



2026 FIELD DAY

AFTER-ACTION REPORT

JUNE 27TH – 28TH, 2025



CONTENTS

Exercise Overview:.....	3
Analysis of Capabilities:	4
Objective 1 - Event Setup.....	5
Location:	5
Summary of setup:	6
Strengths:.....	7
Areas for Improvement:	7
Objective 2 - Emergency Power.....	8
Strengths:.....	8
Areas of Improvement:.....	8
Objective 3 – Make Contacts	9
Strengths.....	9
Areas of Improvement.....	9
Objective 4 – Educational Content	10
Strengths.....	10
Areas of Improvement.....	10
Objective 5 – Community Outreach	11
Strength	11
Areas of Improvement.....	11
Objective 6 – Event Take Down and Site Closure	12
Strengths.....	12
Areas for Improvement	12
Notable Incidents & Operational Observations.....	13

EXERCISE OVERVIEW:

Exercise Name	2026 Field Day Event
Exercise Dates	June 27 th & 28 th , 2025
Scope	Our Field Day event aimed to highlight the versatility and skill of amateur radio by: - Demonstrating radio communication capabilities to the public, inspiring curiosity and awareness - Establishing reliable, long-distance connections with amateur radio operators across the United States - Fostering a welcoming environment for new participants and showcasing the role of amateur radio in community resilience and emergency preparedness This scope reflects our commitment to outreach, technical excellence, and building lasting connections through the power of radio.
Focus Area	Communications, Emergency Power Capabilities, Community Outreach
Objectives	To maximize station-to-station communication throughout the event, demonstrating the reach and reliability of amateur radio. Additionally, to provide hands-on technical experience for current operators and spark public interest by showcasing the educational and community value of amateur radio.
Sponsor	Sweetwater County Emergency Management
Participating Organizations	Sweetwater County Emergency Management Sweetwater Amateur Radio Club (SARC) [WY7u]
Point of Contact	Zach Gunyan <i>Club President</i> 307-922-6326 Ke7wyg@wy7u.org

ANALYSIS OF CAPABILITIES:

Objective	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
Event Setup		X		
Emergency Power		X		
Make Contacts		X		
Educational Content		X		
Community Outreach			X	
Event Takedown		X		

Table 1 – Summary of Core Capability Performance

Ratings Definitions:

Performed without Challenges (P): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

Performed with Some Challenges (S): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified.

Performed with Major Challenges (M): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws.

Unable to be Performed (U): The targets and critical tasks associated with the capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s).

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

OBJECTIVE 1 - EVENT SETUP

LOCATION:

