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MISERS BLUFF ELECTROMAGNETIC PROPAGATION EXPERIMENTS

Vol II-Preliminary Results of the Laser Experiment

James G. Hawley

Alan A. Burns

SRI International

333 Ravenswood Avenue

Menlo Park, California 94025

1 October 1979

Topical Report for Period 1 October 1978-31 March 1979

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A three-wavelength laser radar was fielded at MIS	ERS BLUFF to measure back-
scatter and extinction values of an explosion-pro	
lengths of 0.532 µm, 1.06 µm, and 10.6 µm. These	
to military designers operating active optical sy and for the understanding of cloud dynamics.	scens in such an environment,
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Good-quality backscatter data at the three wavele	engths were obtained to $oldsymbol{L}$
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Wir writers

rthe second event. At early times, the attenuation in the MBII-2 cloud was greater than 144 dB for the 1.06-pm wavelength, and 124 dB and 70dB for the 0.532-pm and 10.6-pm wavelengths, respectively.

Further analysis will be required to assess the backscatter extinction for the three wavelengths. Comparisons will be made with millimeter-wave radar results and in-situ particle-sampling data.

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PREFACE

The material comprising this topical report is virtually the same as that to be published in the proceedings of the MISERS BLUFF Data Review Meeting, held in Albuquerque, NM, in March 1979. Because of the interest in our measurements, we have decided to publish these preliminary results as a separate entity.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	• • • • •		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	٠	•	1
LIST OF	ILLUSTRATION	s.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	3
LIST OF	TABLES		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		3
I	INTRODUCTION		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		5
II	EXPERIMENT .		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8
III	EXPERIMENTAL	RES	UL:	rs	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	13
IV	CONCLUSIONS		• .		•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	21
REFEREN	CES		_	_	_				_	_	_	_	_	_	_		_	_	_	_	_			22

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1	Optical Wavelengths Relevant to Project MISERS BLUFF	6
2	Laser-Experiment-System Block Diagram	10
3	MBII-1 Lidar Data at 0.53 μ m, Intensity as a Function of Range and Time, T + 1 min through T + 11 min	14
4	MBII-2 Lidar Data, Intensity as a Function of Range and Time, T = 0 through T + 2 min	17
5	MBII-2 Lidar Data, Intensity as a Function of Range and Time, $T+2$ min through $T+4$ min	18
6	MBII-2 Lidar Data, Intensity as a Function of Range and Time, $T + 14$ min through $T + 16$ min	19
	LIST OF TABLES	
1	Laser Parameters	11
2	Receiver Parameters	12

I INTRODUCTION

During Project MISERS BLUFF, SRI International fielded a threewavelength autotracking lidar to measure the volume backscatter and the extinction coefficients of the explosion-produced dust cloud. These data are relevant to two fields: cloud development, and the operation of active optical systems in the battlefield environment.

This was one of four experiments fielded by SRI International for MISERS BLUFF. The others are described and discussed in separate reports. $^1,^2$

Both MISERS BLUFF II tests took place at the Planet Ranch test site on the dry bed of the Bill Williams River near Lake Havasu City, Arizona. The first test, MISERS BLUFF II-1 (MBII-1), which was a 120-ton ammonium nitrate and fuel oil (ANFO) detonation, took place at 1300 MST on 28 June 1978. The second test, MBII-2, consisted of the simultaneous detonation of six such 120-ton ANFO charges uniformly spaced on the periphery of a 100-m-radius circle. This test took place at 1100 MST on 30 August 1978. Although the primary objective of the MBII tests was the study of ground motions in a multiple-burst environment in support of the MX program, the tests provided a good opportunity to measure dust effects as well. Our experiments were added and were conducted on a noninterference basis.

Three lidar wavelengths (see Figure 1) were used to assess the effect of cloud-particle size distributions on the extinction and scattering properties of the cloud. In addition, the laser results will be compared with the millimeter-wave radar results to provide cloud-particle size information as a function of time and cloud morphology. The lidar and radar experiments are in many ways complementary.

 $^{^{\}star}$ All references are listed at the end of the report.

