

A wide-angle photograph of an Antarctic seascape. The foreground shows a dark, choppy sea with several icebergs of varying sizes. In the middle ground, a large, dark, rocky island or headland is visible. The background features a distant, flat horizon under a sky filled with soft, white clouds. The overall lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

Operating GNSS Equipment in Antarctica

Experiences, Challenges and Solutions

Transition to Continuous Remote GNSS Stations

Larry Hothem
US Geological Survey
Reston, VA

January 26, 2007

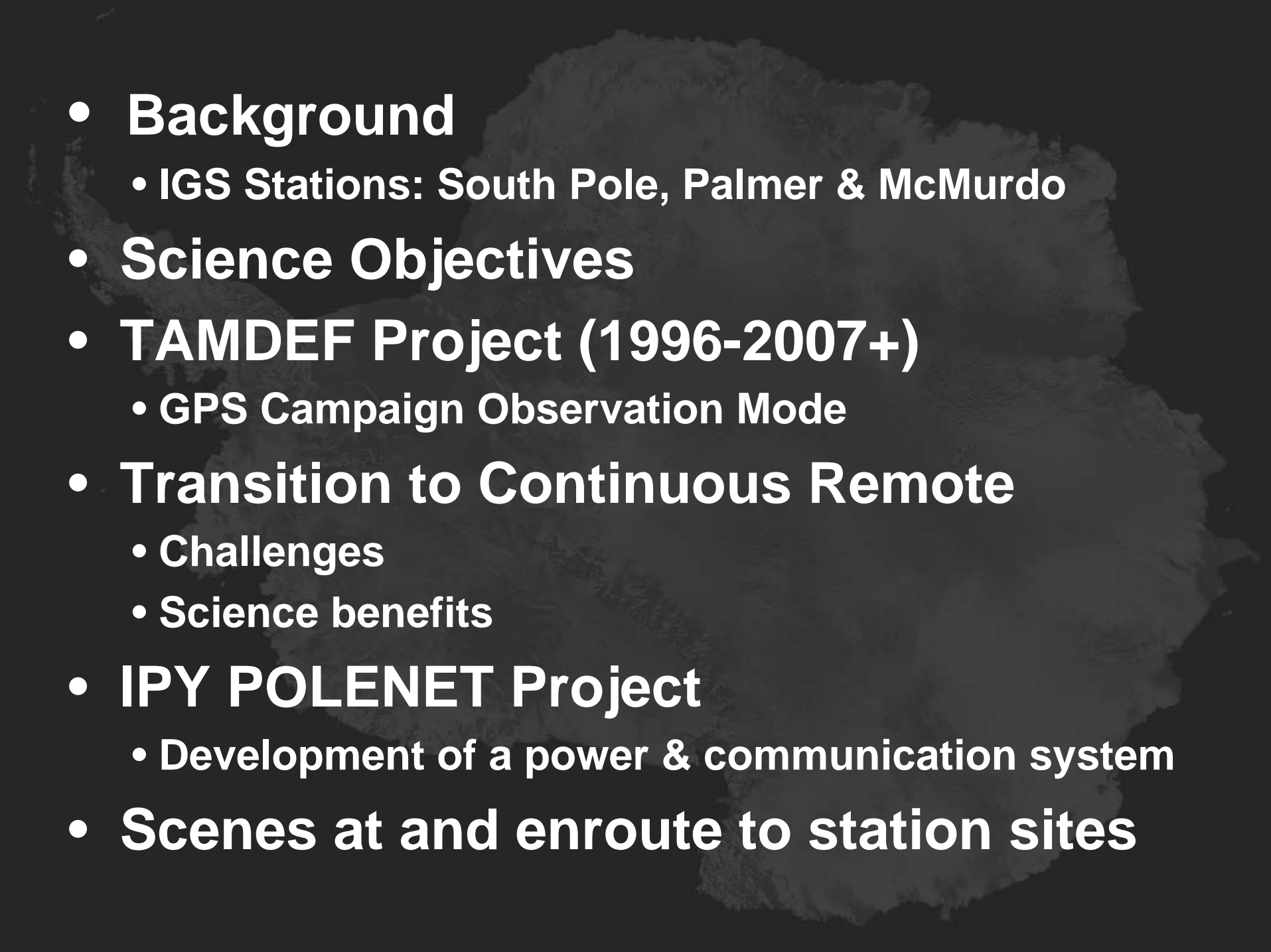
Acknowledgements

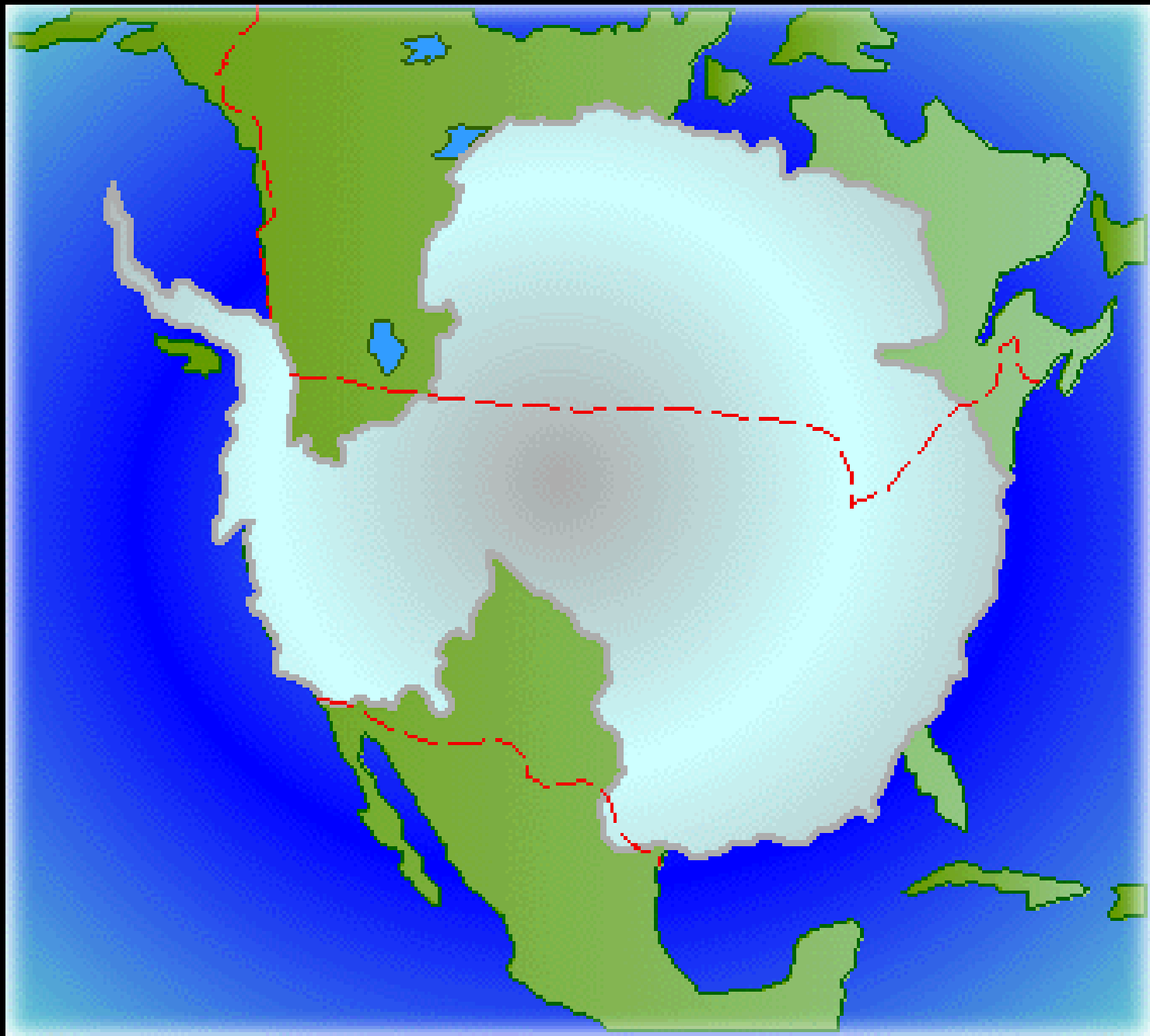
Dr. Terry Wilson, Principle Investigator, TAMDEF and POLENET Projects

Mr. Mike Willis, PhD candidate, TAMDEF Project

School of Earth Sciences, Byrd Polar Research Center
Ohio State University



- 
- **Background**
 - IGS Stations: South Pole, Palmer & McMurdo
 - **Science Objectives**
 - **TAMDEF Project (1996-2007+)**
 - GPS Campaign Observation Mode
 - **Transition to Continuous Remote**
 - Challenges
 - Science benefits
 - **IPY POLENET Project**
 - Development of a power & communication system
 - **Scenes at and enroute to station sites**







MCM4 – IGS station in McMurdo

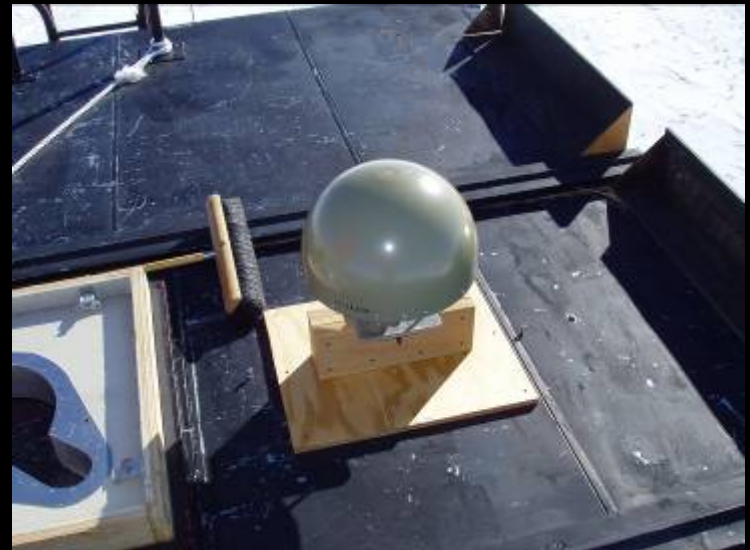
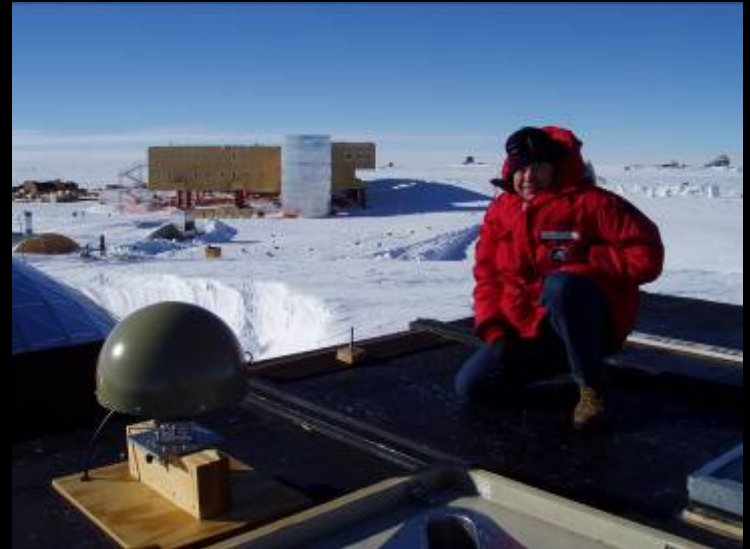
Antenna radome and condensation or ice





