THE GOES-R GLM LIGHTNING JUMP ALGORITHM (LJA): RESEARCH TO OPERATIONAL ALGORITHM

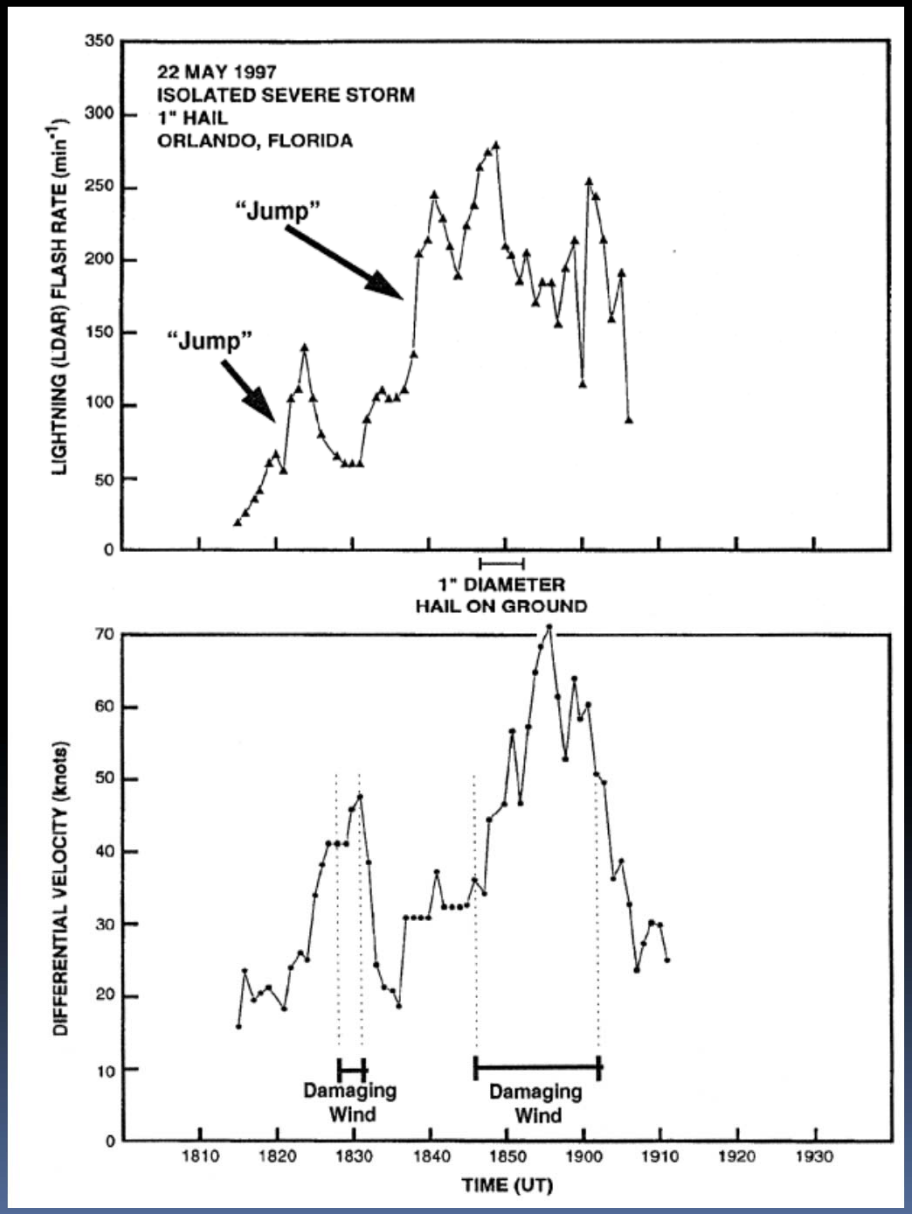
Larry Carey[1], Chris Schultz[1,2], Dan Cecil[2], Monte Bateman[3], Geoffrey Stano[4], Kristin Calhoun[5], Tom Filiaggi[6], Steve Goodman[7]

[1] *Department of Atmospheric Science, UAHuntsville*
[2] *NASA MSFC*
[3] *USRA/NASA MSFC*
[4] *ENSCO/NASA SPoRT*
[5] *OU CIMMS/NOAA NSSL*
[6] NWS–OST–MDL
[7] *NOAA NESDIS*

Goal of LJA Project

- Objective - To refine, adapt and demonstrate the LJA for transition to GOES-R GLM (Geostationary Lightning Mapper) readiness and to establish a path to operations
  - Ongoing work – reducing risk in GLM lightning proxy, cell tracking, LJA algorithm automation, and data fusion (e.g., radar + lightning).

The Lightning Jump Concept



- Several studies in the past have correlated increases in total flash rates within a storm to severe weather occurrence , e.g.,
  - Goodman et al. 1988
  - Williams et al. 1989
  - Williams et al. 1999
  - Schultz et al. (2009)
  - Gatlin and Goodman (2010)
- The correlation is between the following
  - Updraft strength and modulation of electrification
  - Updraft strength and ability to produce severe and hazardous weather.

Recent LJA Work

- Schultz et al. (2011) recently demonstrated the feasibility of the 2σ lightning jump algorithm (LJA) on a large sample of 711 thunderstorms (severe and non-severe) from across the country.
- POD 79%, FAR 36%, CSI 55%, HSS 0.71.
  - Avg. Lead time 20.65 minutes +/- 15.05 minutes
- Schultz et al. (2009, 2011) used native LMA total lightning and TITAN cell tracking, with manual changes when needed
  - Storm splits, mergers
  - Cells change shape/size

TABLE 2. Breakdown of thunderstorm sample by type.

Type	Supercell	Airmass/Multicell	Tropical	Linear	Cold	Low Top
severe	82	73	5	47	38	10
nonsevere	12	387	4	24	18	11
number	94	460	9	71	56	21
number of severe wx events	343	128	8	135	149	18

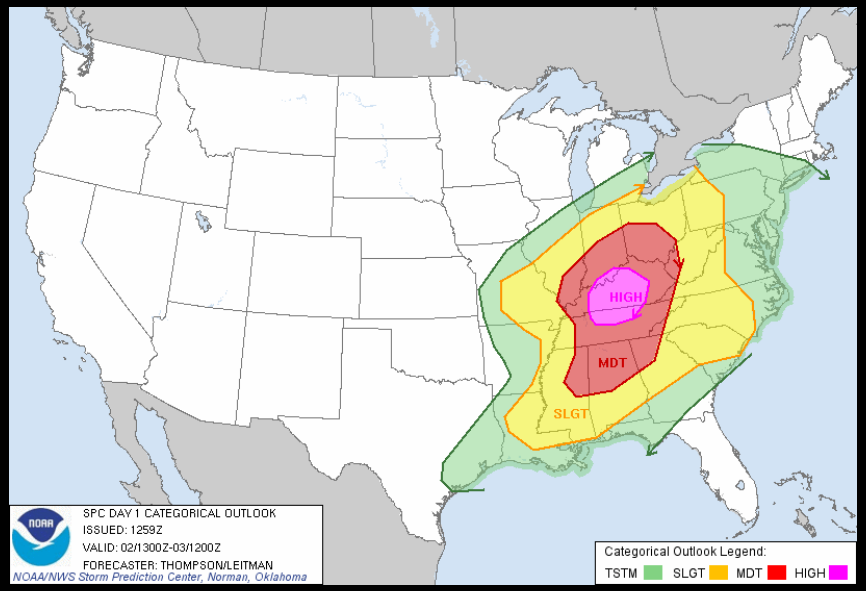
Real Time Situation Awareness Utility

- The LJA Can:
  - Indicate when an updraft is strengthening or weakening on shorter timescales than current radar and satellite
  - Identify when severe or hazardous weather potential has increased
  - "Tip the scales" on whether or not to issue a severe warning
- The LJA Cannot:
  - Predict severe weather potential in every severe storm environment.
  - Discern severe weather types
    - i.e., a certain jump does not mean there will be a certain type of severe weather
  - Issue specific types of severe warnings

March 2, 2012

- "…MS/AL/GA LATE THIS AFTERNOON INTO TONIGHT… THE MOIST/UNSTABLE WARM SECTOR IS ALREADY ESTABLISHED ACROSS THE GULF COAST STATES THIS MORNING. THIS AREA WILL REMAIN A LITTLE S OF THE STRONGEST DEEP-LAYER FLOW…AND THE STRONGEST LLJ CORE WILL DEVELOP NEWD TO THE OH VALLEY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE UPPER JET STREAK AND SURFACE CYCLONE. STILL…INSTABILITY AND VERTICAL SHEAR WILL BE FAVORABLE FOR SUPERCELLS WITHIN IN ONE OR MORE BANDS OF CONVECTION ALONG AND AHEAD OF THE COLD FRONT BEGINNING LATER THIS AFTERNOON AND CONTINUING INTO TONIGHT. RISKS WILL INCLUDE A FEW TORNADOES…DAMAGING WINDS…AND LARGE HAIL THROUGH TONIGHT."