Green River, Western Wyoming Community College Campus

Latitude, Longitude: 41.496872, -109.469420

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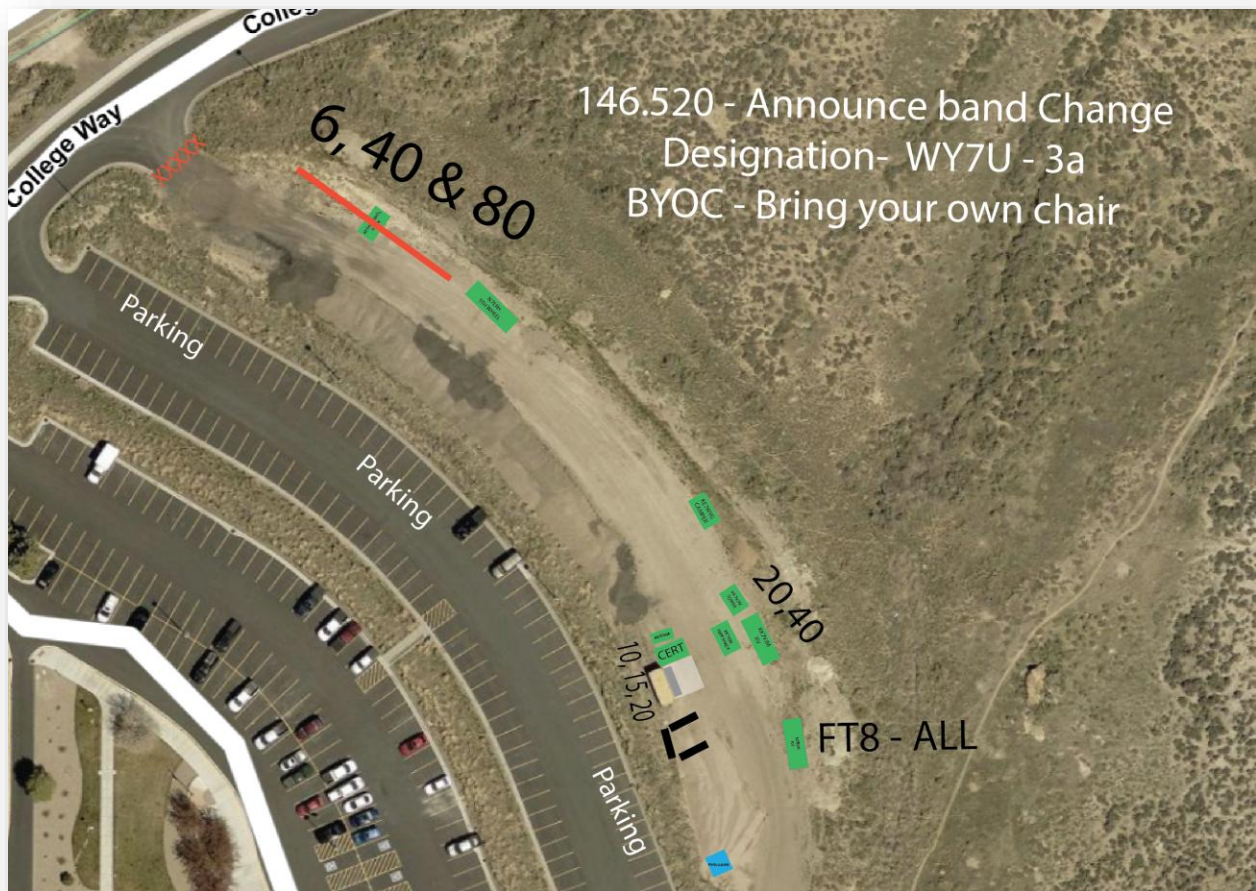
Directions:

- Take Exit 91 off of I-80
- Turn onto US-30 toward WY-530 Green River
- Turn Left onto Upland Way
- Turn right onto College Way



SUMMARY OF SETUP:

- Obtain authorization for use of Sweetwater County Emergency Management trailers and equipment
- Transport said equipment and trailers out to field day location
- Transport personal campers as well as any additional personal trailers out to field day location
- Organize vehicles, trailers, campers and antenna layout



STRENGTHS:

Preparation, Teamwork, and Cooperation

A dedicated Field Day committee was formed early in the planning cycle, bringing together volunteers. The group met regularly to map out the event structure, assign responsibilities, and ensure all major components were accounted for. Even held a special pre-event meeting focused solely on equipment placement, antenna layout, and site flow. This advance coordination allowed the team to arrive on-site with a shared plan, clear expectations, and the ability to set up efficiently and safely.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

Coordination with Partner Agencies

Access to partner-agency storage locations remains limited to times when staff are physically on-site. This could create delays in retrieving equipment and required volunteers to wait for personnel to unlock facilities. Establishing electronic or badge-based access for authorized volunteers would allow for more flexible deployment, reduce dependency on staff availability, and improve overall response readiness for future events.

Equipment Checks & Availability

Several pieces of personal equipment that were expected to participate in Field Day were unable to deploy due to unforeseen issues, including water intrusion in an RV that prevented its use. This highlighted the need for earlier pre-event equipment verification, including a simple readiness check for personal assets that volunteers intend to bring. A structured “equipment confirmation window” the week prior could help identify problems early and allow time for backup planning.

