A CubeSat Mission for Locating and Mapping Spot Beams of GEO Comm-Satellites

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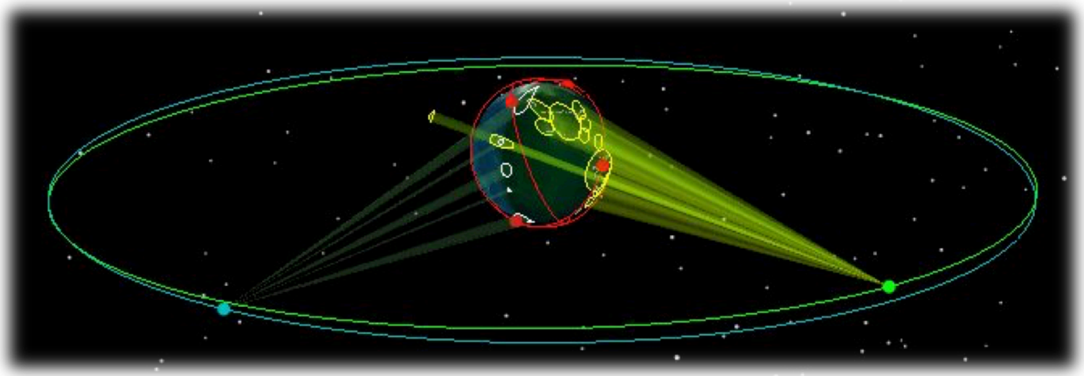
August 9, 2015

Outline

- Background & Motivation
- Spot Beam Mapping Mission + OV-1
- Design of Mission Model
- Software Tools
- Developed Simulations & Results
- Features of Operation
- Conclusion / Future Work



Background

Radio Frequency domain verification from GEO… tied with small satellite mission development concepts

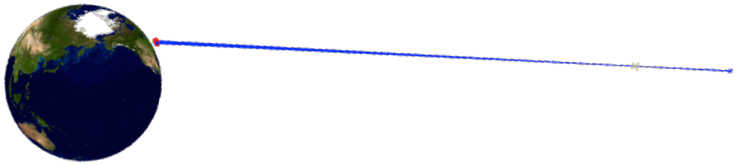
-- Future space environment

- Increased congestion
- Increasingly contested
- Increasingly competitive

Especially at GEO!

-- GEO Spot beam mapping

- Analogous constellation-based RF collection missions
- Enhance RF domain knowledge
- Identify coverage areas



-- Small Satellites (i.e. disaggregation)

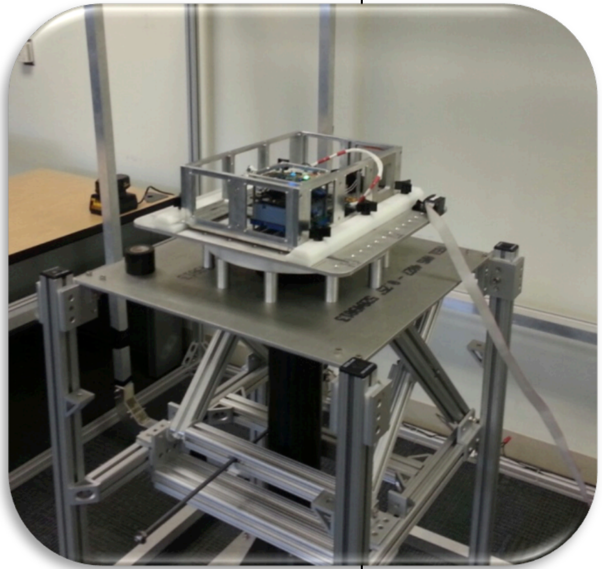
- May reduce costs vs. larger space missions
- Maturing technology increases viability
- Missions include common features / architectures

Motivation

Spot Beam Mapping CubeSat

-- AFIT CubeSat Research
- Mission Analysis and Payload/Bus Design
- Satellite Design and Test Sequence (6U CubeSat)
    1) Systems Engineering
    2) Spacecraft Analysis & Design
    3) Spacecraft Build & Test

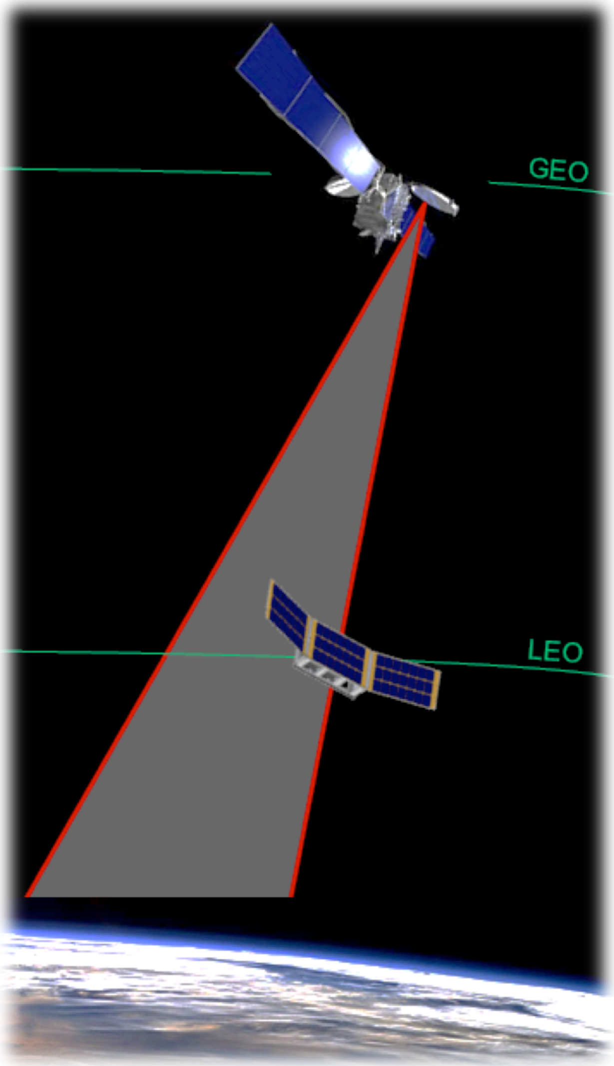
-- RF Domain Verification / Analysis
- Identify spot beam locations (space-ground links)
- Manage frequency allocations (avoid interference)
- Improve ground trace knowledge
    - Increase link efficiency
    - Identify areas of poor signal coverage



AFIT 6U CubeSat Testbed

<u>Key Focus:</u> Is it possible to effectively map spot beams coming from GEO Comm-Satellites using a CubeSat constellation?

The Mission



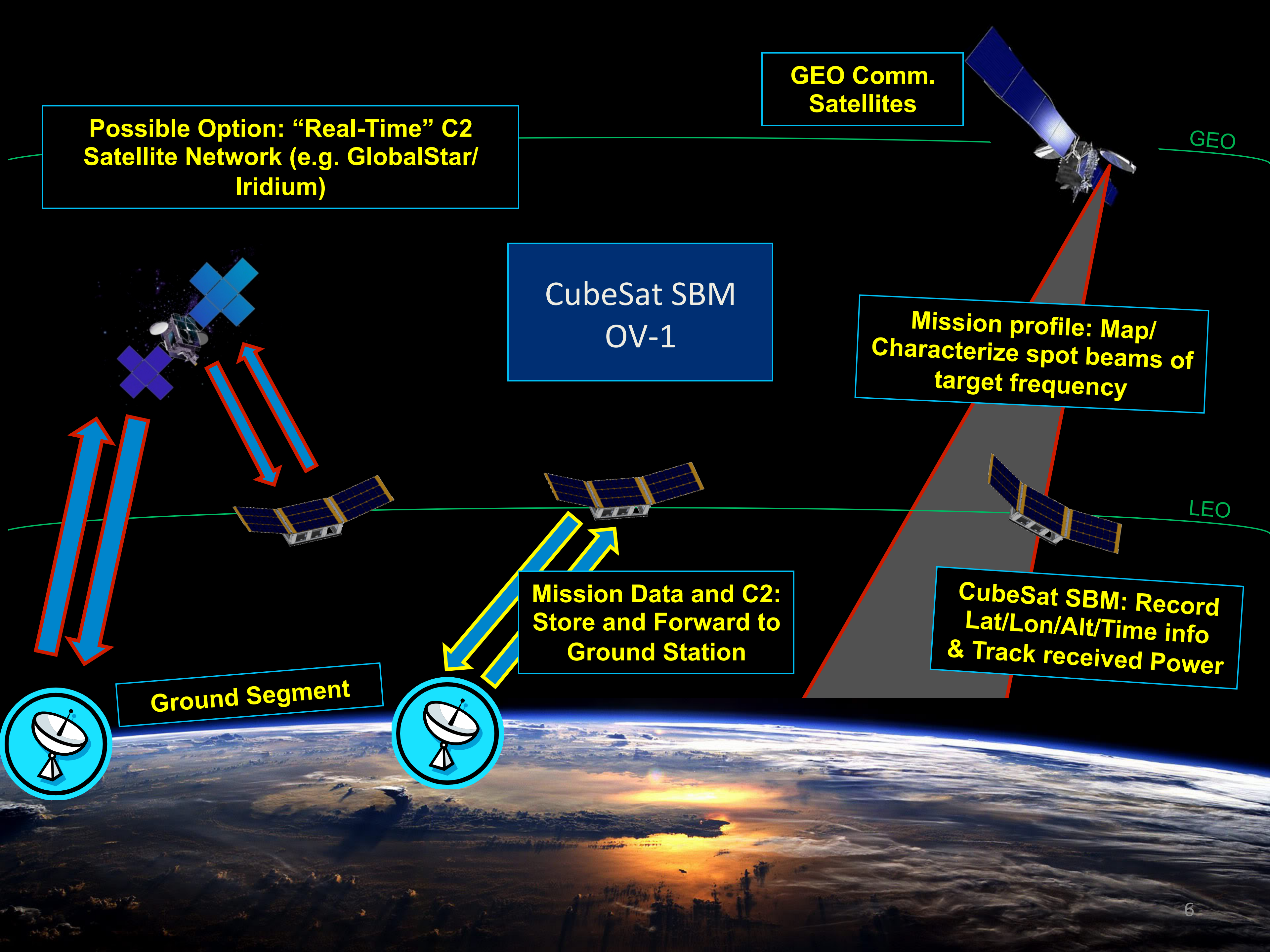
Mission Statement: "Detect and map the boundaries of geostationary (GEO) communications satellites spot beams by flying a CubeSat(s) through the spot beams at a low earth orbit (LEO) altitude."