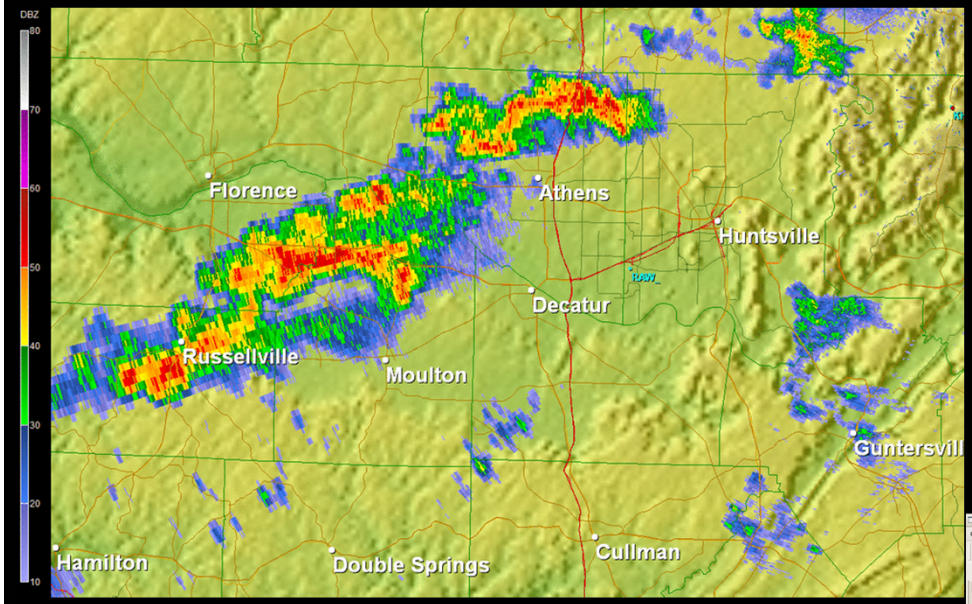
SPC 13Z outlook



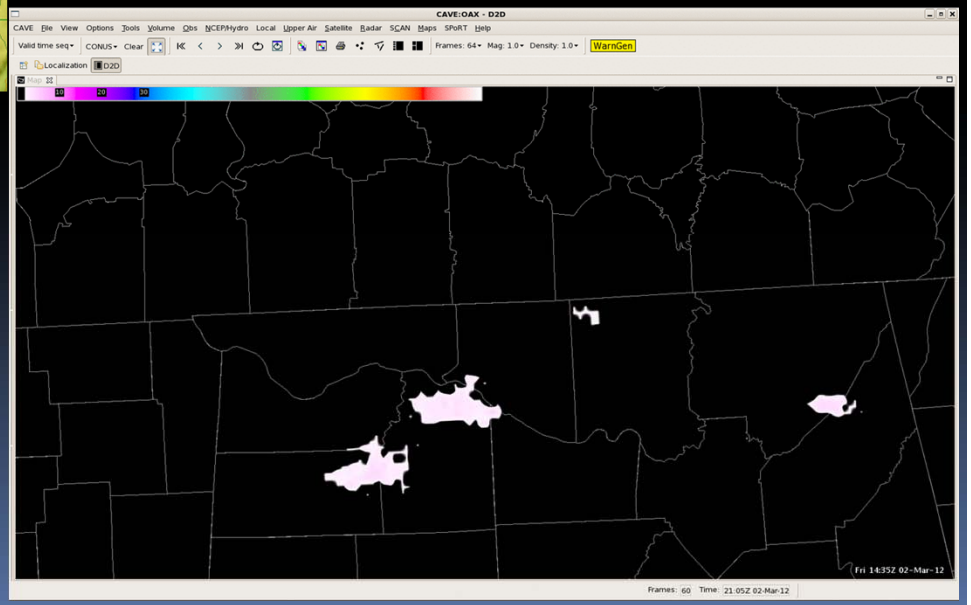
Main threat for AL targeted for the afternoon in association with trailing front

1432 – 1452 UTC

KHTX (every 5 minutes)



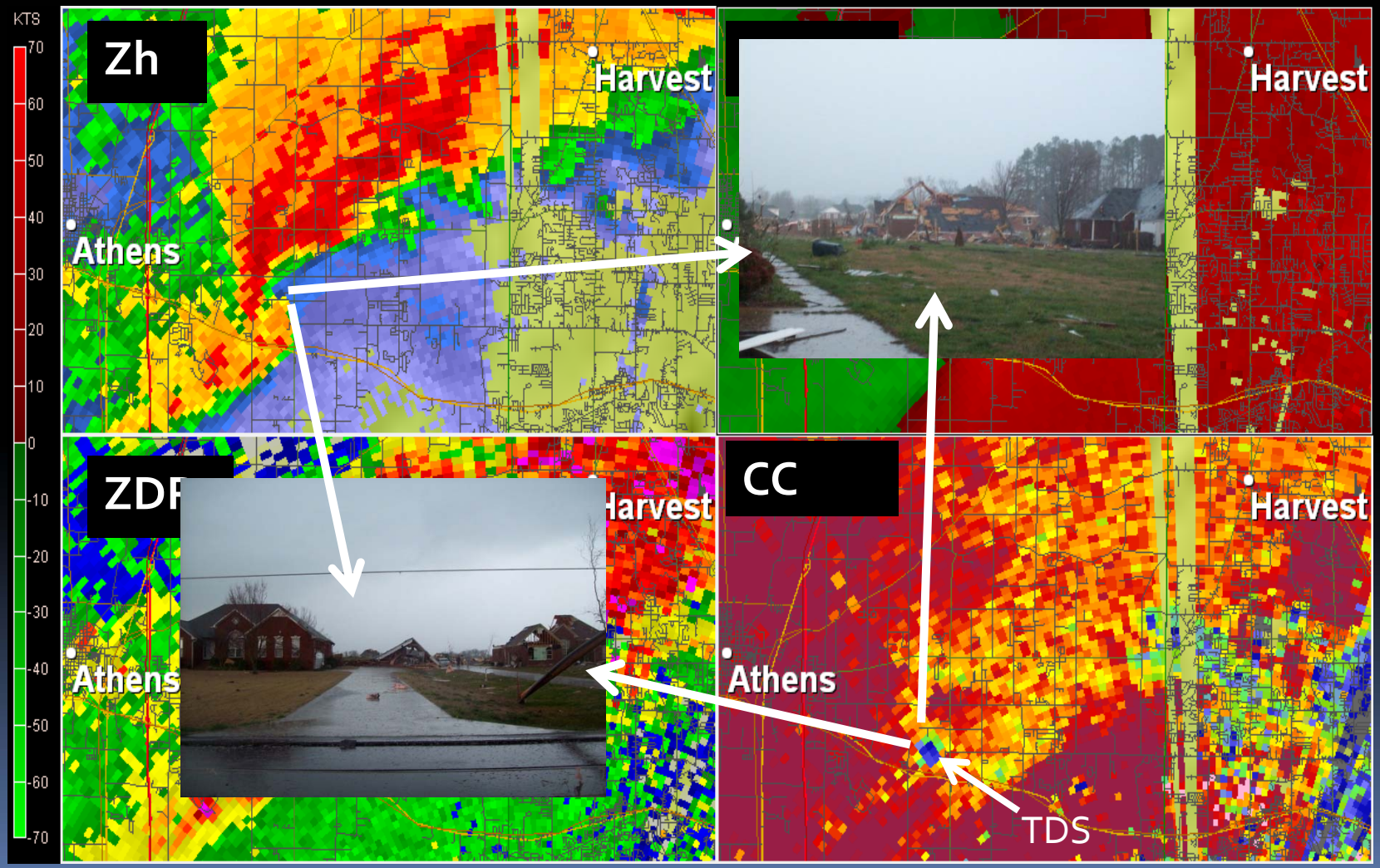
NALMA FED (every 2 minutes)



Lightning jump "tips the scale"

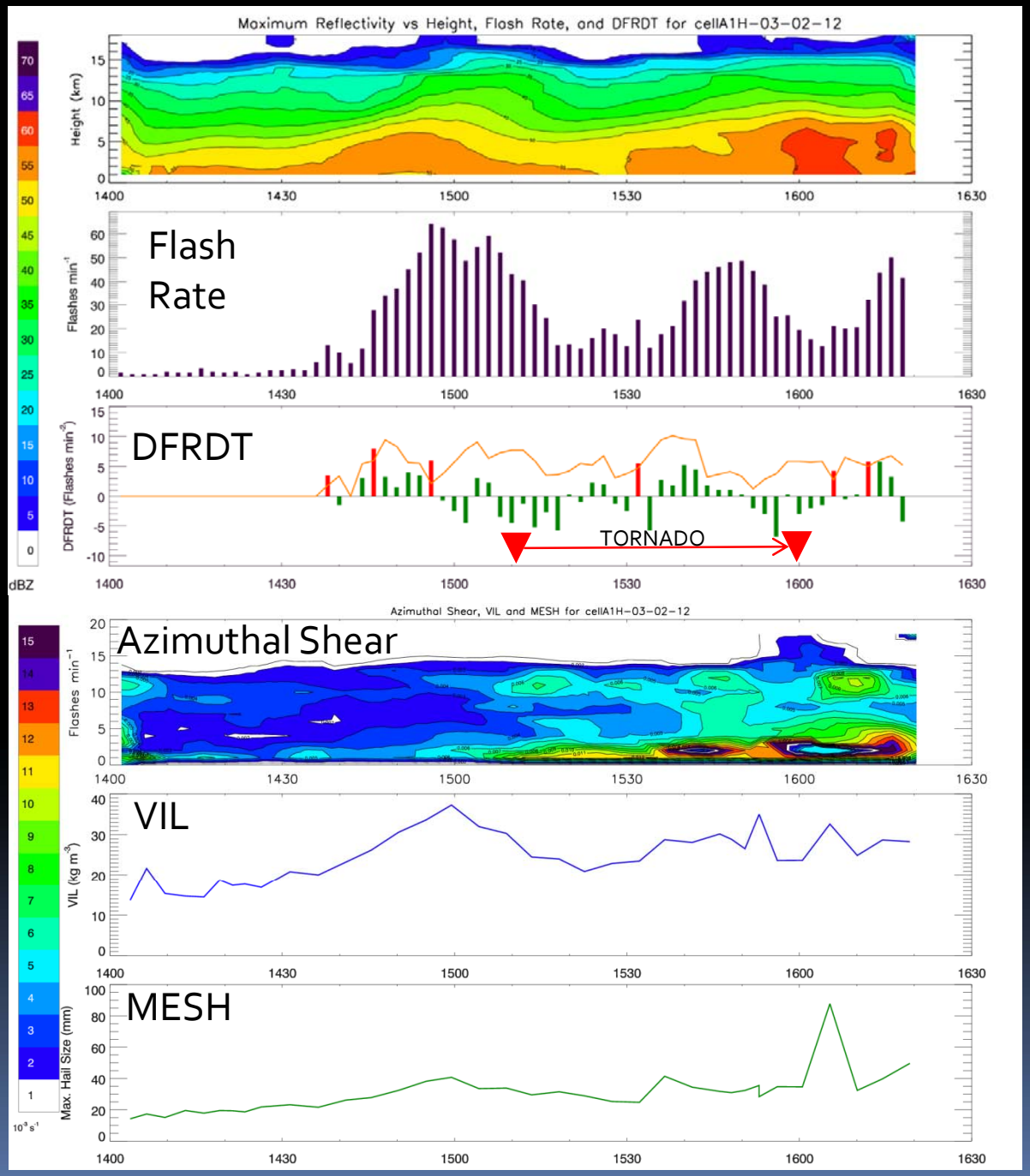
1451 UTC – NWS Huntsville Issues Warning
- Forecaster notes increase in lightning
- First reports of severe weather 1520 UTC
- Debris signature observed on ARMOR at 1513 UTC
- Lead time on event 19 minutes (touchdown 1510)

ARMOR 1517 UTC 3/2/2012



Lightning Jump, lightning rates, and comparisons to radar derived products, March 2, 2012

