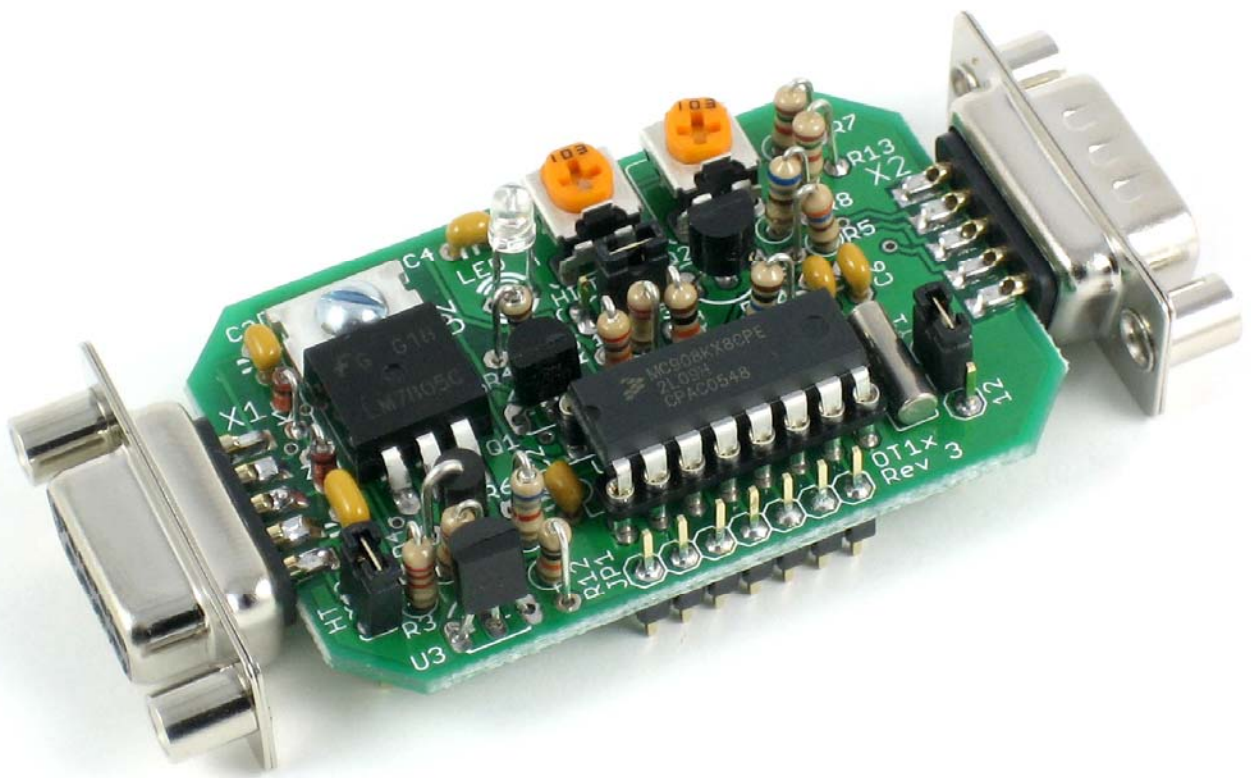


OpenTracker User's Manual



1. Introduction

The OpenTracker is a simple, low-cost amateur radio data encoder capable of generating 1200 or 300 baud AX.25 packets using both APRS™ and OpenTRAC protocols, as well as PSK31 text beacons. It can be connected to a GPS receiver to report position, course and speed, time, and altitude, and will also report telemetry from its onboard temperature and voltage sensors. With its expansion connector and ease of reprogramming, the device can be adapted to a wide variety of tasks.

