

Blowing in the Wind:

On Wednesday this past week we were offered an opportunity to visit the US by air without having to go through border security. As long as you avoided the blown over trucks on the highways, you could have stood out on the road and spread your wings and flown to anywhere in Montana for nothing. Winds sustained at 100 Km/Hr with gusts to 130 and more were measured in this area. I watched as my tower was shaking in the wind and the Butternut vertical swung to be nearly horizontal pointing to the south before whipping back the other way. It survived as well. My wire antennas all withstood the onslaught as did the hexbeam and my VHF/UHF arrays on the roof. I didn't lose any shingles either, but I know lots of neighbours did around me.

One of the things that I did this past fall was to put the delta loop up using electrically isolated pulleys that the wires run through to eliminate the strain more effectively by providing flexibility. They worked perfectly and no damage happened. If you want more information on how I did that, just ask. The apex of the antenna is at 50 feet at the top of a spruce tree, and it gets pretty violent up there when the wind blows. I feel confident with the arrangement now and it proved that we did it right after many failures in the past. Hopefully it will last because I like that antenna a lot.

My delta loop is a full wave on 80M and is resonant on all bands except one and is tuneable on the ones it isn't resonant on. Here's a picture of what the antenna analyzer tells me...



Not bad, eh? That shows it without an antenna tuner. Perfectly useable as you can see. Oh and by the way, I know that antenna analyzers are expensive, but believe me they will save you a lot of fooling around and leg work trimming and fiddling with your antennas to get them tuned. I was encouraged to buy the one that I have, the AA-600 by Rig Expert by Jerry VE6AB a few years ago and it is one of the best investments I have ever made. Thanks Jerry. It's a tool you will use often and pays for itself in no time. I encourage you to buy a good, professional tool like this if you are serious about getting accurate results. GPS Central carries the entire line.