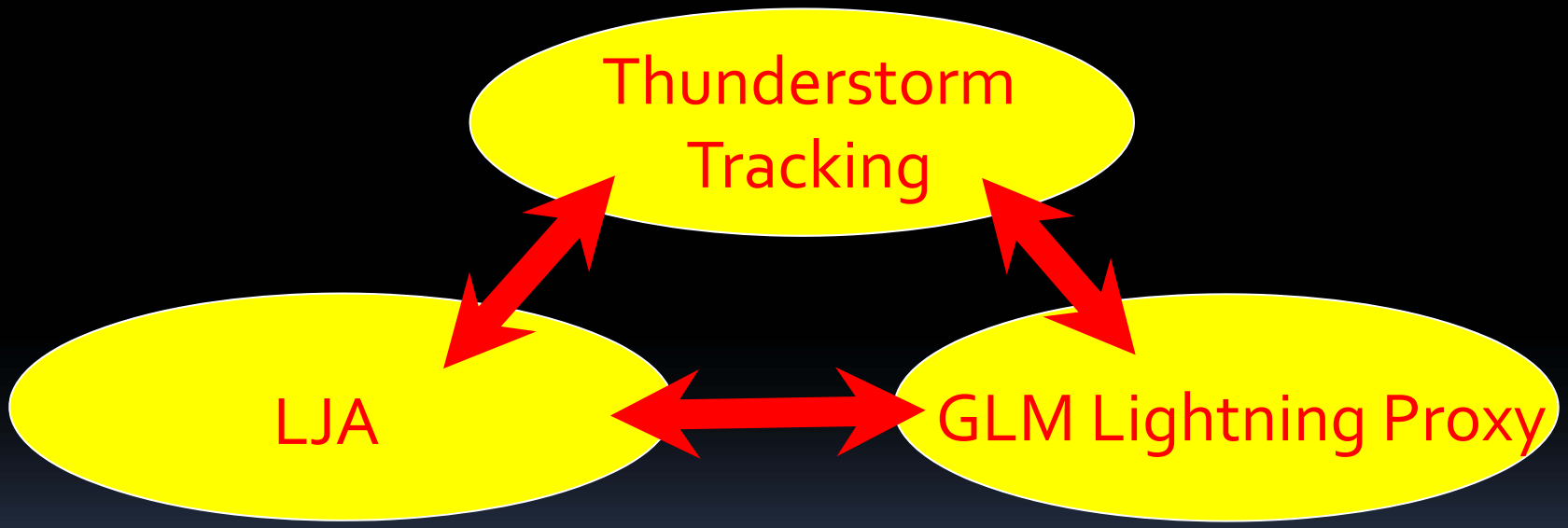
Top – Reflectivity
2 down – total flash rate
Middle – DFRDT, LJ
4 down – VIL trend
Bottom – MESH trend



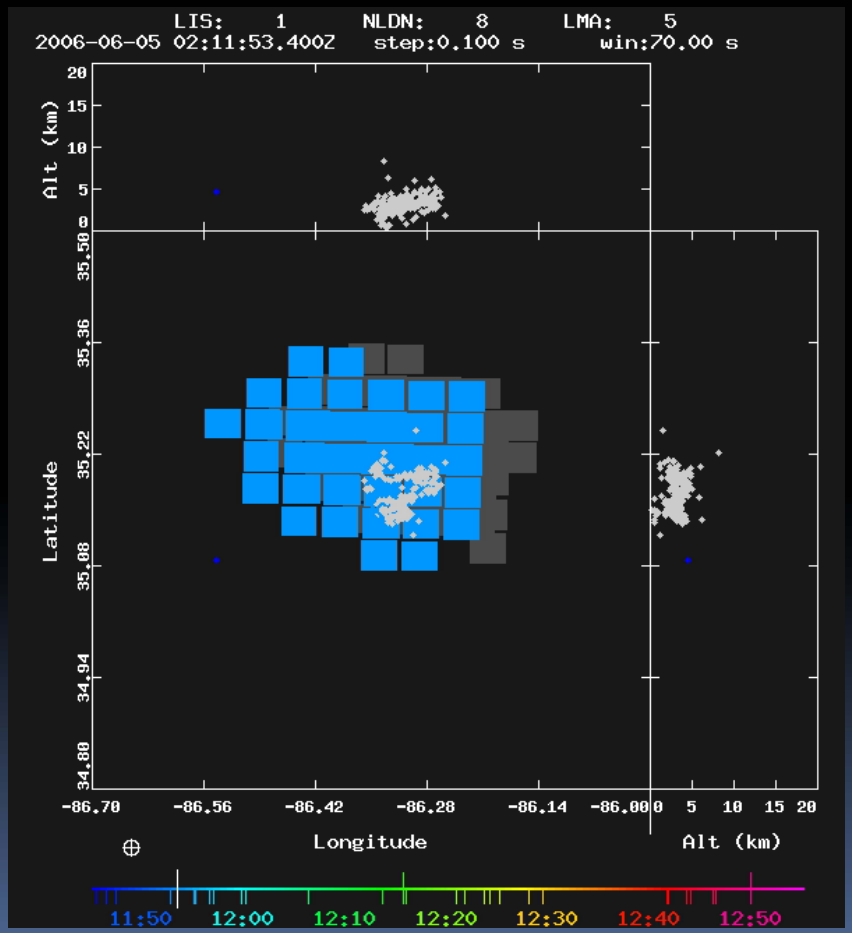
More Feedback from Users

- WFO Nashville: "The LMA often helps **'tip the scales'** towards warning an issue."
- WFO Huntsville: "This was a particularly good case (March 2, 2012), in which the LMA data helped the warning forecaster to realize that a storm of interest was likely to undergo rapid strengthening, and that a warning was necessary."
- WFO Morristown: "…based on the big jump in source density values and the slight jump in POSH (and the favorable storm environment), I decided to issue a SVR." 20 minutes after warning issued, damaging winds occurred near Jasper, TN (April 24, 2010)
  http://nasasport.wordpress.com/2010/04/27/use-of-lma-data-tips-the-scales-toward-a-warning/
- WFO Huntsville: "I believe the density rates were the primary factor in **holding off on a warning**."
- Spring Program Participant: "Not necessarily going to be the main warning product, but it will be a good **confirmation tool**. If I had paid more attention and been more aware I could have issued my tornado warning one scan earlier." (24 May 2008 case event)

Development is more than just an algorithm

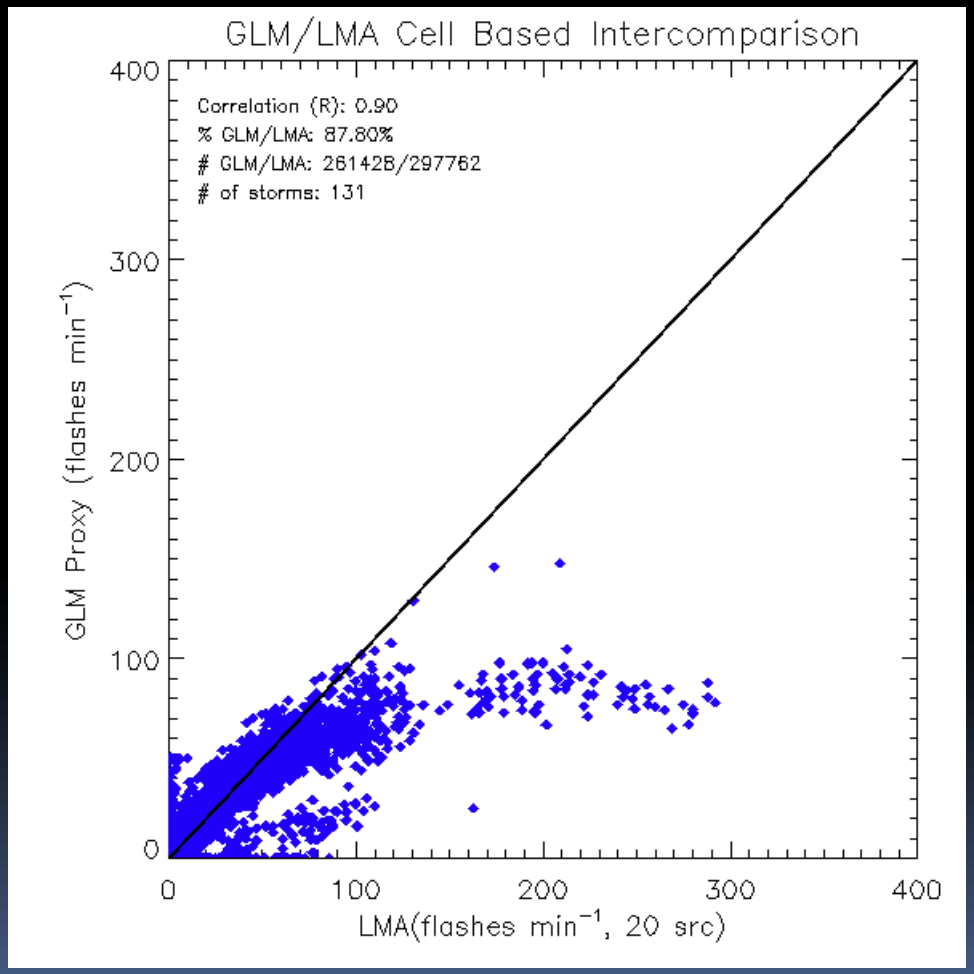


Transition from LMA to GLM Proxy



- Observations from LMA ≠ GLM
  - Different instrument
  - Different frequency
  - Different part of flash
- Must transition product from LMA to GLM proxy data stream
- First step, using current GLM Proxy

Transition LJA to GLM Proxy

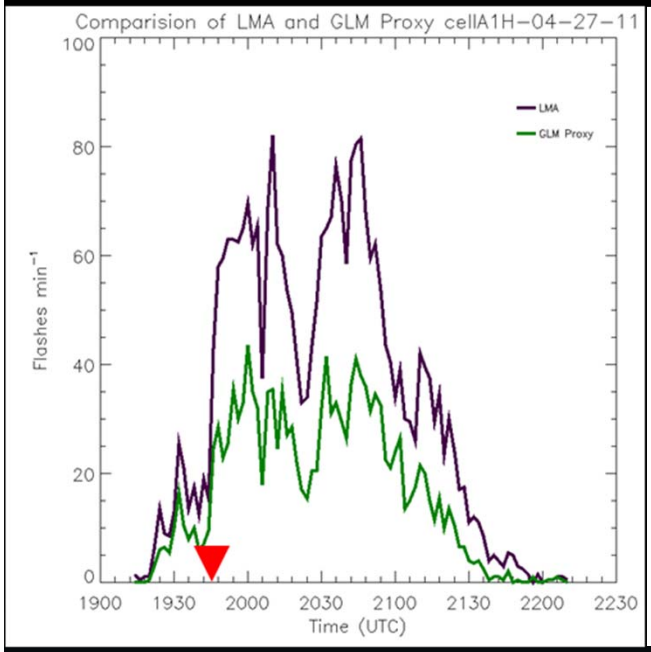


- Compared 1-minute flash rates in LMA and GLM for 131 storms
  - 20+ sources per flash threshold
- GLM Proxy flash count is ~88% of the LMA flash count
- Correlation in the trends are strong
  - R= 0.9
- GLM flash rates have a ceiling at ~100 flashes per minute