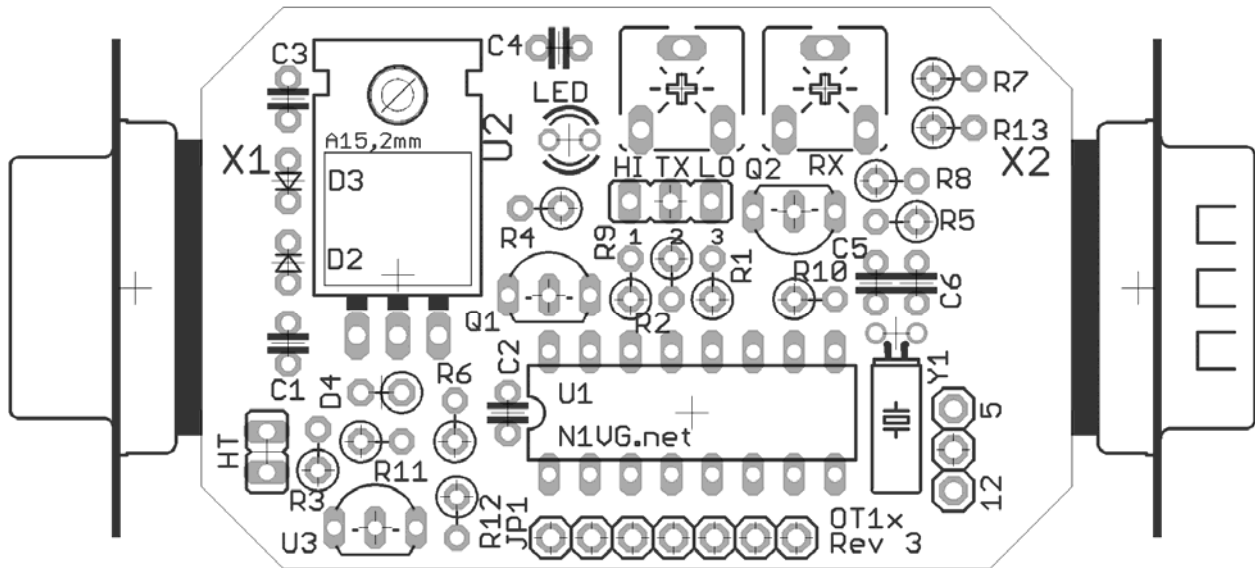
Acknowledgements

The OpenTracker is far from being the first device of its type, and owes much to those that came before – in particular, John Hansen’s GPS-E firmware and its TAPR PIC-E hardware, Steve Bragg’s HamHUD, and Byon Garrabrant’s very successful TinyTraks series. Lessons learned from all of these devices have contributed to the design of the OpenTracker. The SmartBeaconing™ algorithm used by the OpenTracker was originally developed by Tony Americh, KD7TA, and Steve Bragg, KA9MVA. APRS™ is a trademark of Bob Bruninga, WB4APR. Brian Riley, N1BQ, and Keri Morgret, N6TME, contributed to this manual.

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2. OpenTracker Kit Assembly Notes



The OpenTracker kit requires basic to intermediate level soldering skills. You will need a low-wattage soldering iron, wire cutters, and solder. Rosin core solder is recommended – never use acid core solder for electronics.

Review the parts list and identify the components you received. If any are missing or damaged, contact support@n1vg.net for replacements. Don't worry if your kit includes extra resistors or other parts not listed above – these are provided for modifications and alternate versions of the kit.

Assembly Notes

1. Install connectors X1 and X2. You may want to set the board and connectors in the lower half of the case during soldering to ensure a proper fit. The connectors should be level and flush with the board.
2. Install the pin headers next (marked JP1, '12 5', 'HI LO', and 'HT') by inserting them from *under* the board, and carefully soldering them on the top side. This will allow adequate clearance for the finished board to fit in its case.
3. Install the LED last. Insert it without soldering it, with its short lead to the left, facing U2. Place the circuit board in the top half of the case, and push the LED into its mounting hole from the back. Solder it in place and trim the leads.

Observe proper component polarity:

- D4 is non-polarized and can be installed in any orientation.
- Diodes D2 and D3 have their cathodes marked with a black band. This corresponds to the line at the pointed end of the symbol shown for these parts on the silkscreen.
- The labels for D2 and D3 are printed within the outline of regulator U2. The microcontroller U1 is installed with its reference notch toward the left. All other parts should be installed as their outlines indicate.