-- Map Spot Beams from GEO

- Frequency targets up to Ka-Band
- Sizes: "Continent" size down to "Island" size

-- CubeSat Bus / Payload

- Small/Simple form factor ==> Easy to integrate
- "Cheap," possibly even expendable
- 6U version assumed
- Smaller Hardware Emerging
  - RF Payloads
  - "Miniaturized" Bus Subsystems

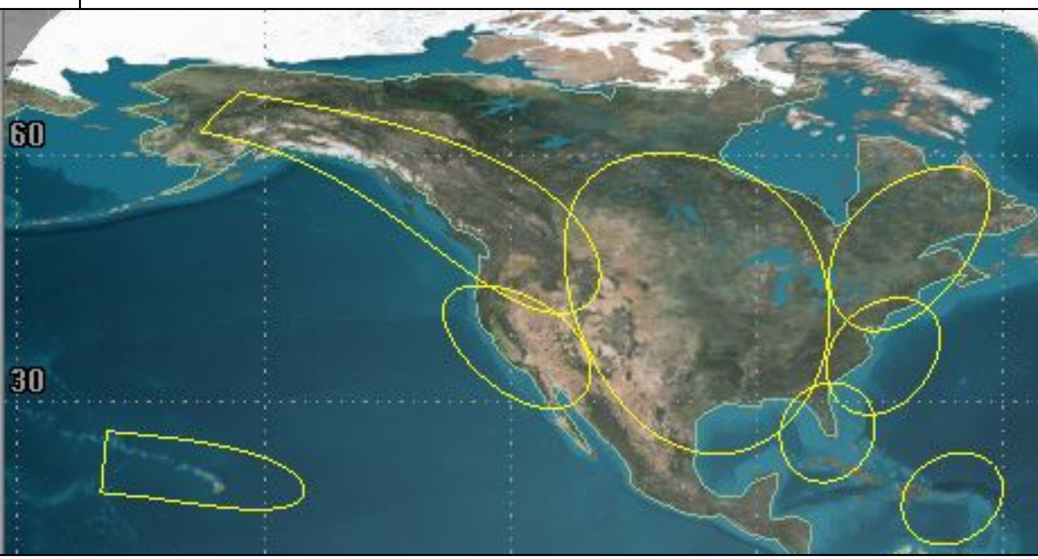

GEO Comm. Satellites
Possible Option: “Real-Time” C2 Satellite Network (e.g. GlobalStar/ Iridium)
GEO
CubeSat SBM OV-1
Mission profile: Map/ Characterize spot beams of target frequency
LEO
Mission Data and C2: Store and Forward to Ground Station
CubeSat SBM: Record Lat/Lon/Alt/Time info & Track received Power
Ground Segment

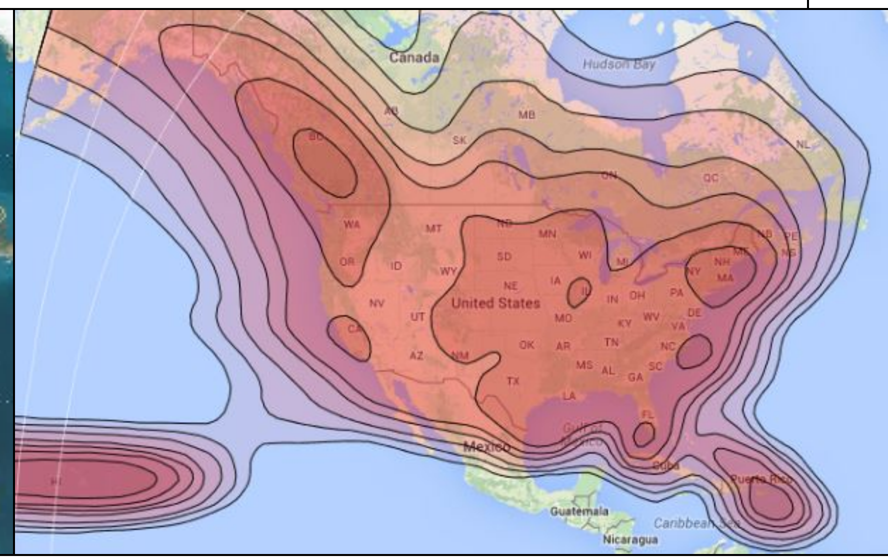
Mission Model: Spot Beams

-- Objective: Simulate collections

-- Model beam patterns of "realistic" spot beams

- Chose Intelsat Galaxy 28 (G28) as a test case
- Ku-Band beams -- North and South America (~12 GHz), HPBW
- C-Band beams ignored (K-Band beams "harder" to find)





Model: North American Region
Intelsat Galaxy 28, Ku-Band Beams

Reference Shape: Satbeams
Intelsat Galaxy 28, Ku-Band Beams

Note: Left is a spherical map projection, right is a Mercator (cylindrical) map projection!