Signage & Traffic Control

The event site lacked clear signage to prevent vehicles from entering the operating area (“camp”). Without visible markings or barriers, several vehicles unintentionally crossed into the setup zone, creating safety concerns and slowing down operations. Improved signage, cones, or temporary barriers would help establish a defined perimeter and maintain a safe, controlled environment.

OBJECTIVE 2 - EMERGENCY POWER

Field Day continues to be an ideal environment for demonstrating our ability to operate completely off-grid. Running stations without commercial power isn't just a tradition, it's a practical test of our readiness to communicate during real-world disruptions. This year's event again proved that our group can sustain reliable radio operations using alternative energy sources alone.

The Sweetwater Amateur Radio Club powered every station with non-utility energy throughout the entire event. Operators brought a mix of solar arrays, battery systems, and portable generators, each tailored to their individual setups. Solar played a major role during daytime hours, with several members deploying well-built systems that included panels, charge controllers, and battery storage. These setups performed consistently and showed a strong understanding of off-grid power management.

As daylight faded, generators and larger battery banks carried the load. Portable generators provided dependable backup power and ensured that overnight operations continued without interruption. Having multiple power options available gave the group flexibility and resilience, allowing stations to adapt quickly to changing energy demands.

STRENGTHS:

Participants demonstrated solid technical skill in planning and running off-grid power systems. Redundancy across solar, battery, and generator setups ensured that no single issue threatened overall operations. The teamwork on display was also notable, volunteers helped one another move equipment, troubleshoot power issues, and get stations online quickly. This cooperative approach kept every station active and contributed to a smooth, successful deployment.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT:

While power generation was largely successful, several opportunities for refinement were identified:

- **Equipment Reliability:** The Emergency Management generator mounted on the tower trailer failed to start, limiting its usefulness during setup. Fortunately, a backup generator was available and performed well. This incident reinforces the need for pre-event testing and maintenance checks on mission-critical equipment to ensure reliability when it matters.

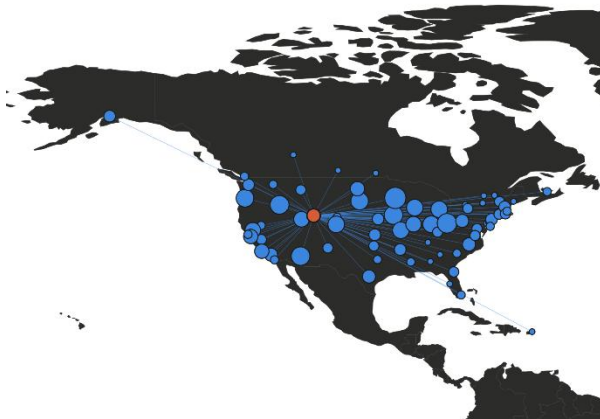
OBJECTIVE 3 – MAKE CONTACTS

Though ARRL Field Day is not officially a contest, it offers a structured framework in which participating stations earn points for successful contacts. These points reflect not only technical proficiency but also the broader connectivity and collaboration fostered among amateur radio operators across regions and operating modes.

Each contact made during Field Day is scored based on the mode of communication. Voice (Phone) contacts earn standard points, while digital and CW (Morse code) contacts are weighted more heavily to encourage technical diversity and engagement. This system promotes experimentation and skill development, enabling operators to explore different approaches to radio communication.

At this year's event, the Sweetwater Amateur Radio Club fielded both voice and digital stations. This dual-mode setup ensured inclusive participation, allowing operators of all experience levels to engage, experiment, and learn. Attendees were encouraged to try out unfamiliar modes, receive real-time mentorship, and experience the excitement of successful QSOs from across the country and beyond.

STRENGTHS



The team successfully made contact with 286 stations worldwide, resulting in a contact score of 453 points. This accomplishment underscores not only technical capability but also strong collaboration and reliable equipment performance. The final event score of 2,056 points reflects thoughtful planning and effective execution across all operational aspects.