| Part | Description | Notes |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| U1 | MC68HC908KX8 MCU | Reference notch faces left |
| U2 | 7805 Voltage Regulator | Align to silkscreen outline |
| U3 | LM335Z | Align to silkscreen outline |
| R1, R12 | 10 K resistor | Brown-Black-Orange |
| R2 | 220K resistor | Red-Red-Yellow |
| R3 | 2.2K resistor | Red-Red-Red |
| R4 | 1K resistor | Brown-Black-Red |
| R5 | 360 ohm resistor | Orange-Blue-Brown |
| R6 | 6.8K resistor | Blue-Gray-Red |
| R7, R13 | 1.5K resistor | Brown-Green-Red |
| R8 | 680 ohm resistor | Blue-Gray-Brown |
| R9 | 27k resistor | Red-Purple-Orange |
| R10 | 10M resistor | Brown-Black-Blue |
| R11 | 20K resistor | Red-Black-Orange |
| RX, TX | 10K potentiometer | Align pins to holes |
| JP1 | 7-pin header | Install from bottom of board |
| C1 | 0.33uF capacitor | Yellow with "334" marking |
| C2-C4 | 0.1uF capacitor | Yellow with "104" marking |
| C5, C6 | 18pF capacitor | "180j" or "180" marking |
| Q1, Q2 | 2N7000 transistor | Align to silkscreen outline |
| D2, D3 | 1N4148 diode | Black band denotes cathode |
| D4 | SA30CA TVS | Not polarity sensitive |
| LED | Red LED | Short lead faces toward D1 |
| X1 | DB9 Connector – female | Left edge of board |
| X2 | DB9 Connector – male | Right edge of board |
| Y1 | 29.4912 MHz crystal | Bend down parallel to PCB |

Jumper Functions

'HT' – Selects if push-to-talk signaling through the audio output line is enabled.

- Selected (enabled) is typically used with handheld radios
- For mobile radios or Kenwood handhelds, leave this jumper open

'HI / LO' – Selects the range of the audio output level.

- 'LO' is suitable for most amateur handhelds
- 'HI' may be needed for some amateur mobile radios and most commercial mobile radios

'12 / 5' –Selects the output voltage on pin 4 of the serial connector. Typically, this is used to power a GPS receiver. The '5' setting connects pin 4 to the output of the 5-volt regulator. The '12' setting connects pin 4 to the regulator's input. The input voltage is typically supplied on the radio connector, and is not necessarily 12 volts. This setting may be used with GPS receivers capable of operating at the supplied voltage, or it may be used to supply power to the tracker through the serial connector. DO NOT apply external power through the serial connector while the jumper is in the '5' position or you may damage the regulator and/or processor.

3. Connector Pin Assignments

Table 2 – Pin Header 1 (JP1)

| Pin | Designator | Notes |
|-----|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| JP1 | Ground | |
| JP2 | Jumper | Configuration select |
| JP3 | PTT Input or Relay Out | See Note #1 |
| JP4 | IRQ | See Note #2 |
| JP5 | ADC0 | On-board temperature sensor |
| JP6 | ADC1 | On-board divider provides 1/3 Vin |
| JP7 | ADC2 | 1-wire data bus |

Note #1 – JP2 can be used for either PTT input for mic encoder operation, or as a relay control output if power control is enabled. When used as a relay output, the pin can provide no more than 15 ma current.

Note #2 – JP4 pulled momentarily to ground will force an immediate transmit or increment the digital counter, if enabled.

Table 3 – DB9 Female (X1) – Radio Port

| Pin | Function |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1 | Audio Out |
| 2 | COR / Squelch Input |
| 3 | PTT Output |
| 4 | Configuration select |
| 5 | Audio In |
| 6 | Ground |
| 7 | Power in |
| 8 | PTT Input |
| 9 | No Connection |

Table 4 – DB9 Male (X2) – Serial Port

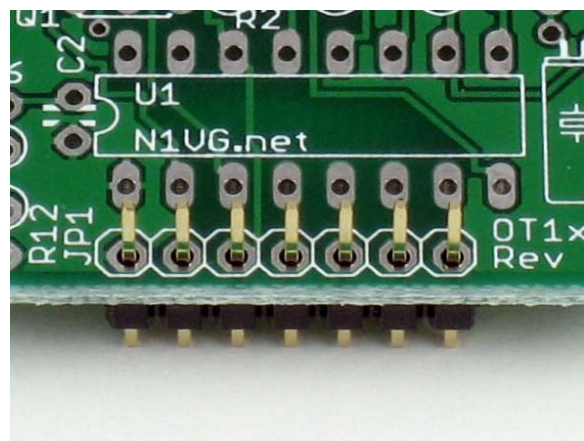
| Pin | Function |
|-----|------------------|
| 1 | No Connection |
| 2 | Data In |
| 3 | Data Out |
| 4 | V _{ext} |
| 5 | Ground |
| 6 | No Connection |
| 7 | 1-Wire Data Bus |
| 8 | No Connection |
| 9 | No Connection |

X2 is wired as DTE to allow connection to a GPS receiver using a standard cable. A null modem cable is required for connection to a computer.