Model: Galaxy 28 Beams

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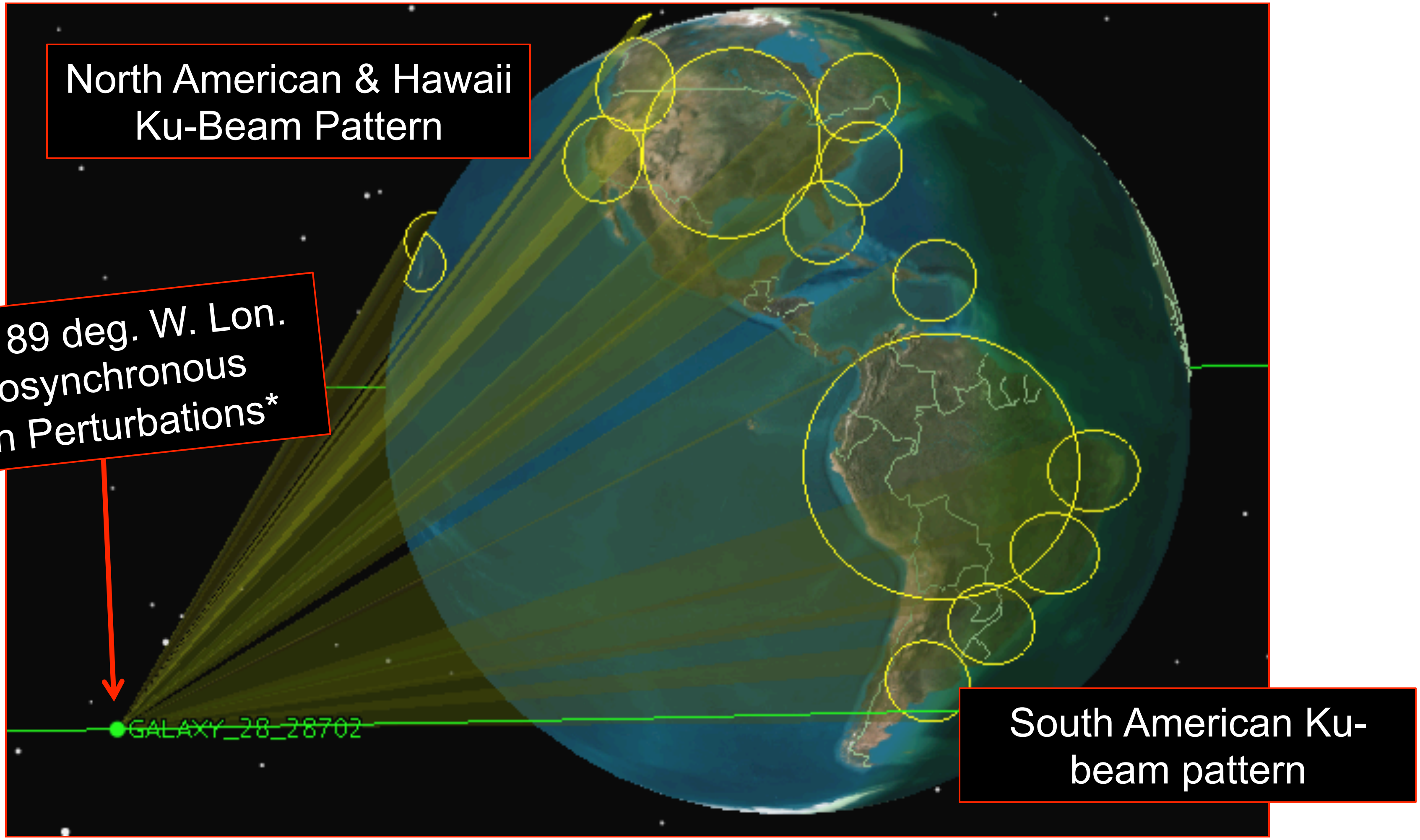
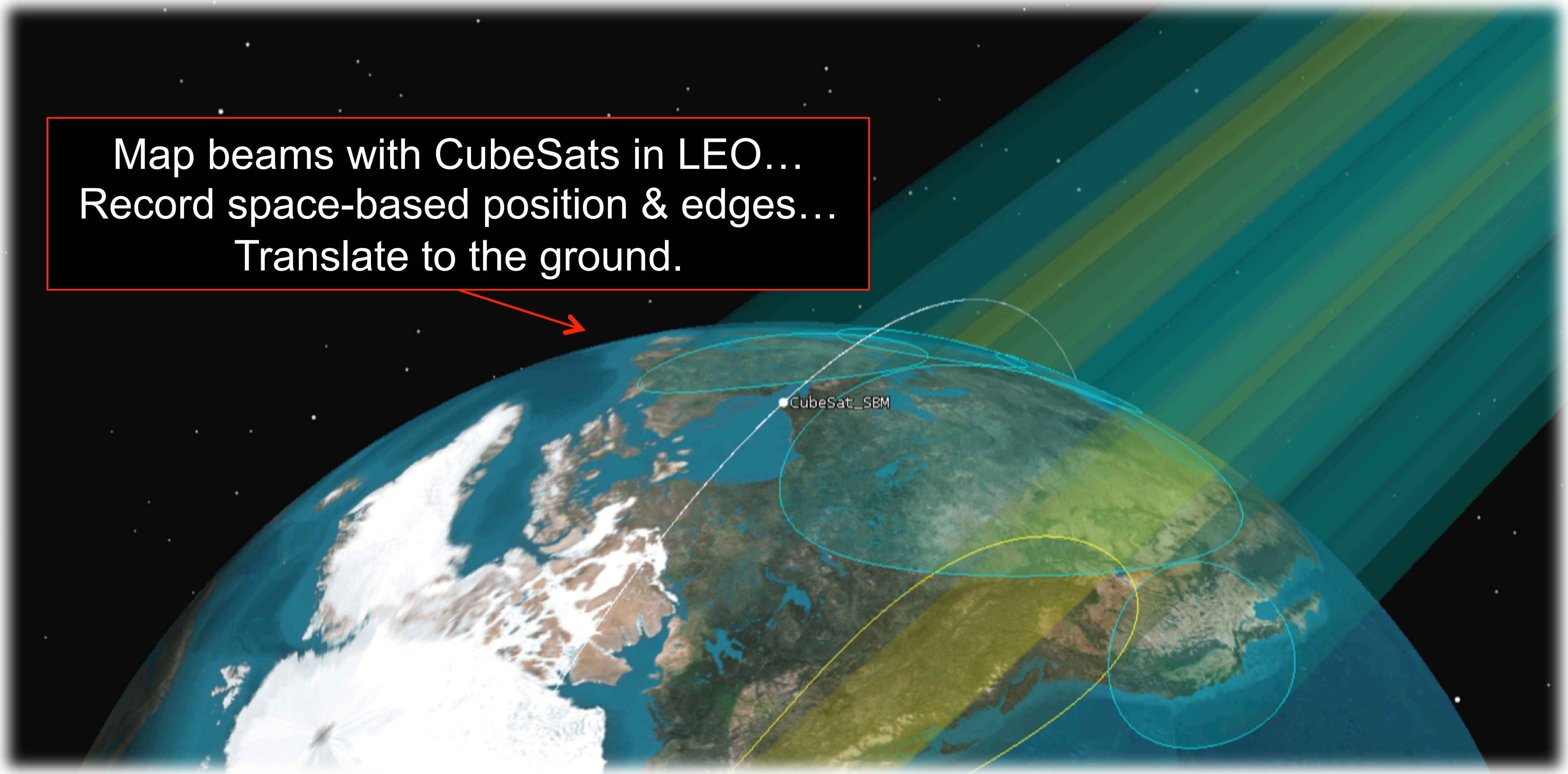