AMUNDSEN-SCOTT SOUTH POLE

IGS Station AMU2





AMUN

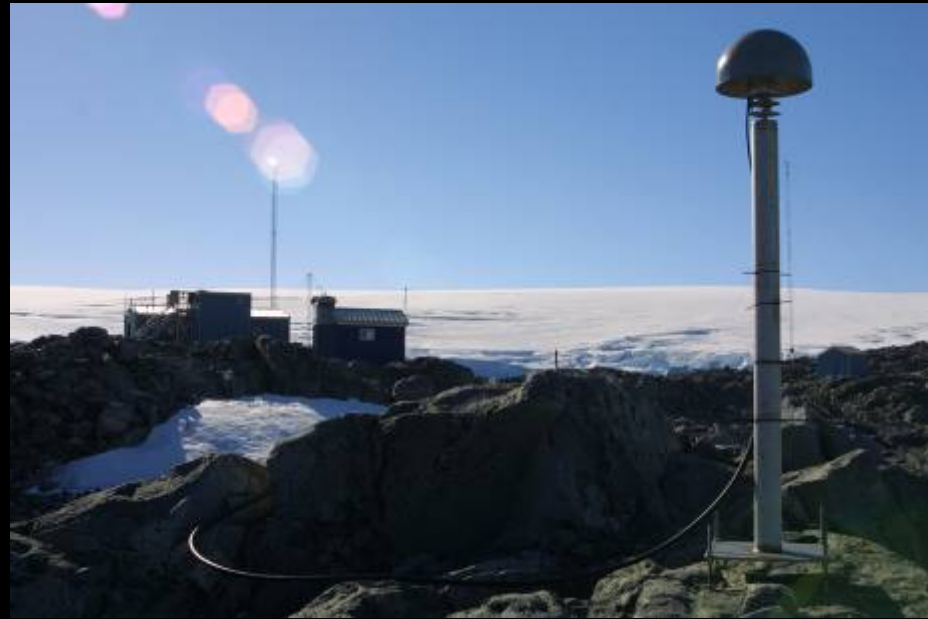
Geographic South Pole
(Jan. 1, 2006)
↓

AMU2



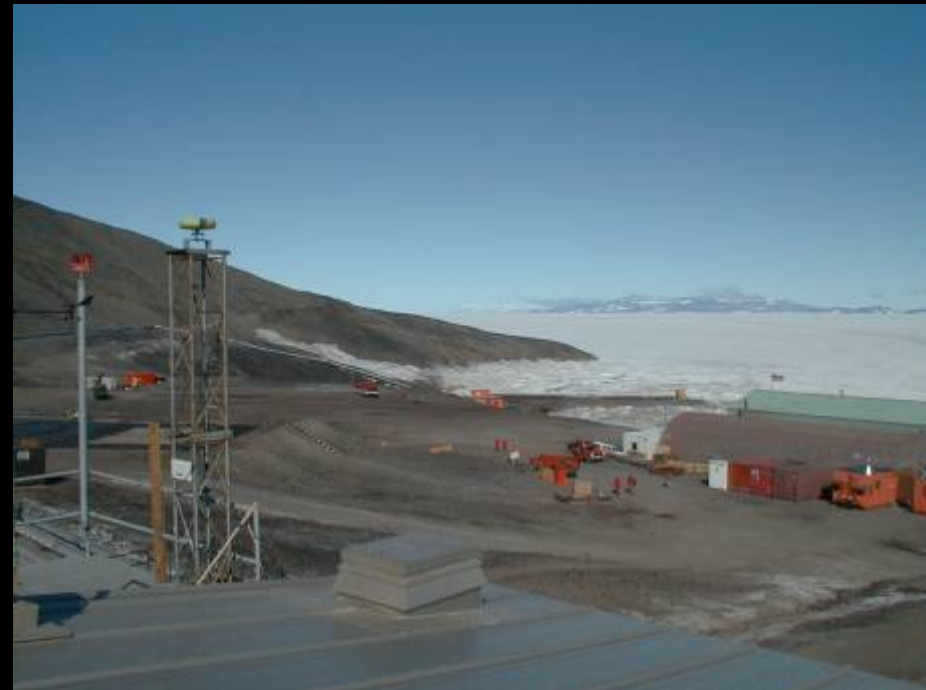
PALMER STATION

IGS Station PALM



IGS Station CRAR

McMurdo Station, Antarctica



Installed December 1998 -- GPS and GLONASS Observations

**South
Atlantic Ocean**

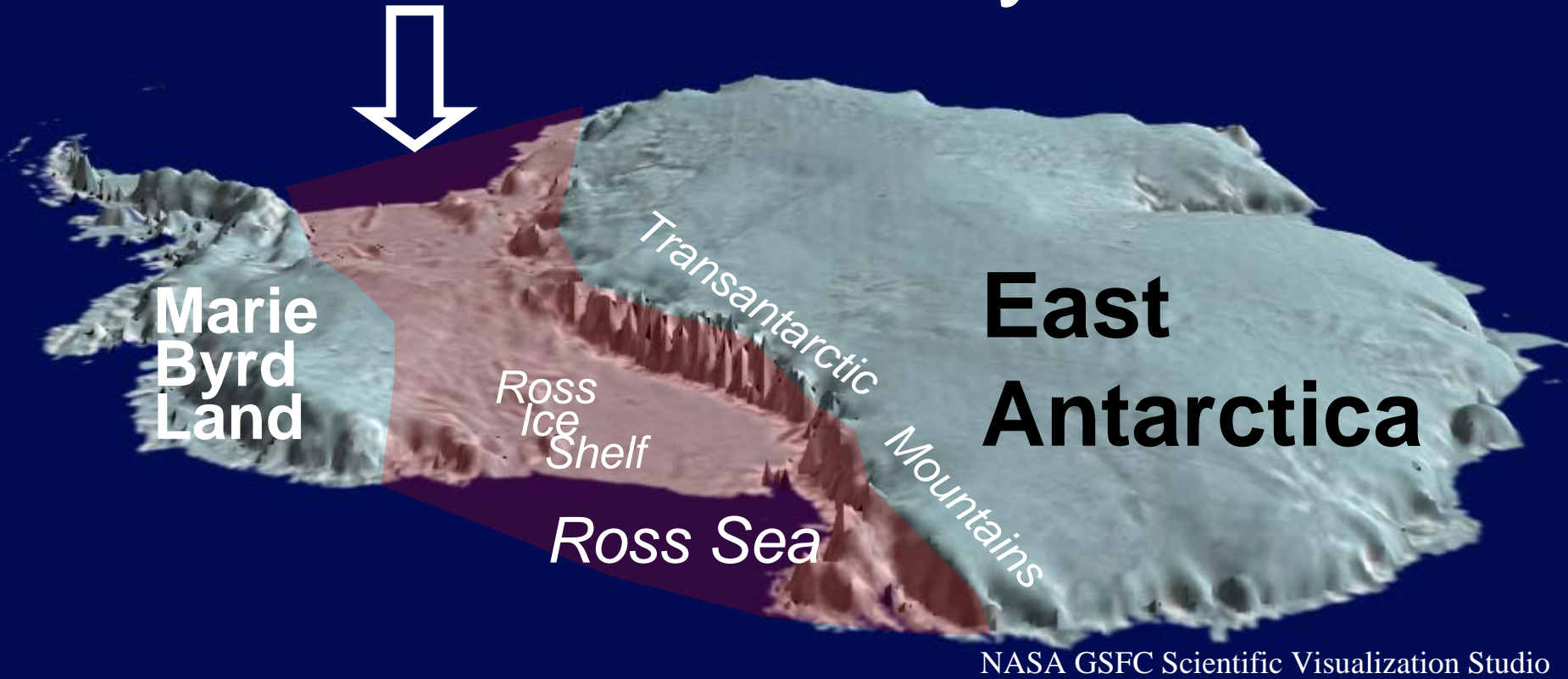
Cutaway view of ice sheet

Indian Ocean

**South
Pacific Ocean**

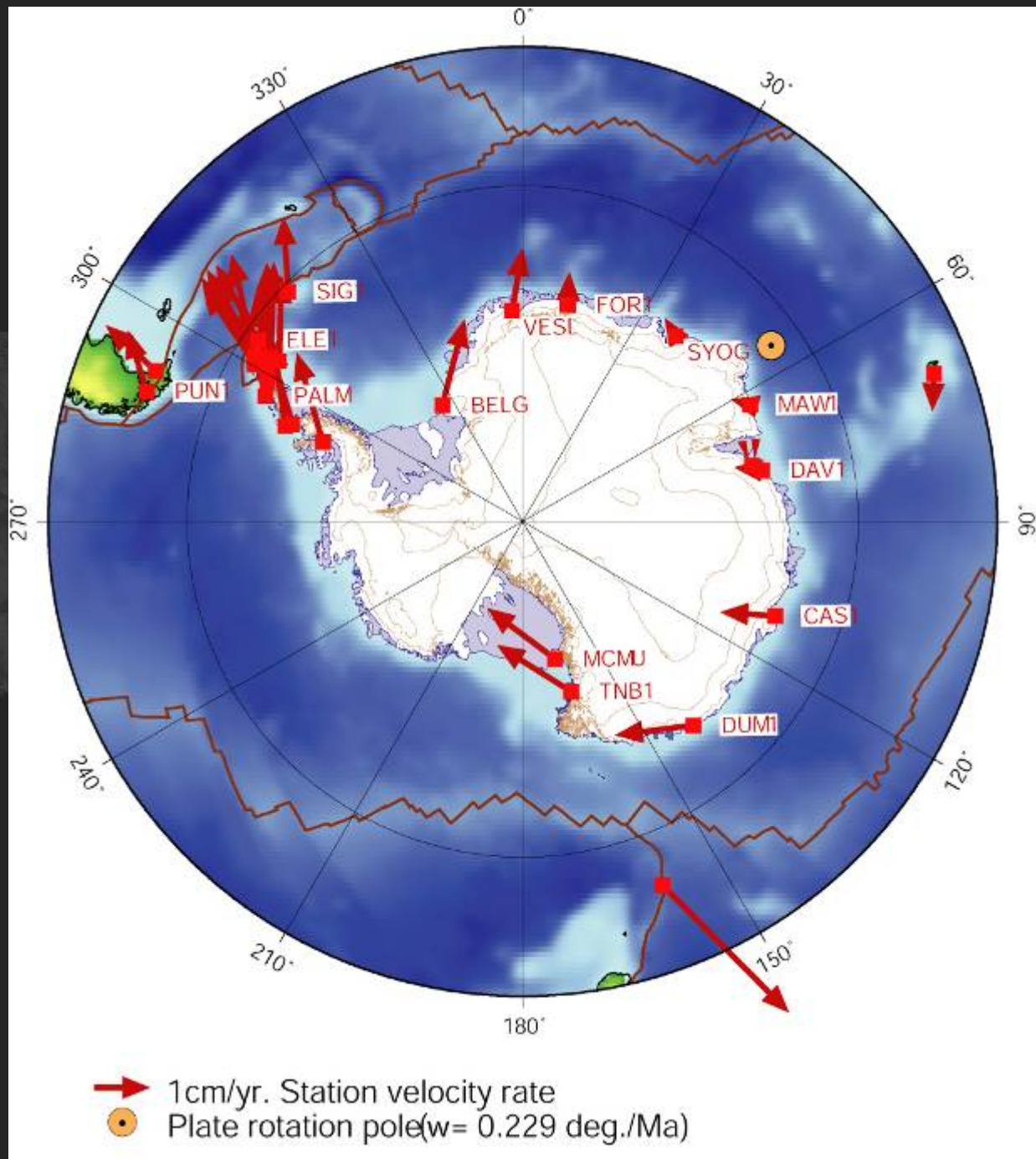


West Antarctic Rift system

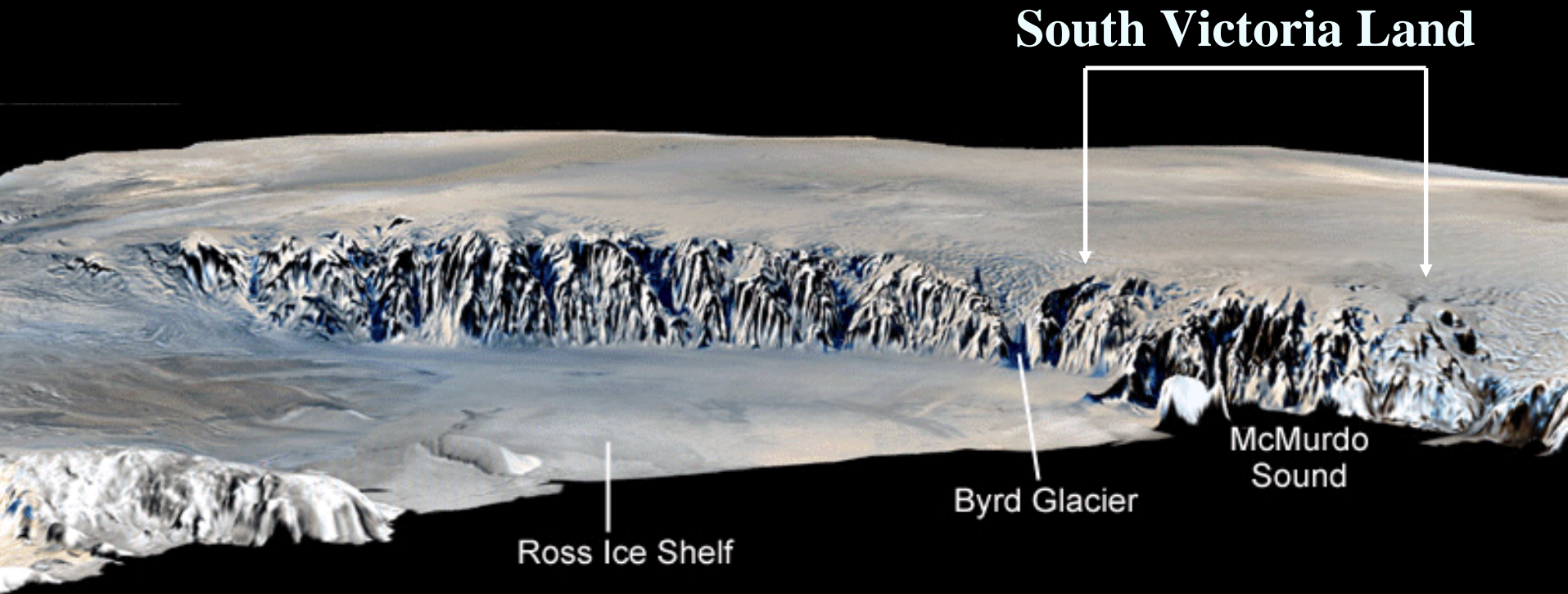


Intraplate deformation:

- Rifting in the Antarctic Interior?
- Glacial Isostatic Adjustment



TransAntarctic Mountains DEFormation Monitoring Network (TAMDEF)



THE TAMDEF PROJECT

TAMDEF Home

[SITE HOME](#)

[POLENET](#)

[ANDRILL](#)

[TERROR RIFT](#)



[HOME AND NEWS](#)

[PROJECT DETAILS](#)

[STRATEGY](#)

[SITE LOCATIONS](#)

[EQUIPMENT USED](#)

[2003-2004 PICS](#)

[2004-2005 PICS](#)

[2005-2006 PICS](#)

[PROJECT LINKS](#)

The TransAntarctic Mountains DEFormation Project

The TAMDEF project is a joint [OSU](#) and [USGS](#) program to measure bedrock motion in the Transantarctic Mountains of Southern Victoria Land.

The bedrock is slowly moving in response to changes in the mass of the Antarctic Ice Sheets. As the weight of the ice sheets changes the Earth's surface bends and the mantle flows to accommodate the new ice configuration.

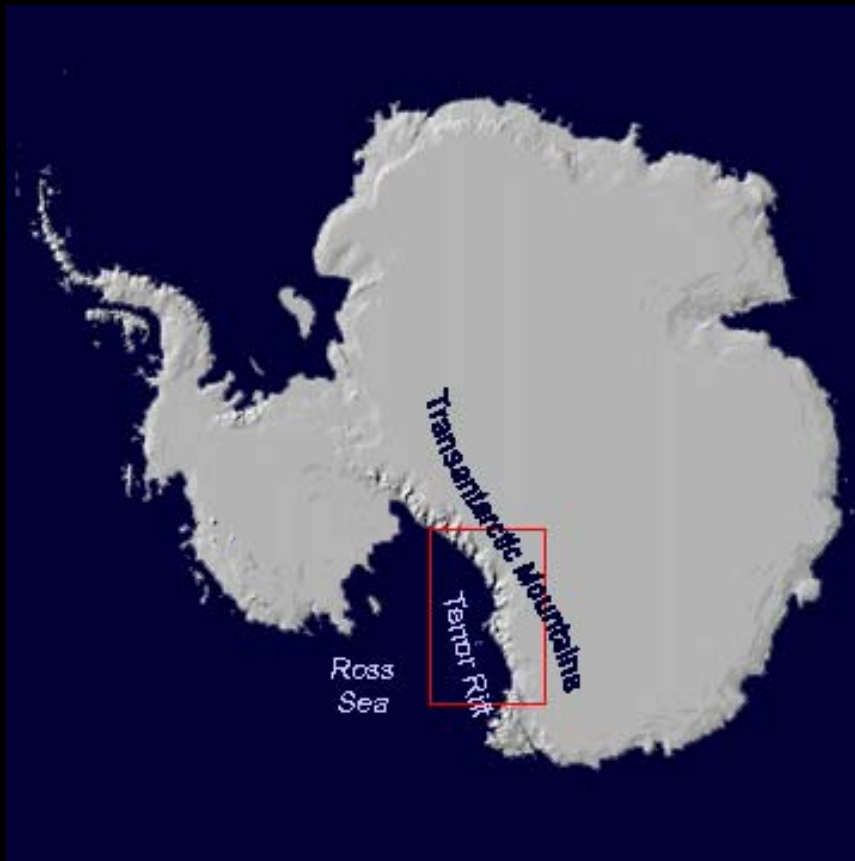
We are also measuring the tectonic motion over the nearby Terror Rift, an offshore zone of faulting.

We use precision GPS measurements separated by several years to test the predicted rates of motion. The eighth and final seasons of measurement was completed in 2006, in this the most extensive ice-free area on the Antarctic continent.

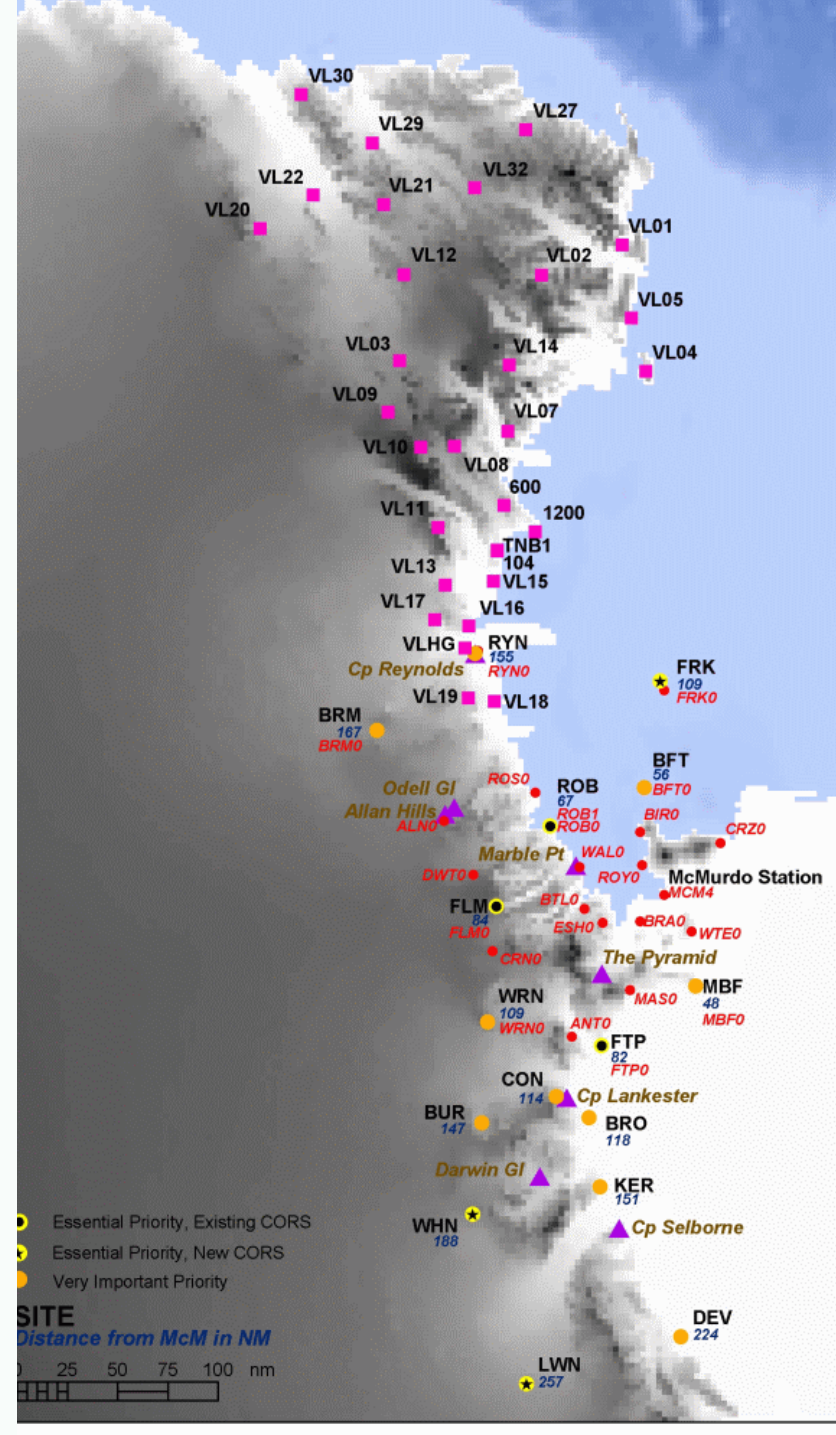
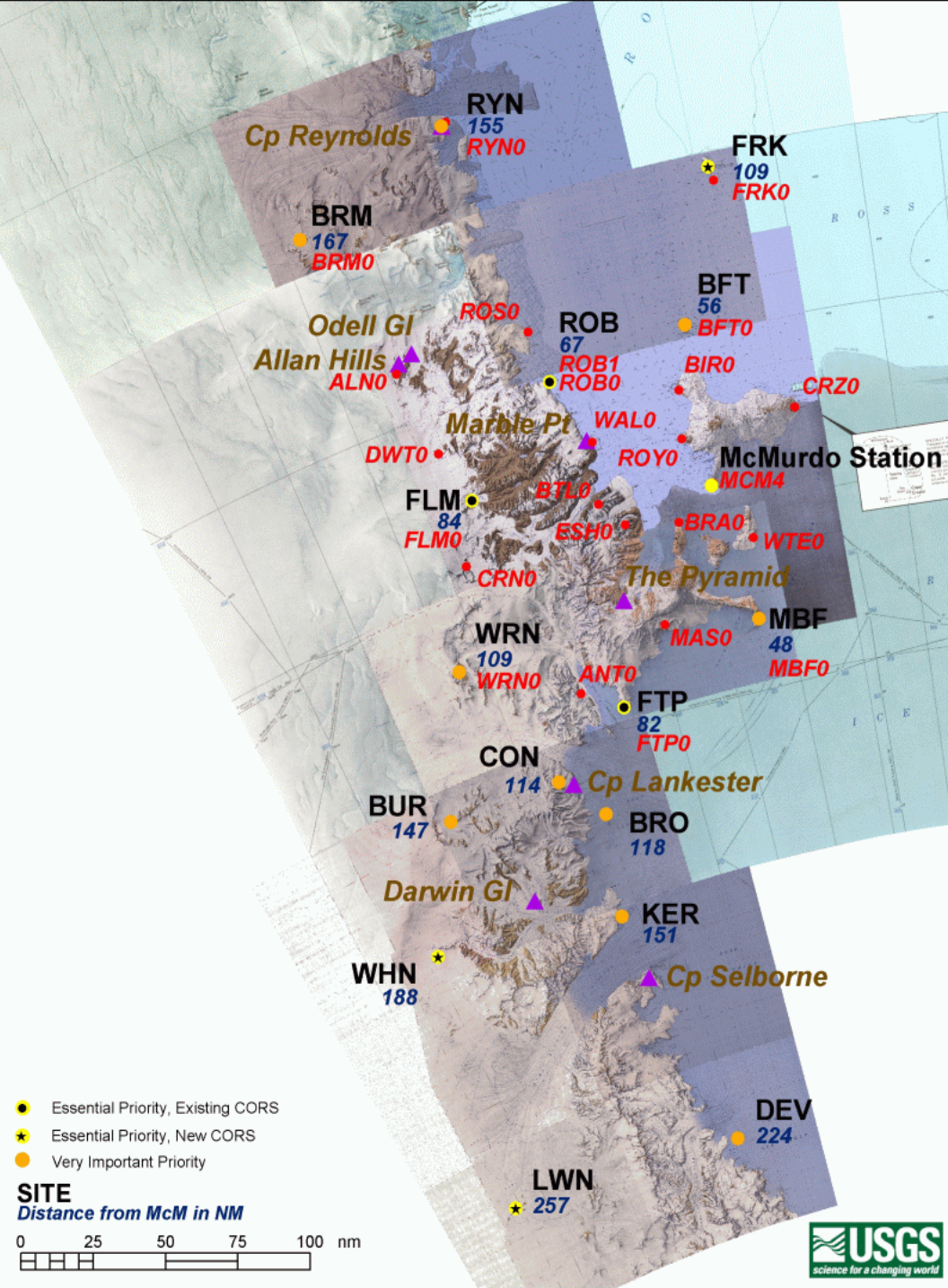
<http://www.geology.ohio-state.edu/TAMDEF/>

