

Raven Snow Science - ICECAPS-MELT 2024

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Draft 2: 11 March 2024, updated formatting, science questions, procedures and recommendations for snow science data collection

Draft 3: 15 April 2024, GPR transects, drone-based NIR survey, FLIR images of snowpit face, other tightening of prose.

Draft 4: 16 April 2024, surface height measurements added into executive summary, new TOC, split doc with Lyte Probe manual

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Executive Summary:

Contents: This document contains a summary of science questions, experiments, and field procedures for the snow science aspect of ICECAPS-MELT at Camp Raven during the Summer 2024.

Snow Science Questions: The snow science questions are centered around understanding heat transfer in snow to better predict when the snow in Greenland will melt. The data collection and monitoring are directed towards characterizing the snow stratigraphy to identify melt events and melt layers spatio-temporally. To support our understanding of this, models of heat transfer in snow need snow property data related to thermal conductivity and heat capacity. Some of the best proxies for the information needed for accurate modeling will be in the LWC, mechanical strength, and the density of the snow.

Measurement Plan: The field measurements described here in support of the science questions above include measurements to be made in a series of snow pits at a central location, spatial compression strength/NIR measurements made using the Lyte Probe (a digital ski-pole penetrometer), and high frequency (~5 GHz) snow radar. Recommendations for the execution of the field measurements are made below. Briefly, they are:

- 1) Snow pits made at the beginning and end of field campaign in a designated 'snow pit' area.
- 2) Lyte probe measurements made in close proximity to the snow pits.
- 3) 200-m Lyte probe transects (wind parallel and wind perpendicular) originating from the snow pit area.
- 4) 200-m high-freq radar transects (wind parallel and wind perpendicular).
- 5) Relative surface height measurements (drone-based).
- 6) Characterization of the snow around the SLEIGH during demobilization.

Field Measurement Guidance: Guidance and 'manuals' for the snow science at Camp Raven are listed below.

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Section 1: Measurable Science Questions:

The **primary snow science questions** that are potentially directly measurable at Camp Raven in 2024 are:

1. What is the time-varying stratigraphy of the top meter of snow at Camp Raven? How does this vary on a range of time scales (30-min, monthly, across summer season)?

Density, hand hardness, compression strength, NIR reflectivity, shear strength, snow grain size/habit, LWC, dielectric constant (via radar), temperature, snow height.

2. What is the spatial variability of 1-m snow properties at Camp Raven? How does this vary on a range of vertical and horizontal spatial scales (0-10 cm, 0-10 m, 0-200 m)?

Compression strength, NIR reflectivity, dielectric constant

3. What is the relationship between snow properties measured traditionally (i.e., snow pit), the Lyte Probe, and the high freq snow radar?

We might curate data from representative case studies through a series of **opportunistic snow science questions**.

1. How do snow properties evolve in response to atmospheric forcing?

If an interesting event occurs, does it help to monitor snow properties as a function of time through the event (e.g., blowing snow, intense LW event, melting event, hoar frost formation)?

2. Can we identify a few types of representative events to make sure the energy and mass flux measurements are operational and collecting quality data?

e.g. a) *VSBL*: calm periods, into/out of snow pack (depends on context), possibly hoar formation (mass transfer *towards* surface interface (from atmosphere and from deeper in snow)),

b) *Neutral BL/small lapse*: calm, heat leaving snow pack, possibly mass leaving surface

c) *Neutral BL*: windy, rapid heating of the snow, potentially mass leaving the surface through latent heat flux or blowing snow vaporization

Section 2: Field Measurement Guidance

The field measurement guidance here is broken into four categories: 1) Where to make the measurements, 2) What measurements to make in support of science questions, 3) How to make the measurements, 4) How to characterize the measurements themselves (i.e. random uncertainties and biases).