Full Version – Shows G-28 Position and South America Beams

Mission Model: Map Concept



3D Beam Pattern – Spot beam mapper in LEO

Simulation: Data Collection Tool

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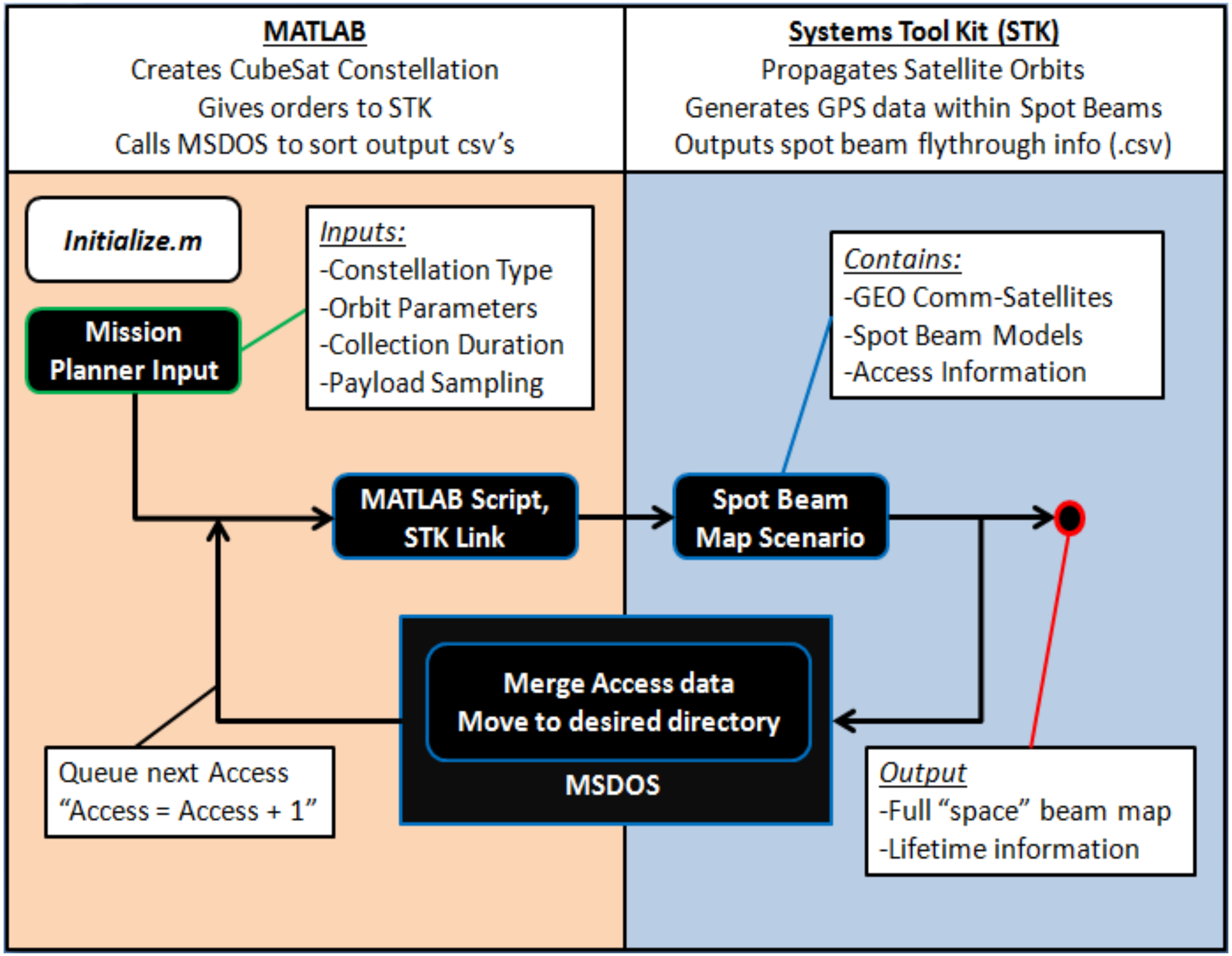
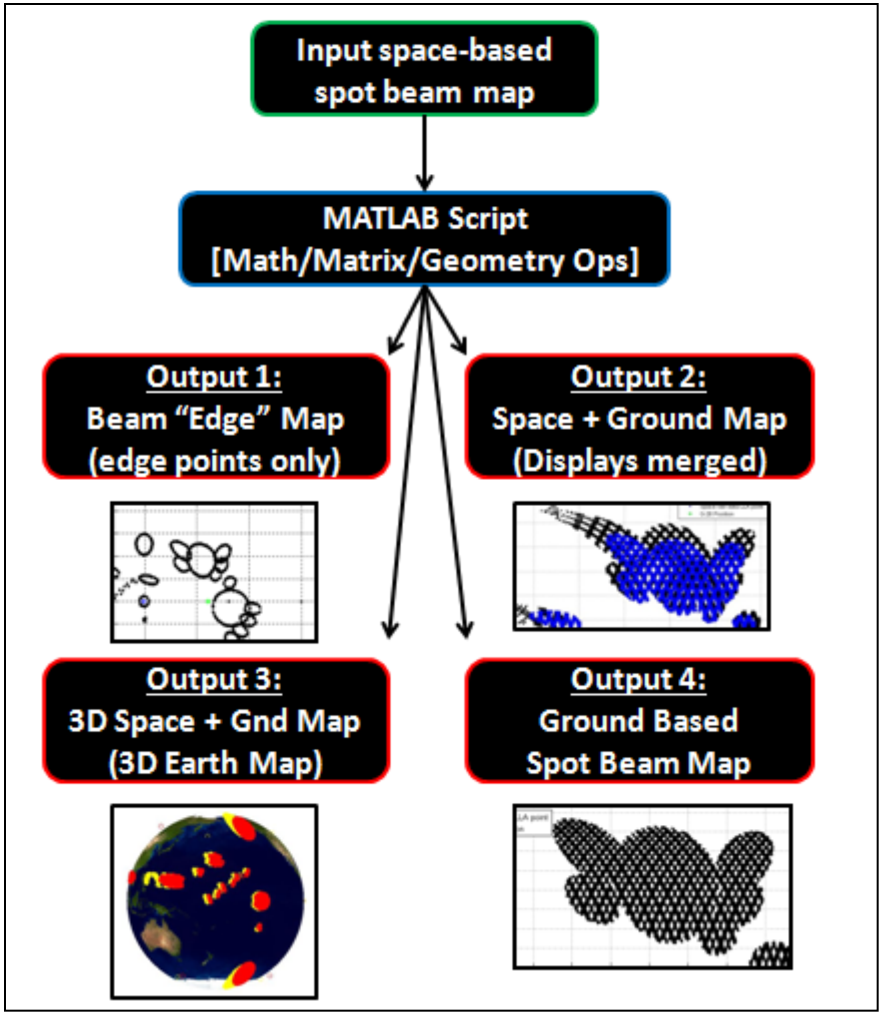


Simulation: Map Generation Tool



Input: Mission "space" data
- Payload collection (GPS)
- Gain information

Outputs:
- Beam edge locations
- "Full" space beam maps
- "Full" ground beam maps

Can observe / analyze:
- Beam Patterns
- Size, position, spread of gaps
- Ground accuracy vs. STK
- Scenario change with time
- Gain patterns within beams

Simulation: Parameters

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-- Constellation Types
- Single Plane
- Multi-Plane
- Walker Delta
- “Formations”

-- Mission Altitudes

200 to 500 km

-- Mission Inclination

68,75,82,90,98

-- Payload Data Collection Rate

1, 5,10 seconds per data point

-- Number of CubeSats per Plane

1-6,8

-- Number of Orbital Planes

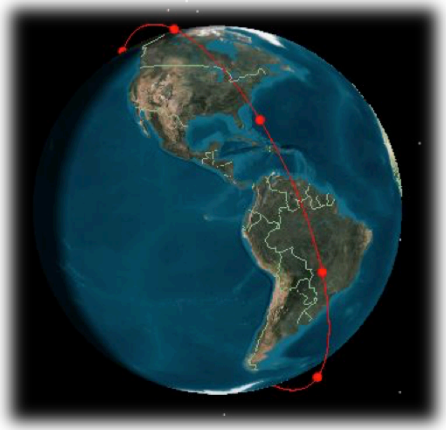
1 – 6 planes

-- CubeSat Spacing / Plane Spacing

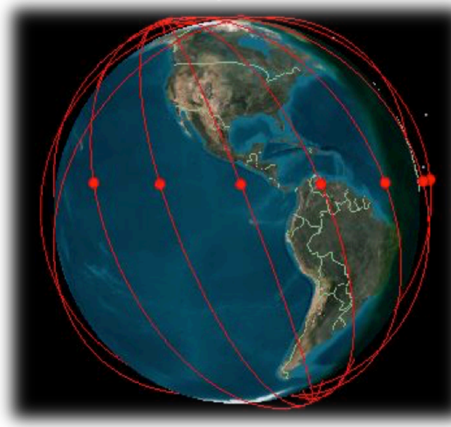
Even spacing vs. set sep. angle

-- Collection Duration

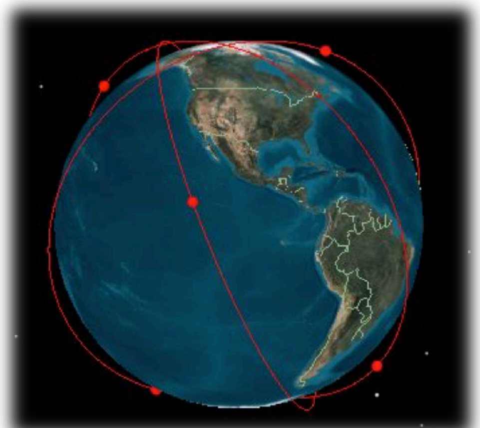
1 to 3 days



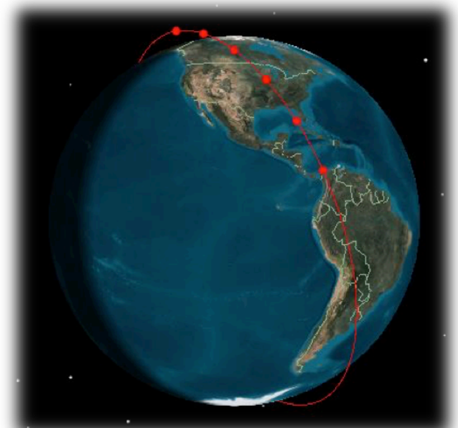
Single Plane



Multiple Plane



Walker Delta



Fixed separation angle “Formation”

Simulation: Altitude Considerations

Assumption: Fully loaded 6U CubeSat!