THE TAMDEF PROJECT

Transantarctic Mountains Deformation Monitoring Network



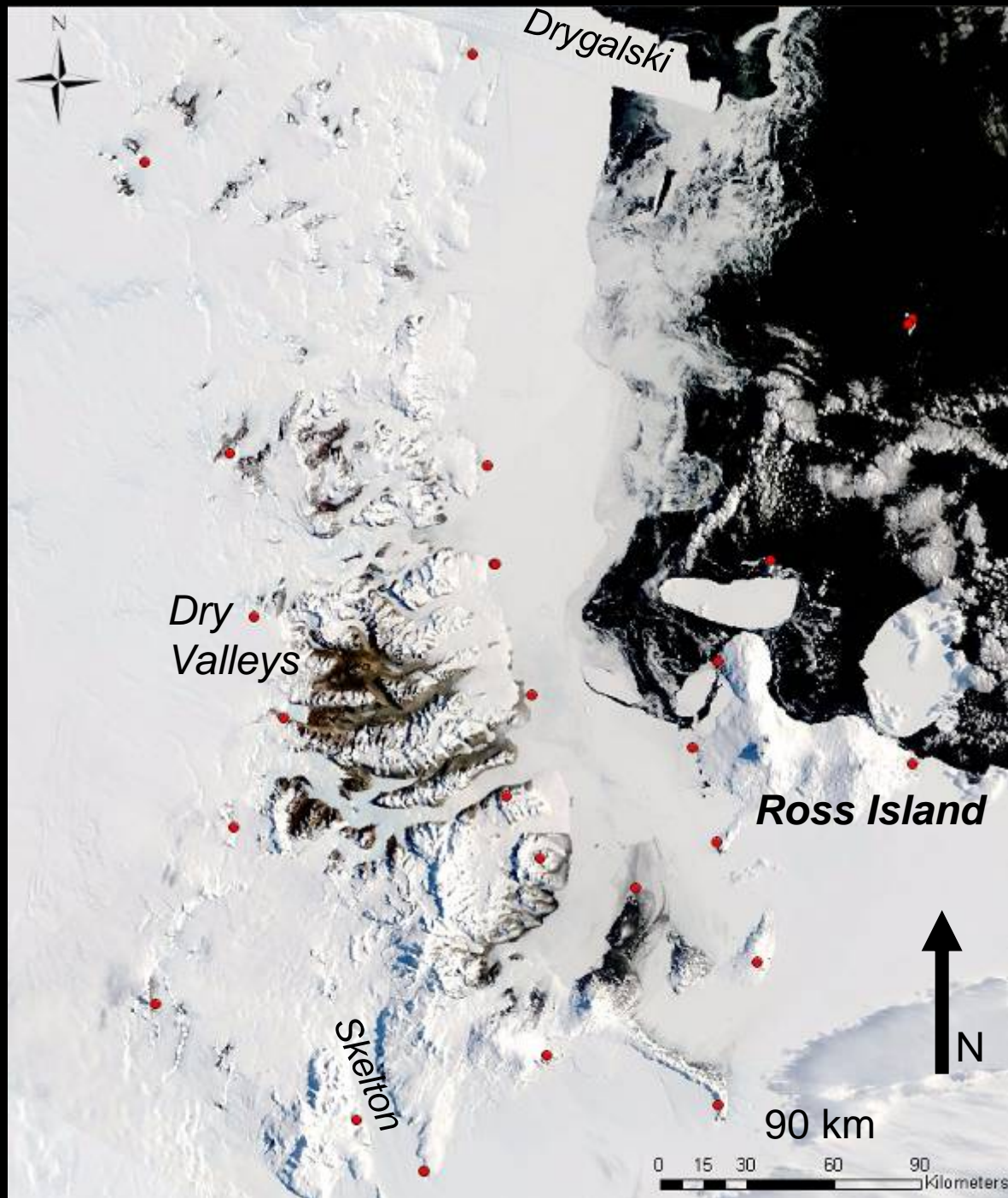
- Initiated in 1996
- Use GPS to measure bedrock crustal motions
- Document neotectonic displacements due to:
 - tectonic deformation within the West Antarctic rift (Terror Rift)
 - mass change of the Antarctic ice sheets
- Horizontal displacements related to active neotectonic rifting, strike-slip translations, and volcanism are tightly constrained by monitoring the combined TAMDEF and Italian VLNDEF networks of bedrock GPS stations



The Campaign Network

1996-2000

- 24 sites
- Rock-pins
- Short-duration measurements

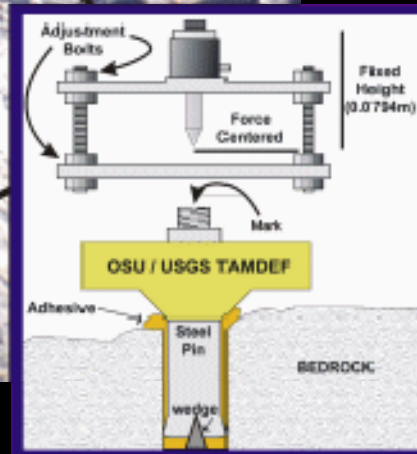
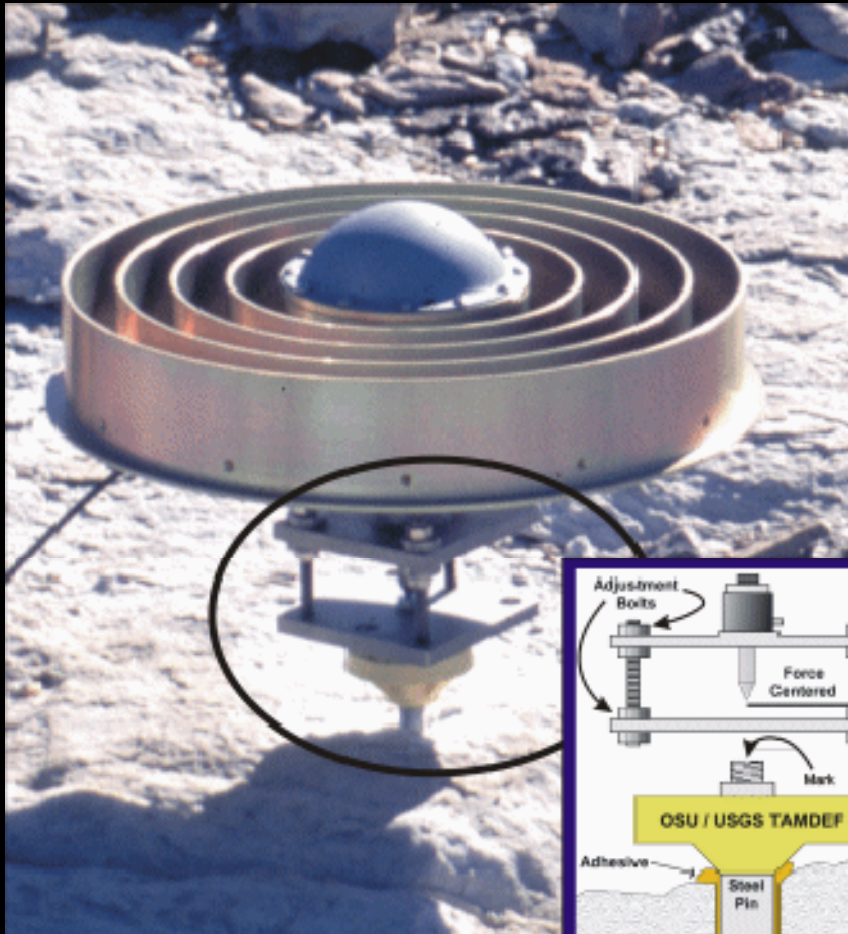


Early Campaign Experiences

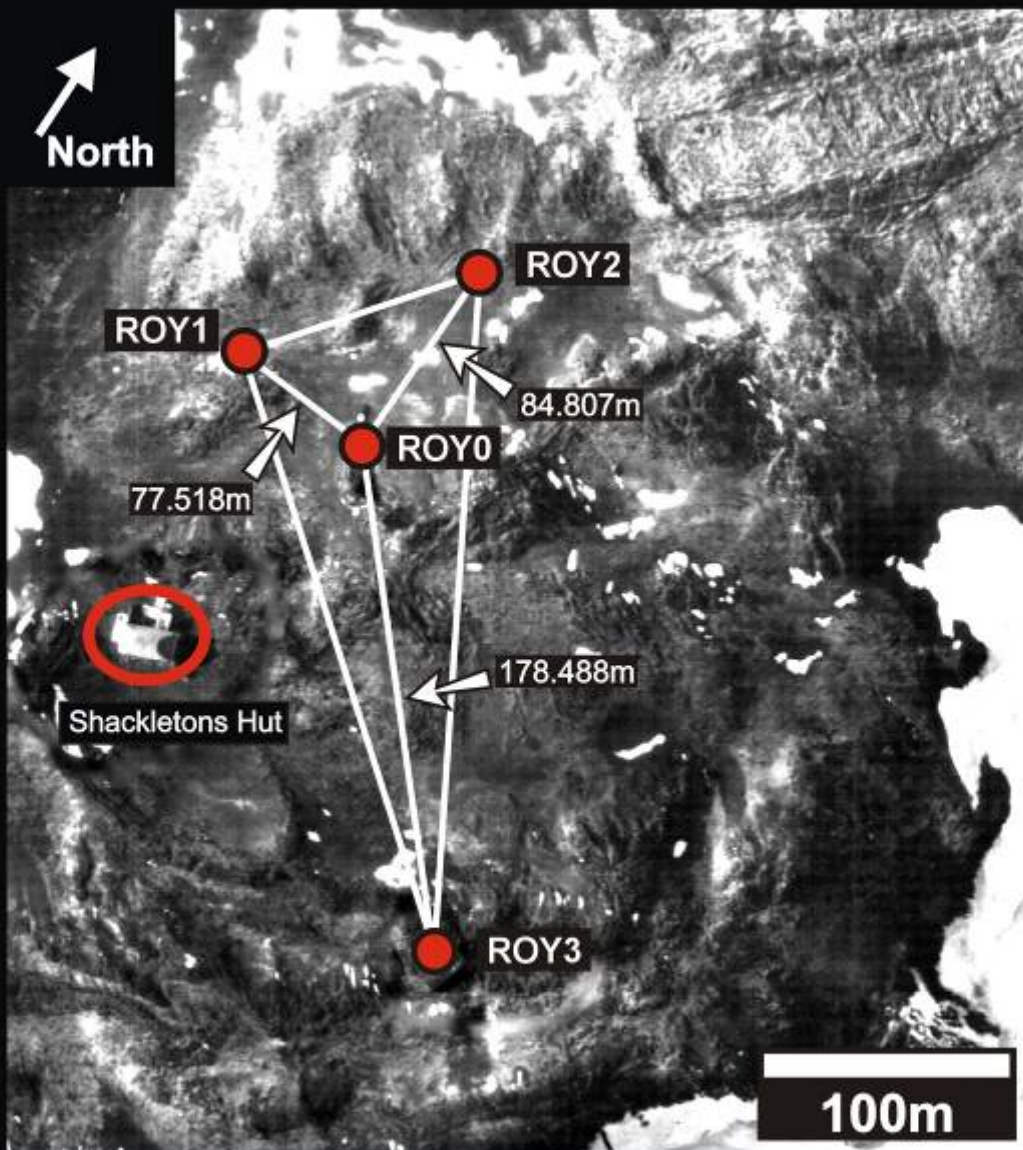
- Blue board insulated wooden boxes
- 80AH gel cells power Z12 for @15 days
- 60W solar panels extend life of batteries
- Receiver memory limited in capacity
- Choke ring antenna - standard
- Level mounts - fixed height
- Monuments - stainless steel pins
- Pins set in bedrock
- Micro-footprints critical to project

Antenna

Dorne Margolin Choke Ring



Cape Royds (ROY) Local Deformation Micro-footprint

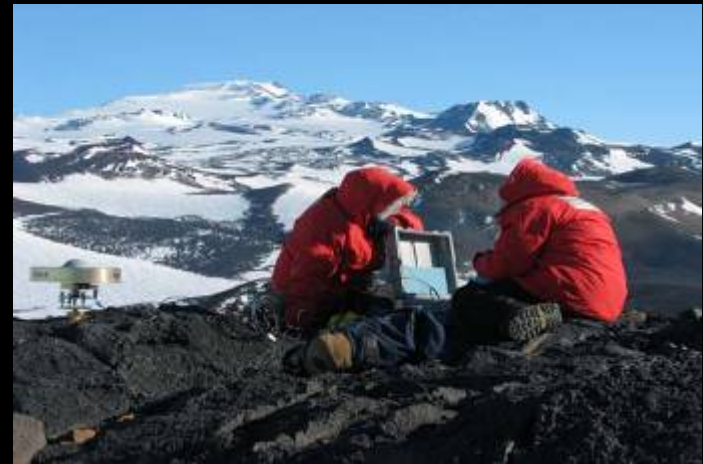


**Test
for
monument
stability**

Air Photo: TMA-2565-V (12-09-83)

Cape Crozier

Seasonal Campaign GNSS Stations





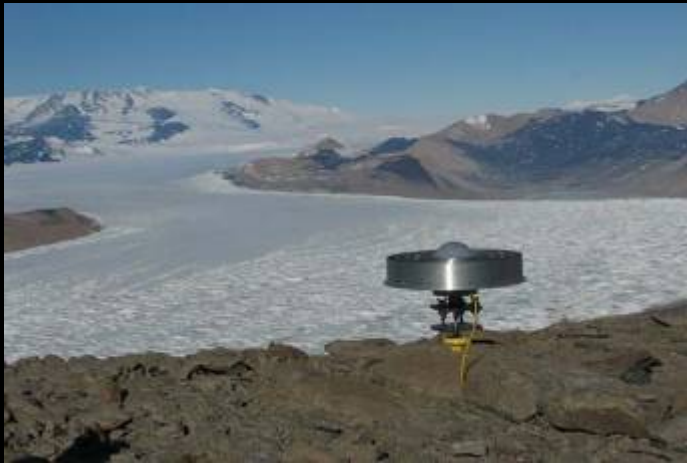
Esser Hill & Bettie Peak

Seasonal Campaign GNSS Stations



Hidden Valley

Site for fault surveys



Beacon Valley

Site for fault surveys



Challenges



Challenges:



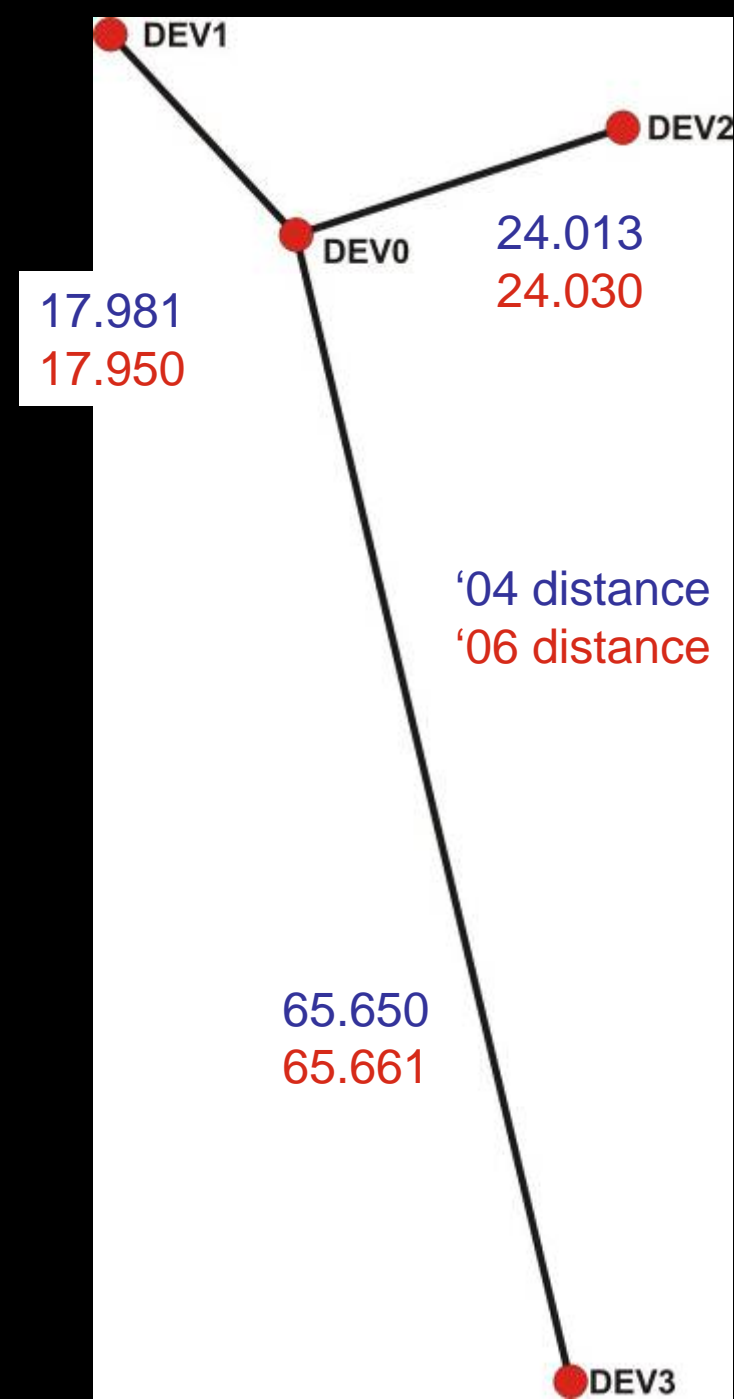
TAMDEF site- Minna Bluff

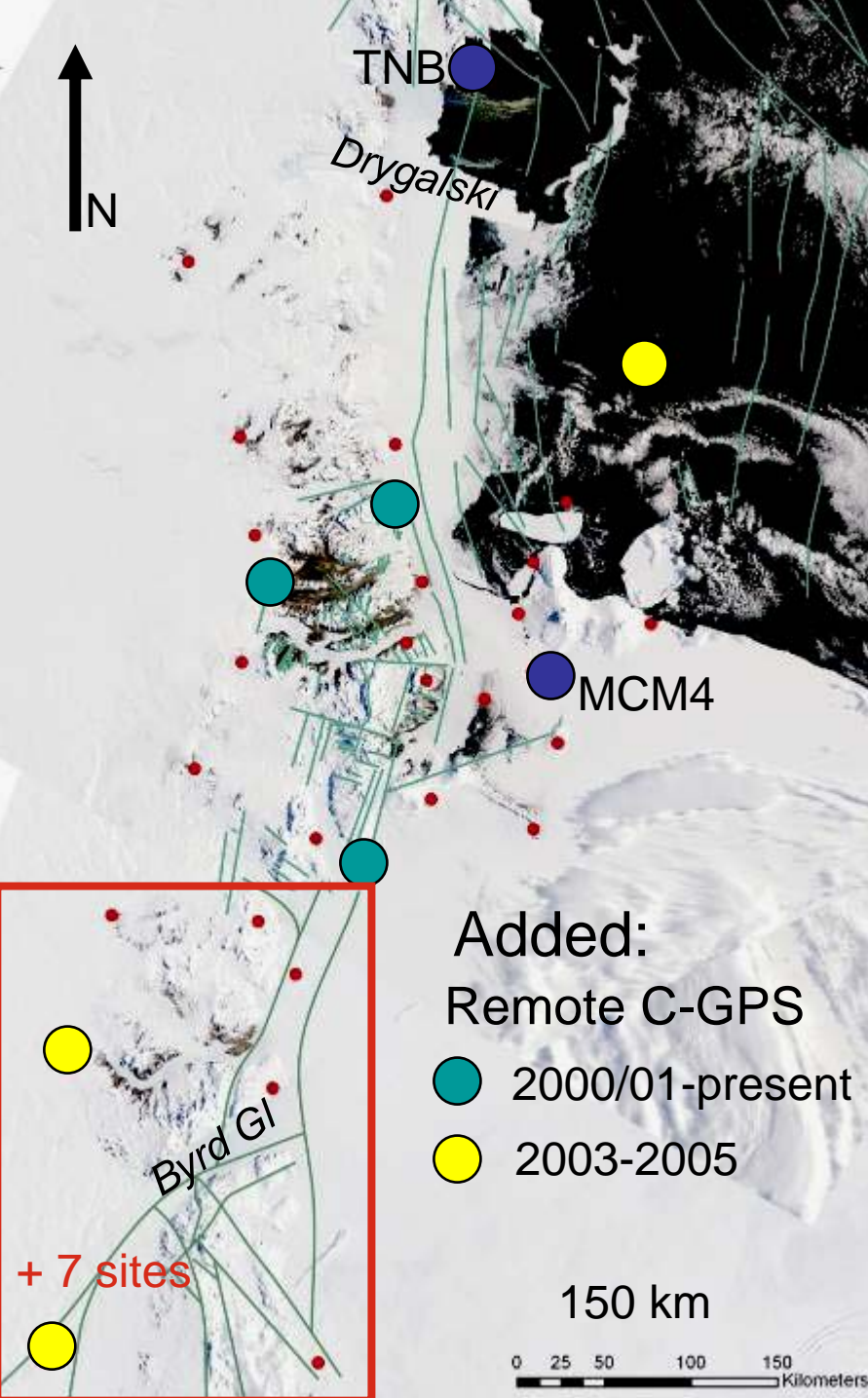
Rime ice on antenna....effect?