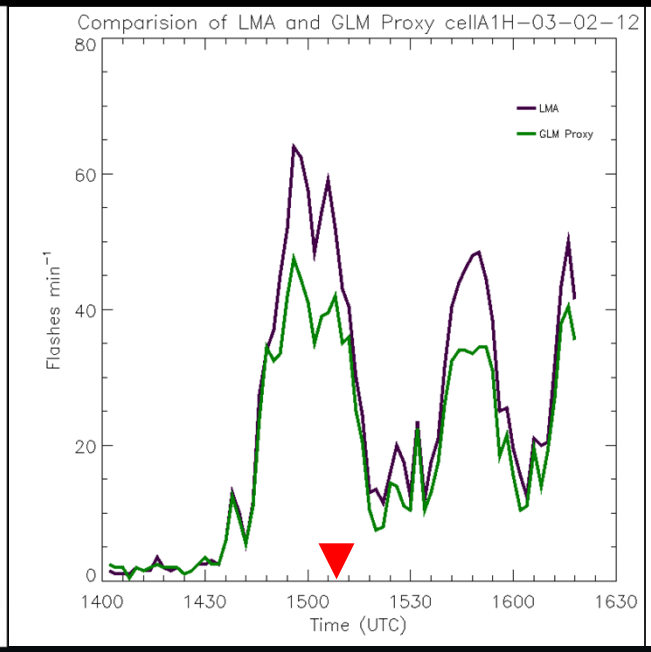
Transition to GLM Proxy:

GLM Proxy vs. LMA trends

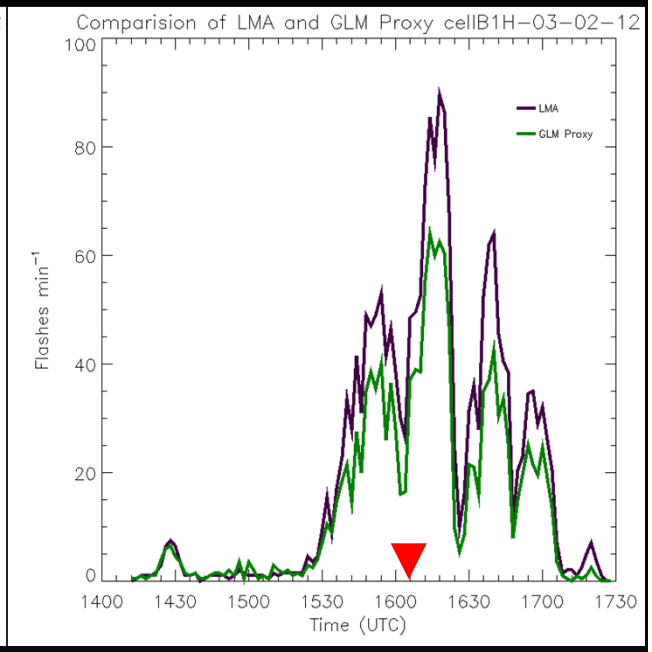
▼ Tornado



2011-04-27 Cell A1H



2012-03-02 Cell A1H



2012-03-02 Cell B1H

- Lightning trends are still present in the GLM proxy data.
- Magnitudes of lightning flash rates and jumps are not as pronounced in GLM proxy as LMA
  - But the standard deviation (2σ) approach is still robust

Fields Used for Cell Tracking

2002-11-11 00:58 UTC

Flct5: 5-minute GLM proxy flash count, updated every minute

VIL: Vertically Integrated Liquid (radar)

VILFRD: VIL combined with 5-minute Flash Rate Density

$$VILFRD = 100 * (((VIL/45) \leq 1) + (sqrt(Flct5/45) \leq 1))$$

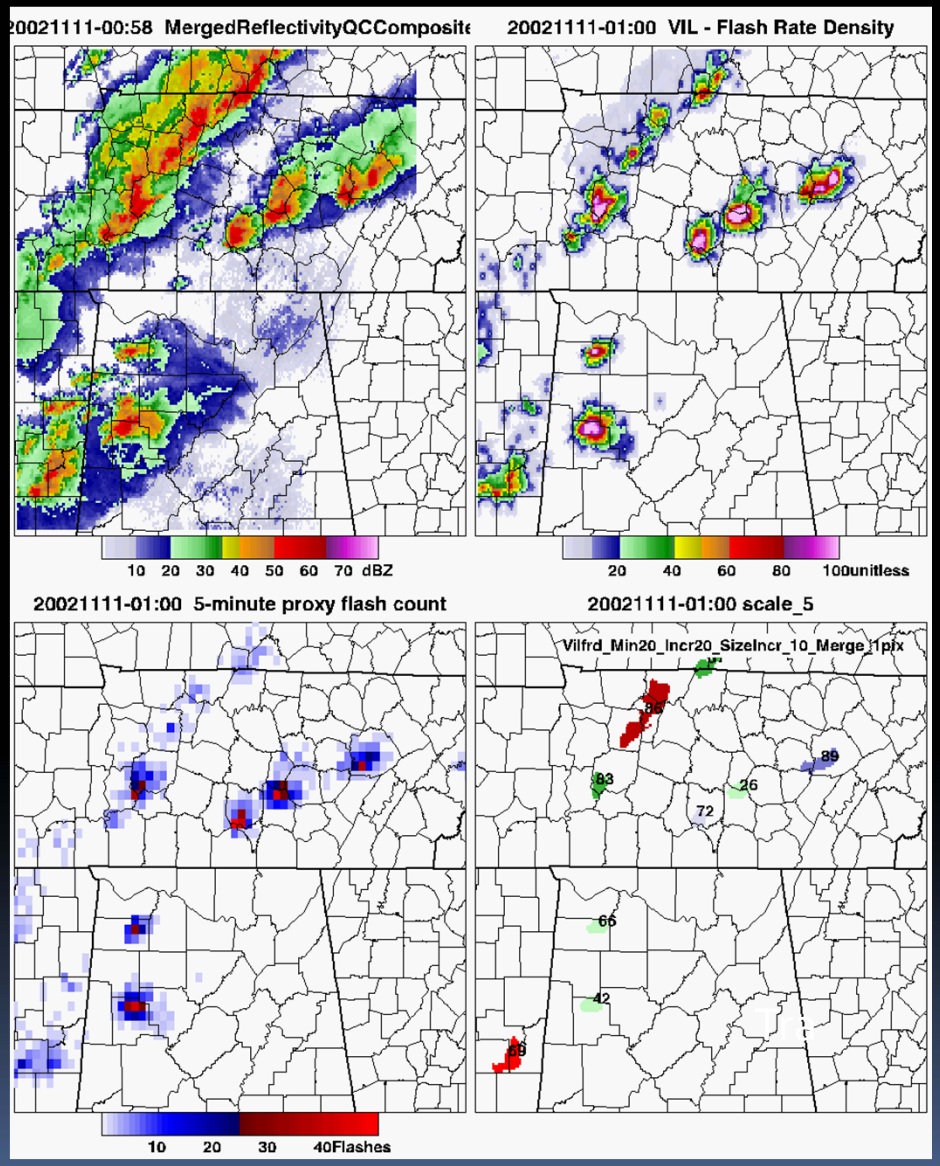
Track values where VILFRD ≥ 20, using increments of 20, with anything over 100 set to 100.

Tracker (WDSSII *w2segmotionll*) builds cells until a minimum size threshold is met. Several sizes tested; we use ~200 km^2 for large storms, ~80 km^2 for smaller storms.

First see if values exceeding 100 cover large enough area (e.g., cells 26, 42, 72, 83)

If not, include values exceeding 80 (e.g., cells 66, 89)

If not, include values exceeding 60 (e.g., cell 66, 89), 40 (e.g., cell 69), or 20 (e.g., cell 36).

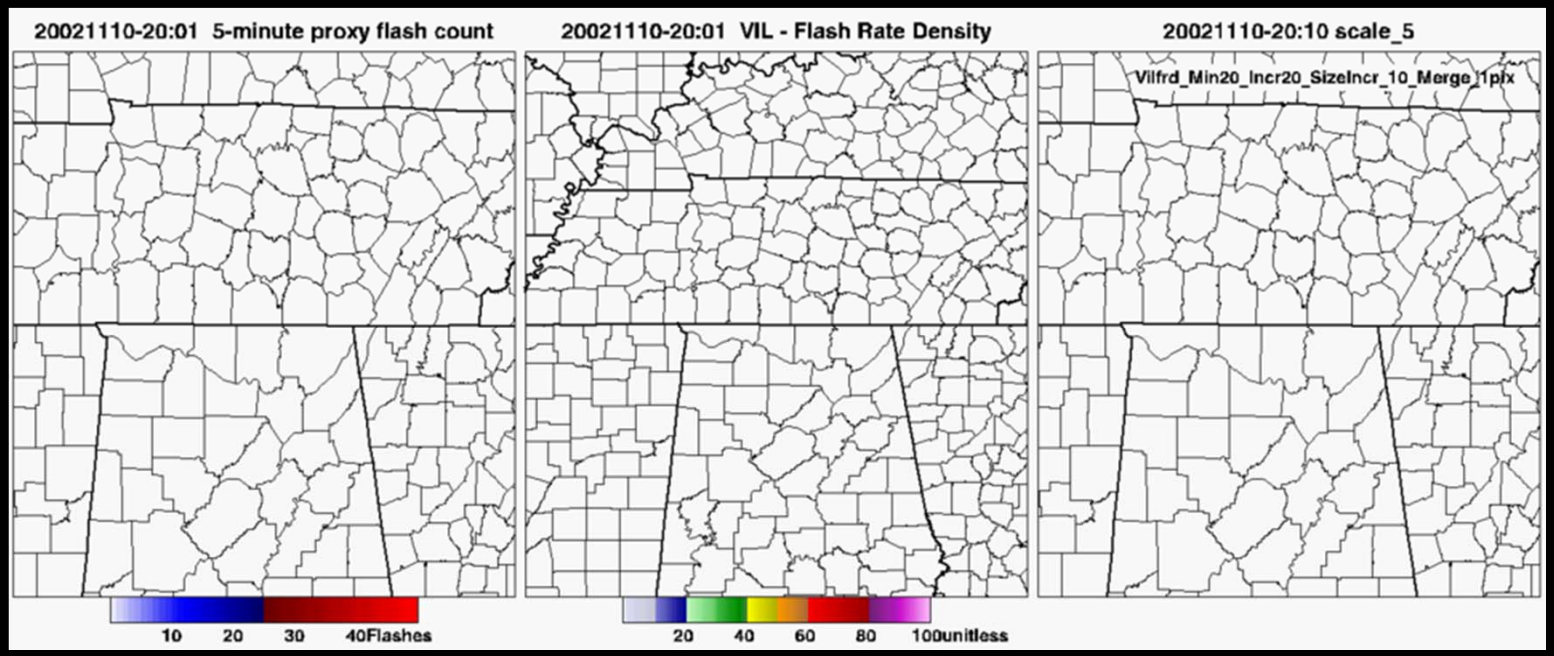


Cell Tracking

Left: *GLM Proxy Flash Count*

Middle: Combined *VIL-Flash Density Field*

Right: *Tracked Features*



Tracking uses WDSSII *w2segmotionll*, with **maximum overlap** approach for associating cells from one time step to the next.