Teamwork played a critical role in this success. Operators assisted each other in switching between modes, resolving equipment issues, and verifying QSOs. The variety of operating modes added a valuable layer of depth to the event, promoting shared learning and exploration.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

One recurring challenge was distraction at operating stations due to nearby conversations. Providing operators with dedicated headsets could significantly improve concentration and minimize ambient interference, allowing for smoother operation and better focus.

Logging also presented a minor hurdle. While contacts were recorded using traditional paper logs, legibility occasionally proved problematic. Future events may benefit from a hybrid approach—combining digital logging with paper backups—to enhance clarity and streamline scoring.

OBJECTIVE 4 – EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Education remains one of the most valuable components of Field Day, giving both experienced operators and newcomers a chance to learn, experiment, and build confidence. This year, the Sweetwater Amateur Radio Club offered a mix of digital-mode instruction and antenna-focused demonstrations that encouraged hands-on participation and real technical engagement.

The digital station provided two layers of educational content. First, operators demonstrated how logging software could be automated between applications, showing how digital workflows can streamline contest operations. Second, the station offered one-on-one instruction for anyone interested in learning more about digital modes, including how signals are encoded, decoded, and managed on the air.

In addition to digital training, several operators brought antennas for on-site demonstrations. This allowed participants to explore tuning, SWR behavior, band characteristics, and how small adjustments can dramatically affect performance. The availability of meters and test equipment made it easy to visualize changes, and the informal format encouraged questions and experimentation.

STRENGTHS

Hands-On Learning Opportunities Participants had direct access to real equipment, antennas, meters, digital stations, which made the educational content practical and engaging. Being able to see SWR changes in real time or watch digital logging automation in action helped operators connect theory to real-world use.

One-on-One Instruction The digital station's individualized training was especially effective. Operators could ask specific questions, work through unfamiliar software, and get personalized guidance without feeling rushed or overwhelmed.

Variety of Topics Covering both digital operations and antenna fundamentals provided a balanced educational experience. Newer operators were able to explore multiple aspects of amateur radio, while experienced members still found value in the deeper technical discussions.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Deeper Explanation of SWR & RF Concepts While SWR meters were available and used effectively, some participants struggled to understand *what* SWR represents and *why* it matters. Incorporating a short, structured explanation, perhaps a quick visual diagram or a simple "RF energy flow" analogy, would help operators grasp the underlying science rather than just the numbers.

More Structured Educational Sessions This year's learning was effective but informal. Offering one or two scheduled mini-classes (15–20 minutes each) could help ensure everyone has a chance to participate and would make the educational component feel more intentional.

Printed or Digital Reference Sheets Providing quick reference guides (SWR basics, common antenna types, digital mode cheat sheets) would help operators retain what they learned and give newcomers something to take home.

OBJECTIVE 5 – COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Public outreach remains a core mission of amateur radio, and Field Day provides an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the value of our service to the broader community. This year, the Sweetwater Amateur Radio Club continued its commitment to engaging local partners, elected officials, and members of the public through demonstrations, conversation, and hands-on exposure to radio operations.

Despite extensive outreach efforts, including radio advertisements, posters placed throughout Rock Springs and Green River, and letters sent to all Sweetwater County schools, the overall public turnout was smaller than anticipated. However, the visitors who did attend represented meaningful community connections. Sweetwater County Emergency Management, a Green River City Council member, and two CERT volunteers spent time at the site, observed operations, and engaged with operators about equipment, emergency communication capabilities, and the role amateur radio plays in local resilience.

These interactions reinforced the club's ongoing partnership with emergency management and highlighted amateur radio's relevance to public safety, volunteerism, and technical education.

STRENGTH

Meaningful Engagement with Key Community Partners Although general public turnout was limited, the individuals who attended were highly relevant to the club's mission. Emergency Management staff, CERT volunteers, and an elected official were able to see firsthand how off-grid communication works, ask questions, and explore equipment. These conversations strengthened relationships with agencies and decision-makers who directly influence emergency preparedness in Sweetwater County.