Deverall Island

- Seemingly good bedrock.
- 3.2 cm deformation!
- Eccentric marks still useful.



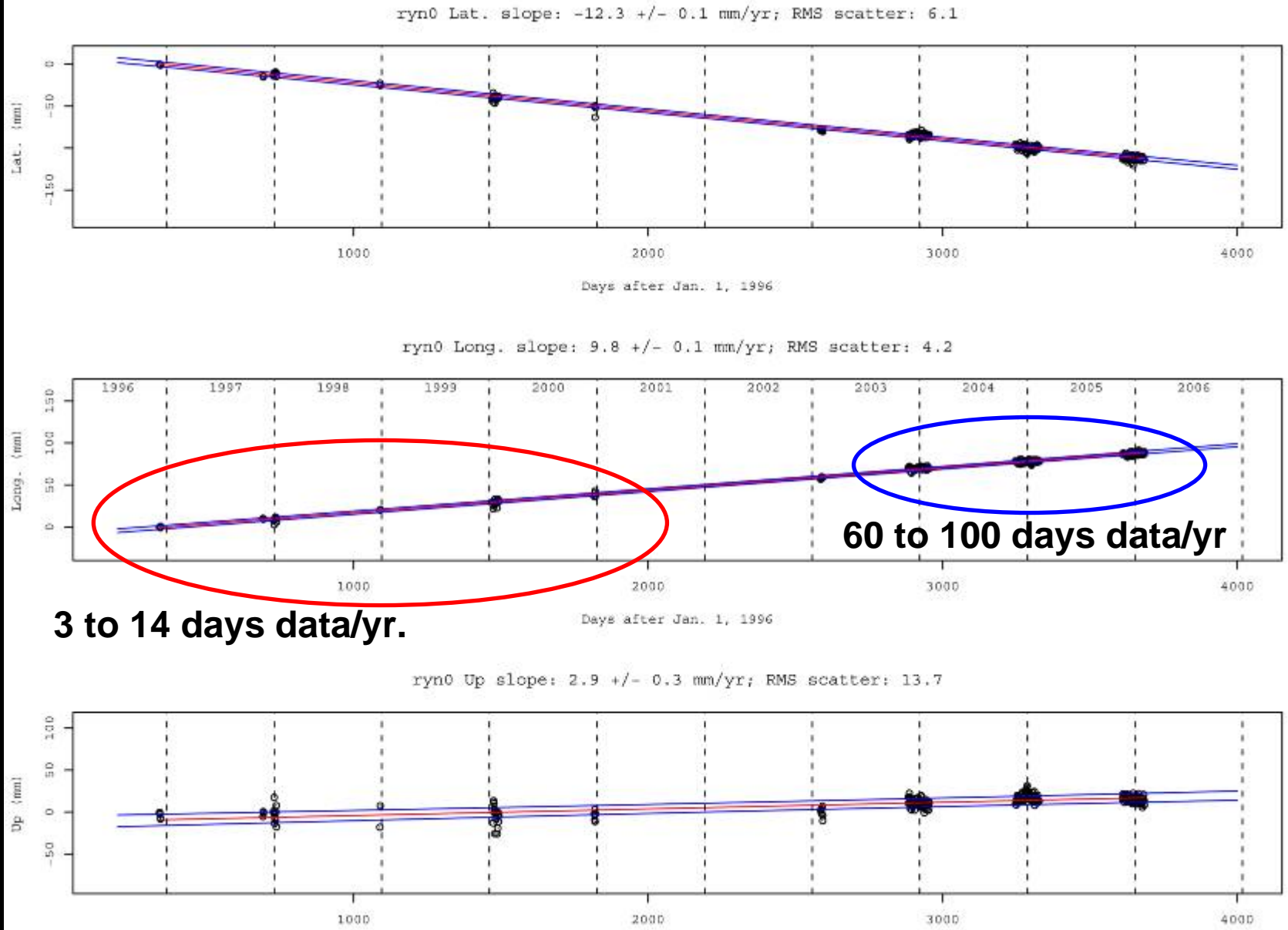


Network expansion to south – 2003

- Used newer receivers to record up to 100 days of data per season.
- Installed select continuous trackers with robust monuments.

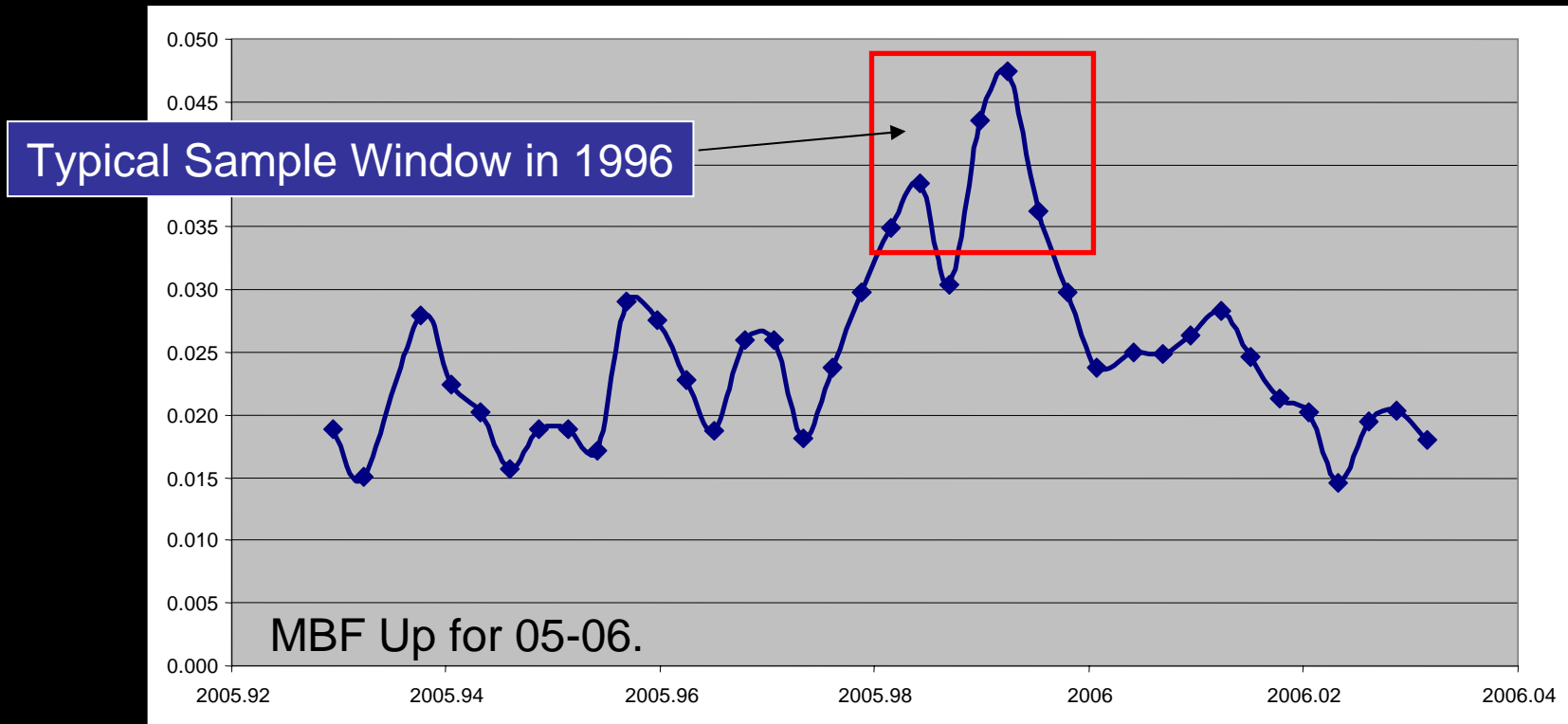
IMPROVEMENT:

Long-duration campaign measurements



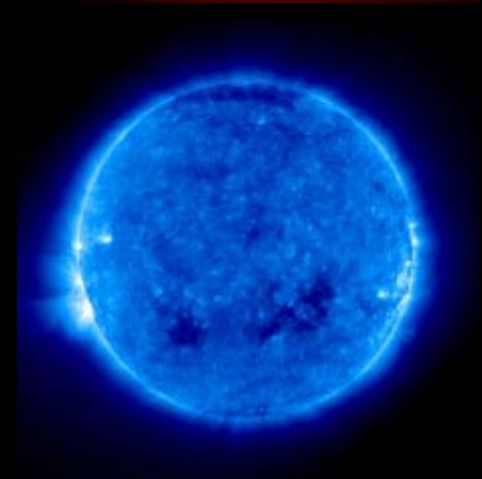
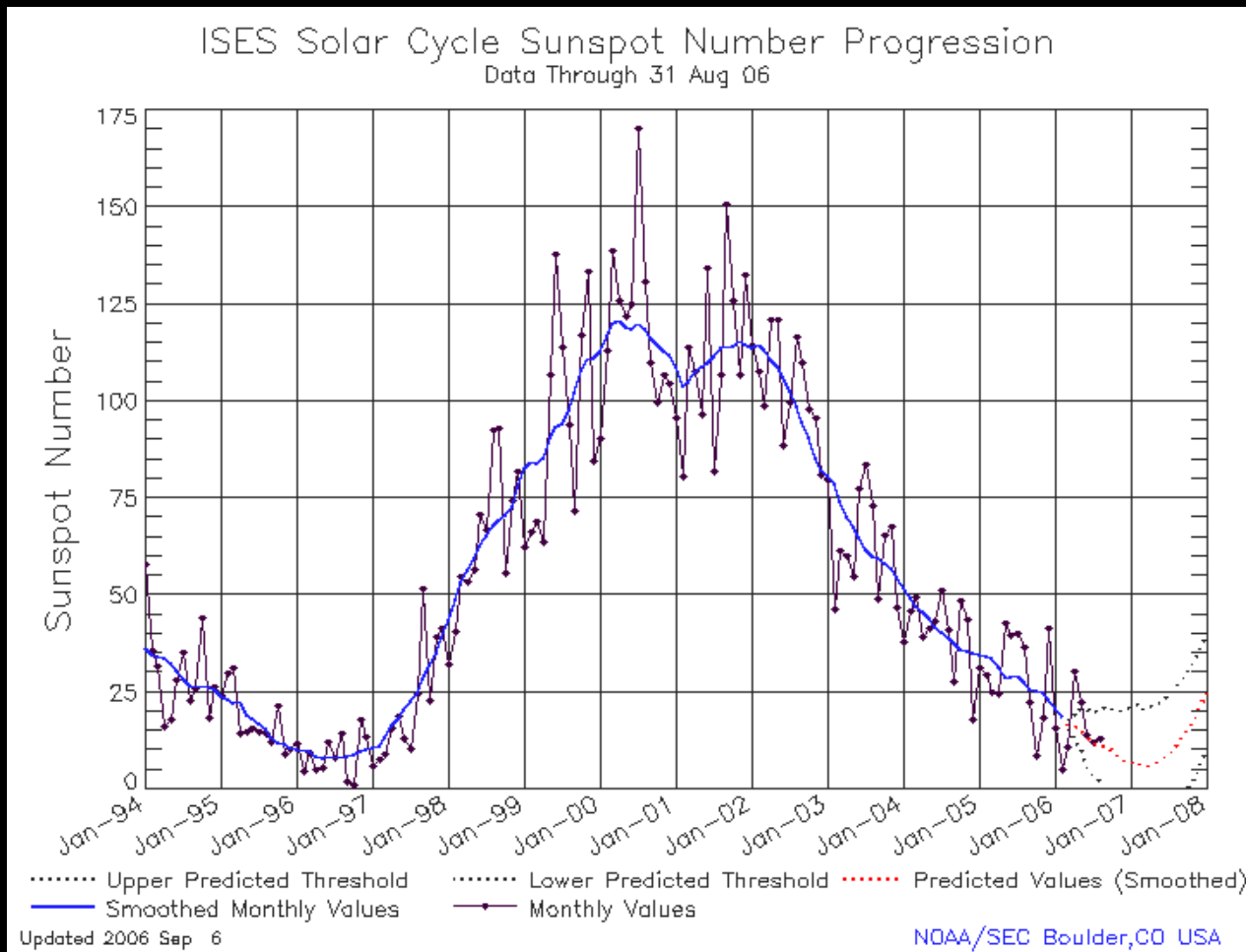
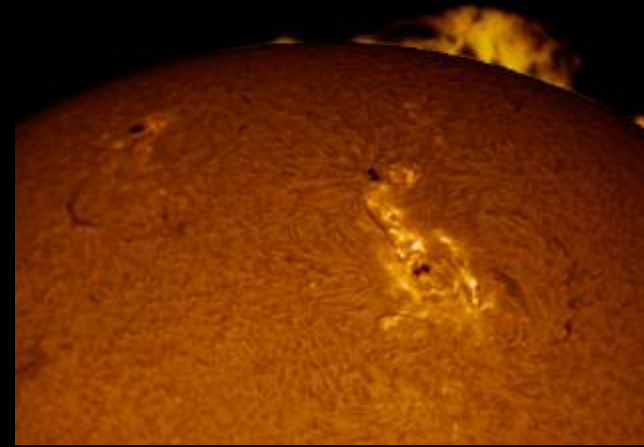
Longer duration campaign data: **SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS**

- Weather effects - previously hidden.
- Water vapor studies.
- Captures Ionospheric disturbances.
- Observation overlap – enhances analysis.



New solar max ~ 2010.

Ionosphere will get noisier. New frequencies will help.



JPL/NASA GPS Remote Stations

Two stations were installed on Mount Coates (1996 & 1997 field seasons) and Mount Cocks (1997 field season)



Mount Coats (1)

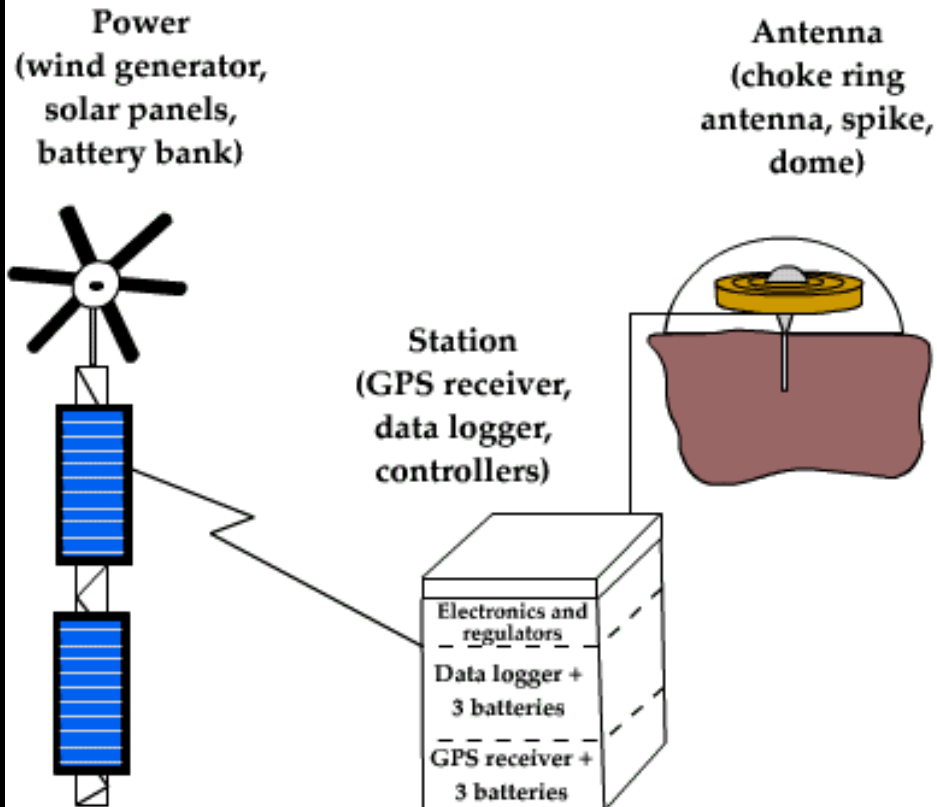


Mount Coats (2)



JPL/NASA Project – 1998-2000

MBL AUTONOMOUS GPS STATION



Initial Experience

- In the **2000-2001 austral summer**, members of the USGS-LINZ survey field team installed a low-power remote Global Positioning System (GPS) station upon bedrock at the **Cape Roberts** peninsula of southern Victoria Land, Antarctica.
- The station is tied to the nearby tide-gauge operated by Land Information New Zealand (LINZ).
- **ROB1** station is situated upon a TAMDEF project benchmark ROB0.