Cells are projected forward from time *t* to *t+1* (1-minute increments, so projected motion has very little effect)

If an observed cell at *t+1* matches a cell location projected forward from *t*, within (5 km) or (1 x Size of Cell), then it is associated with that previously identified cell's history.

If a cell disappears in one time step, it cannot re-appear later.

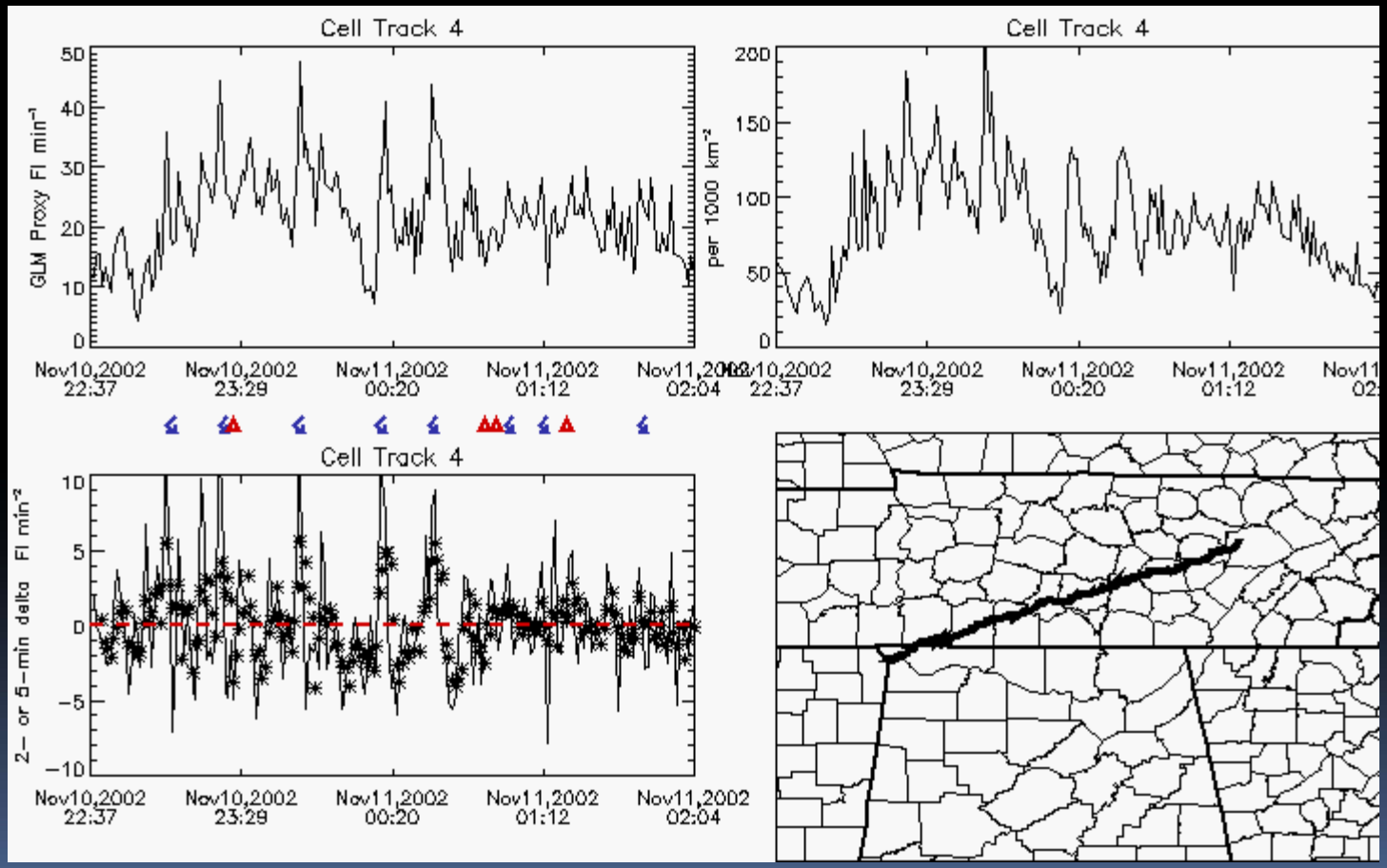
Outside WDSSII, "broken tracks" are objectively merged. If WDSSII has a new cell begin at *t+1* within 20 km of where a previous cell track ended at time *t*, those cell histories are tied together. (This last step is not reflected in animation, but is in flash rate time series .)

Integration of LJA algorithm with WDSSII Cell Tracking of GLM Proxy/Radar VIL

Time Series of Cell #4 (#26 in animation)

2002-11-10/22:37 – 2002-11-11/02:04 UTC

GLM Proxy Flash Rate



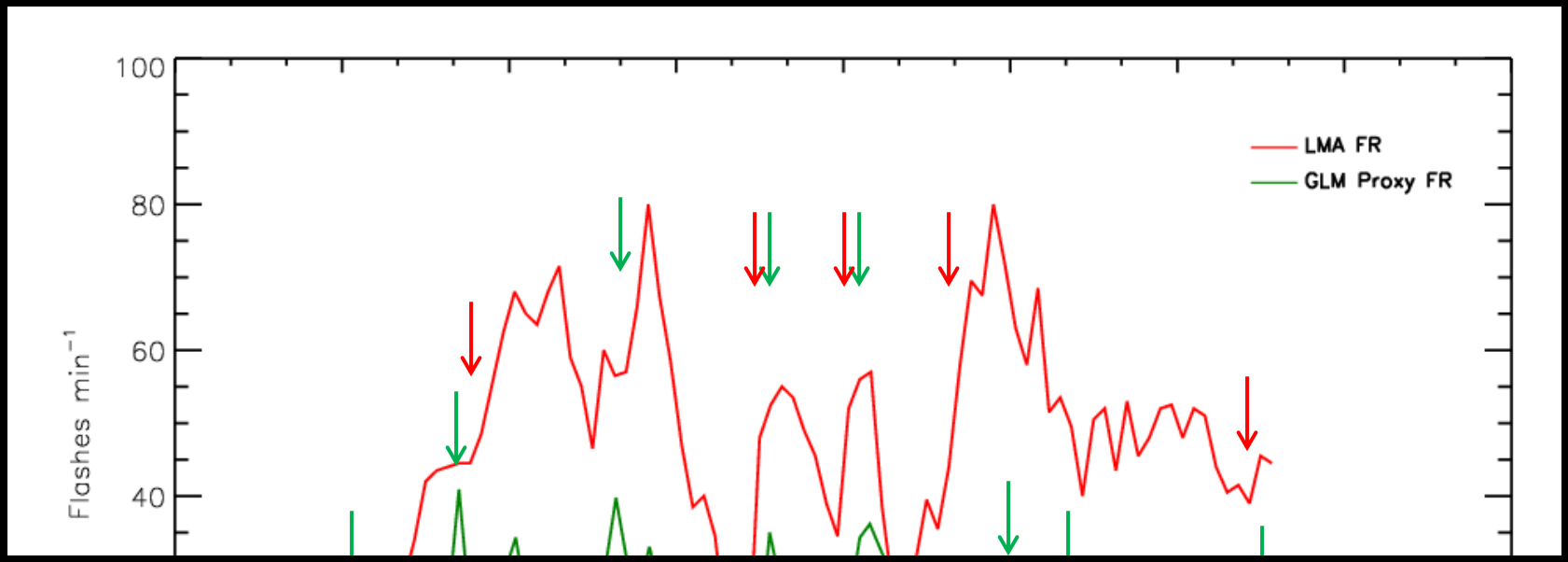
GLM Proxy Flash Density

GLM Proxy Flash Rate DELTA

Cell #26 Track

LMA vs. GLM Proxy Flash Rate and Jumps

Cell 4 / Cell D 11-11-02



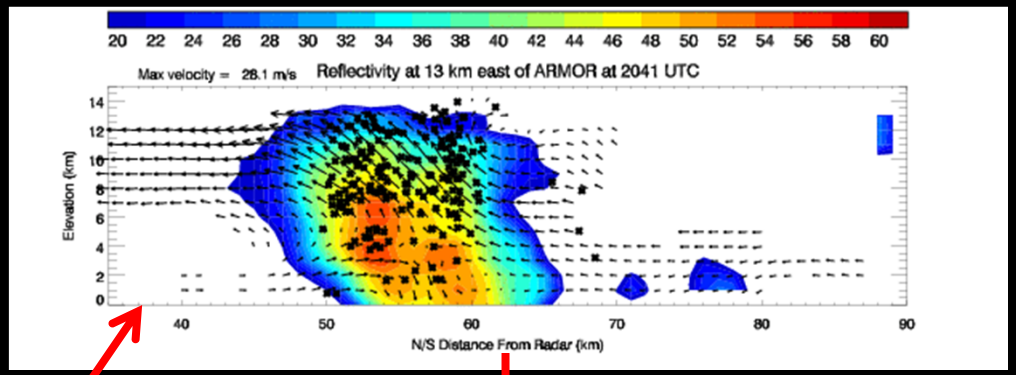
- Tendency for more jumps in GLM proxy data while using original 2σ LJA settings (i.e., based on LMA flashes)
- Unmodified 2σ LJA implemented on ***small*** sample (so far, 19 storms) with tracked GLM proxy objects results in
  - Higher POD (24 hits/27 severe = 89%) than Schultz et al. (2011) (79%)
  - Higher FAR (49%) than Schultz et al. (2011) (36%)
  - Lower CSI (48%) than Schultz et al. (2011) (55%)
  - Similar lead time (21.5 ± 12.8 min) to Schultz et al. (2011) (20.7 ± 15.1 min)
- Working on ***increasing sample size*** of tested GLM proxy-based storms
  - More robust statistics
  - Assess if and what kind of required modifications to GLM proxy-based LJA

The Next Step: Understanding the Physics Behind the Jump

Key points this analysis will address:

1) What physically is going on in the cloud when there is a jump in lightning?
   - **Updraft variations, Ice fluxes**
2) How do these processes fit in with severe storm conceptual models?
3) What would this information provide an end user?
   - **Relate LJA to radar observations, like changes in reflectivity, MESH, VIL, etc. based multi-Doppler derived physical relationships**