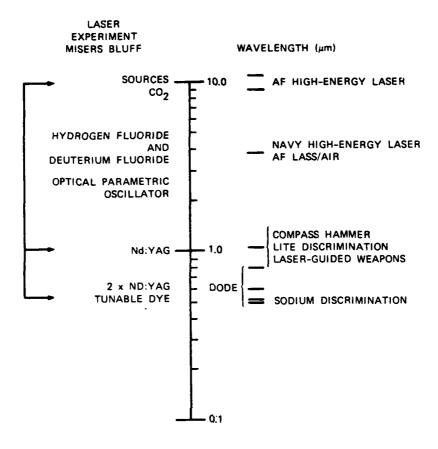


FIGURE 1 OPTICAL WAVELENGTHS RELEVANT TO PROJECT MISERS BLUFF

The other important objective of the laser experiment is the provision of experimental information useful to designers of military systems incorporating designators, rangefinders, and high-energy lasers. The 1.06- μ m wavelength from the Nd:YAG laser is now becoming the most widespread designator source in the military inventory. The other designator/rangefinder wavelengths are 0.9 μ m and 0.7 μ m-emanating from the GaAs and ruby lasers. The 0.532- μ m wavelength in the SRI experiment was generated by frequency-doubling the output of the Nd:YAG. This bracketed the wavelengths covering the wavelengths of the designator/rangefinder and the peak of the human-eye response (0.55 μ m). The appropriate military systems operating at these wavelengths are LITE, COMPASS HAMMER, sodium discrimination, and the DODE optical intelligence system.

The 10.6 μm laser experiment at MISERS BLUFF was important because it extends the wavelength region spanned from 1.06 μm to 10.6 μm . Most notable of the systems using this range of wavelength are the Air Force HEL system (CO₂ laser at 10.6 μm), and the Air Force and Navy DF laser systems at 3.8 μm .

It was expected that a $10.6-\mu m$ laser would penetrate the cloud better than the shorter wavelengths. The higher density of smaller particles should favor transmission of the longer wavelengths, including millimeterwave radars. Because of the soil characteristics, the MISERS BLUFF dust clouds may have had an unusually large proportion of small particles.

II EXPERIMENT

In order to study the cloud for backscatter and extinction, the following requirements must be met:

- (1) Adequate sensitivity at three wavelengths
- (2) Collinear beams
- (3) Scan capability
 Elevation axis = 45°
 Azimuth azis = 180°
- (4) Collocated receivers for all three wavelengths
- (5) Flyable and fixed retroreflector arrays.

The experimental approach requires that both extinction and backscatter be measured simultaneously. For example, the lidar equation (a variant of the well-known radar equation) is

$$P_{r}(R) = P_{t} \frac{A_{r}(\frac{c\tau}{2}) \beta_{\pi}(R) \left(e^{xp} - 2 \int_{0}^{r} \alpha(r) dr\right)}{R^{2}} + P_{BKG}$$

where P_r , P_t = Received and transmitted output powers

 A_r = Receiver area

R = Range from the lidar

 $(c\tau/2)$ = Laser pulse spatial extent, with τ = laser pulse width, and c = speed of light

 β_{π} (R) = Volume backscatter coefficient

 $\alpha(r)$ = Extinction coefficient

 P_{BKG} = Power due to background.

Extinction was measured by monitoring the echoes from a retroreflector array located on Black Mesa, 1.4 km beyond ground zero away from the lasers. After the wind moved the cloud transversely and uncovered the

array, the helicopter-borne retroreflector was directed behind the cloud. The helicopter, moving under ground control instructions, was directed to cover as much of the cloud as possible. It was expected that tracking the helicopter array manually would be extremely difficult. Therefore, an autotracker system was built as an adjunct to the lidar.

The system block diagram is given in Figure 2. The system is housed in a 40-ft-long van. The lidar optics, consisting of the laser and the twin telescope receivers, stand on a framework extending down through the floor of the van and resting on the ground. The optical system filled the back two-thirds of the van. The autotracker and the electronics for the data transmission to the radar van, occupied the front third.

