

A Scalable Interior-Point Gauss-Newton Method for PDE-Constrained Optimization with Bound Constraints

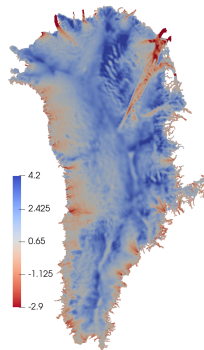
MFEM Community Workshop 2025 – Portland, Oregon

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Motivation – PDE-constrained optimization with bound constraints

- **Example:** inversion (from surface flow observations) for the *non-negative* ice sheet basal friction field.
- **Challenge:** inequality constraints lead to computational challenges via complementarity in the KKT conditions.
- **Goal:** develop a scalable computational framework for such PDE- and bound-constrained optimization problems.



Picture from: T. Hartland, G. Stadler, K. Liegeois, M. Perego, and N. Petra. “Hierarchical off-diagonal low-rank approximation of Hessians in inverse problems, with application to ice sheet model initialization”, Inverse Problems, 2023.

PDE- and bound-constrained optimization problem structure

General problem statement

$$\min_{(\mathbf{u}, \boldsymbol{\rho})} \mathcal{J}(\mathbf{u}, \boldsymbol{\rho}) := \mathcal{J}_{\text{misfit}}(\mathbf{u}) + \mathcal{J}_{\text{reg}}(\boldsymbol{\rho})$$

such that

$$\boldsymbol{\rho}(t, \mathbf{x}) \geq \boldsymbol{\rho}_{\ell}(t, \mathbf{x}), \text{ on } [0, T] \times \overline{\Omega} \text{ and}$$

$$r(\mathbf{u}, \boldsymbol{\rho}) = 0, \text{ in } (0, T) \times \Omega$$

Notation:

1. $\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{u}(t, \mathbf{x})$, $\boldsymbol{\rho} = \boldsymbol{\rho}(t, \mathbf{x})$, the state and parameter (respectively).
2. Ω – spatial domain, $[0, T]$ – time domain.
3. $\boldsymbol{\rho}_{\ell}$ – lower-bound constraint, r – PDE residual.

PDE- and bound-constrained optimization common approach

General problem common “reduced-space” approach

$$\min_{\beta} \mathcal{J}(\beta) := \mathcal{J}(u(\rho), \rho), \quad \rho = \exp(\beta) + \rho_{\ell}$$

where $u(\rho)$ defined implicitly by $r(u(\rho), \rho) = 0$

Pros and cons

PDE- and bound-constrained optimization common approach

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Pros and cons

- + The optimization problem is a reduced unconstrained problem and so simple optimization methods (Newton, Gauss-Newton, etc) are applicable.

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Pros and cons

- + The optimization problem is a reduced unconstrained problem and so simple optimization methods (Newton, Gauss-Newton, etc) are applicable.
- Each objective evaluation requires a PDE-solve.
- The reparametrization $\rho = \exp(\beta) + \rho_{\ell}$ can introduce higher-order nonlinearities and does not make use of constrained numerical optimization research.

PDE- and bound-constrained optimization example problem I

Nonlinear elliptic example problem

$$\min_{(u, \rho)} \mathcal{J}(u, \rho) := \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \int_{\Omega_{\text{obs}}} (u(\mathbf{x}) - u_d(\mathbf{x}))^2 d\mathbf{x}}_{\text{data-misfit}} + \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \int_{\Omega} (\gamma_1 \rho(\mathbf{x})^2 + \gamma_2 \nabla \rho \cdot \nabla \rho) d\mathbf{x}}_{\text{regularization}}$$

such that

$$\rho(\mathbf{x}) \geq \rho_\ell(\mathbf{x}), \text{ on } \bar{\Omega} = [0, 1]^2 \text{ and}$$

$$\begin{cases} -\nabla \cdot (\rho \nabla u) + u + u^3/3 = g & \text{in } \Omega \\ \rho \nabla u \cdot \mathbf{n} = 0 & \text{on } \partial\Omega \end{cases}$$