KHTX-ARMOR dual-Doppler analysis July 19, 2006



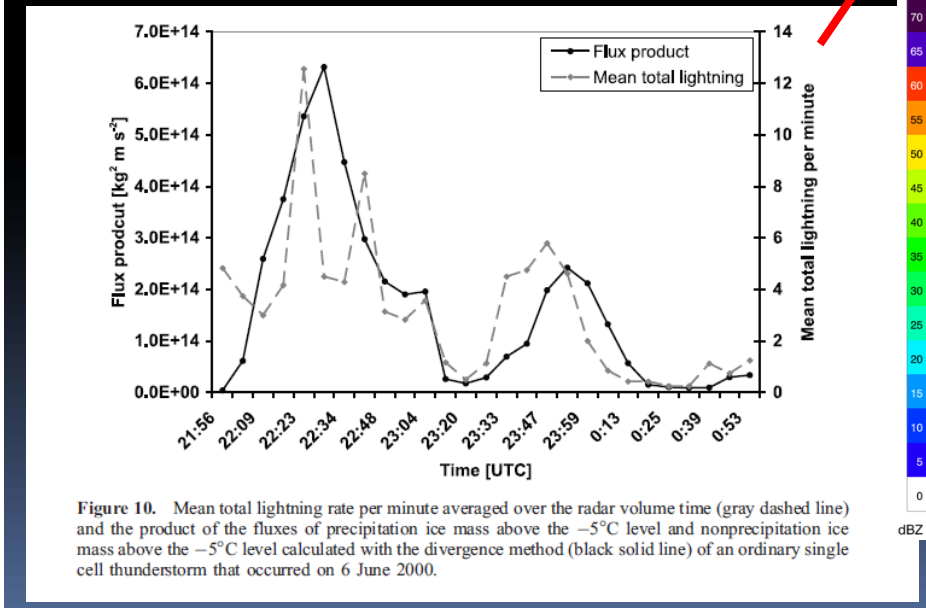
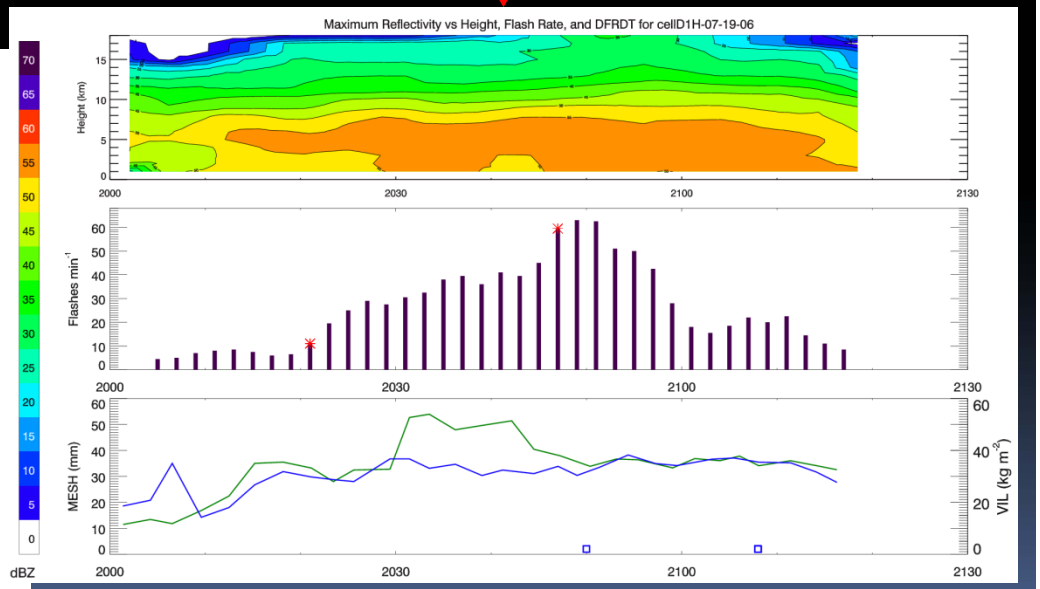


Figure 10. Mean total lightning rate per minute averaged over the radar volume time (gray dashed line) and the product of the fluxes of precipitation ice mass above the −5°C level and nonprecipitation ice mass above the −5°C level calculated with the divergence method (black solid line) of an ordinary single cell thunderstorm that occurred on 6 June 2000.

Adapted from Deierling et al. 2008, JGR

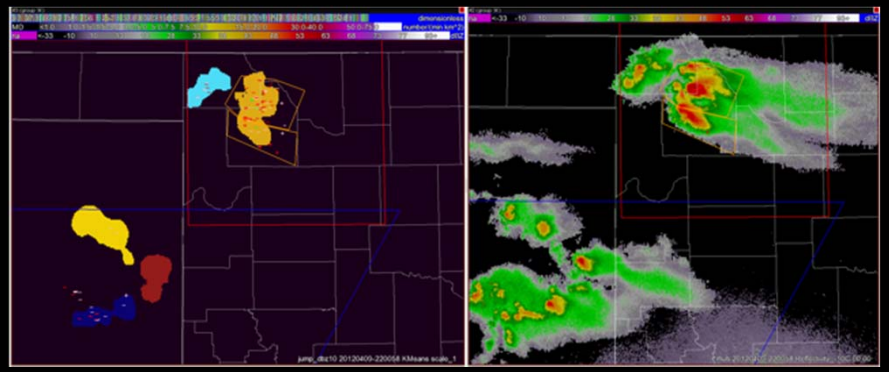


Time height of reflectivity (top) flash rate w/ lightning jumps (red asterisks; middle) and VIL (blue; bottom) and MESH (green; bottom)

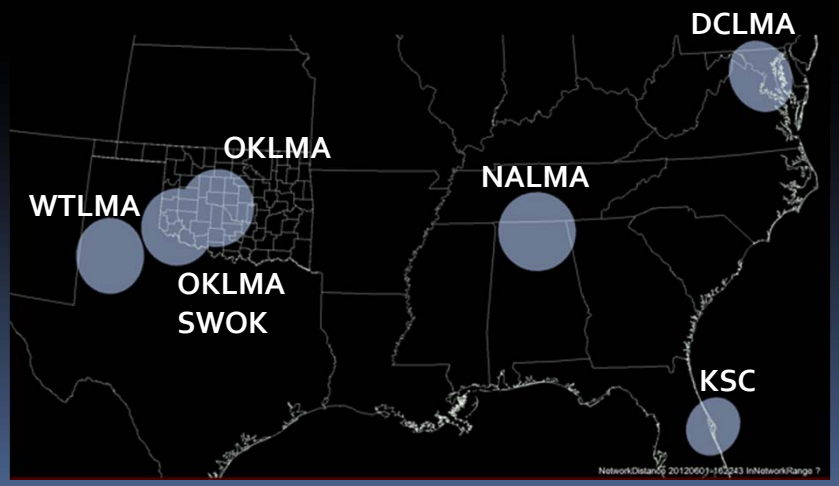
Lightning Jump Evaluation and National Demonstration

- Purpose: Evaluate potential for Schultz et al. (2009, 2011) LJA to improve NWS warning statistics, especially False Alarm Ratio (FAR).
  - Objective, real-time WDSSII cell tracking (radar-based example upper right)
  - LMA-based total flash rates (native LMA, **not GLM proxy**).
  - Increased sample size over variety of meteorological regimes (LMA test domains bottom right)
  - Enhanced verification data, SHAVE – (Severe Hazards Verification Experiment), and methods

Storm Objects WSR-88D



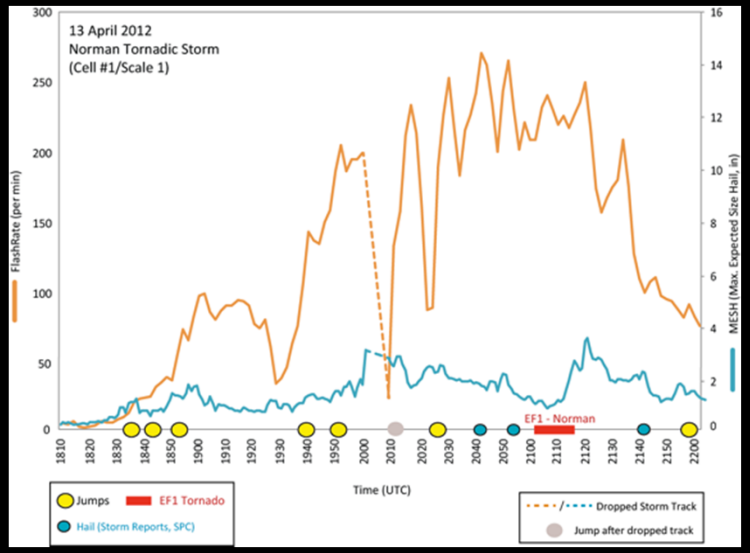
WDSSII K-means storm tracker.



LMA Test Domains

Lightning Jump Evaluation and National Demonstration

- Who: Multiple collaborating partners at NOAA, NWS, University, and NASA MSFC, including
  - NOAA NSSL/OU CIMMS: Kristin Calhoun, Kiel Ortega, Greg Stumpf
  - NOAA NWS: Tom Filiaggi, Daniel Melendez, Steve Zubrick
  - NOAA NESDIS: Steve Goodman, Scott Rudlosky
  - NASA MSFC/UAHuntsville GLM Team: Larry Carey, Chris Schultz, Dan Cecil, Geoffrey Stano
- Where: NOAA NSSL
- When: April – October 2012 (Ongoing 1st Test Phase)
  - Evaluation: Nov 2012 – Feb 2013
  - 2nd Test Phase: Mar 2013 – July 2013
- Future Potential: Pathway to operations - merge GLM proxy efforts; 2nd possible pathway to operations with ENTLN total lightning; fusion with radar



1st Test Phase (2012) data collection statistics for period through August 31, 2012.

	2012 TOTAL	
	SHAVE reports	Storm Count
DCLMA	953	78
KSC	170	18
NALMA	639	52
OKLMA	158	22
OKLMA(SWOK)	20	1
WTLMA	167	20
TOTAL	2107	191

Summary of Ongoing Work

- **Refining and developing GLM lightning proxy database**
  - Transformed VHF-based NA-LMA to optical lightning proxy using LIS and statistical-physical methods
  - Developed representative proxy lightning (e.g., GLM resolution, 8 km) for 37 events (100's of cells) from 2002-2010 over NA-LMA. Turn-key for new cases, as needed.
- **Improving multi-sensor (GLM proxy, radar) cell (object)-oriented tracking**
  - Optimized current WDSS-II/K-means cell tracking algorithm to reduce tracking ambiguity for LJA
- **Developing LJA as an automated objective system**
  - Began adaptation of LJA (rules, thresholds) to GLM proxy and multi-sensor object tracking improvements
  - Investigated environmental controls on LJA for identification and mitigation of known LJA biases during low topped convection

Summary of Ongoing Work

- **Studying fusion of LJA with radar data and products**
  - Reflectivity-based, Doppler, dual-polarization
  - For operational use and solidifying the LJA conceptual model
- **Exploring use of LJA and LJA/radar in forecasting process and operational situational awareness**
  - User interactions and feedback within NASA SPoRT and local NWS offices
- **Participating in NOAA NWS National Demonstration and Lightning Jump Evaluation**
  - Assisted with implementation of Schultz et al. (2009, 2011) LJA on VHF-based flash data at LMA-native (**non-GLM**) resolution
  - Potential 2nd pathway to NWS operations using ground-based LF/VLF total lightning such as Earth Networks Total Lightning Network (ENTLN)