The laser system consisted of a pulsed Nd:YAG laser and a high-power pulsed Transverse-Electrical-Atmospheric (TEA) CO $_2$ laser. The 1.06- μ m output of the Nd:YAG laser was frequency doubled to 0.532 μ m using a KD*P-Type-II doubler (see Table 1). The remaining 1.06- μ m radiation was transmitted collinearly and in synchronism with the 0.532 μ m radiation. The third wavelength, at 10.6 μ m, was brought together with the former two beams, by using a special mirror with a central hole. That is, the 1.06/0.532- μ m radiation was introduced through a 15-mm hole in the back while the 10.6- μ m radiation was reflected from the front surface at 45°. The 10.6- μ m radiation emanates from an unstable resonator laser cavity so that in the near field there is no energy in the central region. The hole-in-mirror technique allowed an elegant solution in constructing a three-wavelength laser experiment using widely varying wavelengths.

The three wavelengths were directed out of the van and collinearly with receiver field-of-view by using a series of mirrors in the Coudé configuration. The receivers consisted of a 16-inch-diameter Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope mounted in the az/el configuration and a 12-inch Newtonian mounted alongside. The 16-inch telescope was used for collection of the $1.06/0.532-\mu m$ radiation, while the Newtonian telescope was used for collection of $10.6-\mu m$ radiation. The detector package for the $1.06/0.532-\mu m$ radiation was situated at the Cassegrain focus. A dichroic

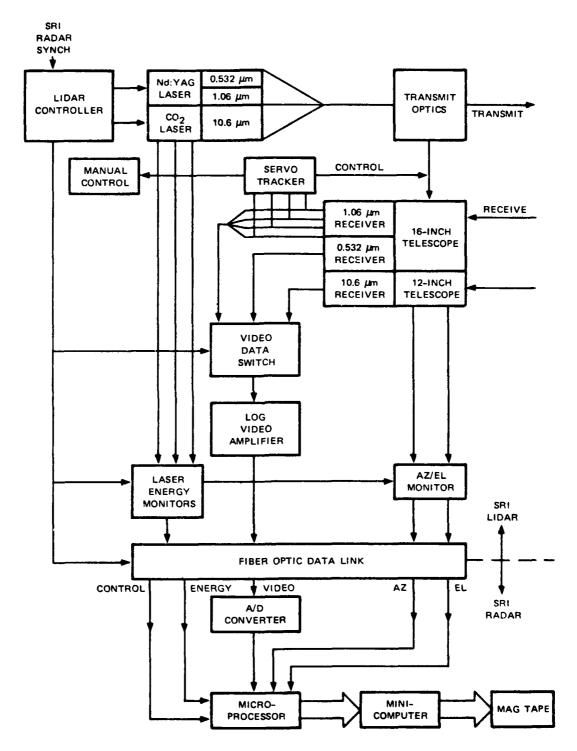


FIGURE 2 LASER EXPERIMENT SYSTEM BLOCK DIAGRAM

Table 1
LASER PARAMETERS

	Nd:YAC	Laser	CO ₂ Laser
Wavelength	1.06 µm	'0.532 μm	10.6 μ m (Multiline)
Energy per pulse	150 mJ	50 mJ	1-2 J (MBII-1) 0.3 J (MBII-2)
Pulsewidth	10 ns	8 ns	200 ns (MBII-1) 75 ns (MBII-2)
PRF	10 Hz	10 Hz	0.25 Hz (MBII-1) 1 Hz (MBII-2)
Divergence (10 dB below peak)	1 mrad	1 mrad	1.2 mrad

beam splitter directed the received beams to the appropriate detectors. The receiver parameters are given in Table 2.

The autotracking system was constructed to enable the lidar to follow the helicopter-borne retroreflector at long ranges behind the cloud when manual tracking could not be done. The standard monopulse-radar technique was used. Error signals to the tracking motors were generated by the 1.06- μ m 4-quadrant receiver. A narrow gate provided range tracking. A boresighted TV camera with a telephoto lens filtered for viewing at 1.06 μ m, enabled manual tracking.