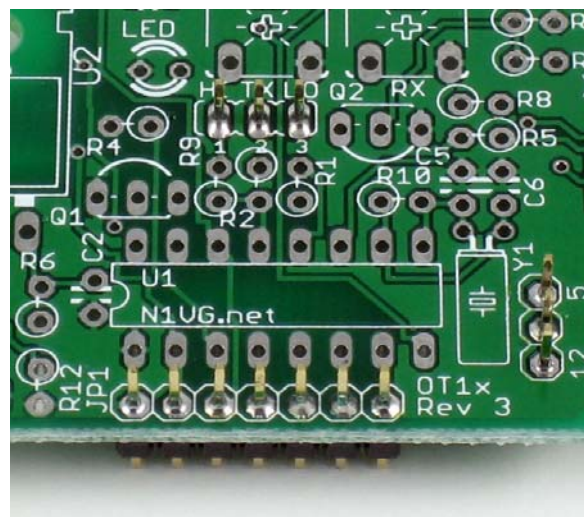
Kit Assembly Pictorial



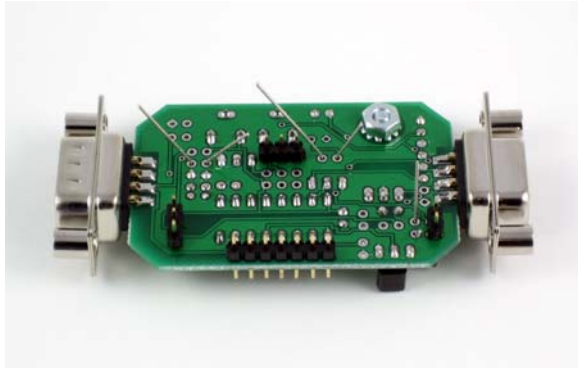
Board aligned in the lower half of the case, ready to solder the connectors in place.



Pin headers installed from the bottom of the board, before soldering.



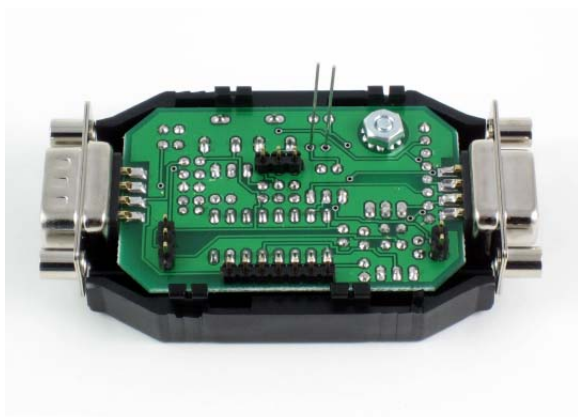
Pin headers after soldering from the top.



Install a few parts at a time, bending the leads to hold them in place before soldering.



Completed board, without LED.



LED placed and ready to be soldered.

Finished kit



4. OpenTracker Setup and Operation

a. General

The OpenTracker radio connector, X1, is identical to that used by the Kantronics KPC-3 and the Byonics TinyTrak3. Any cable that was made to interface a radio to either of these devices should work with OpenTracker. BUX Comm provides detailed wiring diagrams and pre-assembled cables for a wide variety of radios at <http://www.packetradio.com/wiring.htm>.

Most handheld radios (with the notable exception of those made by Kenwood) assert PTT by grounding the microphone input. The OpenTracker uses this method if the 'HT' jumper is installed. This jumper should be omitted when the tracker is used with mobile radios or with handhelds that do not use this method of PTT keying.

The OpenTracker requires 6.7 to 28 volts DC. If R11 and R12 are installed, the OpenTracker can measure and report its voltage input level. However, the measurement range is limited to 6.7 to 15 volts.

Power may be supplied through either 9-pin connector. Most often, it is supplied through pin 7 of the radio connector. It may also be supplied through pin 4 of the data connector if a jumper is installed in the '12' position of the header marked '12 / 5'.

b. Receive Adjustment

The OpenTracker cannot decode incoming packet data. Instead, it watches for audio energy (voice, data, or static) to avoid transmitting over other stations. The sensitivity of the energy detect is determined by the trimpot labeled 'RX'.