PDE- and bound-constrained optimization example problem II

Linear parabolic example problem

$$\min_{(\mathbf{u}, \boldsymbol{\rho})} \mathcal{J}(\mathbf{u}, \boldsymbol{\rho}) := \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \int_{\Omega_{\text{obs}}} (\mathbf{u}(T, \mathbf{x}) - u_d(\mathbf{x}))^2 d\mathbf{x}}_{\text{data-misfit}} + \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \int_{\Omega} (\gamma_1 \boldsymbol{\rho}(\mathbf{x})^2 + \gamma_2 \nabla \boldsymbol{\rho} \cdot \nabla \boldsymbol{\rho}) d\mathbf{x}}_{\text{regularization}}$$

such that

$\boldsymbol{\rho}(\mathbf{x}) \geq \rho_{\ell}(\mathbf{x})$, on $\overline{\Omega} = [0, 1]^2$ (periodic) and

$$\begin{cases} \partial \mathbf{u} / \partial t - \nabla \cdot (\kappa \nabla \mathbf{u}) &= g(\mathbf{x}) & \text{in } (0, T) \times \overline{\Omega} \\ \mathbf{u}(t, \mathbf{x})|_{t=0} &= \boldsymbol{\rho}(\mathbf{x}) & \text{in } \overline{\Omega} \end{cases}$$

Infinite-dimensional interior-point (IP) optimality system

1. Cast the PDE into weak form (assumed here time independent)

Find $\mathbf{u} \in H^1(\Omega)$ such that $c(\mathbf{u}, \rho, \lambda) = 0, \forall \lambda \in H^1(\Omega)$.

2. Define the log-barrier penalized Lagrangian function with PDE-constraint Lagrange multiplier λ and log-barrier penalty parameter $\mu > 0$

$$\mathcal{L}(\mathbf{u}, \rho, \lambda) := \underbrace{\mathcal{J}(\mathbf{u}, \rho)}_{\text{Objective}} - \underbrace{\mu \int_{\Omega} \log(\rho - \rho_{\ell}) d\mathbf{x}}_{\text{log-barrier term}} + \underbrace{c(\mathbf{u}, \rho, \lambda)}_{\text{PDE constraint}}.$$

3. Solve the interior-point regularized nonlinear optimality system for $\mu \rightarrow 0^+$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\mathbf{u}} \tilde{\mathbf{u}} = 0, \quad \forall \tilde{\mathbf{u}} \in H^1(\Omega), \quad \{\text{stationarity}\}$$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\rho} \tilde{\rho} = 0, \quad \forall \tilde{\rho} \in H^1(\Omega) \cap L^{\infty}(\Omega), \quad \{\text{stationarity}\}$$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\lambda} \tilde{\lambda} = 0, \quad \forall \tilde{\lambda} \in H^1(\Omega), \quad \{\text{feasibility}\}$$

“Outer” IP-Gauss-Newton method

1. Construct the $\mu > 0$, nonlinear continuation system

$$\mathcal{L}_u \tilde{u} = 0, \quad \forall \tilde{u} \in H^1(\Omega), \quad \{\text{stationarity}\}$$

$$\mathcal{L}_\rho \tilde{\rho} = 0, \quad \forall \tilde{\rho} \in H^1(\Omega) \cap L^\infty(\Omega), \quad \{\text{stationarity}\}$$

$$\mathcal{L}_\lambda \tilde{\lambda} = 0, \quad \forall \tilde{\lambda} \in H^1(\Omega), \quad \{\text{feasibility}\}$$

2. Use the Gauss-Newton method, with stopping criteria defined by mass-weighted norms, to inexactly solve log-barrier subproblems ($\mu \searrow 0$), with a filter line-search IPM for robust convergence

More details can be found in:

A. Wächter and L.T. Biegler. *On the implementation of an interior-point filter line-search algorithm for large-scale nonlinear programming*, Mathematical Programming, 2006.