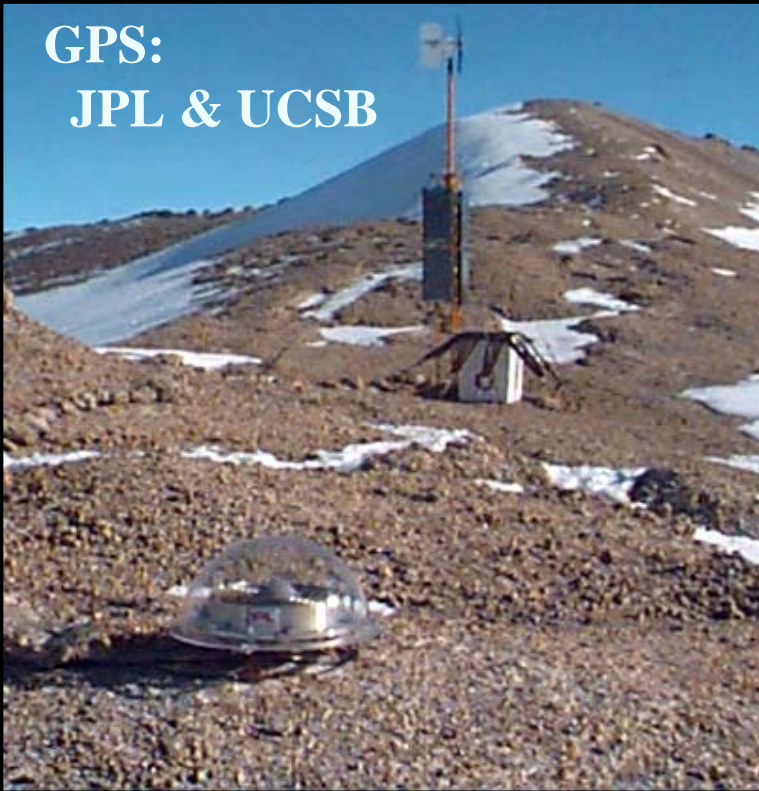
Installation at Cape Roberts (ROB1)

December 2000



Remote Observatories

GPS:
JPL & UCSB



GPS: USGS/TAMDEF



Enabling
Technologies:

- Solar
- Wind
- Low-power
- High-capacity storage
- Satellite communications

IMPROVEMENT:

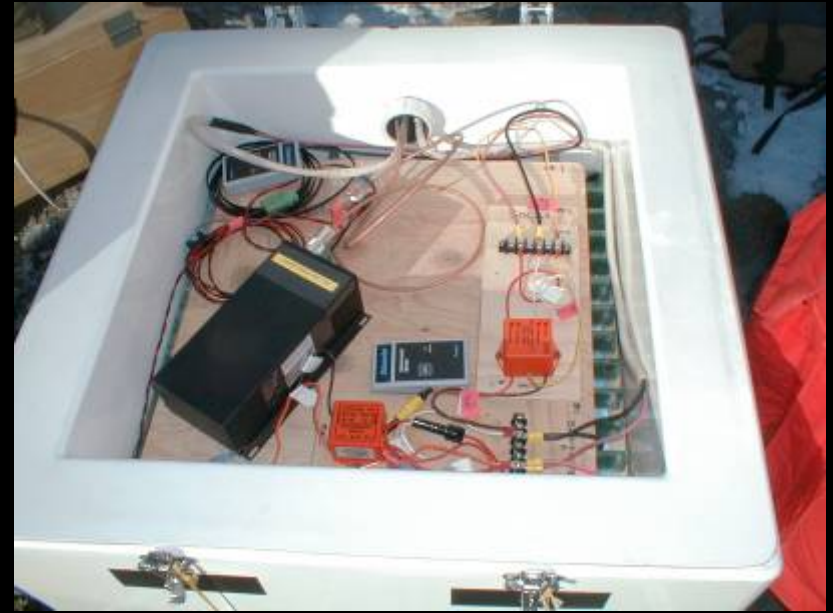
Continuous GPS measurements at remote sites

Fishtail Pt.: USGS/TAMDEF





GNSS Equipment



2001-2002 Installations

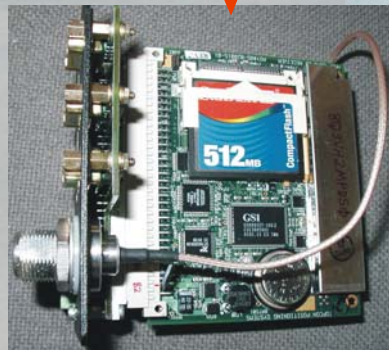
Temperature Sensor
for top of box (Avatel)

To Antenna, Second
Battery Bank and Solar
Panels

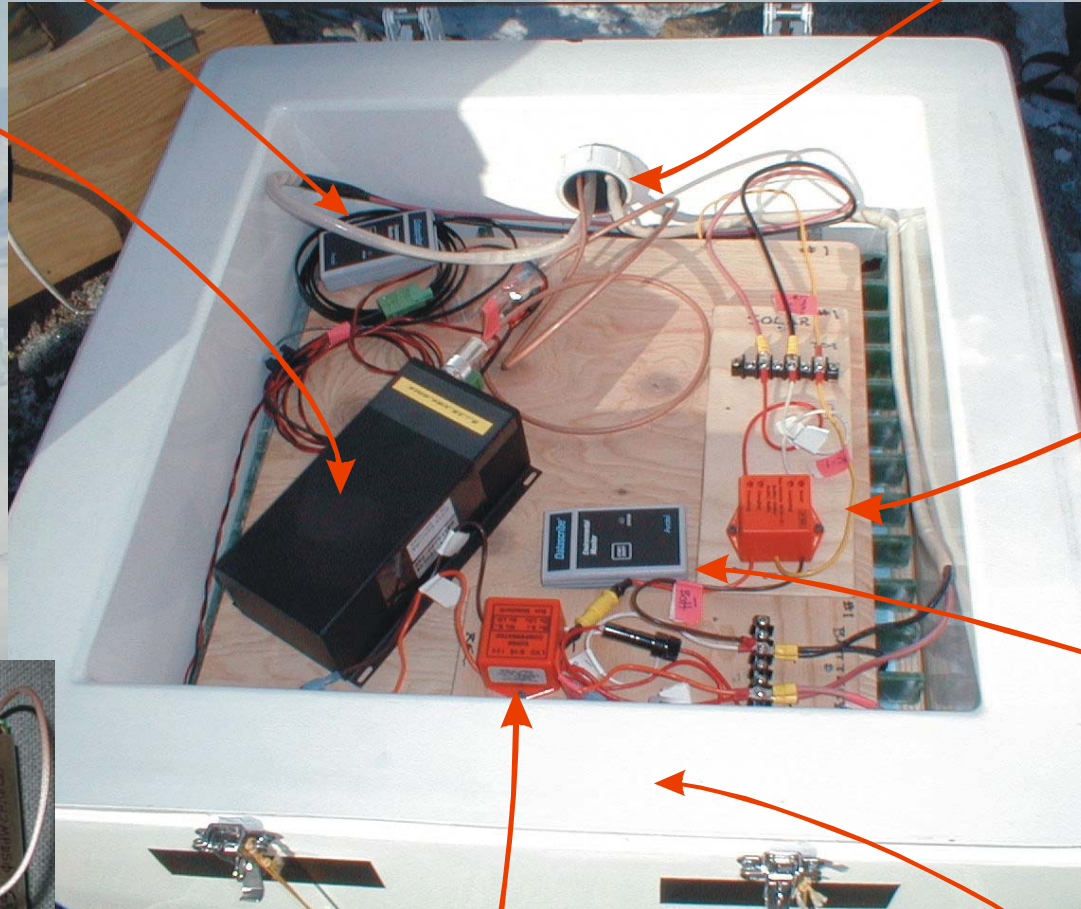
JNS GPS
Receiver

Solar charge
controller
(Sun Selector)

Temperature
Sensor
for bottom of
box (Avatel)



JNS EURO-80 Card



Low Voltage
Disconnect
(Sun Selector)

Vacuum Panel R-80
Insulated Enclosure

**TAMDEF CORS at Westhaven
Nunatak.**

4 X 40 Watt Solar Panels

1" Tube A-Frame

R-40 Vacuum Insulated Box

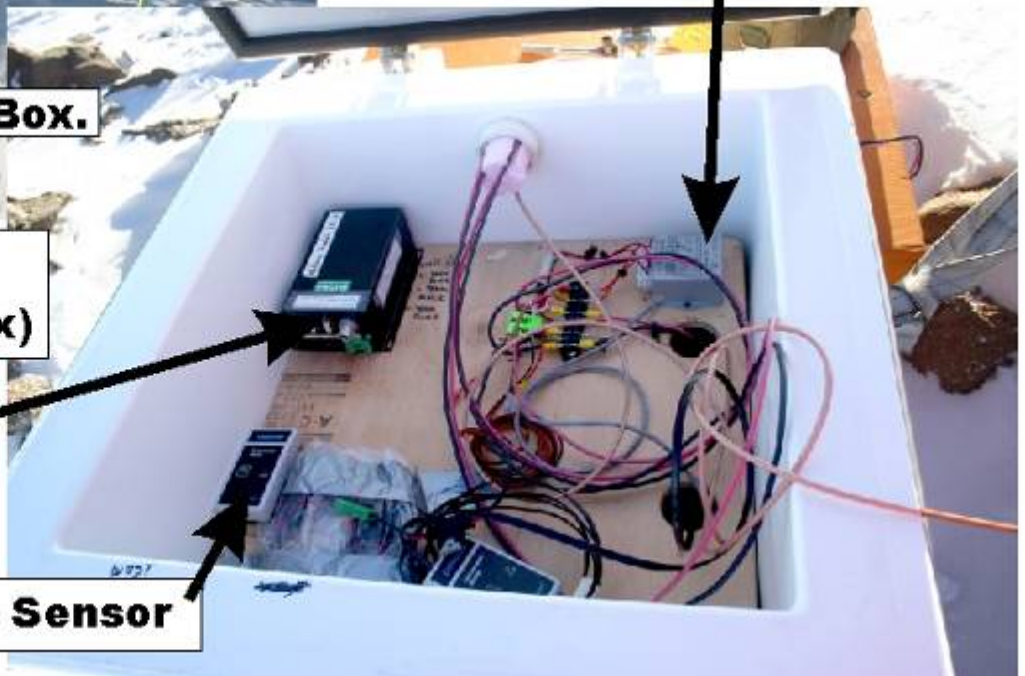
"Blu-Board" Insulated Battery Box.

**16-Amp Rated Low-Voltage
Disconnect and
Charge Controller**

**12 X 100 AmpHr Batteries
(6 in Insulated Box, 6 in Battery Box)**

**JNS-EURO-GDA 40-Channel GPS
Receiver (1.8W to 2.4W) with 1Gb
Flash Card Storage**

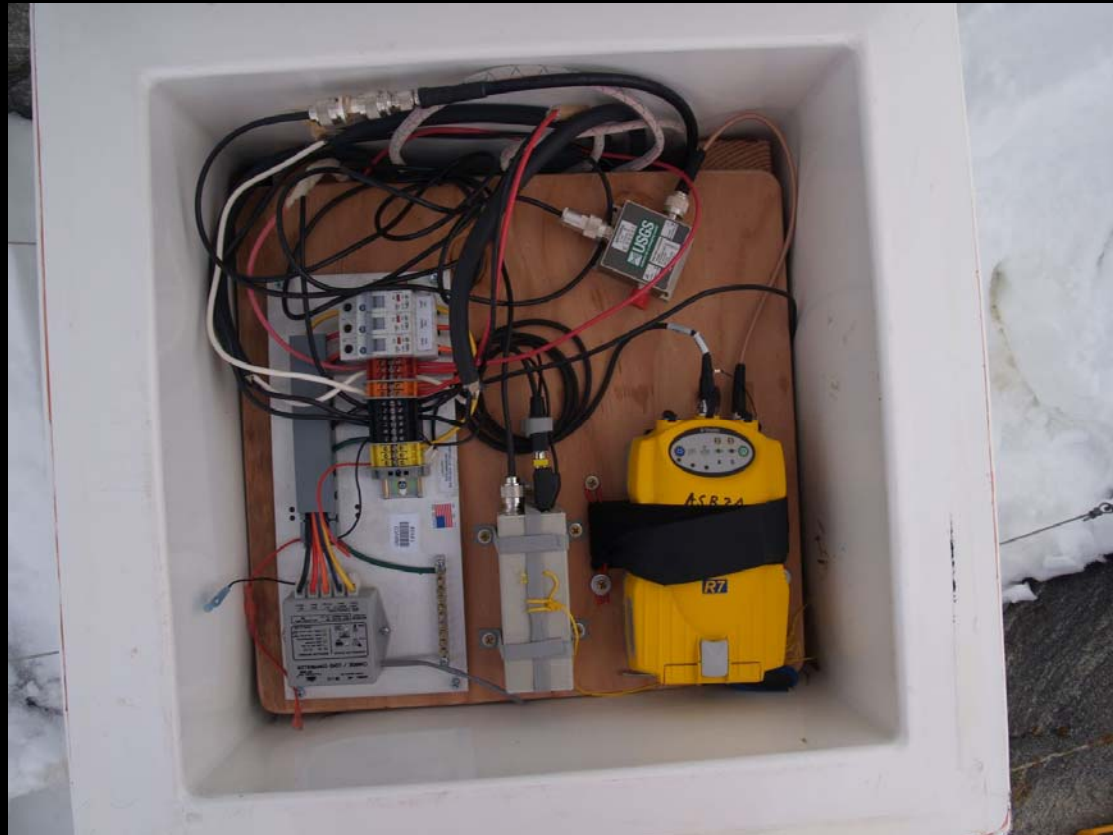
Temperature Sensor



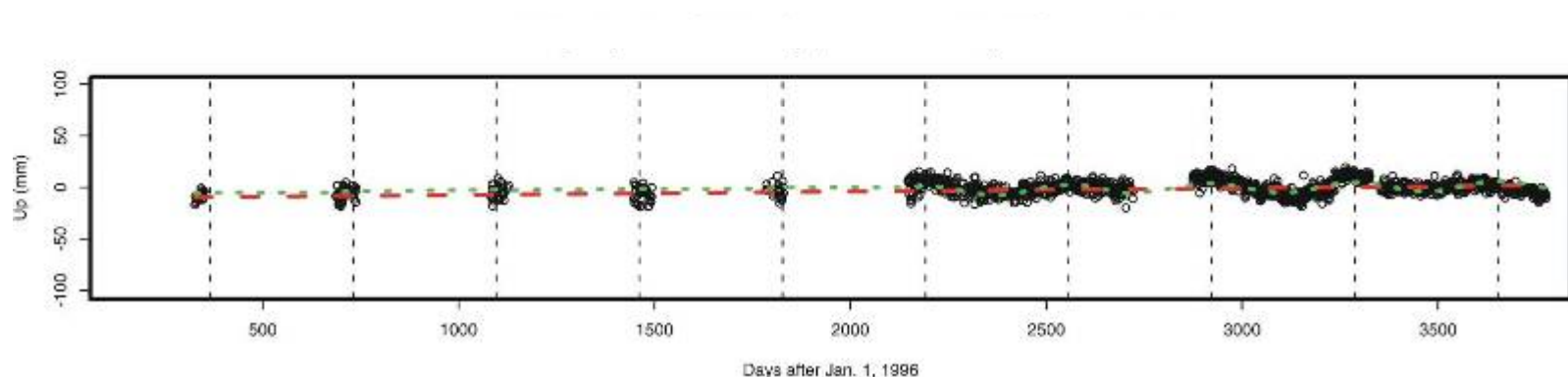
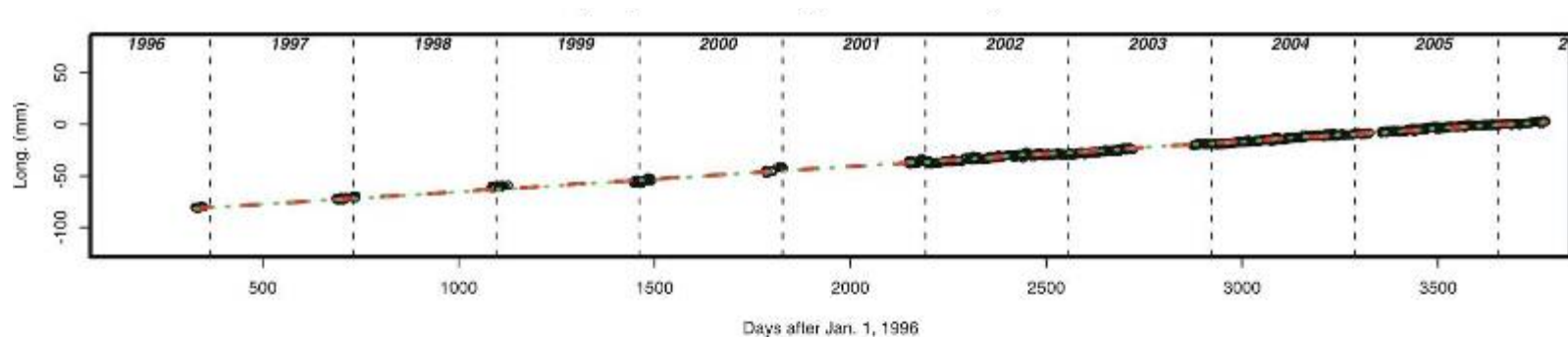
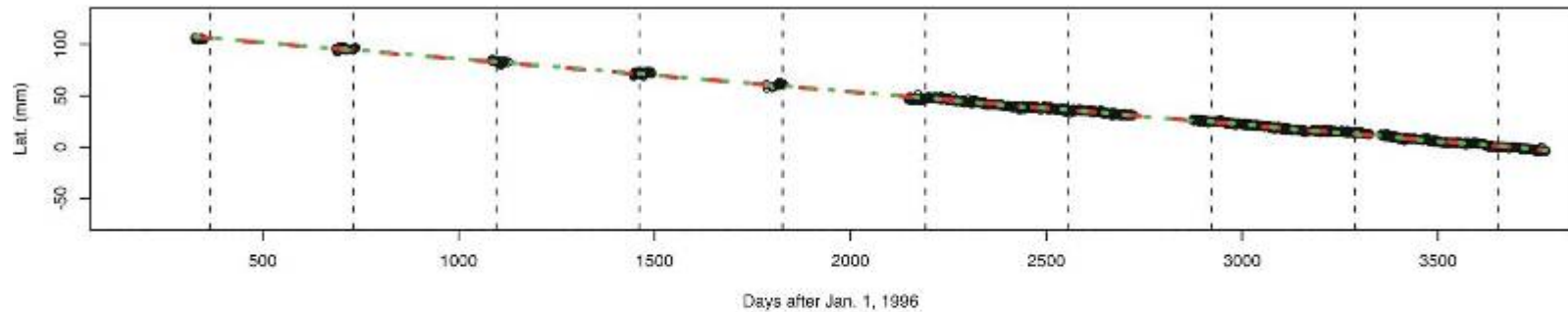
Cape Roberts

GNSS CORS Remote

Station ROB4



Success with year round CGPS measurements

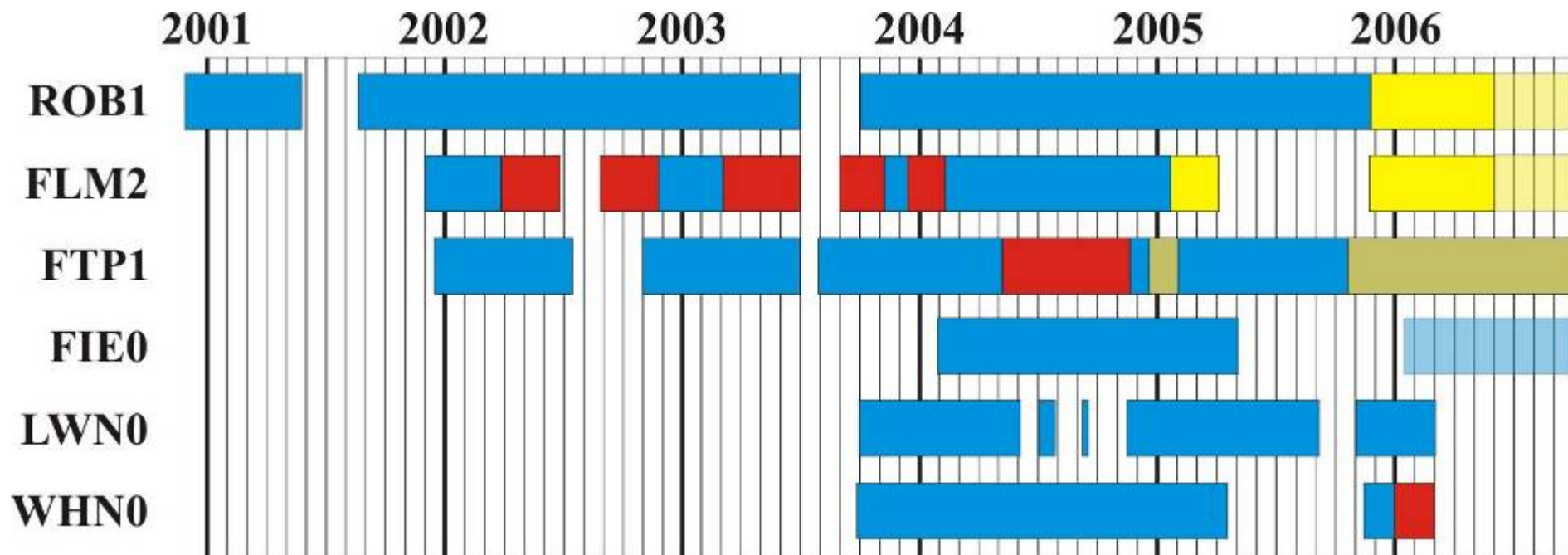


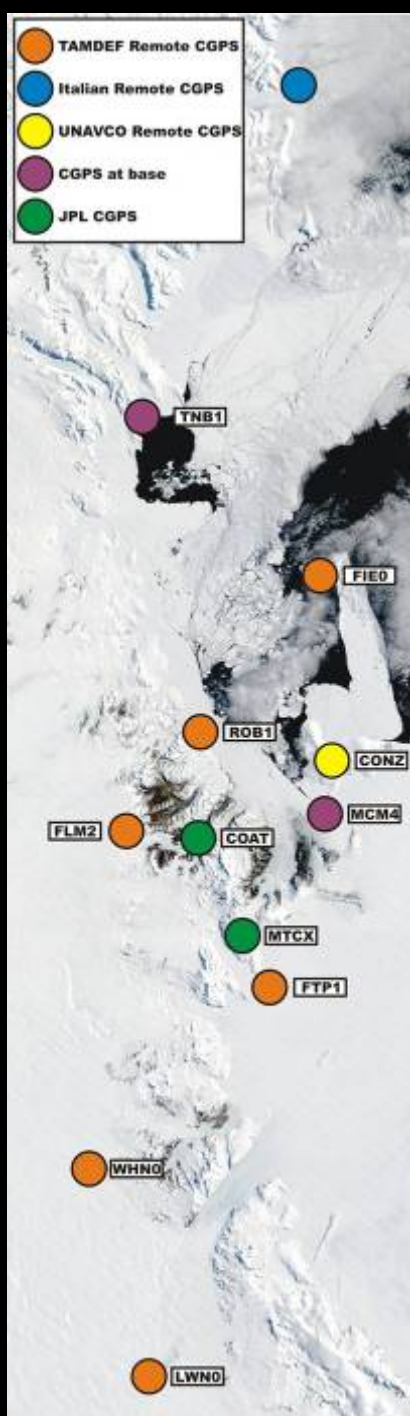
Performance of TAMDEF CGPS:

Quite reliable.