The stationary retroreflector array consisted of 12 front-surface-mirror corner cubes each 5 inches in diameter. When the 1.06- μ m experiment was added to the overall laser experiment, an all-reflective array was required rather than a Scotchlite target, which uses the refractive properties of plastics to retroreflect light. The helicopter-borne reflector consisted of 12 retroreflectors spaced equally distant from each other on the surface sphere (icosahedral arrangement). The motion of the array, which hung free beneath the helicopter, allowed the returns from the retroreflectors to be averaged.

Table 2
RECEIVER PARAMETERS

	Wavelength 1.06 μm	Wavelength 0.532 μm	Wavelength 10.6 μm
Telescope	l6-inch Schmidt- Cassegrain l76-inch focal length	16-inch Schmidt- Cassegrain 176-inch focal length	12-inch Newtonian 36-inch focal length
Detector	Silicon pin diode, quadrant array with integral preamps	Photomultiplier Gain = 10 ⁴ S-20 response	$Hg-Cd-Te$ $D* = 1.1 \times 10^{10}$ cm $Hz^{1/2}/W$ 1 mm diameter
Filter	5.0 nm at 1.064 nm T = 65%	0.23 nm at 0.5323 nm T = 30%	None
Field of view	1.9 mrad	1.9 mrad	3.0 mrad

Data from the receivers were fed through a video log amplifier and then fed (via optical-fiber data links) to the SRI radar van for digitization and storage on tape. A microprocessor handled the interlacing of lidar data, with radar data, so that the same A/D converter could be used for both. Housekeeping data, such as azimuth, elevation, laser energy, which laser data was being recorded, and certain status bits were transmitted over parallel fiber-optic data links. The 1.06- μ m and 0.532- μ m returns were recorded, alternatively, each 100 ms, and the 10.6- μ m return was inserted into the data stream each second.

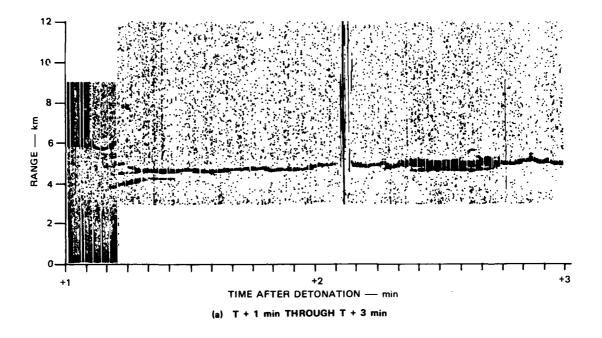
III EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

The SRI laser experiment was fielded at the Planet Range site, two weeks before MBII-1. The experiment was readied in the remaining time. Many tests were performed with the helicopter-borne retroreflector, to optimize the tracker. The tracker seemed to work well, locking onto stationary targets such as the retroreflector array atop Black Mesa, but did not maintain lock while tracking the helicopter.

Because of high winds at event time, the MBII-1 cloud did not occult the retroreflector array; therefore, we immediately began to manually scan the cloud. All wavelengths (0.532 μ m, 1.06 μ m, and 10.6 μ m) were operational. Figure 3 gives range-time intensity plots (RTI) of the received echoes from the cloud for the 0.532- μ m wavelength for the first 11 minutes after detonation. The main cloud was optically thick but there were other, thinner clouds situated about 0.75 km in front of the main cloud. These are probably caused by ground shocks ejecting dust far from the main event. These same clouds, rising from the desert floor, can be observed on photographs.

The MBII-1 cloud was scanned for about 20 min, while we attempted to acquire the helicopter track. This was very difficult, so only one track was undertaken--at about T+25 min. Because of the high winds aloft (≈ 35 knots), the cloud quickly moved beyond the 16-km maximum range of the laser experiment.