2.1 Field Measurement Layout

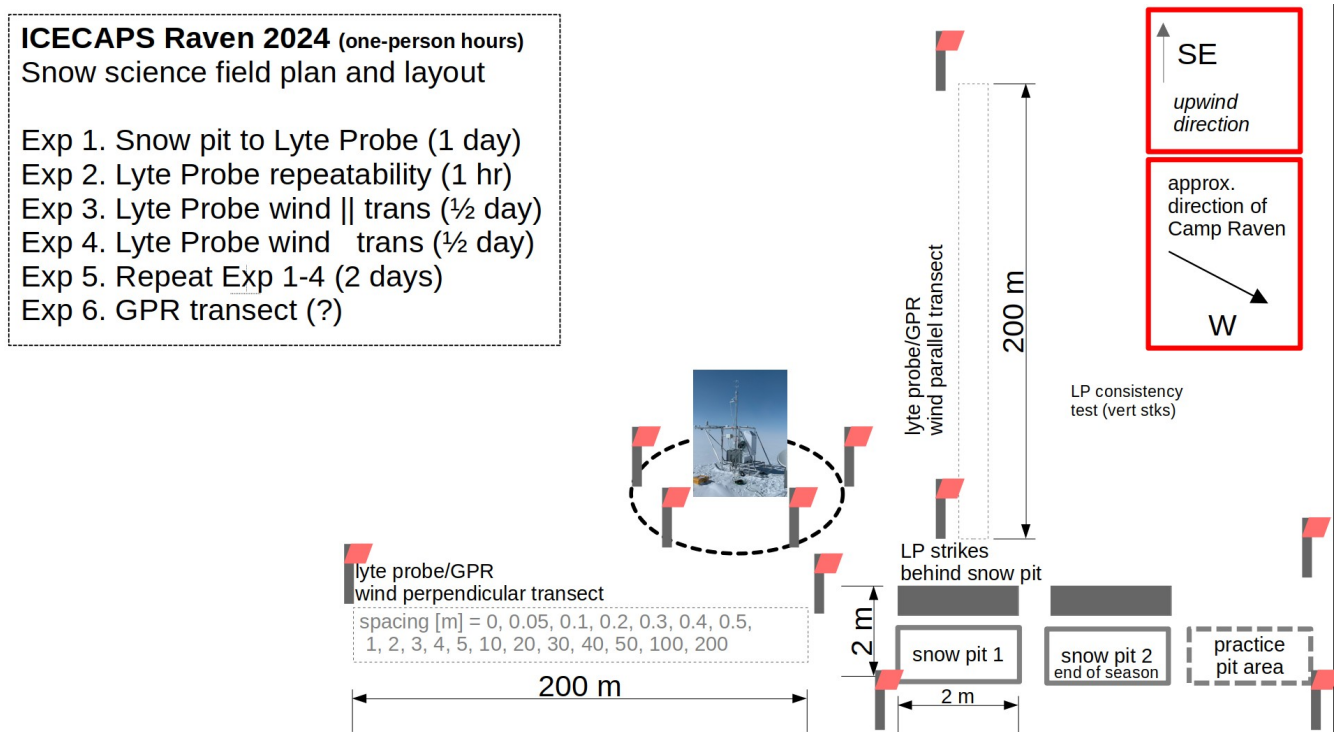


Figure 1. A top view of a potential ICECAPS-MELT field measurement schematic. Included are potential person-hours to complete each suggested measurement suite.

The field measurement schematic shows one concept of the observing platform positioning relative to other field science and the Raven Camp. Some important features and criteria here are:

- 1) Flag all important areas, or areas that are to be protected for surface science.
- 2) Keep the SLEIGH on the far side of the field site relative to snow science area, and basically upwind of the snow pits and snow transects.
- 3) Proximity of the SLEIGH to snow science is not that critical. It primarily matters to minimize the footprint of the experiment and make easier to protect the SLEIGH from interference.

