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AMF2 Team Surveys Storm Peak Area

The U.S. Department of Energy recently announced the initial deployment of the second ARM Mobile Facility (AMF2) to Steamboat Springs, Colorado, in 2010 for the Storm Peak Lab Cloud Property Validation Experiment (StormVEx). In addition to measurements obtained by the AMF2, central to StormVEx is the Desert Research Institute's Storm Peak Laboratory (SPL), located at 3200 meters on one of the highest peaks in the Steamboat Springs Ski area. With design and engineering of the new AMF2 in full swing, its Argonne National Laboratory-based management team traveled to the Storm Peak area in October to meet with local contacts and scout around for potential AMF2 deployment sites. They were particularly concerned with logistics for installation and operations in potentially more than 7 meters (300+ inches) of snow during the winter season.

Storm Peak Laboratory, at an elevation of 3200 meters, will supplement measurements obtained by the AMF2 during its debut in 2010 near Steamboat Springs, Colorado (ARM Photo).

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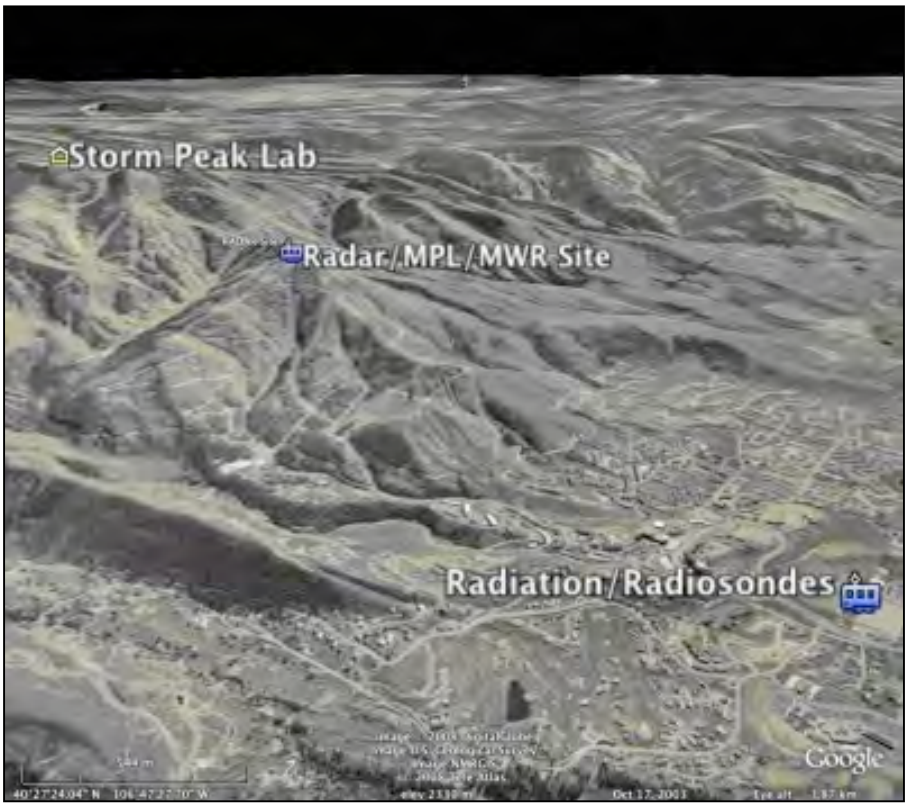
To meet the science objectives of StormVEx, the AMF2 must be located upwind and below SPL, which will provide measurements of cloud microphysics and cloud-aerosol chemistry. With this in mind, the AMF2 team spent two-and-a-half days with the SPL director and site operations manager touring the area for operationally feasible sites. They located a primary site for operating the AMF2 cloud sensors part way up the mountain, at an elevation of 2700 meters, and another site lower in the valley, at approximately 1400 meters, suitable for a number of other instruments. These preliminary sites are aligned approximately east-west from SPL and should provide good locations for measuring cloud properties and evolution.

The AMF2 team also met local representatives from the National Forest Service and Steamboat Springs Ski Resort, who will ultimately need to approve any site location. Staff at SPL have a good working arrangement with the local authorities and organizations and will play an important role in the coordination of deployment and operational logistics.



Preliminary sites identified for the StormVEx AMF2 deployment could host separate instrument groupings at the upper and lower end of the Steamboat Springs Ski area gondola track (ARM Graphic).