Orbit Altitude	Long Case Lifetime (days / years)	Intermediate Case Lifetime (days / years)	Short Case Lifetime (days / years)	Meets Mission Requirements?
200 km	9d / 0.025y	6d / 0.016y	3d / 0.008y	No
300km	167d / 0.45y	108d / 0.29y	51d / .14y	No
350km	584d / 1.6y	365d / 1y	177d / .48y	Possible
400km	2519d / 6.9y	1351d / 3.7y	548d / 1.5y	Yes
450km	5402d / 14.8y	4088d / 11.2y	2263d / 6.2y	Yes
500km	>9125d / 25y	8870d / 24.3y	4672d / 12.8y	Possible

Constant or Variable	Set Value
Drag Coefficient	2.2, models a "flat plate"
Solar Reflection Coefficient	1.0
Drag Area	0.06 square meters (short case) 0.03 square meters (intermed. case) 0.02 square meters (long case)
Satellite mass	12 kg (Fully loaded 6U) – long case 6 kg ("Light" 6U) – short case
Atmospheric Density Model	NRLMSIS-00 (Mass Spectrometer Incoherent Scatter) [37]

- 200 km: Too low
- 300 km: Too low
- 350km: Workable
- 400 km: Good
- 450 km: Good
- 500 km: Workable

Simulation: G-28 NA Beams Sample

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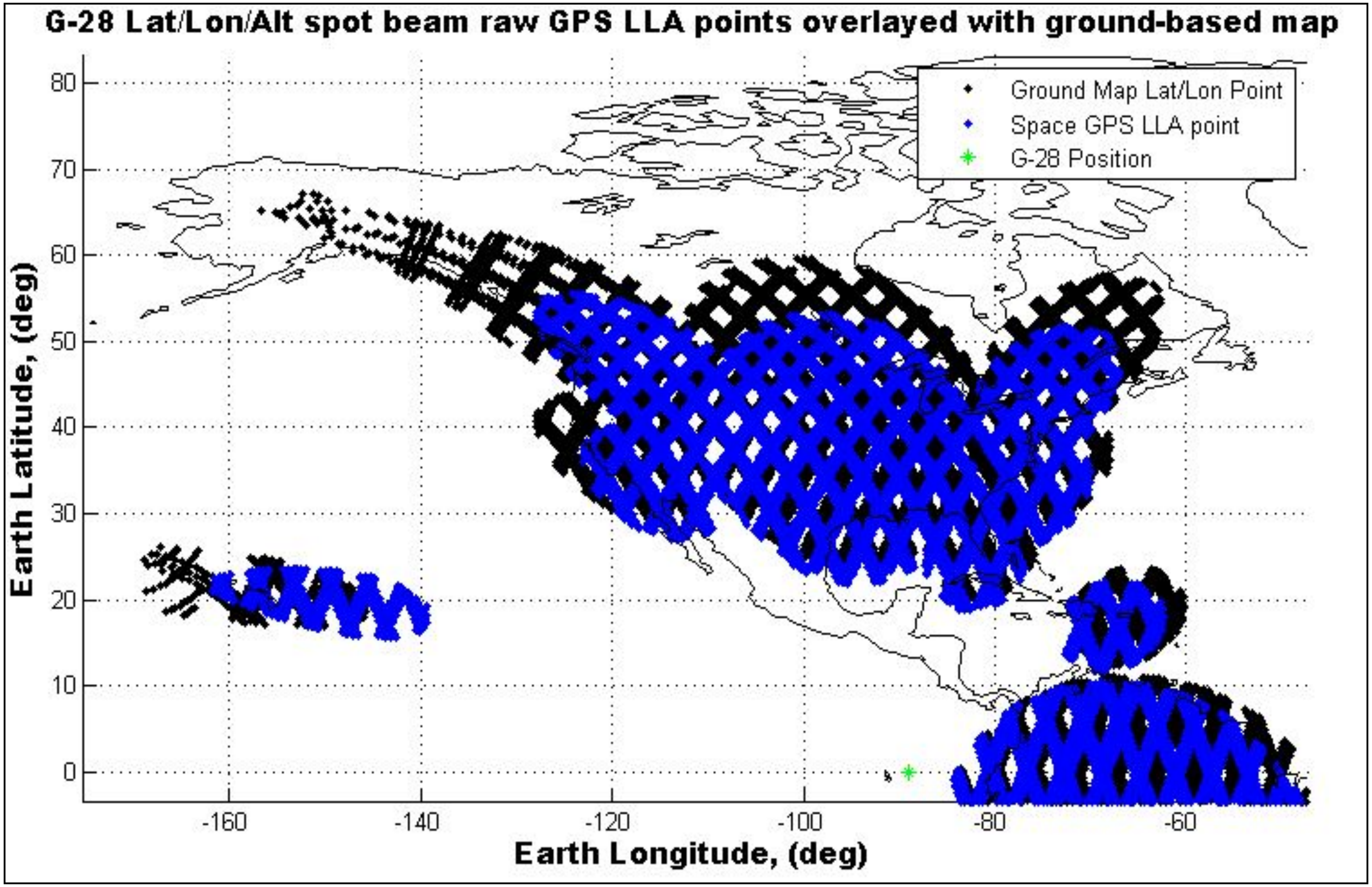
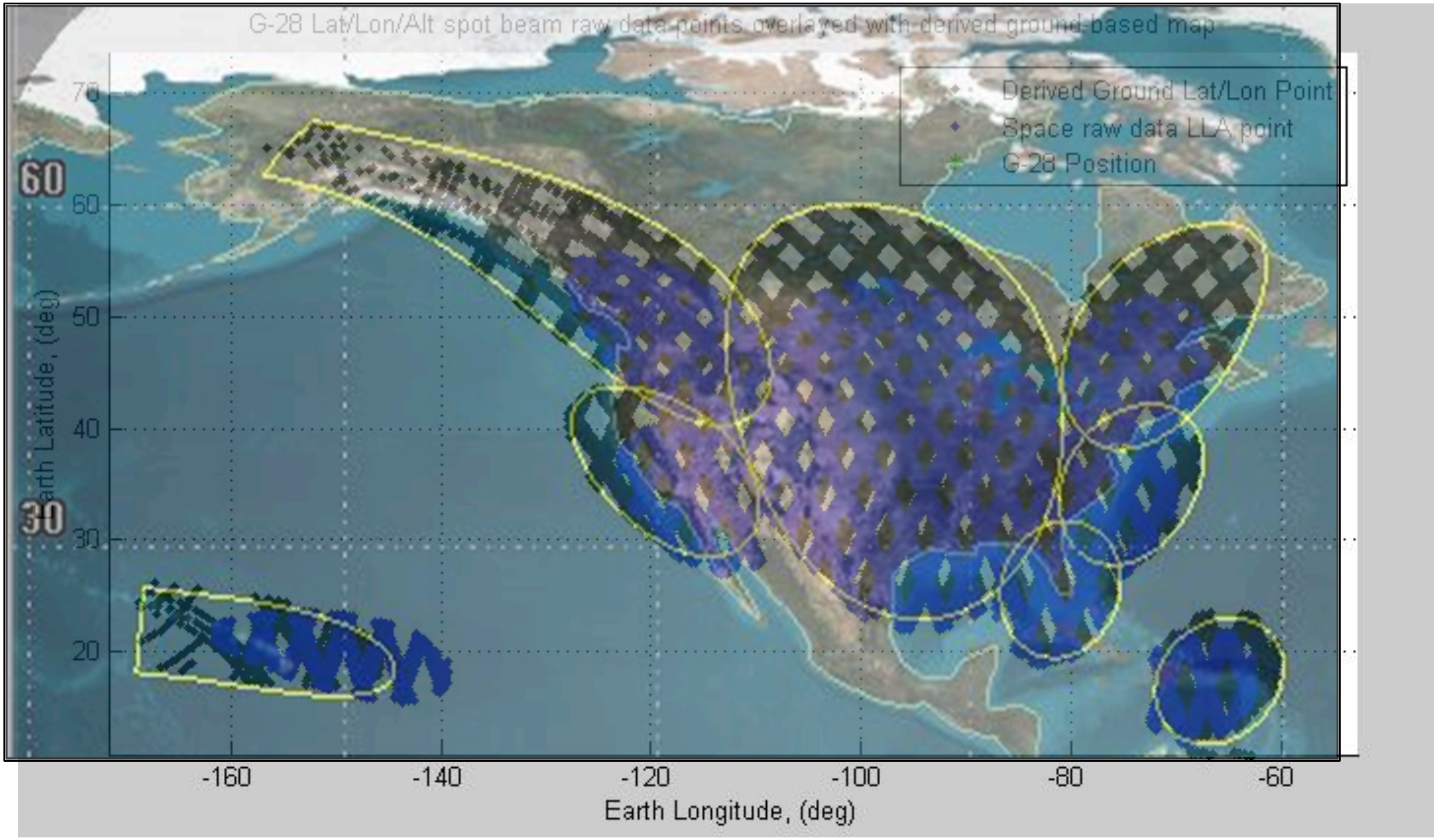


Space-based GPS collects mapped to Ground-based points.