Several sites have worked year round.

Challenges remain.





TAMDEF Remote CGPS Stations

Cape Roberts (Coastal site)
Co-located with tide gauge.

Mount Fleming (Mountain site)
LOS radio system.

Fishtail Point (Coastal site)
Iridium Communications system.

Franklin Island (Maritime environment)

Westhaven Nunatak (Plateau environment)

Lonewolf Nunatak (Mountain site)
Extreme conditions

Cape Roberts:

LINZ/USGS funding.
Run by OSU.

CHALLENGES

low storage capacity initially.
Drifting in winter.
Vibration worries.
Vac-panels broken.

SOLUTIONS

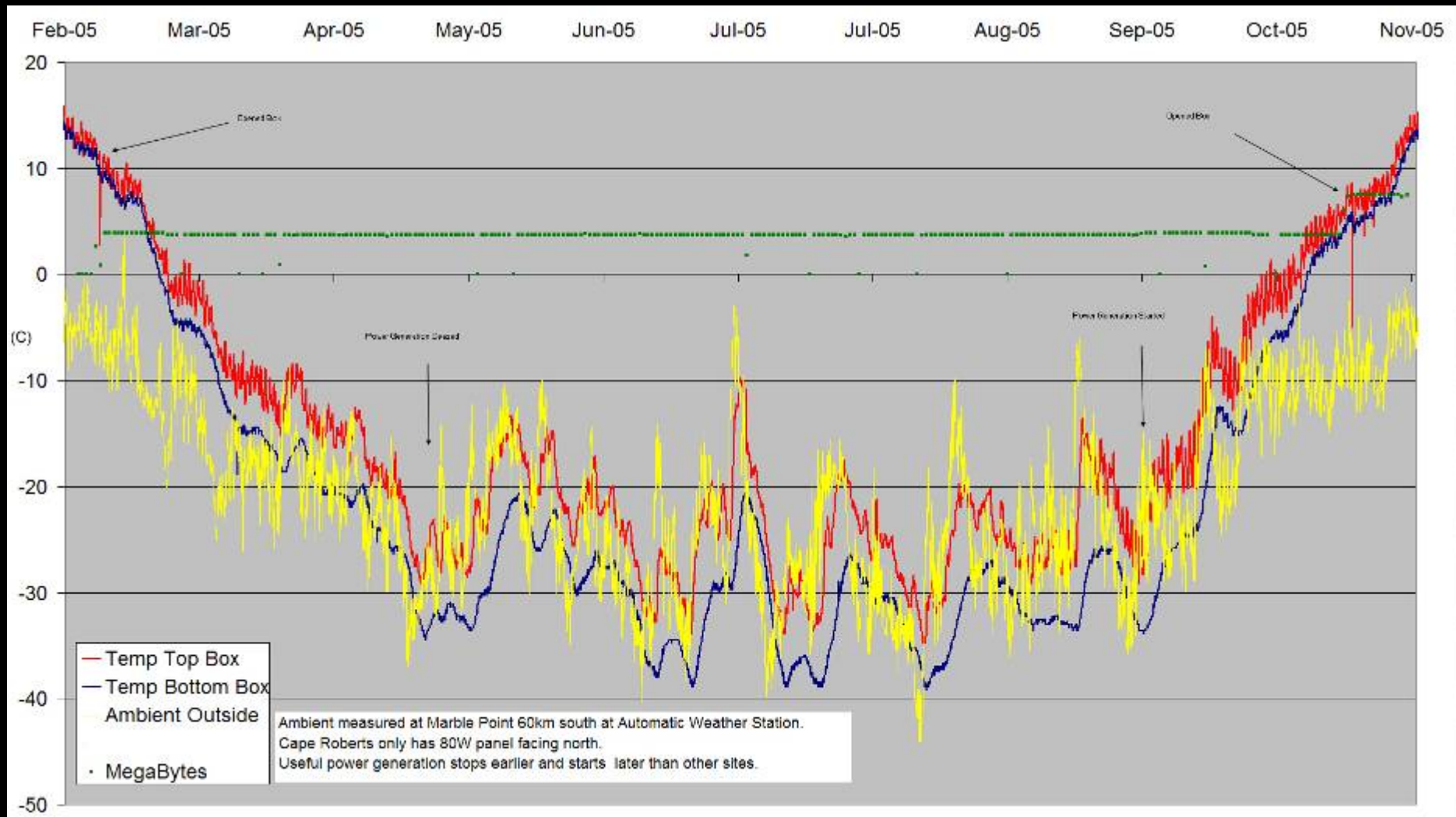
New receiver, more storage.
New panels, redundant power.
New monument.
LOS data link, site is monitored.



Cape Roberts

More than 1700 days of data.

Runs to -45C.



Mount Fleming

Continuous GNSS Remote CORS Station



Mount Fleming:

High Mountain – very cold, windy site.

CHALLENGES

High winds.

Difficult access.

Problematic receivers.

Bad wiring.

SOLUTIONS

LOS data link –
monitoring receiver
Systems integration
drive.





Mount Fleming:

>600 days data

Outside temps to at least -40C.

Winds to 140kph (90mph).

**Faulty wiring – temperature of system
reached 100+ C**

**Power system
replaced in
2005**



Fishtail Point

Continuous GNSS remote station



Fishtail Point:

Windy site near
Skelton Glacier.

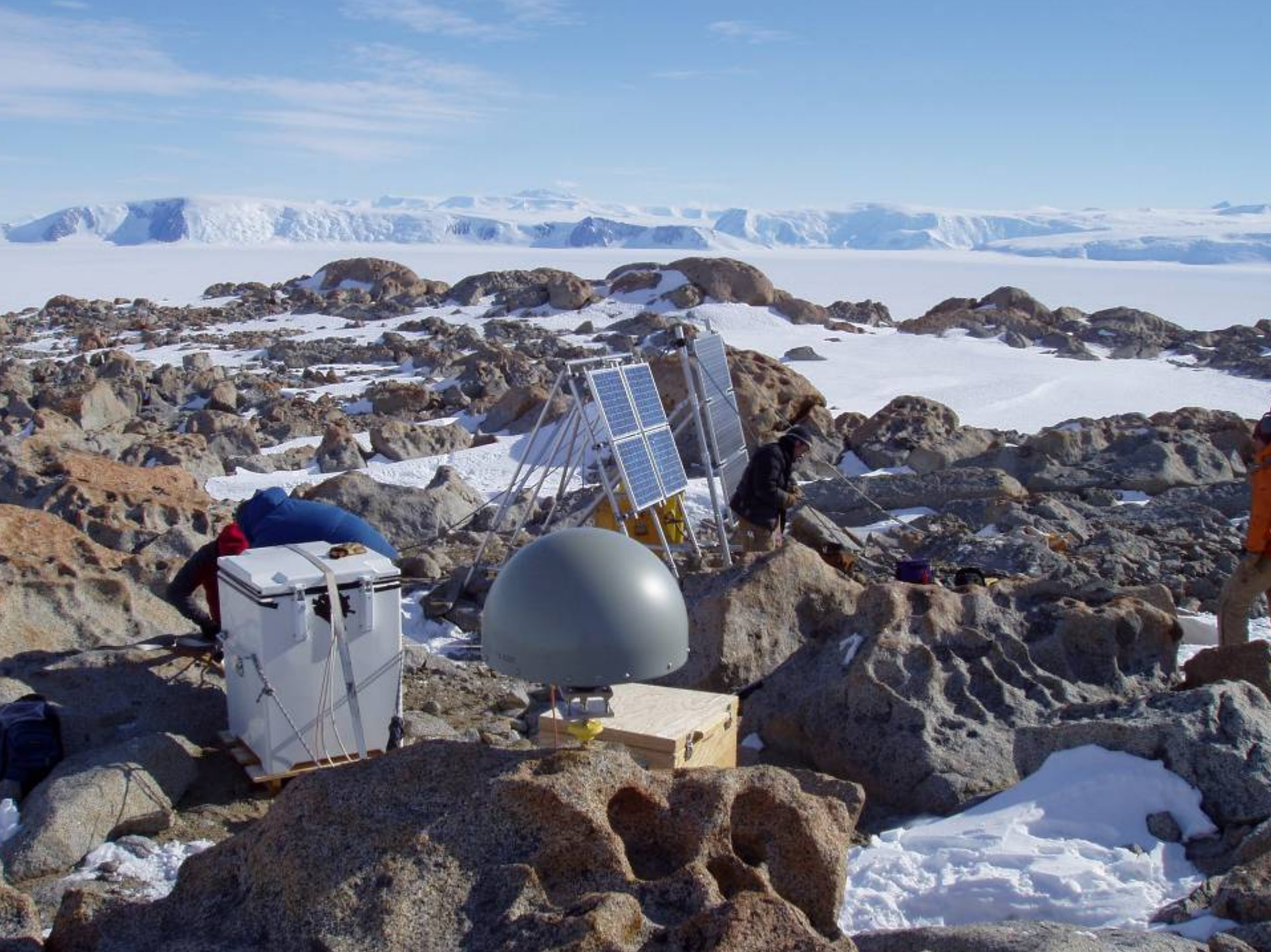
CHALLENGES

Access is difficult.
No LOS to McMurdo.
Problematic receiver.
Wind load on antenna.

SOLUTIONS

New receiver.
Iridium satellite link.
Many many batteries.
New monument.





Fishtail Point:

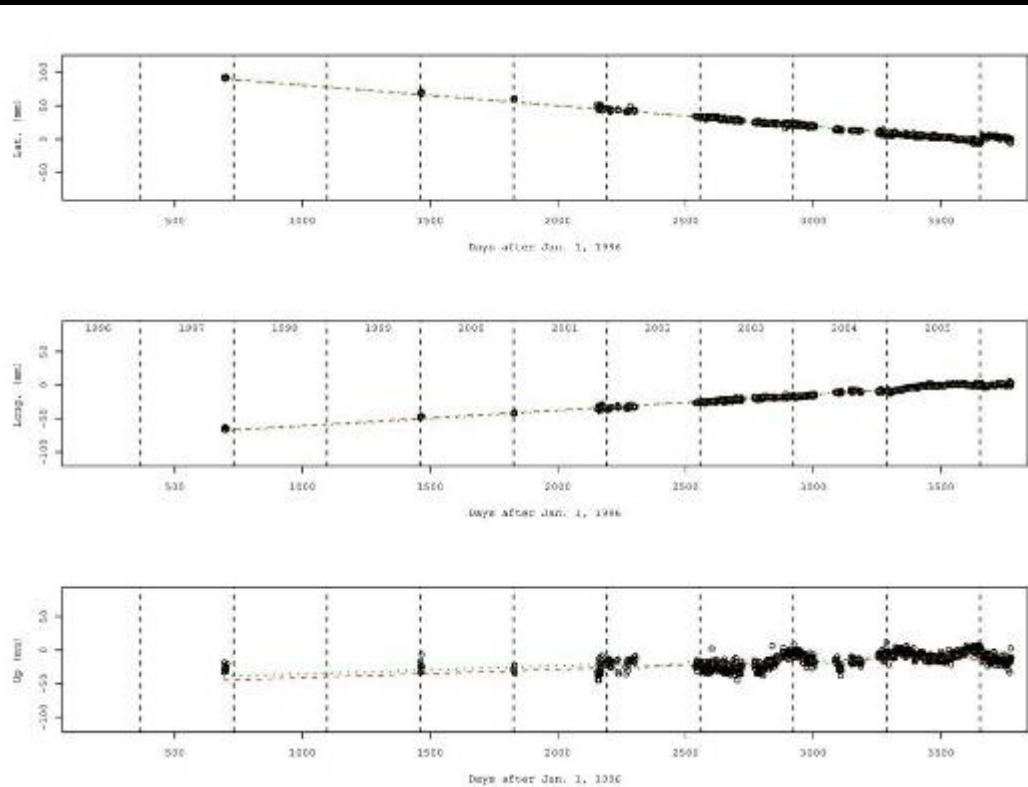
1250+ days of data. Works to -40C

Winds moved 200 kg enclosure.

2nd attempt at Iridium works well.

Timer resets Iridium modem every 4 days.

No interference between Iridium and GPS seen.



Franklin Island: Marine environment

CHALLENGES

Very difficult access.

1st year, perfect!

2nd year, failure ☹️

Rime on antenna?

SOLUTIONS (Future)

Install late model GNSS

Data link: LOS to
McMurdo

Multi-year unattended
operation?





Westhaven Nunatak

Plateau site, very cold

Challenges

Extreme cold

Difficult access

1st year perfect!

2nd year failure ☹️

Temp sensors failed

Solutions (future)

Lightweight station

New logistics plan

Vac-panel box helps



Lonewolf Nunatak

Continuous GNSS remote station



Lonewolf Nunatak:

**Extremely windy and
cold site**

CHALLENGES

**Temp sensors failed
Wind destroyed
system.....Twice.
Battery charger failed**

SOLUTIONS

**Strengthened solar
panel frame.
Redundant power.
Seal system better.**



Lonewolf – A development driver.

- Design redundancy needs improvement.
- Systems need strengthened against storms.



- Light weight systems desirable.
- Wind power ☺





Spindrift in sealed enclosure.



Lower profile – reinforced solar panel frame



Spindrift in sealed enclosure following year.



Panel ripped off again

Site worked even though the environment was extremely difficult.



MAJOR IMPROVEMENT Communications systems



Monitoring Data Quality

Archived at
UNAVCO

Possible to
monitor
receiver state
of health and
basic
environmental
variables.

```
SV+-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----+ SV
23|L                L+oooooooooooo+m_                mLoooooooooooo+m| 23
 2|+m                L+oooooooooooo+m_                L+oooooooooooo|  2
13|oo-m              L+oooooooooooo++_                mmoooooooooooo| 13
 6|oo-o+L            L+oooooooooooo+L                L+oooooooooooo|  6
16|oo-ooo++          LLoooooooooooo+m                _L+oooo| 16
10|oo-ooo+mL          L+oooooooooooo++                Lmooooooo| 10
27|oo-oooo+m          L+oooooooooooo++_                L+o| 27
 7|oo-ooooo+L_        LL+oooooooooooomm                L+oo|  7
 8|m+-oooooooo+m        _LooooooooooooL+                L|  8
21|oo-ooooooooL_        m+oooooooooooo+m                _Loo| 21
29|L+-oooooooo+m          L+oooooooooooo+_                _| 29
 3|L+-oooooooo++          L+oooooooooooo+m                |  3
26|LL-oooooooo+mL        LL+oooooooooooo++                | 26
18| _+oooooooooooo+L        L+oooooooooooo++                | 18
19| _L+oooooooooooo++        L+oooooooooooo+mL                | 19
22| _LLoooooooooooo+L_        m+oooooooooooo+m                | 22
28| _Loooooooooooo++        _Loooooooooooo+m                | 28
 9| _LLoooooooooooo+mL        LL+oooooooooooo+LL                |  9
11| _L+oooooooooooo+L        LL+oooooooooooo+mm                | 11
14| _L+oooooooooooooomm        LL+oooooooooooo++                | 14
17| _L+oooooooooooo++        L+oooooooooooo+m                | 17
 1| _L+oooooooooooo+m          mLoooooooooooo+m^                |  1
 5| _Lm+oooooooooooo+L        m+oooooooooooo+L                |  5
20| _LLoooooooooooo+L_        Lm+oooooooooooo+L                | 20
30| _LL+oooooooooooo+m          LL+oooooooooooo+L                | 30
25| _Loooooooooooo+m          L+oooooooooooo+m                | 25
 4| _L+oooooooooooo++          Lmoooooooooooo+m                |  4
-dn|                  |                  |                  | -dn
+dn| c                |                  |                  | +dn
+10|8bbbbbbbbbaaaa888988999aa99aaaa9999aaa9abbbbbaaaaaa97789899aaa9aa9999998|+10
Pos|oo oooooo oo          o   oo o o oooooooo          o   o |Pos
Clk| ^                  |                  |                  |Clk
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
00:00:00.000                23:59:30.000
2006 Sep 22                2006 Sep 22
```

```
*****
QC of RINEX file(s) : /ap/data/ender/queue/.rinex/.949783/ftp42650.06o
input RnxNAV file(s) : /ap/data/ender/queue/.rinex/.949783/ftp42650.06n
*****

4-character ID      : FTP4 (# = 66062M002)
Receiver type       : TRIMBLE NETRS (# = 4451241729) (fw = 1.1-2)
Antenna type        : ASH700936D_M SCIS (# = CR13562)
```


TAMDEF Network and Program

- Built upon Campaign experiences.
- Used simple technologies (**no moving parts**).
- On the whole, highly successful.