Summary of Potential Future Work:

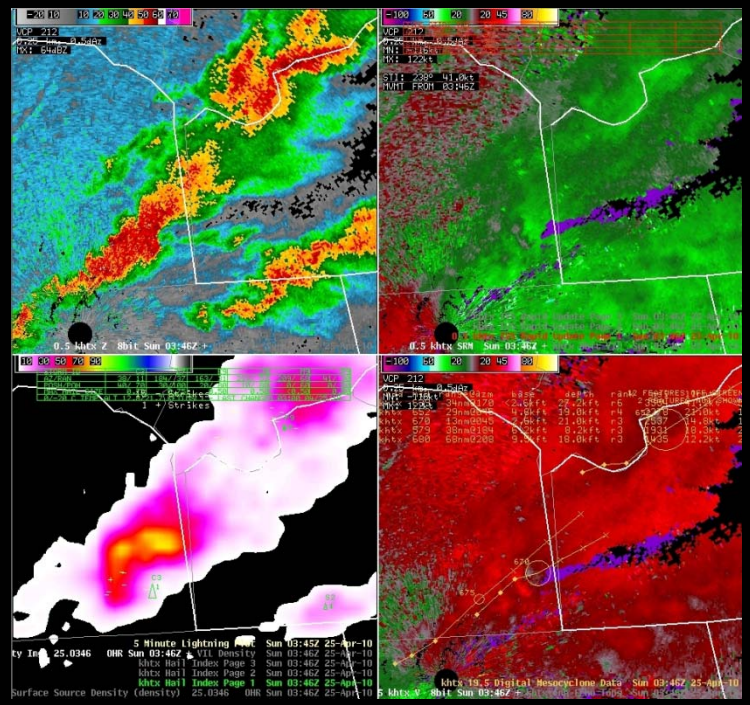
- **Test LJA/Cell-tracker/GLM proxy system in Proving Ground (PG) and local WFO's**
  - Make improvements to *LJA and verification methods* based on direct user feedback
  - Leverage NASA SPoRT's capability in transitioning NASA products to the NWS/PG
  - Create necessary software plug-ins for next generation decision support tool, AWIPS II.
  - Merge GLM proxy work into the LJ National Demonstration and Evaluation at PG in Norman
- Develop LJA training materials
  - To educate end users on LJA theoretical basis, methods, expected algorithm performance, strengths/limitations, optimal uses in situational awareness
- **Explore LJA in multi-sensor/multi-parameter forecaster methods and algorithms**
  - Investigate optimal synthesis of LJA with WSR-88D radar and GOES-R ABI algorithms for improved situational awareness

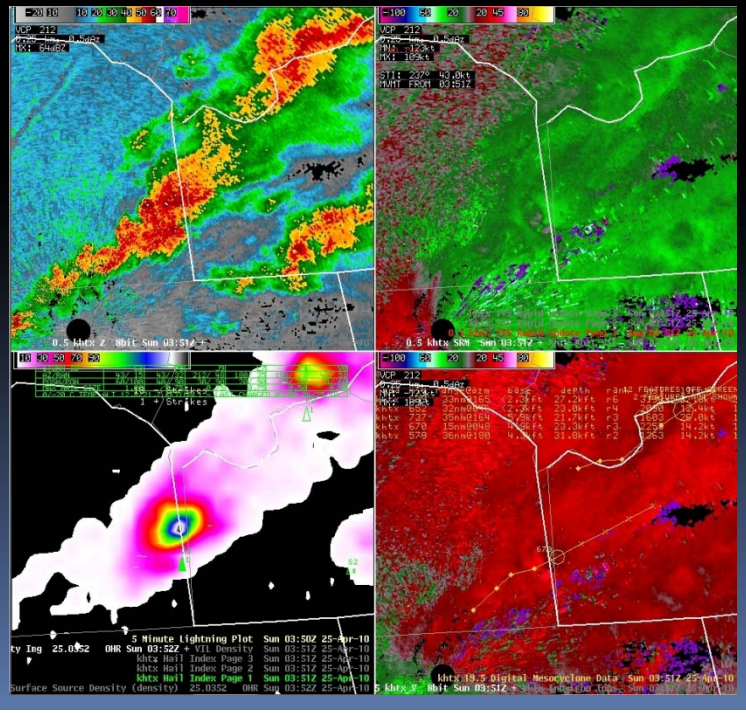
Extra Slide Material Follows

April 24, 2010 Southeastern, TN

- "Source density values jumped up over 200. Other radar products did not indicate significant intensification – other than the POSH rising to 60%, just about everything else stayed the same. But based on the big jump in source density values and the slight jump in POSH (and the favorable storm environment), I decided to issue a SVR."
- 20 minutes after warning issued, damaging winds occurred near Jasper, TN

http://nasasport.wordpress.com/2010/04/27/use-of-lma-data-tips-the-scales-toward-a-warning/





Integration of LJA algorithm with WDSSII Cell Tracking of GLM Proxy/Radar VIL

Time Series of Cell #7 (#42 in animation)