T. Hartland, C.G. Petra, N. Petra, J. Wang. *A scalable interior-point Gauss-Newton method for PDE-constrained optimization with bound constraints*, arXiv, 2024 (in review).

IP-Gauss-Newton linear solve is a critical computational step

- The IP-Gauss-Newton linear system

$$\underbrace{\begin{pmatrix} H_{u,u} & 0 & J_u^\top \\ 0 & R + H_{\log\text{-barrier}} & J_\rho^\top \\ J_u & J_\rho & 0 \end{pmatrix}}_A \begin{pmatrix} \hat{u} \\ \hat{\rho} \\ \hat{\lambda} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} b_u \\ b_\rho \\ b_\lambda \end{pmatrix}$$

that must be solved for the search direction $(\hat{u}, \hat{\rho}, \hat{\lambda})$ at each “outer” optimization step.

IP-Gauss-Newton linear solve is a critical computational step

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- J_u , discretized linearized forward PDE, $R = \gamma_1 M + \gamma_2 K$, regularization

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- J_u , discretized linearized forward PDE, $R = \gamma_1 M + \gamma_2 K$, regularization
- $H_{\log\text{-barrier}} = M_{\text{lumped}} D$, the log-barrier Hessian, a **positive** definite **diagonal** matrix that generally is **very ill-conditioned** ($\mu \searrow 0$).

IP-Gauss-Newton linear system preconditioner

- **Goal:** efficient iterative solution of the IP-Gauss-Newton linear system $\mathbf{Ax} = \mathbf{b}$
- **Strategy 1:** GMRES with the block Gauss-Seidel preconditioner,

$$\tilde{\mathbf{A}} := \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{H}_{u,u} & \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{J}_u^\top \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\log\text{-barrier}} & \mathbf{J}_\rho^\top \\ \mathbf{J}_u & \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}.$$

J. Pestana, T. Rees. *Null-space preconditioners for saddle point systems*, SIAM Journal on Matrix Analysis and Applications, 2016

G. Biros, O. Ghattas. *Parallel Lagrange-Newton-Krylov-Schur methods for PDE-constrained optimization. Part I: The Krylov-Schur solver*, SIAM Journal on Scientific Computing, 2005

- **Strategy 2:** Log-barrier and regularization, $\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\log\text{-barrier}}$ preconditioned CG for the equivalent “reduced-space” Schur complement system

The Gauss-Seidel preconditioned IP-Gauss-Newton matrix

The preconditioned matrix $\tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1}\mathbf{A}$, is similar to
$$\begin{bmatrix} I & \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{H}_{u,u} & \mathbf{J}_u^\top \\ \mathbf{J}_u & \mathbf{0} \end{bmatrix}^{-1} \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{J}_\rho^\top \end{bmatrix} \\ \mathbf{0} & I + (\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\log\text{-barrier}})^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d \end{bmatrix}.$$

$\hat{\mathbf{H}}_d$ is the positive semi-definite “reduced-space” data-misfit Gauss-Newton Hessian

$$\hat{\mathbf{H}}_d = (\mathbf{J}_u^{-1} \mathbf{J}_\rho)^\top \mathbf{H}_{u,u} (\mathbf{J}_u^{-1} \mathbf{J}_\rho)$$

Particular to typical ill-posed PDE-constrained optimization problems:

- eigenvalues of $\mathbf{R}^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d$ decay rapidly to zero and in a mesh independent fashion

More details can be found in:

O. Ghattas, K. Wilcox. *Learning physics-based models from data: perspectives from inverse problems and model reduction*, Acta Numerica (2021).

