USAP ANTARCTIC AUTOMATIC WEATHER STATION PLANS FOR 2011-2012 FIELD SEASON

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1. OVERVIEW

Plans for the 2011-2012 USAP AWS field season are constantly evolving. Efforts are expected to focus on work in five areas: McMurdo Area, Ross Ice Shelf, West Antarctica, South Pole and Cape Hallett (See Figure 1).

The McMurdo Area effort will focus on the installation of new AWS systems at several sites. Some of the AWS will be evolving from Argos communications to freewave modem systems, where the data will be directly sent to McMurdo Station. Some of this effort will be collaborative projects with other science groups. Planning and arrangements are still underway.

Several Ross Ice Shelf AWS sites will be visited for repairs such as Carolyn, Eric and Vito sites. Additional AWS site visits will be conducted to such locations as the Tall Tower! Alexander AWS site for inspection. Margaret AWS site will be visited for its first visit since installation, as it is in need of reprogramming. A final list of which sites to be visited will rest on the status after the end of the 2011 austral winter.

Two targeted efforts are planned this season. The radiation shield test facility will be removed from South Pole Station. A second activity will be the removal of the two AWS at Cape Hallett and the installation of a new AWS. The trip to Cape Hallett will involving camping at the site overnight, and is the only site that requires a permit for the visit, as it is in an ASPA protected area.

In West Antarctica, plans include inspection visits to Byrd AWS and Janet AWS, along with the removal of Brianna AWS and perhaps an additional site near the Siple Coast. Siple Dome AWS will have its electronics replaced and may be moved a short distance to be closer to the skyway operation, which in turn will allow easier servicing.

Efforts next field season with AWS collaborators are still in formative stages and depend on available hardware and logistics. Additional efforts in the Antarctic Peninsula region are also under discussion for later in the field season or at a later time period.

As always, these plans are in flux. Community input on AWS needs is welcome and encouraged. A short discussion following the presentation will poll the attendees to voice AWS requisites that could be considered for the 2012-2013 field season and the future. To date, feedback at prior AMOMFW meetings has led to continued service from Nico and Henry AWS sites near South Pole, as they are used not only by the forecast community, but by the numerical modeling community for verification studies.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under grant #ANT-0944018.

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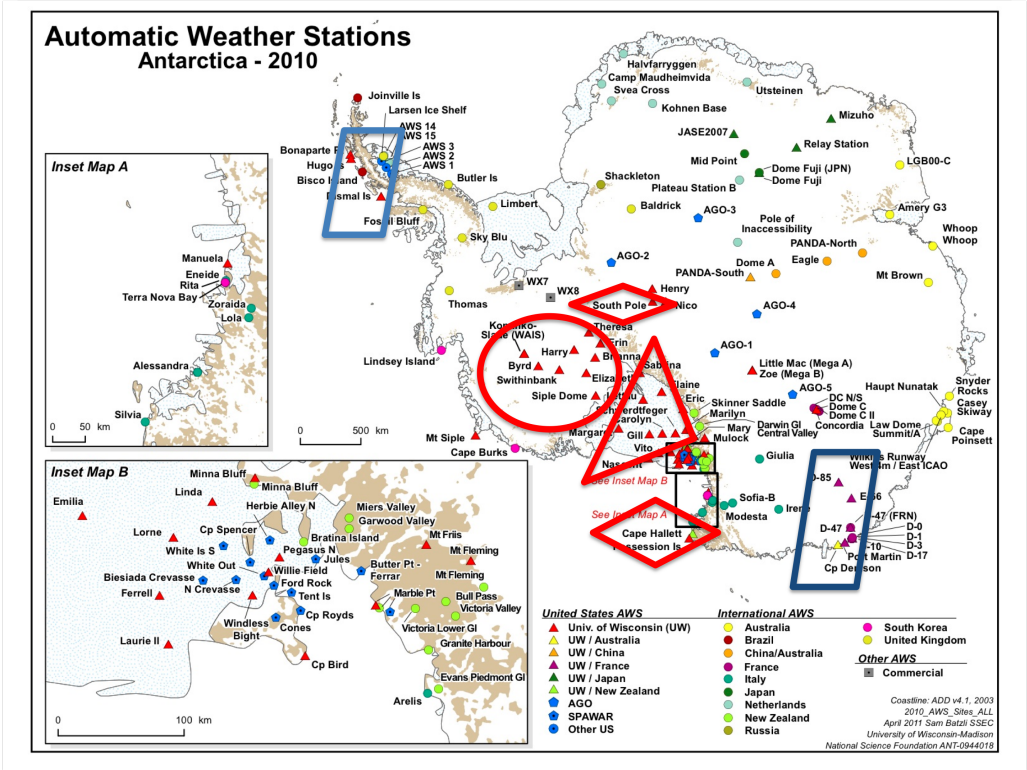

Figure 1. Regions targeted for AWS field work in the 2011-2012 field season. As of this publication, efforts are still under discussion and planning final arrangements are underway.