*Antarctic
realities*



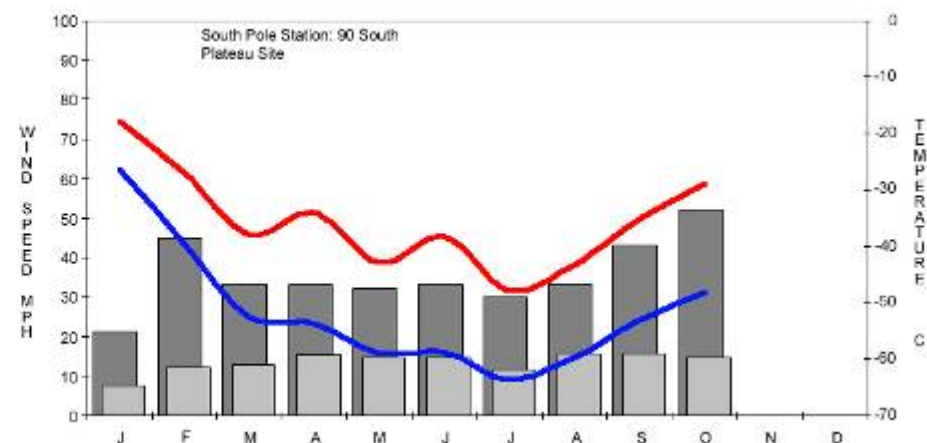
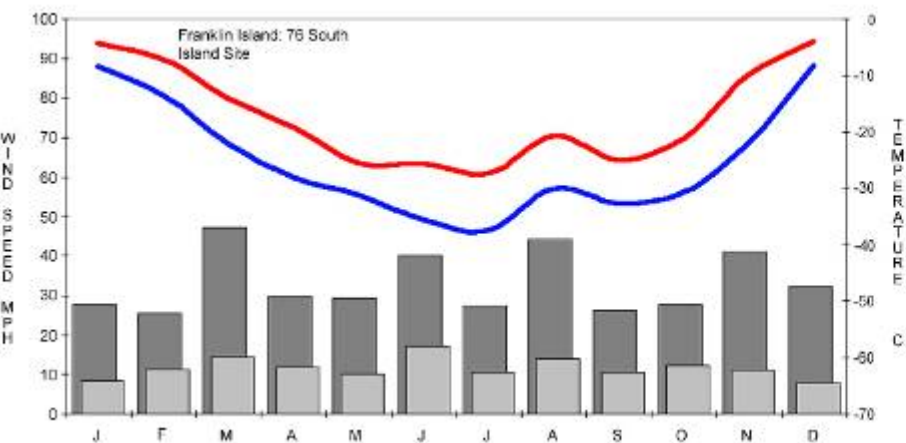
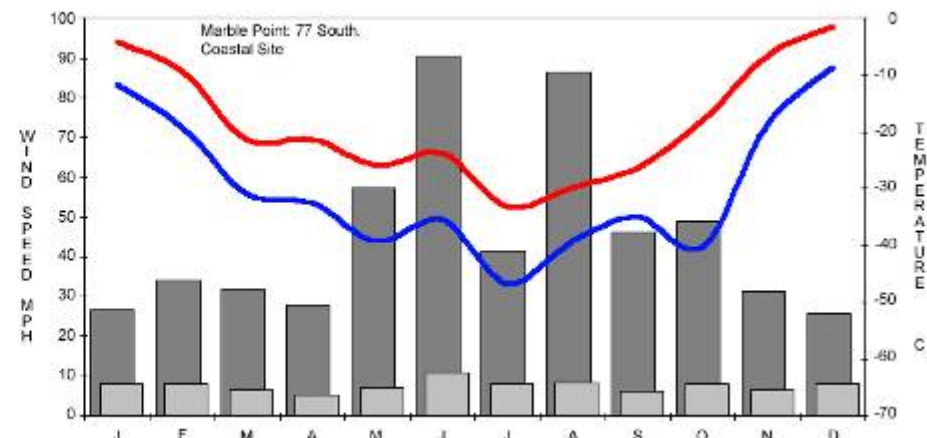
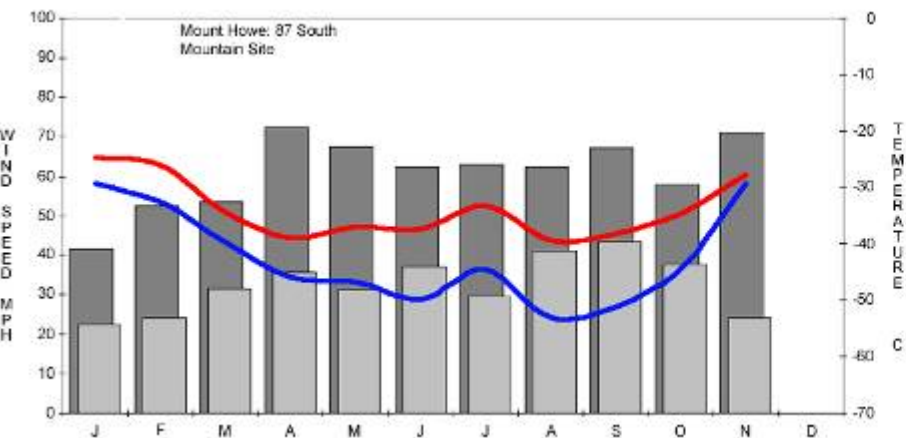
CONTINUOUS CHALLENGES

- Long-term autonomous operation
 - *Reliable, low-power communications*
- Continuous operation through polar night
 - *Lightweight power systems*
- Effective operation in very remote locations
 - *'Antarctic-optimized' system*

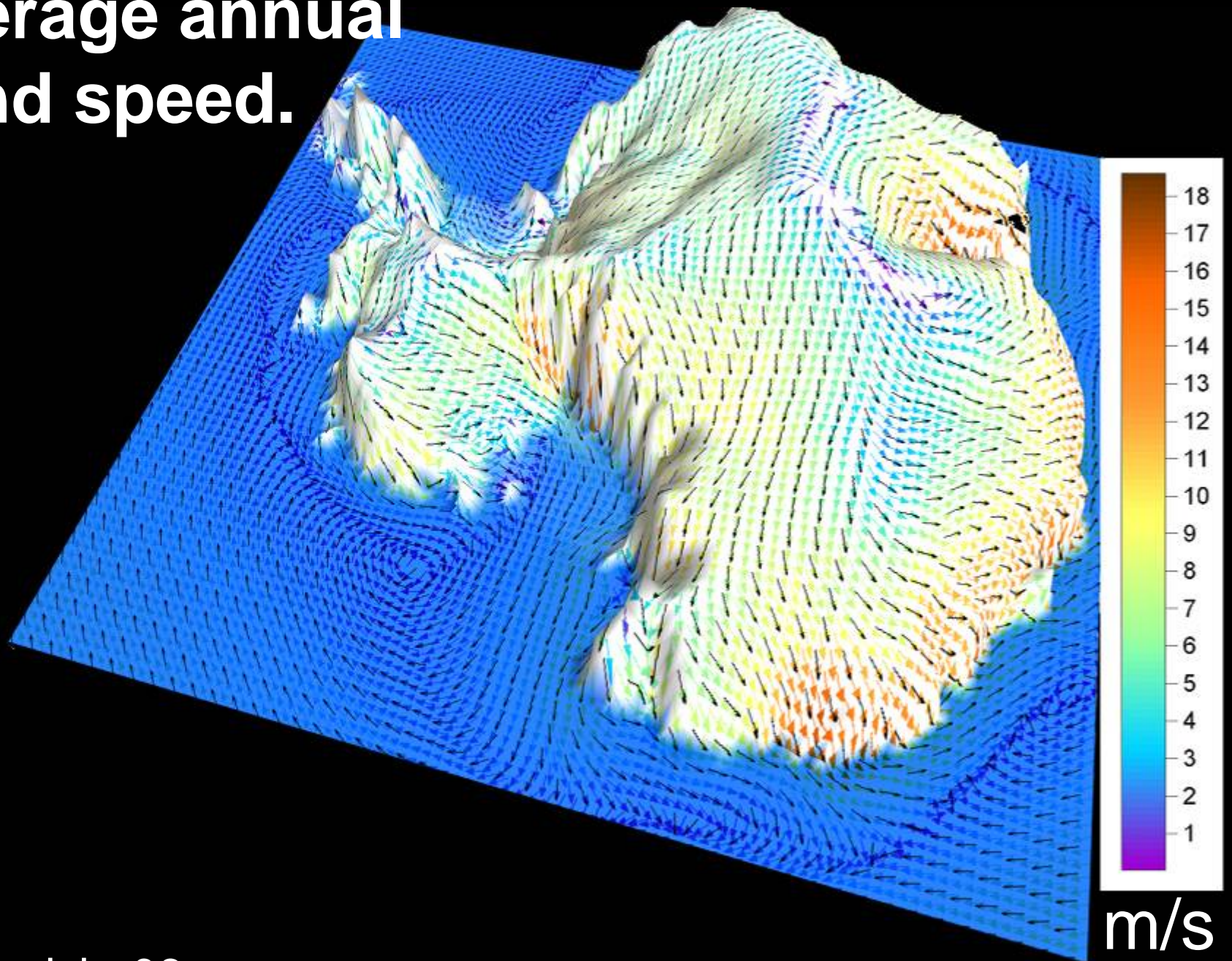


Diverse environments for deployment.

Suggest standardizing systems, but making them customizable.



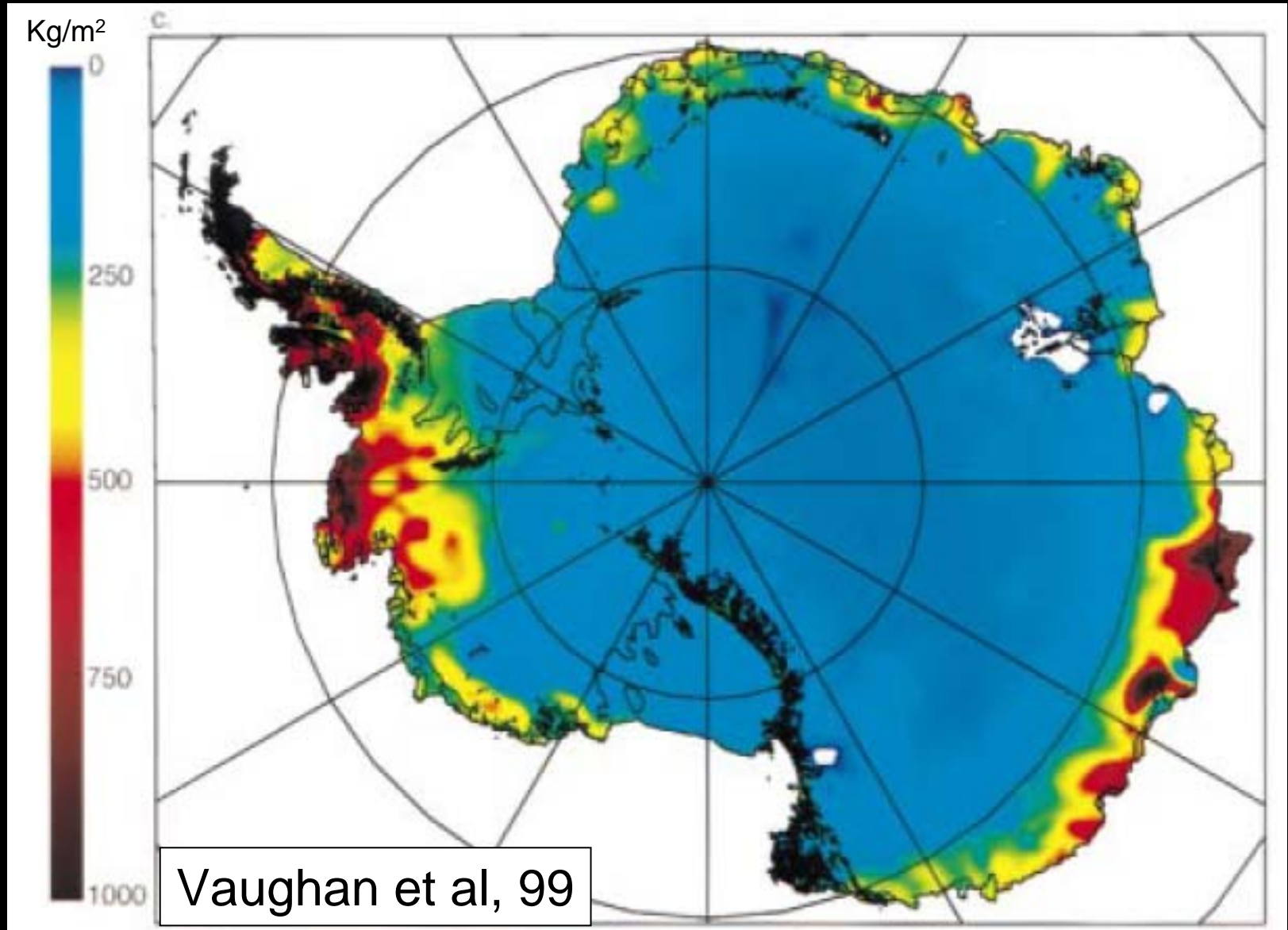
Average annual Wind speed.



Bromwich, 06

Average annual snow accumulation.

- Coastal sites need taller monuments.



Solutions under investigation:

Data Communications

- Satellite modems
- Line Of Sight.
- Fly-Over Download.

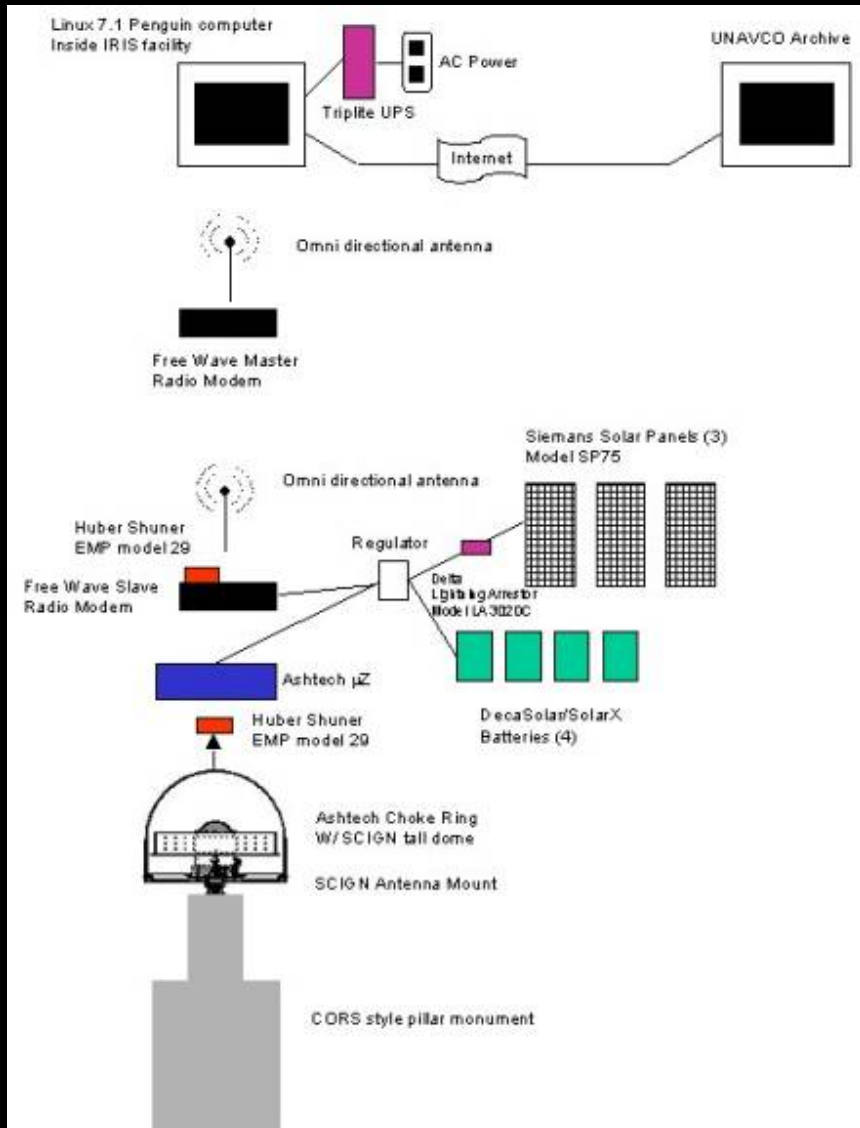
Lightweight Power

- Wind Generators
- Lithium Primary Cells
- Lithium Secondary Cells
- Fuel Cells
- New PV technology

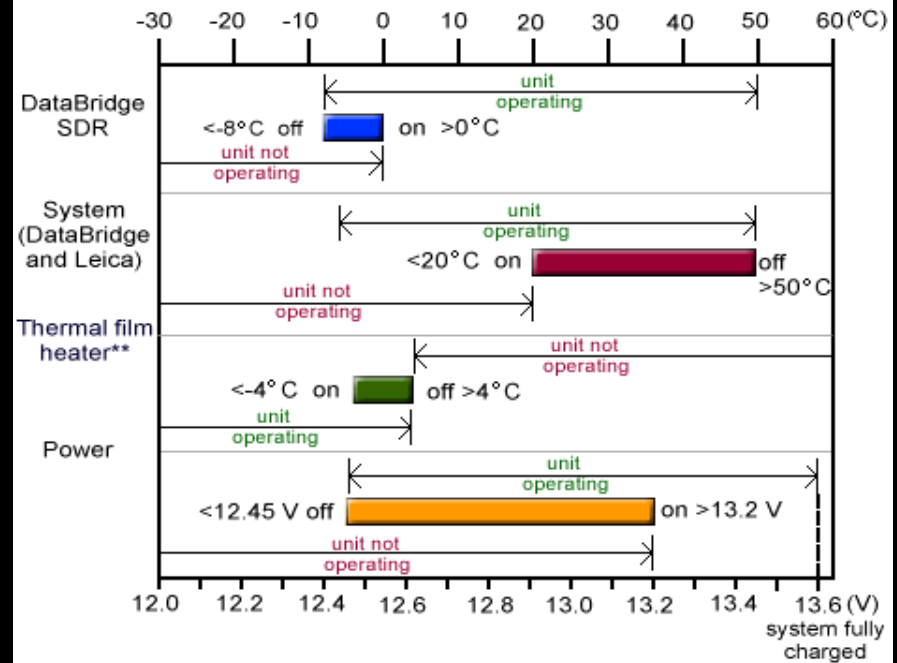
Environmental Hardening

- Frame designs.
- System integration
- Hyper-Insulation
- Active heating

Power Generating and Data Communications



Temperature and Power Operating Ranges



Explanation

- To prevent disk drive from running at temperatures below its rating
- To prevent batteries from overheating and allow for at least one day of data to be collected before system overheats
- To warm Leica, DataBridge, and batteries
- Allows enough voltage to obtain at least 1 day of data, taking into account rebound from batteries and system power draws

** The overlap with the DataBridge is to possibly save the DataBridge from turning off in the event that power level exceeds turn-on voltage of 13.2 volts.