Block Gauss-Seidel preconditioner effectively clusters spectrum

Bounds on the eigenvalues of preconditioned matrix

$$1 \leq \lambda_j(\tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1} \mathbf{A}) \leq \begin{cases} 1 + \lambda_j(\mathbf{R}^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d), & 1 \leq j \leq \dim(\boldsymbol{\rho}), \\ 1, & \dim(\boldsymbol{\rho}) + 1 \leq j \leq \dim(\boldsymbol{\rho}) + 2 \cdot \dim(\mathbf{u}), \end{cases}$$

- eigenvalues of $\mathbf{R}^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d$ decay rapidly to zero and in a mesh independent fashion
- $\mathbf{R}^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d$ does not contain components specific to IPM

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Conclusions to be drawn from the eigenvalue bounds

- eigenvalues of $\tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1} \mathbf{A}$ decay rapidly to one and in a mesh independent fashion

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Conclusions to be drawn from the eigenvalue bounds

- eigenvalues of $\tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1} \mathbf{A}$ decay rapidly to one and in a mesh independent fashion
- spectrum of $\tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1} \mathbf{A}$ is largely independent of IPM ill-conditioning

Block Gauss-Seidel preconditioner effectively clusters spectrum

Bounds on the eigenvalues of preconditioned matrix

$$1 \leq \lambda_j(\tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1} \mathbf{A}) \leq \begin{cases} 1 + \lambda_j(\mathbf{R}^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d), & 1 \leq j \leq \dim(\boldsymbol{\rho}), \\ 1, & \dim(\boldsymbol{\rho}) + 1 \leq j \leq \dim(\boldsymbol{\rho}) + 2 \cdot \dim(\mathbf{u}), \end{cases}$$

- eigenvalues of $\mathbf{R}^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d$ decay rapidly to zero and in a mesh independent fashion
- $\mathbf{R}^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d$ does not contain components specific to IPM

Ill-conditioning due to IPM is factored out by the preconditioner.

Details in: T. Hartland, C.G. Petra, N. Petra, J. Wang. *A scalable interior-point Gauss-Newton method for PDE-constrained optimization with bound constraints*, arXiv, 2024 (in review).

The cost to apply the block Gauss-Seidel preconditioner

To compute

$$\mathbf{x} = \tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1} \mathbf{b} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{H}_{u,u} & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\log\text{-barrier}} \\ \mathbf{J}_u & \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{J}_u^\top \\ \mathbf{J}_\rho^\top \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}^{-1} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{b}_u \\ \mathbf{b}_\rho \\ \mathbf{b}_\lambda \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x}_u \\ \mathbf{x}_\rho \\ \mathbf{x}_\lambda \end{pmatrix}$$

1. $\mathbf{x}_u = \mathbf{J}_u^{-1} \mathbf{b}_\lambda$ {linearized forward PDE solve}
2. $\mathbf{x}_\lambda = \mathbf{J}_u^{-\top} (\mathbf{b}_u - \mathbf{H}_{u,u} \mathbf{x}_u)$ {adjoint PDE solve}
3. $\mathbf{x}_\rho = (\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\log\text{-barrier}})^{-1} (\mathbf{b}_\rho - \mathbf{J}_\rho^\top \mathbf{x}_\lambda)$ {AMG-CG solve}

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The log-barrier Hessian improves the **diagonal dominance** of $\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\log\text{-barrier}}$

$$\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\log\text{-barrier}} = \gamma_1 \mathbf{M} + \gamma_2 \mathbf{K} + \underbrace{\mathbf{M}_{\text{lumped}} \mathbf{D}}_{\text{log-barrier Hessian}}$$

Sketch of Preconditioned CG approach

Idea: form Schur complement system by eliminating $\hat{\mathbf{u}}, \hat{\lambda}$

$$(\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\text{log-barrier}} + \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d)\hat{\rho} = \mathbf{b}$$

Use preconditioner: $\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\text{log-barrier}}$. The eigenvalues

$$(\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\text{log-barrier}})^{-1} (\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\text{log-barrier}} + \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d) = \mathbf{I} + (\mathbf{R} + \mathbf{H}_{\text{log-barrier}})^{-1} \hat{\mathbf{H}}_d$$

of this preconditioned system are intimately related to the eigenvalues of $\tilde{\mathbf{A}}^{-1} \mathbf{A}$.