68 deg / 350 km / 0.2 Hz / 1 Plane / 6 Satellites / 72 Hour Collection

Simulation: G-28 NA Beams Sample

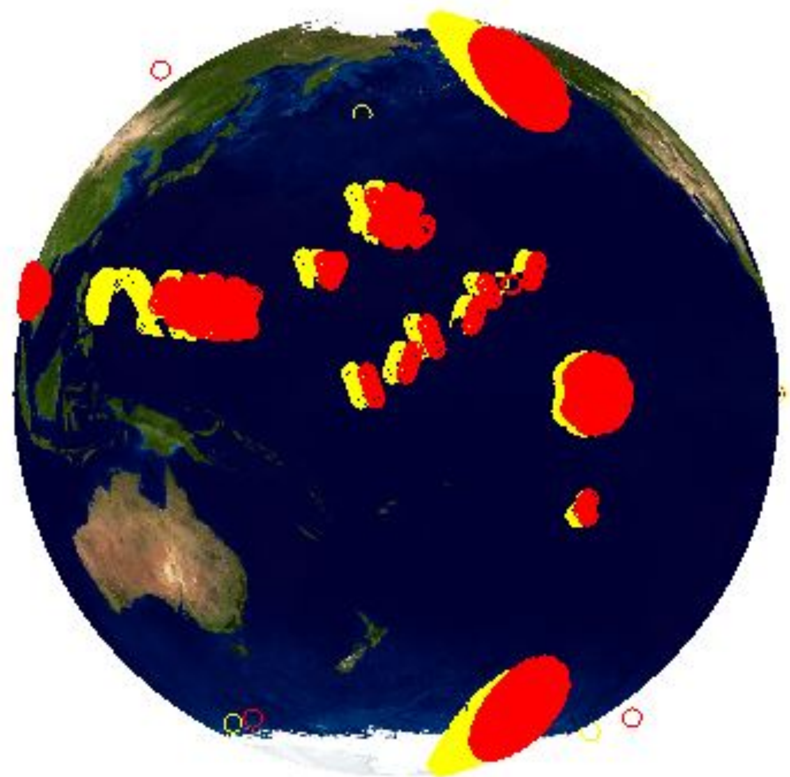


Space-based GPS collects mapped to Ground-based points.

68 deg / 350 km / 0.2 Hz / 1 Plane / 6 Satellites / 72 Hour Collection

Simulation: Applied in 3-D

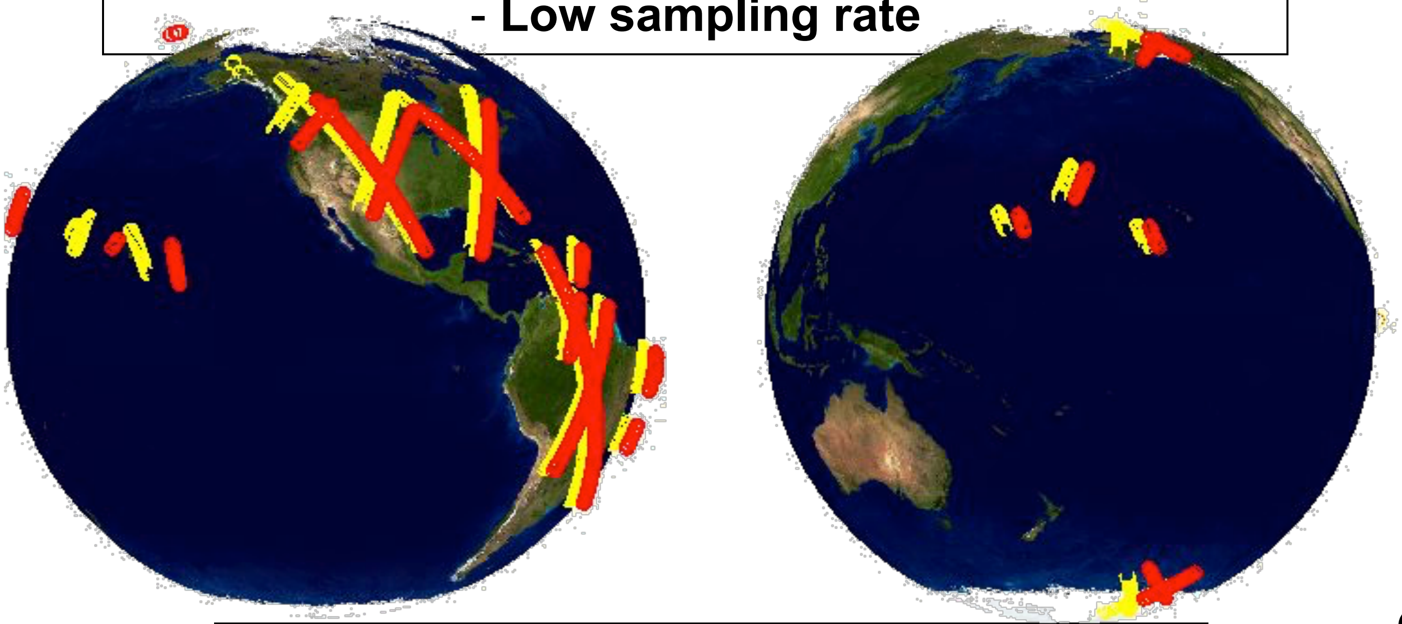
In 3D: Galaxy 28 Space-based GPS collects (Red) with ground trace map (Yellow)



In 3D: G-II Space-based GPS collects (Red) with ground trace map (Yellow)

Simulation: Less desirable…

Characteristics of a "Bad" collection:
-Not enough spacecraft
-Not enough collection duration (i.e. time)
-Directly repeating / harmonic ground traces
- Low sampling rate



Specs:

68 deg

350 km

0.2 Hz

1 Plane

1 Sat.

24 Hour Collection

"Can't Characterize Beam Shapes"
"Massive Gaps"
"Missing Beams"