Just before MBII-2, the field team again set up the laser experiment--this time concentrating on calibrations and beam-pattern measurements. More tracking work was undertaken with the helicopter-borne retroreflector, but the results were disappointing. The helicopter-borne array was designed to exhibit at least one corner cube at all angles; however, at longer ranges, the waiting time between consecutive echoes caused the autotracker to hunt and then totally lose track. That is, the combination of the intensity of the return and the sampling interval was inadequate



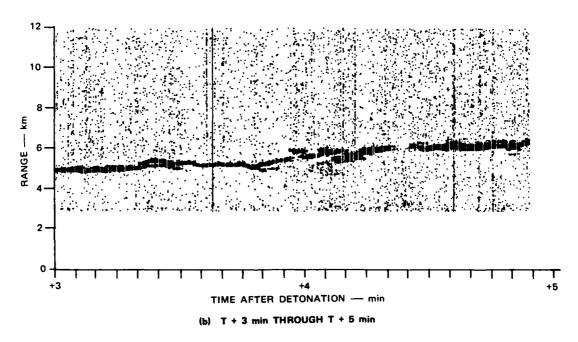
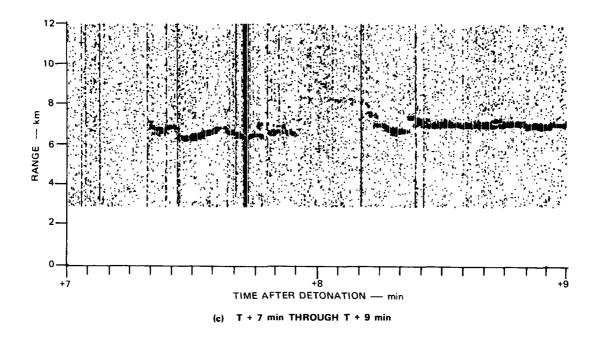


FIGURE 3 MBII-1 LIDAR DATA AT 0.53 μm , INTENSITY AS A FUNCTION OF RANGE AND TIME



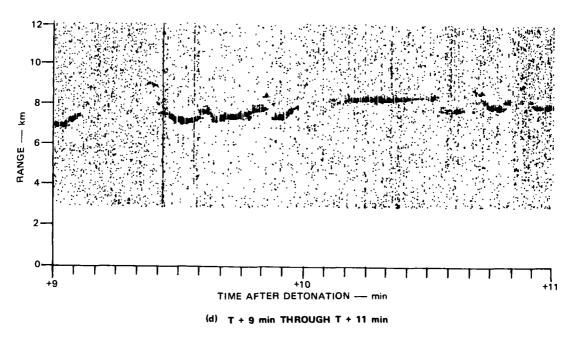


FIGURE 3 (Concluded)

to allow consistent tracking. Only one or two of the twelve retroreflectors were illuminated by the lasers at any one time.

The MBII-2 dust cloud rose and occulted the fixed retroreflector array for 3 min. At T + 2 min, the lasers were still pointed at the fixed array--at the stem of the dust cloud. At T + 3 min, the stem, which was moving to the northwest, uncovered the array. Figures 4 and 5 show the preliminary RTI plot for all wavelengths from T - 0 to T + 4 min.

Apparently, all three wavelength echoes from the retroreflector array came back into view at approximately the same time. (However, there may have been a data recording problem at 10.6 μ m.) Further data analysis, using the appropriate calibrations, is needed to determine the ability of the three wavelengths to penetrate the cloud at around T + 3 min.

During the occultation period, only the <u>minimum</u> attenuation can be deduced. Preshot measurements of the signal return of the retroreflector echoes had to be attenuated enough to fall in the linear region of the detector system. The maximum values of signal-to-noise ratio that the SRI laser experiment could accommodate from a two-way retroreflected laser pulse through the MBII-2 cloud at early times are as follows:

Wavelength	SNR
0.532 µm	124 dB
1.06 $\mu\mathrm{m}$	104 dB
10.6 μm	70 dB

During the period T+4 min to T+6 min, the cloud was scanned manually while the helicopter pilot was instructed to fly out from a hover position over the Planet Ranch air strip. This strategy, while taking a little longer, assured acquisition of the helicopter track from the start. The helicopter was tracked from T+8 min to T+15 min. Most tracking was done manually. Figure 6 shows the echoes from the helicopter when it was positioned behind the cloud, for transmission measurements at the three wavelengths. A second helicopter track was undertaken at T+35 min. In both cases, track was broken when the operator