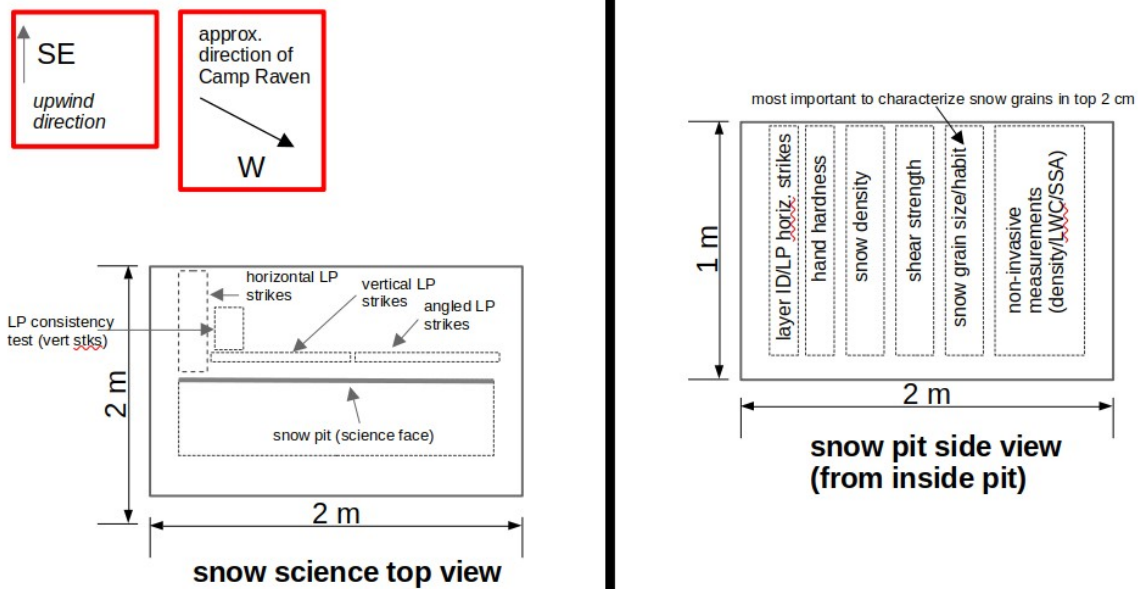


Figure 2. Snow pit diagrams from top view (left) and side view (right). Measurements in this diagram are listed in the next section on Snow Science Measurements. *It is also recommended to take a **NIR** photo of the snow pit face after cleaning and before any measurements.*

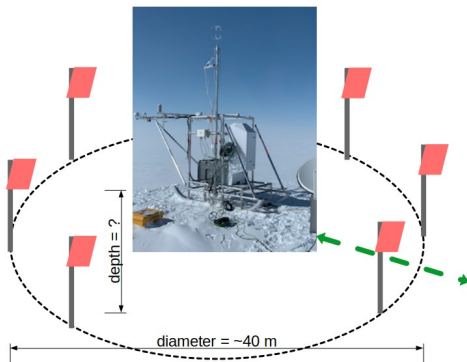


Figure 3. A figure of the SLEIGH deployment with suggested no-impact diameter, approach (**green**), and reminder to measure the depth of anchors and posts for compaction modeling. NOTE: It could be interesting to do a *final survey (snow pit, lyte probe)* at the SLEIGH site after breakdown.

2.2 Snow Science Measurements

Below are lists of measurements to make broken down by field operation task. Included in each table is a list of measurements for 'calibration' or 'uncertainty' of specific tools/measurements. The lists are in checklist form for use in the field.

Record all field data in green **Rite in the Rain** notebook.

Snow pit

Table 1. A list of measurements and calibration tasks for the snow pit. The right-hand side of the table is a field checklist.

Measurement	Priority	Reference	Practice	May 2024	Aug 2024
Layer ID (manual)	1	SWAG CH2			
Hand hardness (manual)	1	SWAG CH2			
Snow density (manual)	1	SWAG CH2			
Shear strength (manual)	1	SWAG CH2			
Snow grain size (manual/photo)	2	SWAG CH2			
Snow grain habit (manual/photo)	2	SWAG CH2			
Liquid water content (manual)	2	SWAG CH2			
Density/LWC (FPGA inst.)	1	SLF SnowPro User Manual			
SSA (FPGA inst.)	1	SLF Infrastow User Manual v2			
Temperature profile (manual)	3	SWAG CH2			
NIR pit-face image (camera)	1	FLIR Camera Manual			

NOTES:

Layer ID - identify summer layers, crusts, and other holistic changes in material properties.

Profile resolution - try to get up to 3-cm resolution in all things. Of course, the layer ID will help you identify when that is appropriate, and when it is unnecessary. Layer ID will have higher precision than anything else (~ 1cm or less).

Profile sampling protocols - try to sample above and below crusts/hoar/and other thin layers with things like HH, snow density, shear strength. Try to sample thin layers separately whenever possible (e.g. snow grain size, snow grain type).

Practice pit - settle on minutae for procedures during the practice pit. Record procedures in notebook (or videos). Upload procedures for review by 'instrument stewards' if possible.