Simulation: More desirable

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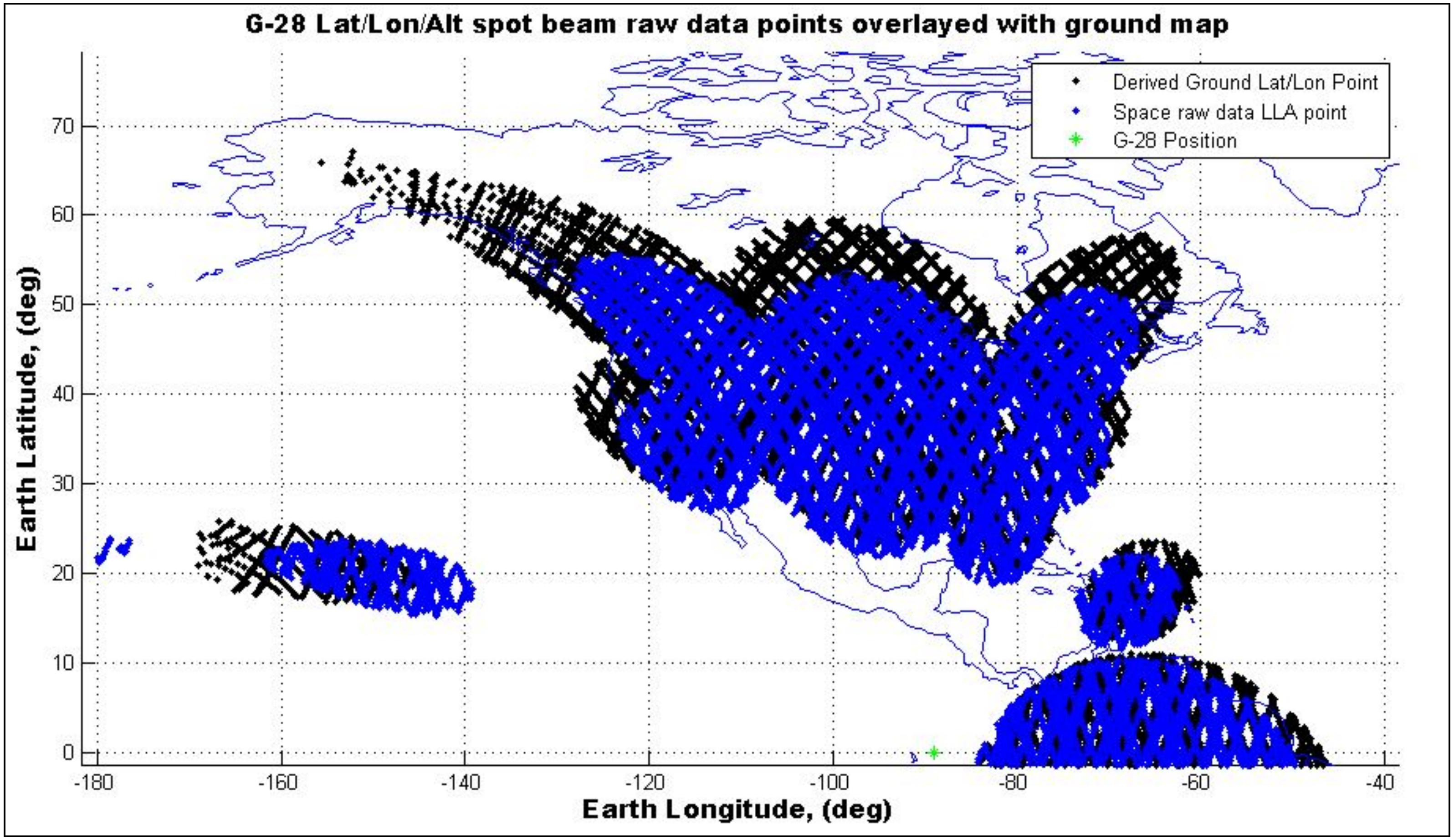
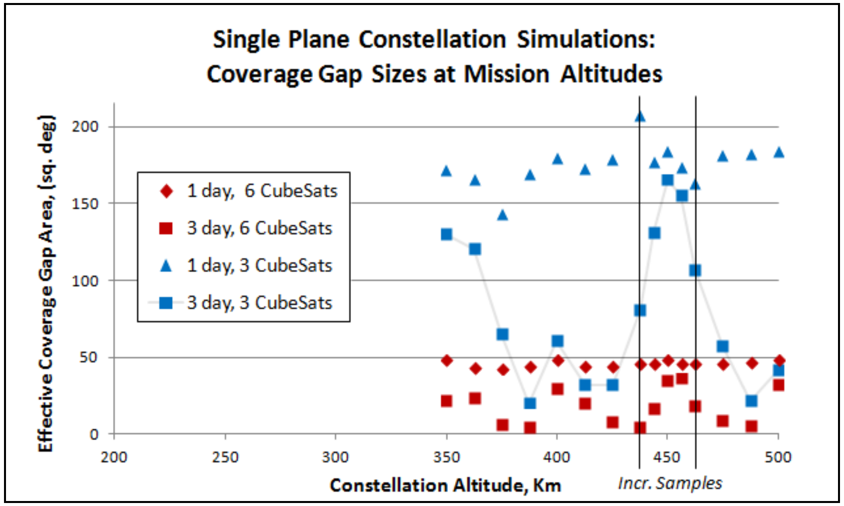
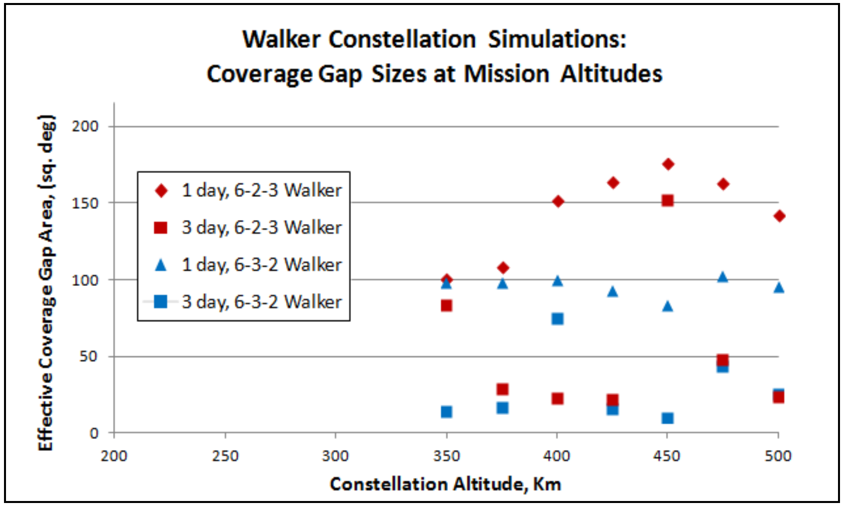


Shown: **350km / 68 deg / 6-3-2 Walker Delta / 3 Day Collection**

Simulation: Altitude Effects





Goal: Check gap size at mission altitudes

Observations / Main points:

- Altitude selection impacts capability

-Performance can be tailored…

- Some constellations more stable

- More satellites = generally better

- Caveat: Less sats => Need more time

- Repeating ground track…
  Bad for spot beam mapping

Simulation: Inclination Changes

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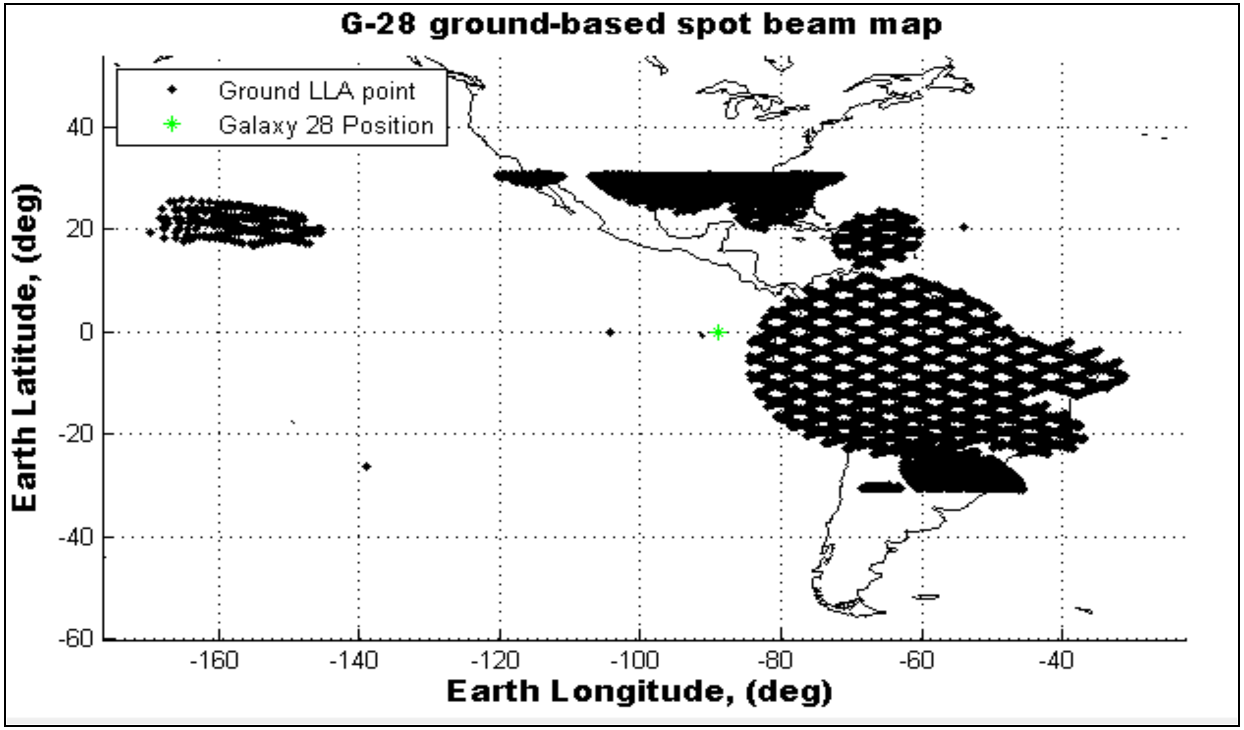

<u>Spot beam mapping at lower inclinations</u>

-Very good coverage for orbit region
-Shorter collection durations possible
- Cannot find beams at higher latitudes

Simulation: Inclination Changes

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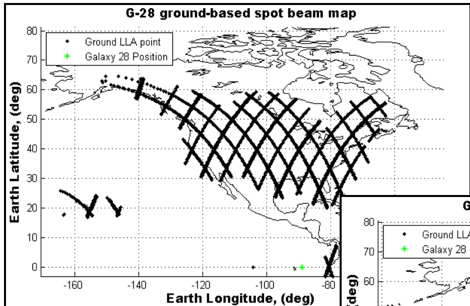
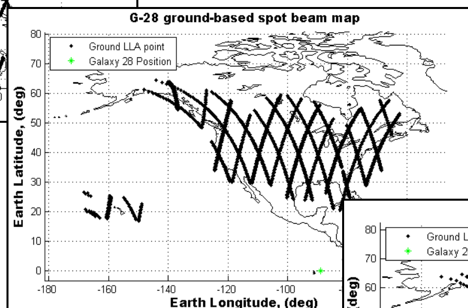
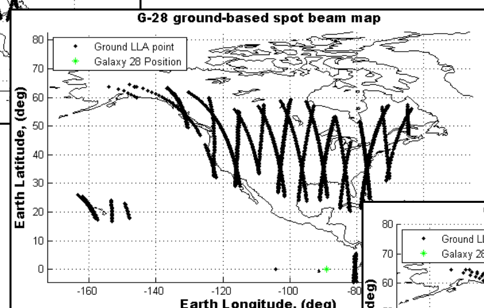