MFEM-based implementation of the IP-Gauss-Newton framework

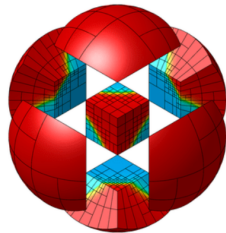
Features utilized

- Modular object-oriented design;
- Distributed memory parallelism (MPI);
- Finite element discretization, mesh refinement, Krylov subspace solvers (MFEM);
- Algebraic multigrid preconditioners (hypre);

More details can be found in:

J. Andrej, et al. *High performance finite elements with MFEM*, The International Journal of High Performance Computing Applications, 2024.

hypre. *High Performance Preconditioners*,
<https://llnl.gov/casc/hypre>



MFEM is a free, lightweight, scalable C++ library for finite element methods.



Nonlinear elliptic PDE- and bound-constrained example problem

$$\min_{(u, \rho)} \mathcal{J}(u, \rho) := \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \int_{\Omega_{\text{obs}}} (u(\mathbf{x}) - u_d(\mathbf{x}))^2 d\mathbf{x}}_{\text{data-misfit}} + \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \int_{\Omega} (\gamma_1 \rho(\mathbf{x})^2 + \gamma_2 \nabla \rho \cdot \nabla \rho) d\mathbf{x}}_{\text{regularization}}$$

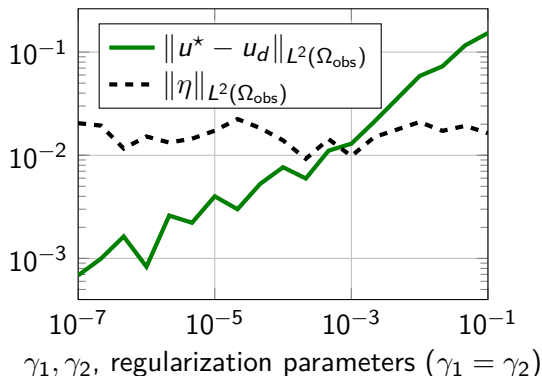
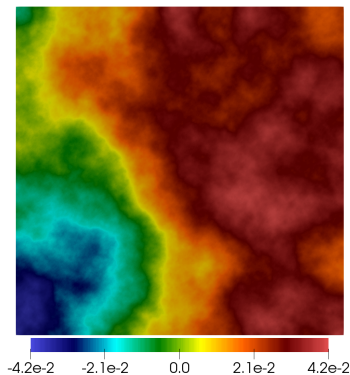
such that

$$\rho(\mathbf{x}) \geq \rho_{\ell}(\mathbf{x}) = 1.0, \text{ on } \bar{\Omega} = [0, 1]^2 \text{ and}$$

$$\begin{cases} -\nabla \cdot (\rho \nabla u) + u + u^3/3 = g & \text{in } \Omega \\ \rho \nabla u \cdot \mathbf{n} = 0 & \text{on } \partial\Omega \end{cases}$$

- $\Omega_{\text{obs}} = (0, 1/2) \times (0, 1)$, observation domain
- $u_d(\mathbf{x}) = \cos(\pi \mathbf{x}_1) \cos(\pi \mathbf{x}_2) + \eta(\mathbf{x})$, noisy (η) data

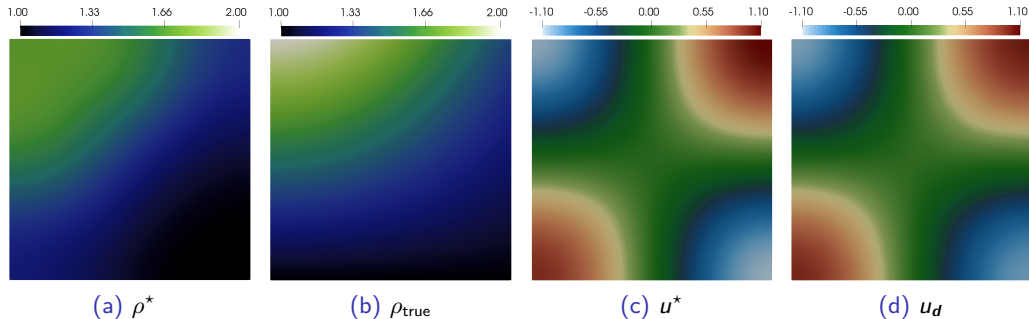
Regularization determined by the Morozov discrepancy principle



Left: spatial structure of a random noise sample η (5% relative noise level).