Manual temperature measurements - Lots of considerations here. Assess any solar bias by shading sensors as much as possible (Thomas umbrella or other). Take measurements quickly after exposing snow pit face, or dig deep into pit face, ~30 cm/day the face has been exposed.

Final survey at SLEIGH site? - Could be interesting to do a final, complete survey with Lyte probe and snow pit where the SLEIGH was looking after extraction. Transect Measurements (Lyte Probe, Snow Surface Height, GPR, Demob survey?)

Lyte probe measurement procedure (and important metadata) are described in Section 3.1.

Lyte Probe Adjacent to Snow Pits

Table 2. Lyte probe measurements that ought to be made adjacent to the snow pits shown in Figure 2 are list below.

Measurement	Priority	Reference	Practice	May 2024	Aug 2024
vertical strikes along pit face	1	Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024			
consistency test	1	Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024			
angled strikes along pit face	1	Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024			
horizontal strikes into pit face	2	Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024			

NOTE:

When to measure - Try to make these LP measurements within a day or two of digging the snow pit. Try to make the LP measurements on the upwind side of the snow pit after the pits have been sampled.

Consistency test - In this box, keep strikes around 5 cm apart. Suggest to record the pattern (if possible) after completion (a small circle or square). Be careful to make strikes vertical. Use clineometer to check angle of attack *in situ* to self-calibrate on angle of attack. An angle of 3 deg should correspond to about 5 cm deviation from vertical over 1 m.

Transects (Lyte Probe, Snow Surface Height, GPR)

We ask for at least four (4) transects during the field season. Two in May and two in August. They ought to be wind-parallel and wind-perpendicular, approximately 200 m in length at variable resolution including a transects of surface height, Lyte probe strikes, and GPR measurements.

Table 3. Lyte probe measurements along transects.

Measurement	Priority	Reference	May 2024	Aug 2024
vertical strikes along wind parallel1 transect		Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024		
angled strikes along wind parallel 2 transect		Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024		
vertical strikes along wind perpendicular transect	1	Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024		
angled strikes along wind perpendicular transect	2	Lyte Probe Manual for ICECAPS 2024		
Survey of surface height (cm resolution)	2	Gallagher		

NOTES:

LP Strike locations - These transects can be measured with 100 m tape, and marked out initially using the popsicle sticks or other temporary marking. The transect lines should be marked at each end with flagged bamboo poles. Strike locations should be at a progressively coarse resolution so that fine resolution measurements are made, but not overburdening the field crew. Probe strikes in a line parallel/perpendicular to prevailing wind (and surface structure axes). Use variable spacing, out to 100-200 m. Variable spacing should match expected surface structure changes (e.g. dunes/sastrugi, small hills, megadunes, etc...). Transects begin at central snow pit.

Surface Height Survey

This may be accomplished by one of the following apps.

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/theodolite/id339393884>,

or simply a [reasonable laser level](#) with distance measurement (e.g. tape measure). Needs tripod. A theodolite with tripod and measuring stick would be better.

Gallagher will take a NIR drone survey of the surface and get relative surface height from the stereographic images. This is all that is needed at the beginning and end of the field season as long as the transects are in survey.

GPR Survey

We will want a GPR survey next to (or over) the transects where the Lyte Probe strikes have been performed. Reminders of details for data collection.

1. **Timing:** The field team will have to decide whether it is better to perform the Lyte Probe strikes first or the GPR survey. Mark the location after the first survey has been taken. *Decide where subsequent surveys will be taken before taking the first survey, and mark these out also!*
2. **Location:** It will be important to have enough information to co-locate the GPR with any other survey information like Lyte Probe strikes or surface height information. Ideally, co-location of measurements does not result in measuring disturbed snow in a way that would bias the measurement.
3. **Invasive/noninvasive:** Ideally the GPR will be on a system that does not disturb the snow. This will rely on the ingenuity of the field team to build a rig that safely and easily transports the GPR across the snow, without disturbing the snow surface too much. At a minimum, the GPR can be transported to a location and set on the snow surface (blocks or simply lightly on the snow surface).

SLEIGH Installation Characterization

Two ideas for the SLEIGH installation characterization:

1. Shade the area to assess solar bias of SIMBA temperatures.
2. Final snow pit, lyte probe, and mobile GPR survey after the SLEIGH is demobilized.