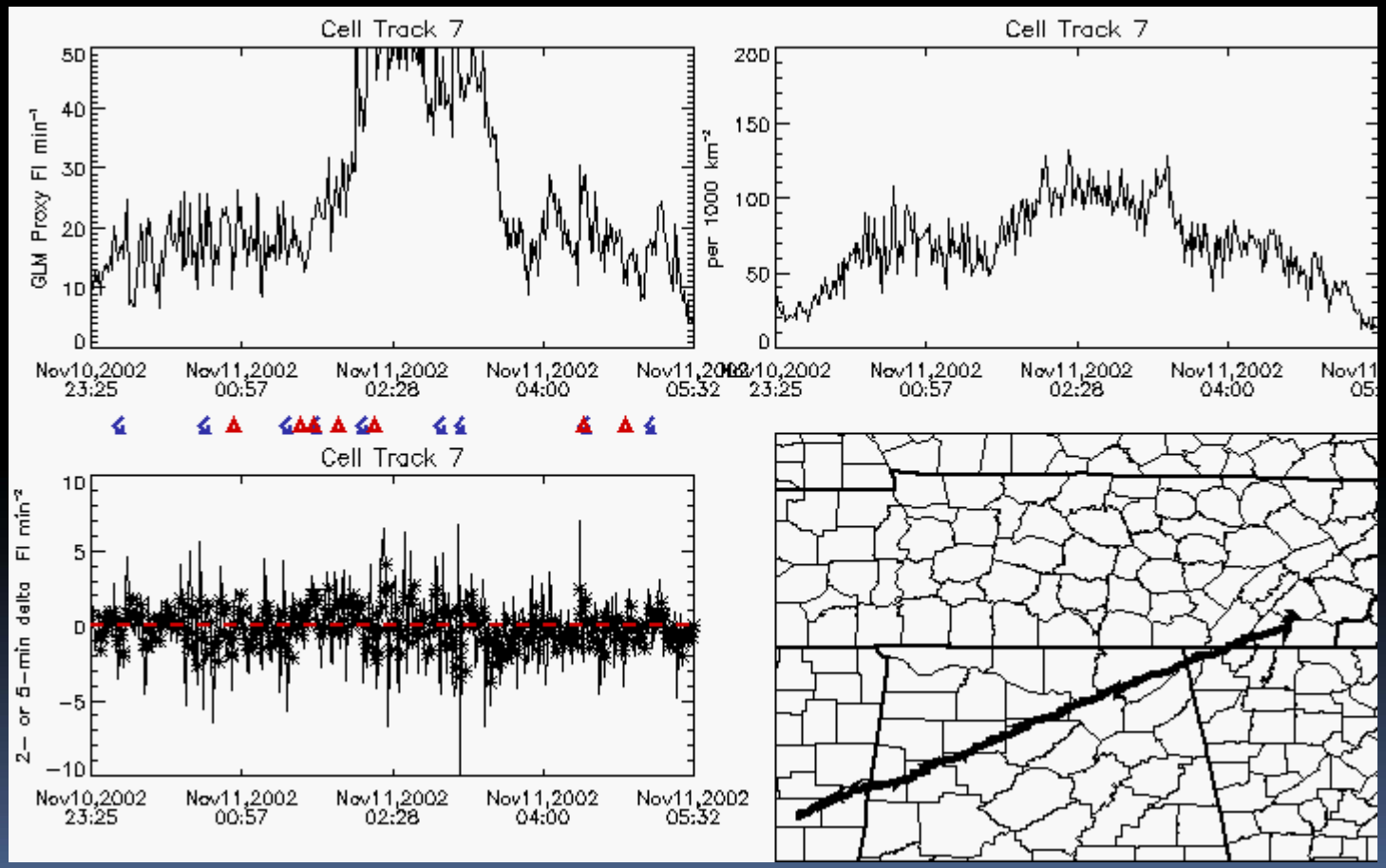
2002-11-10/23:25 – 2002-11-11/05:32 UTC

GLM Proxy Flash Rate

GLM Proxy Flash Density

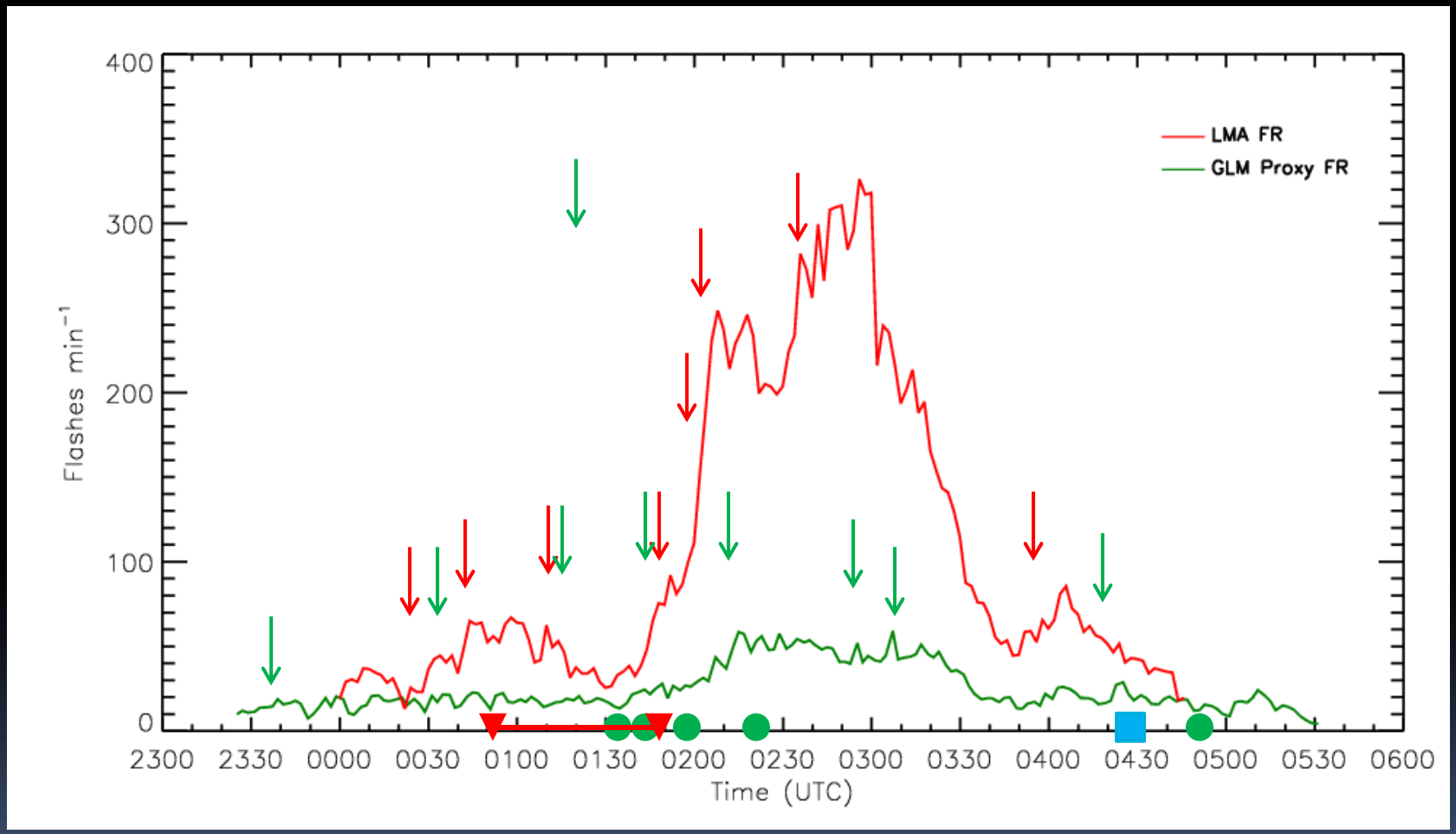
GLM Proxy Flash Rate DELTA

Cell #26 Track



LMA vs. GLM Proxy Flash Rate and Jumps

Cell 7 / Cell H 11-11-02



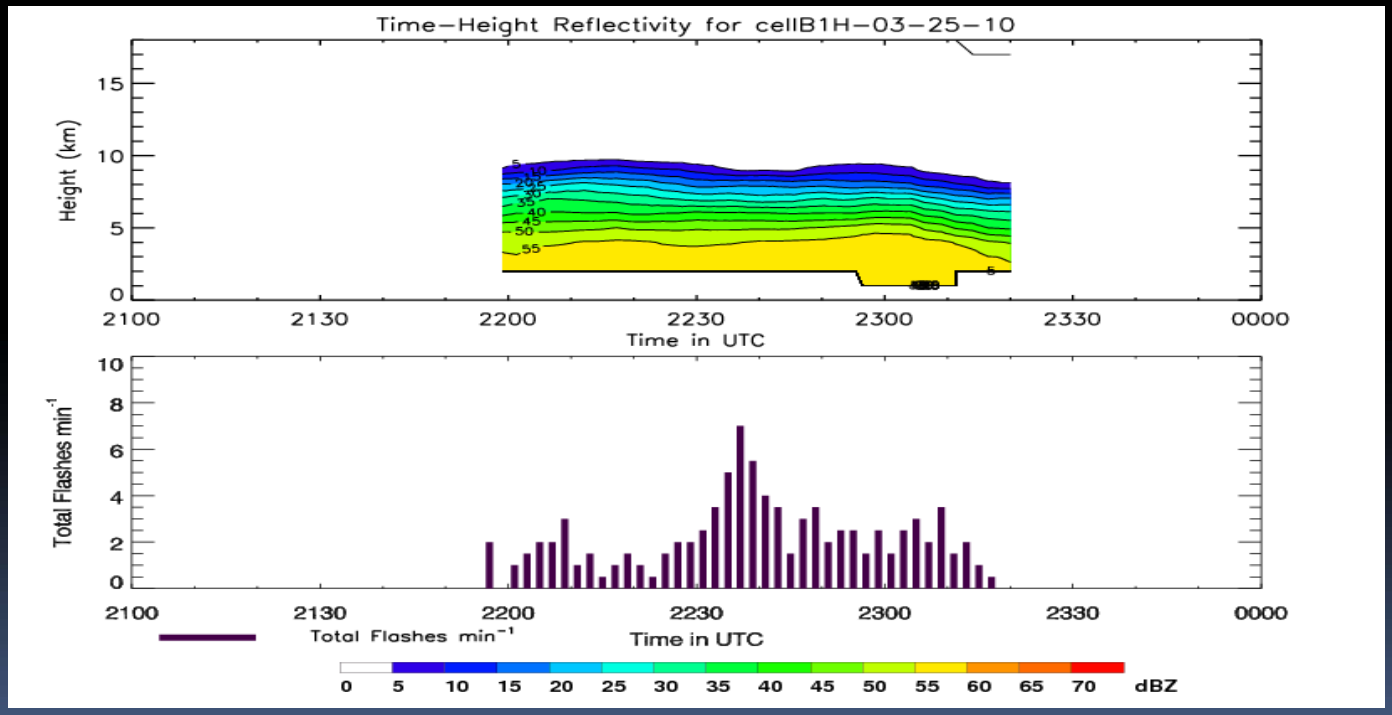
GLM Jump: ↓ LMA Jump: ↓

Tornado: ▼ Hail: ● Wind: ■

Current Environmental Limitations

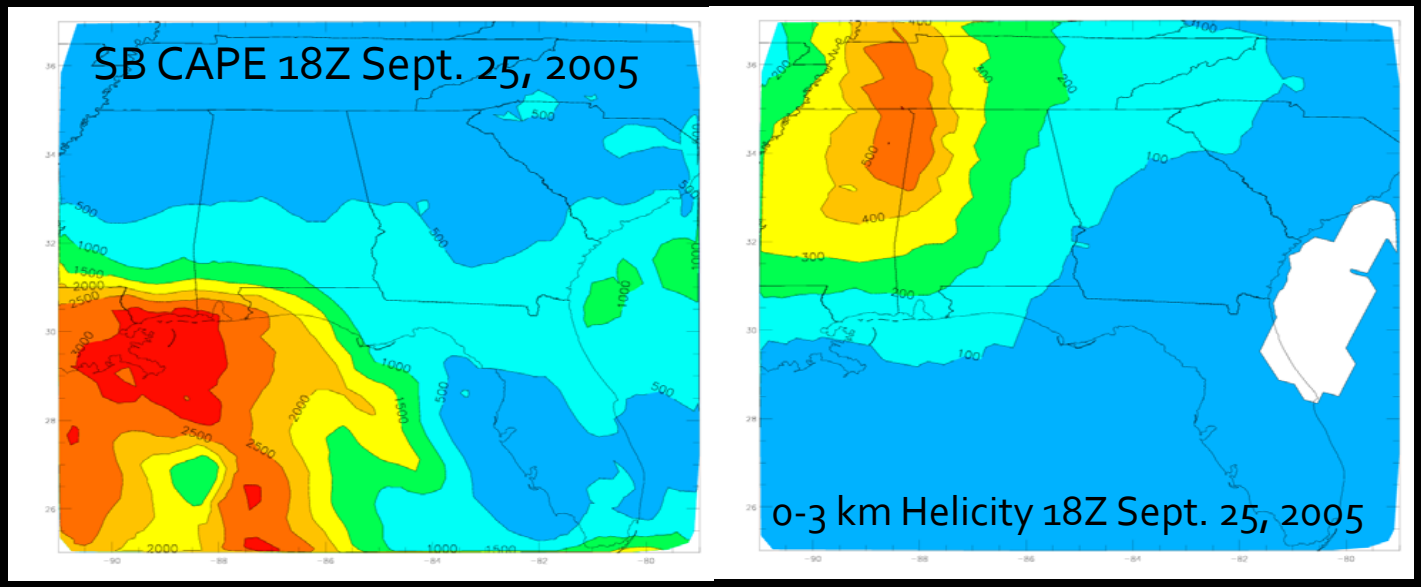
Nearly 40% of misses in Schultz et al. (2011) came from low topped supercells, TC rainband storms, and cold season events

- Lack of lightning activity inhibited the performance of the algorithm
- Lightning can still serve as a situational awareness tool in these environments



Time-height plot of reflectivity (top) and total flash rate (bot) for an EF-1 producing tornadic storm on March 25, 2010. Tornado touchdown time ~2240 UTC.

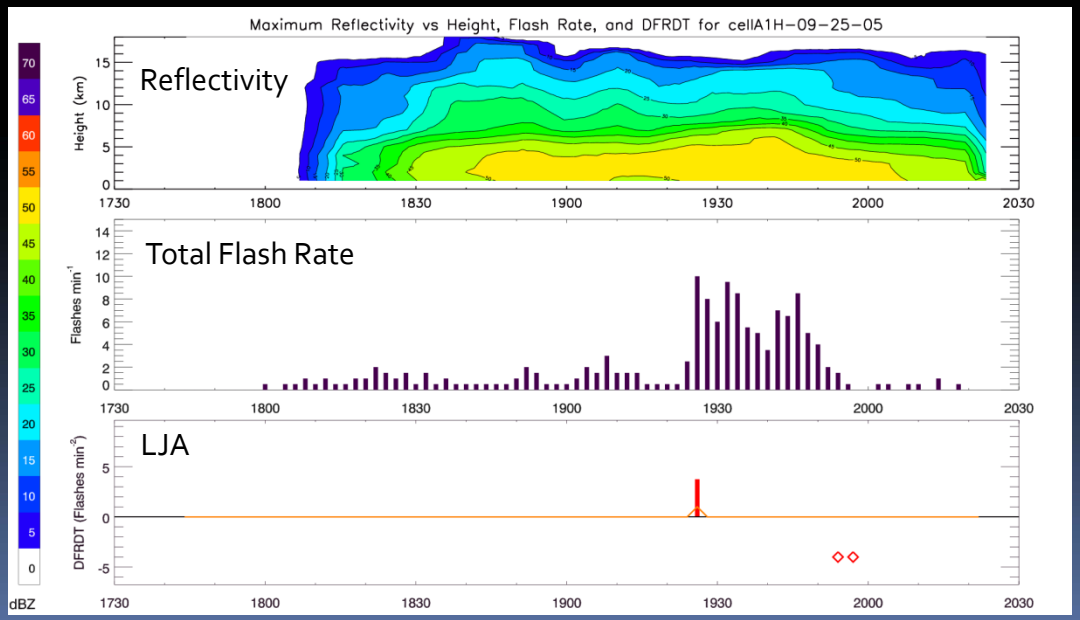
Environmental Situational Awareness example - Rita



Lightning rates are modest in these situations

- Generally, below 10 per minute
- LJA might not trigger

Total flash rate notably increases before severe weather occurrence.

- Trend in flash rate still important!

Understanding the background environment in these scenarios will provide further utility of lightning trends to the operational forecaster for situational awareness.