Right: Seminorms of the discrepancy ($u^* - u_d$) and noise η as functions of the regularization.

Nonlinear elliptic PDE- and bound-constrained problem solution



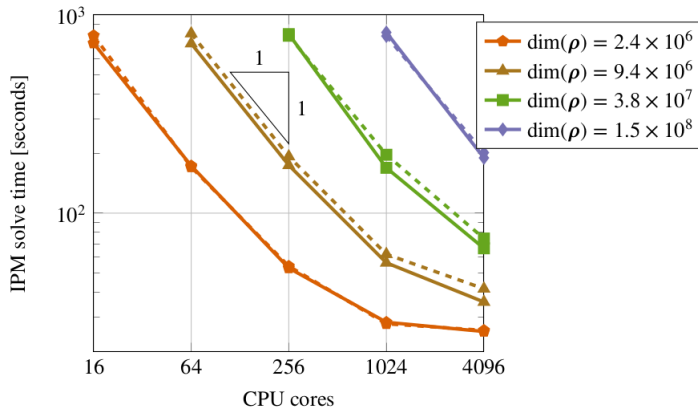
Computed optimum ρ^* (left), ρ_{true} (middle left), computed optimum state u^* (middle right) and noisy state data u_d (right).

Solution computed with a mesh independent number of iterations

$\dim(\rho)$	Average interior-point per optimizer solve	Average GMRES iterations per linear solve	Average CG iterations per linear solve
148 609	28.4	6.50	6.76
591 361	28.2	6.48	6.72
2 362 369	28.8	6.51	6.68
9 443 329	28.3	6.49	6.85
37 761 025	28.7	6.42	6.87
151 019 521	29.0	6.52	6.75

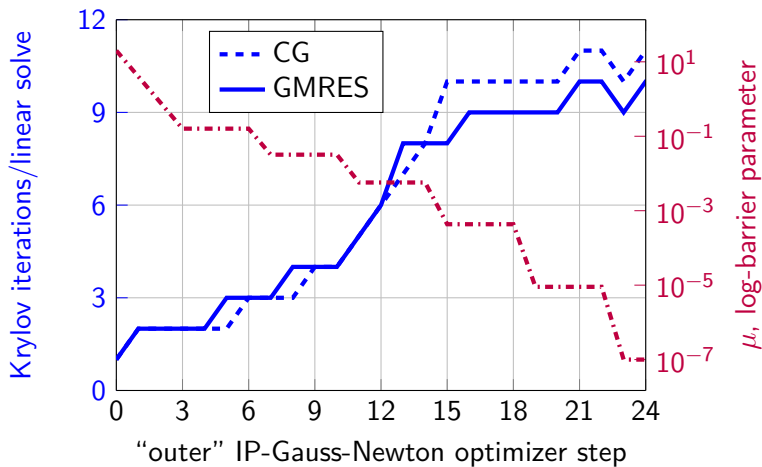
Figure: Outer interior-point optimizer and inner Krylov iteration counts. 10^{-6} interior-point optimizer absolute tolerance and 10^{-8} relative linear solve tolerance.

Strong scaling (quartz) of the IP-Gauss-Newton-Krylov method



GMRES: solid lines, CG: dashed lines. Timings obtained on Intel Xeon E5-2695 v4 chips.