Strong Outreach Effort & Visibility The club executed a broad and proactive outreach campaign. Radio spots, printed posters, and school outreach demonstrated a serious commitment to public engagement. Even if turnout did not match the scale of the effort, the visibility and professionalism of the campaign helped reinforce the club's presence in the community.

Positive On-Site Experience for Visitors Those who attended received personalized demonstrations, explanations of equipment, and opportunities to observe live operations. Operators provided friendly, informative engagement that reflected well on the club and the hobby.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Re-Evaluating Outreach Channels While posters, radio ads, and school letters were widely distributed, they may not have reached the audiences most likely to attend. Exploring additional channels—community Facebook groups, targeted social media posts, local event calendars, or partnerships with youth organizations—may help broaden reach.

OBJECTIVE 6 – EVENT TAKE DOWN AND SITE CLOSURE

The teardown phase of Field Day is just as important as the initial setup, and this year's wrap-up was exceptionally smooth. Volunteers remained energized and coordinated, working together to disassemble stations, pack equipment, and return assets to the Sweetwater County facility. Clear communication and shared awareness of responsibilities helped ensure that sensitive electronics, antennas, and support gear were handled carefully and stowed properly.

A notable improvement this year was the attention given to site restoration. After equipment was packed, volunteers conducted a full walk-through of the area, collecting trash and confirming that no materials were left behind. This extra step demonstrated respect for the space, reinforced the club's commitment to stewardship, and ensured the site was left in excellent condition.

STRENGTHS

Highly Efficient Teardown Process The entire takedown was completed quickly and without complications. Volunteers worked together seamlessly, reducing strain and preventing the fatigue that often sets in at the end of a long event.

Thorough Site Cleanup The post-event walk-through was a standout success. Volunteers took time to inspect the area and remove debris, leaving the site cleaner than it was found.

Strong Team Coordination Operators and volunteers stayed focused and cooperative throughout the final phase. The same teamwork seen during setup carried through teardown, contributing to a safe, organized, and professional closeout.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Electronic Access to Partner-Agency Storage While teardown itself went smoothly, returning equipment to partner-agency storage locations again required staff to be physically present to unlock facilities. As a result equipment was returned to the Sheriff's Office then later transported to the County Yard location. Gaining electronic or badge-based access for authorized volunteers would streamline both deployment and teardown, reduce delays, and improve overall efficiency for future events.



NOTABLE INCIDENTS & OPERATIONAL OBSERVATIONS

While Field Day operations were smooth overall, several noteworthy incidents and equipment considerations emerged that are important to document for future planning and safety.

Trailer Hitch Compatibility Issue During deployment, the Emergency Management vehicle arrived without a trailer hitch ball compatible with the tower trailer. Useage of personal equipment was necessary to transport. This reinforces the need for verifying towing equipment compatibility prior to deployment and ensuring backup hardware is available.

Operator Fall & First Aid Response One operator, who had parked in the designated area, attempted to join the group by walking down a steep hillside instead of using the established path. They lost balance and required first aid. The response was quick and effective, but the incident highlights the importance of clearly marked safe walking routes and reinforcing their use during setup and operations.

Unauthorized Vehicle Traffic Through Camp Multiple vehicles drove through the operating area (“camp”) during the event. Although no equipment was damaged, the unexpected traffic created safety concerns and disrupted operations. Improved signage, cones, or temporary barriers will help prevent vehicle intrusion in future deployments.

Trailer Positioning & Safety Equipment Needs During setup and teardown, it became clear that the enclosed trailer’s tongue jack does not raise high enough for easy hitching. Having taller trailer block or risers would make positioning safer and reduce strain on volunteers. Additionally, wheel chocks were not available for all trailers. Ensuring each trailer has proper chocks will improve stability and safety during both setup and teardown.