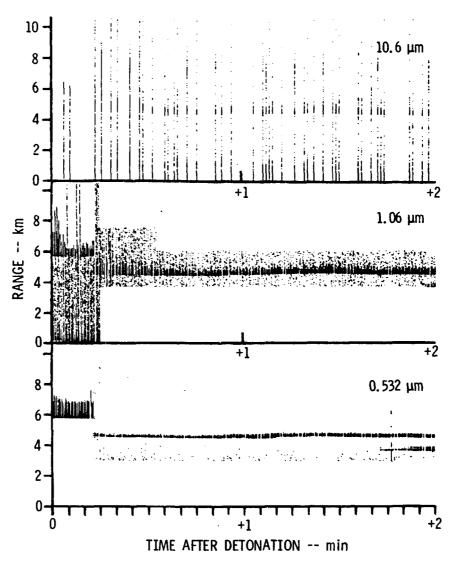


FIGURE 4 MBII-2 LIDAR DATA, INTENSITY AS A FUNCTION OF RANGE AND TIME, $T_{\rm o}$ THROUGH T + 2 min

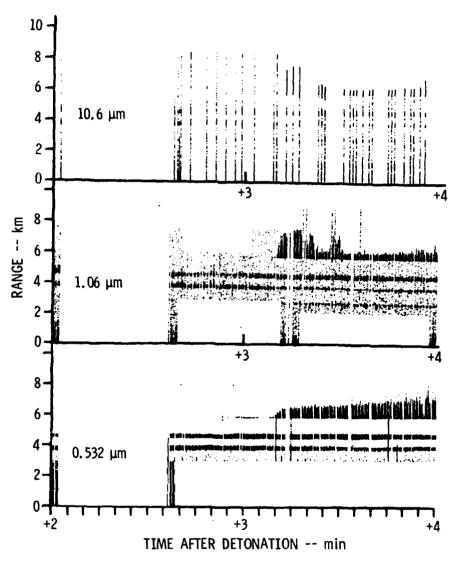


FIGURE 5 MBII-2 LIDAR DATA, INTENSITY AS A FUNCTION OF RANGE AND TIME, T + 2 min THROUGH T + 4 min

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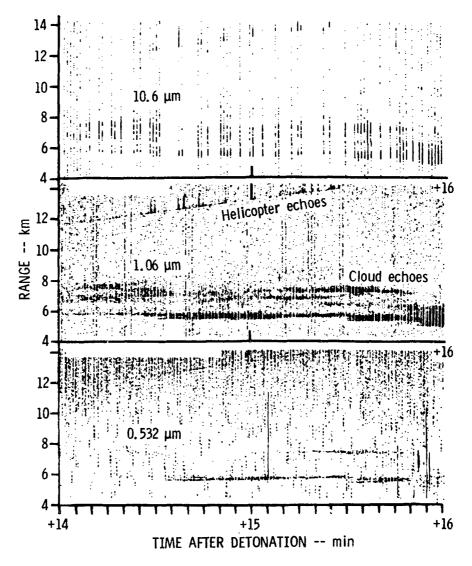


FIGURE 6 MBII-2 LIDAR DATA, INTENSITY AS A FUNCTION OF RANGE AND TIME, T + 14 min THROUGH T + 16 min

viewing the helicopter in the TV screen could no longer see it because of the cloud. Backscatter from the cloud was still quite strong.

IV CONCLUSIONS

The results so far show that the optical attenuation for the MBII-2 event at early times was deeper than 104 dB for the 1.06- μ m wavelength, and 124 dB and 70 dB for the 0.532- μ m and 10.6- μ m wavelengths, respectively. Optically thin clouds situated from hundreds of meters to several kilometers from the main event were associated with the event and were probably caused by shock waves. Further processing of the laser data to correct for system response will have to be performed to assess the meaning of the data across all three wavelengths.

A mathematical technique is being investigated to estimate the volume backscatter coefficient when the extinction coefficient is known. It is expected that an iterative technique will be applied to the coefficients so that they converge to physically realizable values. A comparison of the coefficients at the three wavelengths will be compared with in-situ particle-size data, as well as millimeter-wave radar data where appropriate.

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