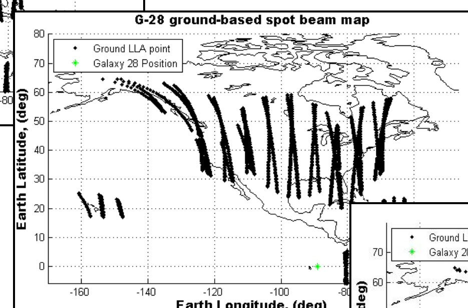
68 degrees



75 degrees

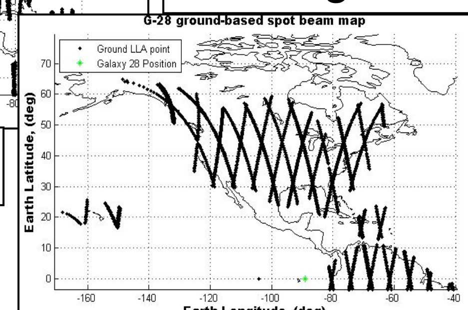


82 degrees



Polar

98 degrees



<u>Increasing inclination (up to polar):</u>

-Increases size of latitude gaps
-Can tailor longitude gaps
- Reduces overall "time in beam"

<u>Inclinations for beam mapping:</u>

-Lowest possible inclination
-Covers all desired latitudes

Simulation: Xmitter Position Knowledge

-- Position knowledge of the GEO transmitters

- Mandatory to generate accurate ground beam map
- Increased GEO position accuracy = increased ground accuracy

-- Option 1: *(Best)* Obtain GEO position information from other sources.

- Easy; No extra hardware required.
- Ground beam map derived from known transmitter location

-- Option 2: *(Complex)* Perform GEO-location on board the CubeSat

- Difficult; adds *stringent* attitude knowledge requirements
- Extra dedicated hardware likely needed
- Requires more data flow, increases demand for data storage

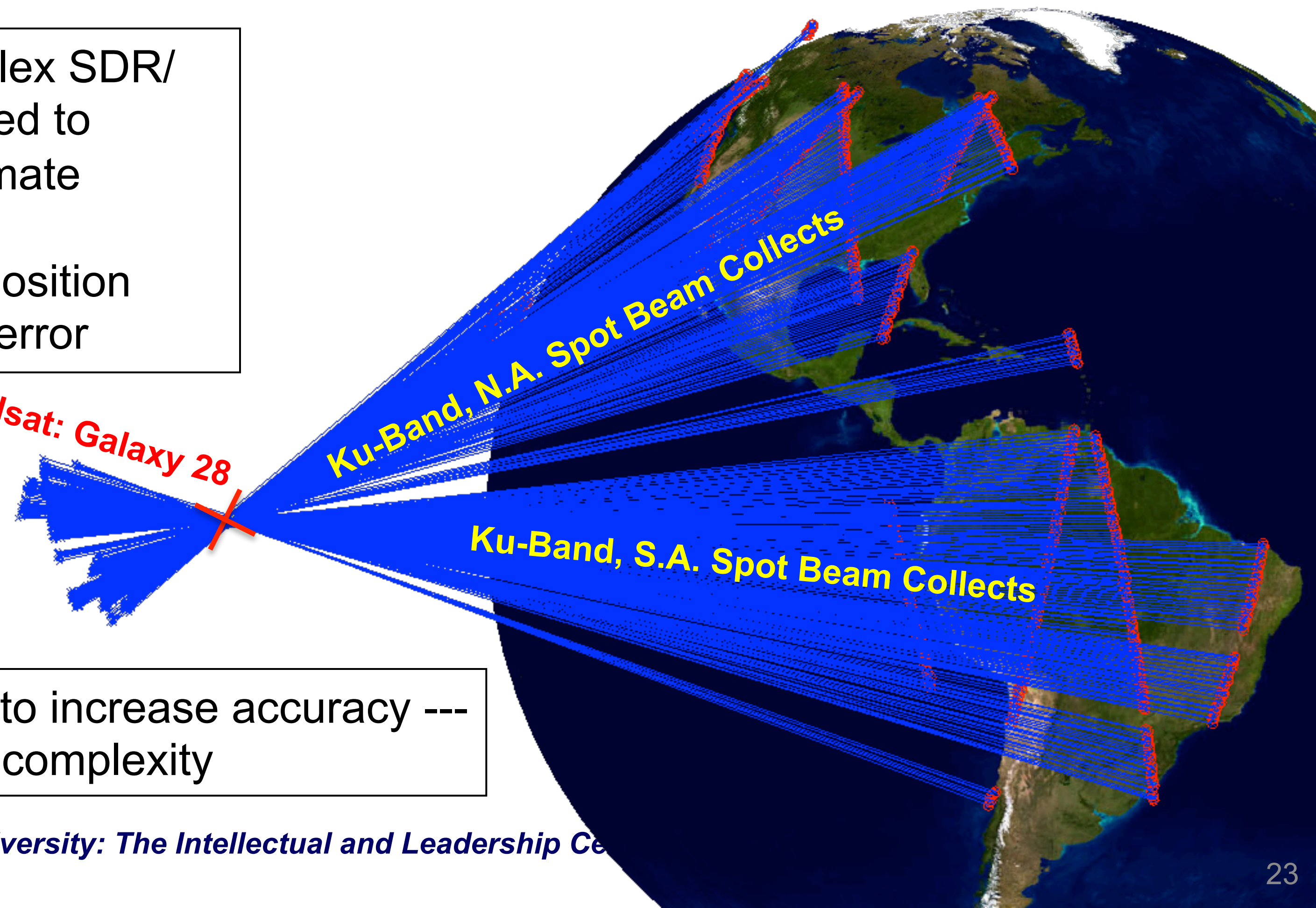
Simulation: Xmitter Position Knowledge

Option 2: Simulation of on-board GEO-location

i.e. If the CubeSat can draw Lines of Bearing to the Transmitter…

Parameters: 1 Sat / 450km alt / 0.2 hz sensor collect / minor sensor noise / 10m pos. error

- More difficult, complex SDR/ antennas likely needed to perform bearing estimate
- Error in estimated position correlates to ground error



- Could fly in clusters to increase accuracy --- adds too much risk & complexity

Simulation: GEO-Location

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Attitude Knowledge "noise" reduces GEO-location capability. (i.e. large error)

Ground trace mapping becomes inaccurate when transmitter position knowledge is poorly known

Kalman-filtering attitude data reduces this error, …even further w/SOA CubeSat sensors

Spot Beam Mapping: On the whole

-- Workable mission for CubeSat Platform

- Simulation tools developed – can generate maps for any constellation
- Best altitudes for established 6U configuration: 350 – 500 km
- Best case: Transmitter position known accurately
- Worst case: Generate angular estimate on board CubeSat

-- Constellation needed for "best" results

- 6+ evenly spaced CubeSats with my assumptions
- 6-3-2 Walker pattern was best from my data sets @ 450km / 68 deg
- Numerous configurations "work" – performance can be tailored.

-- Things to watch out for:

- Directly repeating ground tracks are undesirable
- Accuracy of Ground map at extreme latitudes / longitudes
- Transmitter position knowledge (i.e. the importance of)

Future Work

-- Optimization

- Incorporate tools developed to find best solution
- (Manual approach would take centuries)
- Requires more assumptions with no sponsor (i.e. cost)

-- CubeSat hardware / Subsystem Design & Dev.

- COTS sources vs. new
- Payload selection & supporting hardware
- Form factor trade-offs
- GEO position determination hardware “black-box”

-- Mission Design/Build/Test/Fly

- Would be interesting to compare orbit tests w/findings
- One issue with this “future work” is probably funding

Conclusion

- Background & Motivation
- Spot Beam Mapping Mission + OV-1
- Design of Mission Model
- Software Tools
- Developed Simulations & Results
- Features of Operation
- Conclusion / Future Work

Questions?

Backup Slides

- Mission Requirements
- Tracking Received Power
- Vehicle Profile Transition
- More Duration Information
- Results Format
- Simulation 3D
- Transmitter Position Knowledge
- Simulated Payload Sampling Rate
- More ADCS Information
- Geometry
- Ref. Equations
- References / Sources

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