Preconditioners are robust with respect to IPM ill-conditioning



Parabolic PDE- and bound-constrained example problem

Linear parabolic example problem

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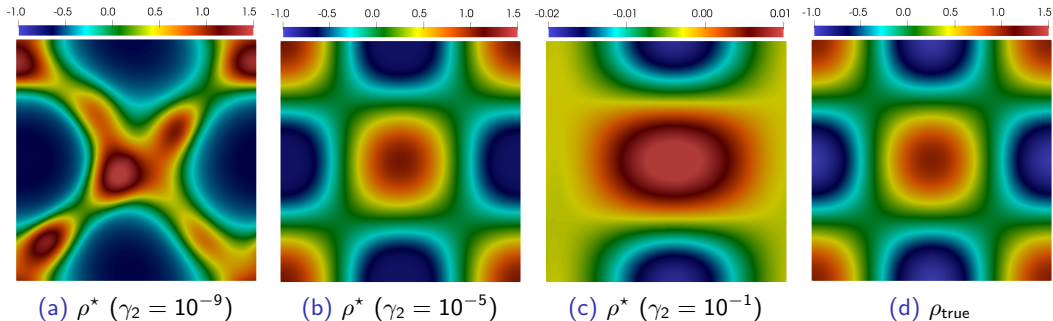
such that

$$\boldsymbol{\rho}(\mathbf{x}) \geq \rho_{\ell}(\mathbf{x}) = -3/4, \text{ on } \Omega = (0, 1)^2 \text{ (periodic) and}$$

$$\begin{cases} \partial \mathbf{u} / \partial t - \nabla \cdot (\kappa \nabla \mathbf{u}) &= g(\mathbf{x}) \quad \text{in } (0, T) \times \Omega \\ \mathbf{u}(t, \mathbf{x})|_{t=0} &= \boldsymbol{\rho}(\mathbf{x}) \quad \text{on } \Omega \end{cases}$$

$$- \rho_{\text{true}}(\mathbf{x}) = \cos(\pi \mathbf{x}_1) \cos(\pi \mathbf{x}_2),$$

Parabolic PDE- and bound-constrained problem solution



Parameter reconstruction ρ^* with various regularization parameters (left, middle left and middle right), and true parameter ρ_{true} (right).

Solution computed with a mesh independent number of iterations for a wide range of regularization parameter values

$\dim(\rho)$	# iter GMRES, (# iter IP)				
	$\gamma_2 = 10^{-10}$	$\gamma_2 = 10^{-8}$	$\gamma_2 = 10^{-6}$	$\gamma_2 = 10^{-4}$	$\gamma_2 = 10^{-2}$
9.2×10^3	16.8 (14)	16.7 (14)	15.4 (13)	11.8 (11)	7.1 (7)
3.7×10^4	18.7 (15)	17.2 (14)	15.4 (13)	12.1 (11)	7.4 (7)
1.5×10^5	19.5 (15)	18.9 (14)	15.5 (13)	11.9 (11)	7.3 (7)
5.9×10^5	20.2 (15)	20.5 (15)	15.4 (13)	12.1 (11)	7.1 (7)
2.4×10^6	20.7 (14)	20.1 (14)	15.8 (13)	11.9 (11)	7.4 (7)

Table: Algorithmic scaling of the IP-Gauss-Newton method with block Gauss-Seidel preconditioned GMRES solves for the parabolic time-dependent PDE- and bound-constrained optimization with backward Euler time step $\Delta t = 0.01$. The absolute tolerance of the outer optimization loop is 10^{-6} and the relative tolerance of the block AMG-CG solves is 10^{-13} .

Conclusions and future work

- Algorithmically scalable IP-Gauss-Newton method for PDE- and bound-constrained optimization problems that respects the nature of the infinite-dimensional problem.
- Ill-conditioning of IP-Gauss-Newton linear systems handled by preconditioners that exploit PDE-constrained optimization problem structure.
- Interested in applying this framework to a broader set of problems and discussions/feedback from the MFEM community.
- The IPM solver (without PDE-constrained examples) is available at <https://github.com/LLNL/ContinuationSolvers>.
- Details in: T. Hartland, C.G. Petra, N. Petra, J. Wang. *A scalable interior-point Gauss-Newton method for PDE-constrained optimization with bound constraints*, arXiv, 2024 (in review).

Thank you for your attention.

Presenter (**Tucker Hartland**) contact info – hartland1@llnl.gov

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