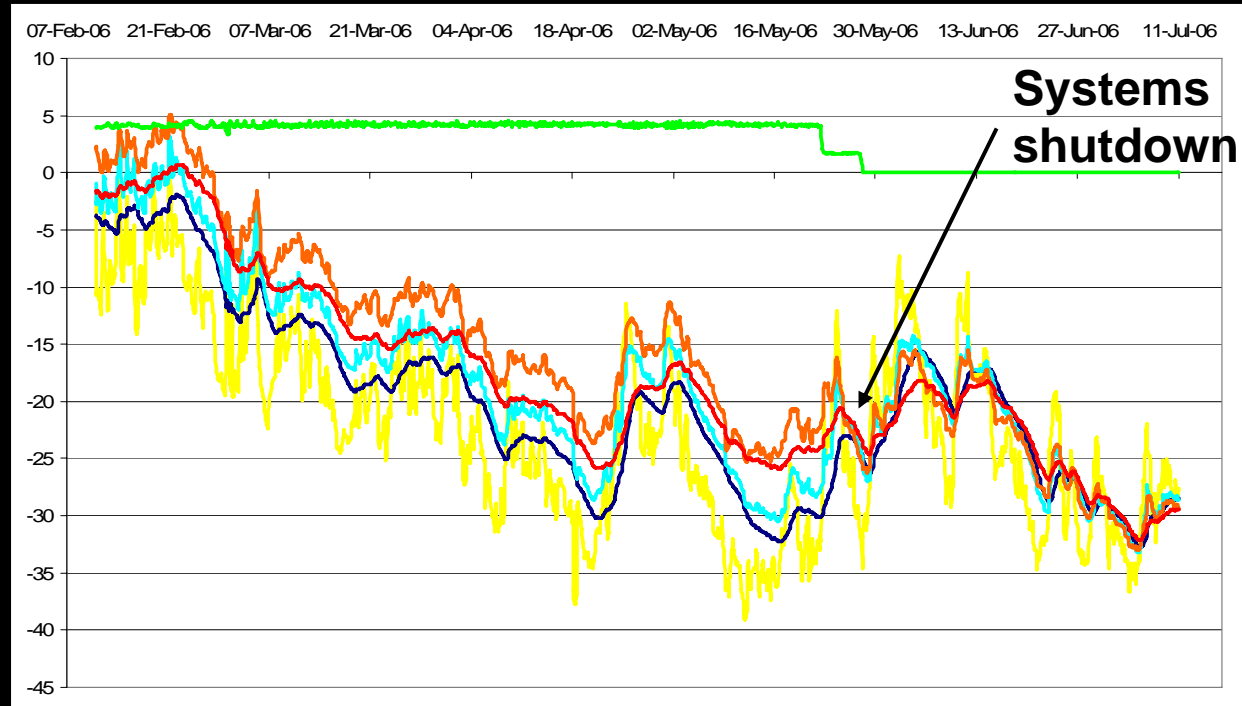
In-situ testing is *critical*.

Testing underway:

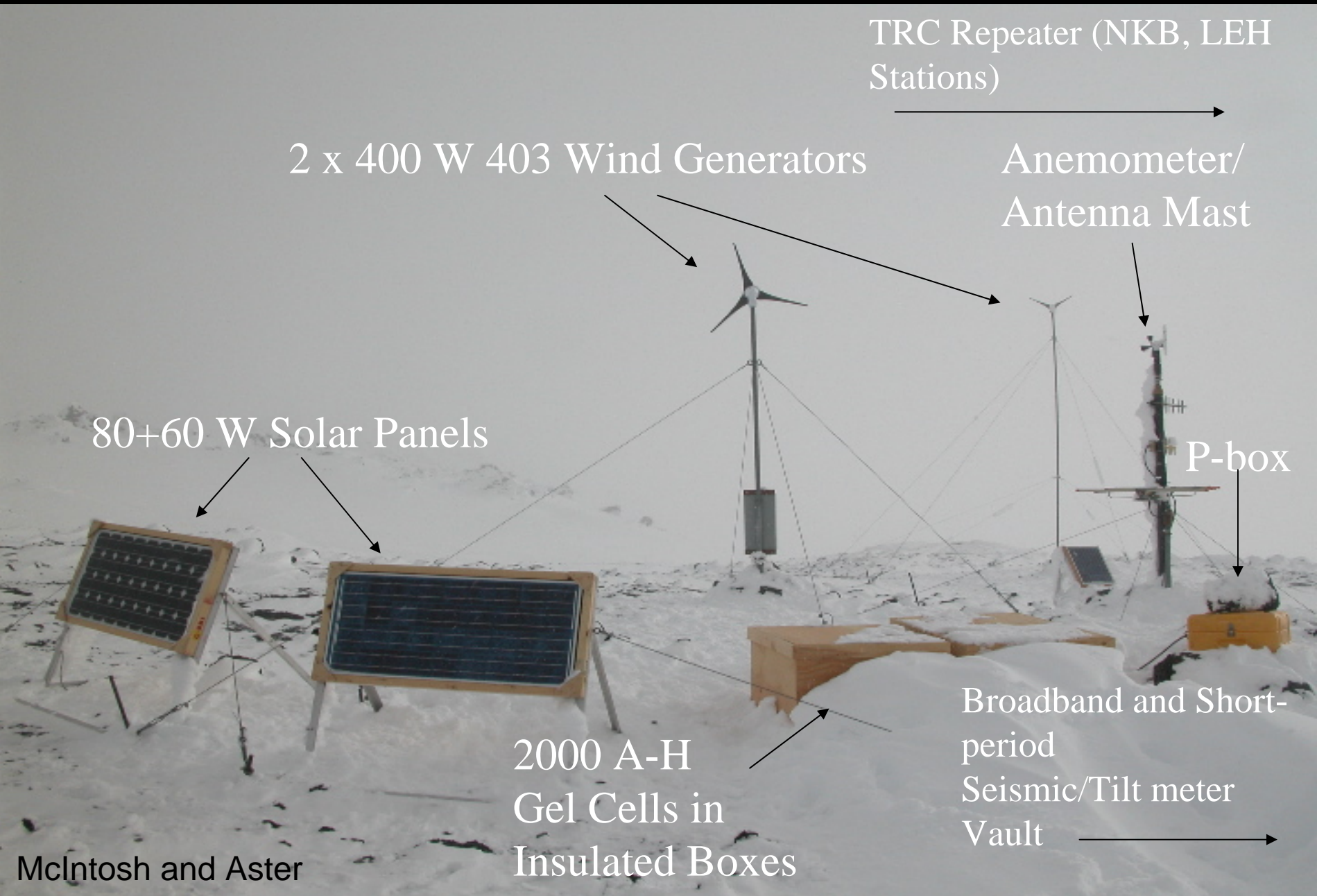
- Battery performance
- Insulation benefits
- Power draws

S. White

High-R
value
enclosures
work well, *if
system is
running.*




Wind Generator Test *in Situ* (Erebus, 3400 m)



Wind Power Generators





API
THERMAL & ELECTRIC LTD

windside

Vertical Axis Wind Turbines

Contact

Oerlikon

Windside

SunWare

Studer

Solarex

Vision


Intro

Request

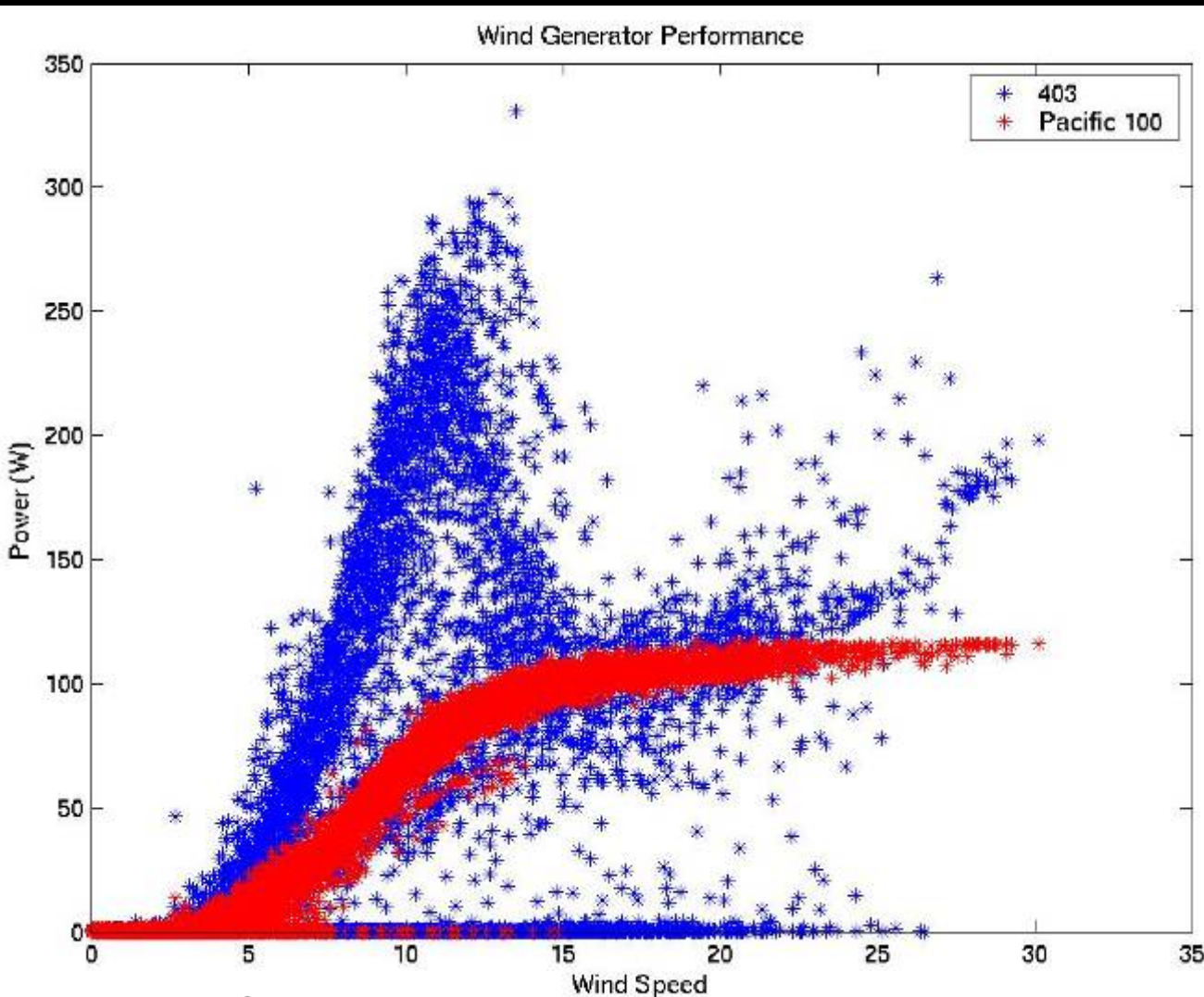
Strong - Safe - Silent, from 60w to 1200w

These ecological wind turbines, primarily for battery charging, can be used for lighting, water pumping, electric systems in remote area homes and bach's, telecommunication, radio, telemetry and data logging.

Durable, aesthetic design, safe around people, constant energy production (in storms and low winds), no gearing system or dripping oil, AC output for low cabling voltage losses.



Tested wind generator performance under Antarctic conditions.



Also tried
Windside.

Forgen 500s
used by BAS
for last three
years. No
failures. Run
to -65C.

Battery testing

- Lithium (non rechargeable cells) to be tested Jan 07, McMurdo and South Pole
- Many manufacturers available
- Weight savings are substantial
- But, large bank of batteries are hard to make & ship
- And, cost is substantial!



HEDB Battery corp.
2400 Amp Hours.
140 Kg.

Battery comparisons:

System Characteristic	Lead Acid	Nickel-Cadmium	Nickel-Hydrogen	Silver-Zinc	Lithium-Ion
Cell Specific Energy (Wh/kg)	30	30	35	~100	130-140
Cell Energy Density (Wh/lit)	60	100	50	~150	250-300
Specific Energy (Wh/kg) at Battery	25	25	25	75	100
Energy Density (Wh/lit) at Battery	55	80	40	100	200
Cycle Life (30-40% DoD)	~ 1,500	30,000	30000-60000	<100	> 15,000
Wet life (Storageability)	~7 years	~10 years	> 10 years	2 years	5 years
Self-Discharge (per month)	5-10 %	15%	30%	15-20%	<5%
Low temperature Performance (-20°C)	Poor	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Excellent
Temperature Range, °C	-10- 30	-10- 30	-10- 30	-10- 30	-20 to +40
Charge Efficiency %	85%	80%	80%	70%	~100%

Li Rechargeable.

- Li on Mars rovers. Design for 90 days still running after 950 days.

Pack Performance

Capacity = 6.6 Ah (at 23°C)

Watt-Hours = ~ 95 Wh

Specific Energy = ~ 145 Wh/Kg

Cycle Life = > 80% after 300 cycles

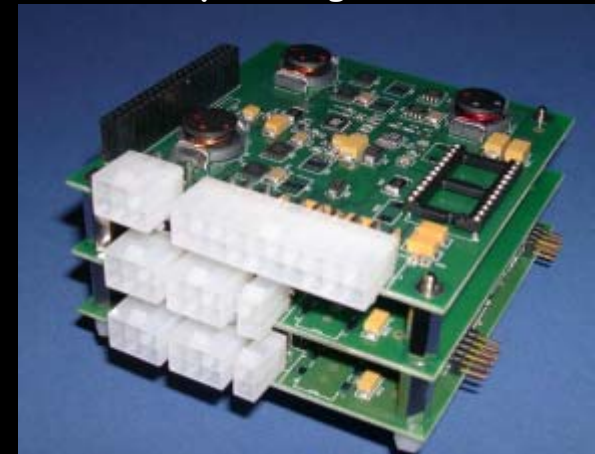
Wet Life = ???

(Life data needs to be verified)

95 Wh Smart Battery Pack



MP-08 Battery Management Module



JPL

Estimated Battery Performance

(11 x 4s10p Batteries in Parallel)

Voltage = 11 – 16.4 V

Capacity = > 845 Ah (at 23°C)

Watt-Hours = 12,160 Wh (at 23°C)

Specific Energy = ~ 120 Wh/Kg

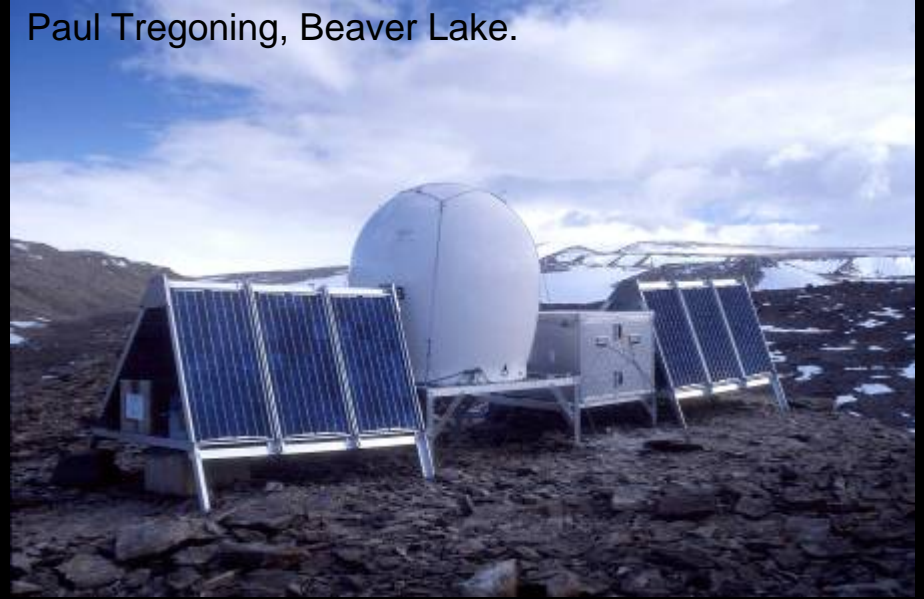
Battery Weight = ~ 100 Kg

Environmental hardening.

Frames must be:

- Quick to build.
- Light.
- Drift proof.
- Strong.

Paul Tregoning, Beaver Lake.



Reinhard Dietrich – Peter I Oye



Franklin Island



Niwot Ridge @ 3500m

Component Testing.

- System integration
- Cold tolerance
- Receiver performance
- Weight reduction
- Help minimize logistics



7.5W installation Mike Rose (BAS)



UNAVCO Cold Chamber (Bjorn Johns)

Monument Design

- Quick to install.
- Various heights available.
- Anchored by 4 X 40cm expansion bolts
- Bolts set using epoxy.
- Demonstrated stability.
- Zero offset for antenna.
- **Multipath tests needed.**



Conclusions

- **Continuous stations critical**
- **Minimize logistical costs by:**
 - **Light weight strong equipment.**
 - **Communications.**
- **Different challenges around Antarctica.**
- **Good monuments needed.**

Suggestions

- **Ways to minimize logistical costs further?**
- **Standardize on monument.**
- **Open documentation.**
- **Equipment development dialogue?**
- **Website equipment development page.**



What is POLENET?

- **POLar Earth Observing NETwork** - involving people from 24 nations
- Aims to dramatically improve the coverage of many different kinds of geophysical data across the polar regions of the Earth.
- Core activity of the International Polar Year (IPY) 2007-2008.
- Overcomes scarcity of observational systems in the Earth's polar regions and will provide a legacy in observational infrastructure.
- Technological capabilities in deploying autonomous systems in extreme environments will be developed and extended new datasets will be made available to the global science community.
- Scientists, engineers, field assistants and students are deploying new GPS instruments, seismic stations, magnetometers, tide gauges, ocean-floor sensors and meteorological recorders.
- Enable new research into the interaction between the atmosphere, oceans, polar ice-sheets and the Earth's crust and mantle.
- New insights into the Earth's magnetic field and deep Earth structure will be possible from the important vantage point of high-latitude geophysical observatories.

POLENET SCIENCE



GEODETTIC OBSERVATIONS

SEISMOLOGY

GLACIOLOGY

OCEANOGRAPHY

MAGNETOMETERS

GRAVITY

ATMOSPHERIC OBSERVATIONS

METEOROLOGY





Collaborative Research: Development of a Power and Communication System for Remote Autonomous GPS and Seismic Stations in Antarctica

January 2006

Submitted by

UNAVCO and IRIS
on Behalf of the Polar Community

Submitted to

Major Research Infrastructure
and
Office of Polar Programs
Division of Earth Sciences
National Science Foundation



Build on decade of experience with autonomous station technology in Antarctica to achieve reliable, modularized station support systems

Technology proven in Antarctica	Advances to be achieved through this MRI effort
Quasi-continuous and logistics-intensive GPS and seismic data collection	Reliable year-round data collection, minimizing logistical cost of installation, operation, and maintenance; “plug-and-play” deployment
Geodetic GPS receivers	Selection of next generation GPS receivers (low power, high memory, remote controllable, robust power management)
Seismic sensors and datalogger	Develop cold sensor testing and harden data recording system
Line of sight radio links	Higher bandwidth technology, flyover data retrieval
Solar power	Standard components, and improve ease of field deployment
Power control components	Integrated, robust power controller packages
Iridium satellite data modems, intermittent operation	Robust and efficient Iridium data retrieval, sensor-communications integration
Wind turbines with highly variable success	Select already proven units, test and optimize for different environmental conditions
Sealed lead acid batteries	Optimal battery selection, quantified extreme cold performance, lithium battery backup

Technical Requirements – “low” power consumption is a critical design requirement, as well as state-of-the-art in data storage, communications, and system integration.

Operating Mode	Allowable power use	Data telemetry requirement	Data storage Requirement
GPS data collection	2.5W	1Mb/day average	27 months = 830Mb
Seismic data collection	2W	1Mb/day (SOH and events) 15Mb/day average (full data retrieval)	27 months =12Gb
Satellite data link (NAL Resesarch Iridium)	1W/Mb	>2Mb/day	na
Radio data link (FreeWave 900MHz)	0.5W/Mb	>16Mb/day	na
Housekeeping overhead	0.5-1W	na	na
Lowest power configuration (single sensor, no winter data comms)	2.5W year-round	1Mb/day average, store-and-forward	Up to 12Gb
Combined GPS and seismic (with low bandwidth link)	7W year-round	2Mb/day average, store-and-forward	830 Mb + 12 Gb
Highest power configuration (combined sensors, year-round large data volume comms)	10.5W year-round	2Mb/day year-round	830 Mb + 12 Gb

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- Raytheon Polar Services**
- PHI Helicopters**
- UNAVCO**
- US Coast Guard**

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