Adjust the squelch on the receiver so that it remains closed under average channel conditions with no signals present. Turn RX potentiometer all the way up so that it remains lighted, and then turn it back down until it stops blinking under quiet channel conditions.

c. Transmit Adjustment

The 'TX' potentiometer sets the unit's transmit audio level. To set this level properly, use another radio to listen to the unit's transmitted packets. Turn the level up slowly until the signal doesn't get any louder, and then turn it back down until it gets noticeably quieter. Continue turning it down for about 1/8 turn after that point. **Proper audio level is critical to ensuring the transmitted packets can be received and decoded.** A transmit audio level set too high will cause clipping in the transmitter, which results in signals that are difficult to decode.

The header marked 'HI / LO' selects between two audio level ranges. The 'LO' setting is suitable for most handheld radios and some mobiles. If you are unable to get sufficient audio level in the

'LO' setting, move the jumper to the 'HI' position. A jumper must be installed in one of the two positions or no audio output will be produced.

The configuration software also allows adjustment of the audio output level using a slider control. See the software documentation for details.

d. LED Blink Codes

The tracker reports its status through the use of a single LED as follows:

| Action | Meaning |
|----------------|--|
| Rapid blinking | Channel is in use |
| Single flash | Received valid GPS fix |
| Double flash | Received invalid GPS fix. GPS may not be ready |
| Lit solid | Transmitting or in configuration mode |

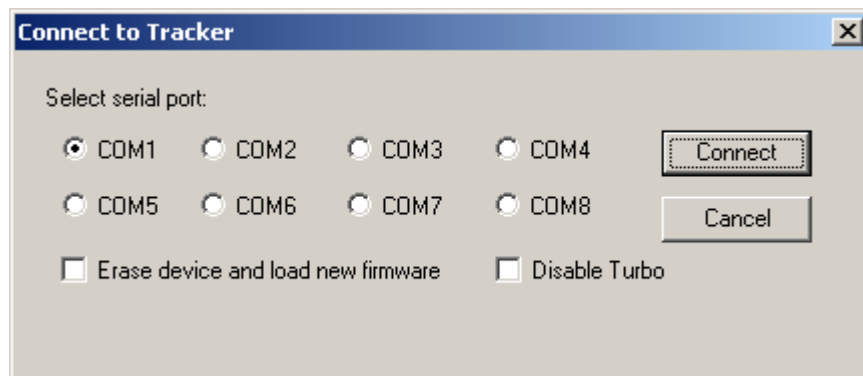
Note - If the LED is blinking rapidly when the channel is not in use, the receive sensitivity is probably set too high. Adjust the RX trimpot until the LED stops blinking. It should start blinking again when the radio's squelch opens.

e. Configuration Program

The OpenTracker is configured through a Microsoft Windows program available in the download section of the website. Use a standard null-modem cable to connect the device to the PC. The PC does not supply power to the tracker, so it must be powered externally.

s

Connect the tracker and start the configuration program. The first window displayed allows you to select the COM port that the tracker is connected to.



Overwriting an Invalid Configuration

The 'Erase device and load new firmware' option will load a new firmware image, using the default configuration settings, without attempting to read the existing configuration first. This is particularly useful if the tracker has an invalid or missing configuration.

Turbo Mode

By default, the configuration program will attempt to connect at 115,200 baud. If you have trouble connecting, use the 'Disable Turbo' option to force the program to connect at 19,200 baud.

Warm Boot vs. Cold Boot

If the unit is already powered on and operating when you click the 'Connect' button, the program attempts a 'warm boot' operation to put the device into configuration mode. If the firmware has been corrupted, i.e. by a failed upgrade, it may fail to enter configuration mode. You can correct this by performing a 'cold boot' - power the unit off and power it on again after clicking 'Connect'.

f. Main configuration window

The screenshot shows the 'OpenTracker Configuration' window with the following settings:

- Config 1 | Config 2** (selected)
- Firmware Build 53893**
- Callsign:** N1VG
- Path:** WIDE1-1,WIDE2-1
- TX Delay:** 120 mSec
- TX Interval:** 240 Seconds
- Symbol Table:** /
- Symbol Code:** >
- Temp. Adjust:** -6 °C
- Quiet Time:** 16
- Text:** scott@n1vg.net
- In:** Comment Status **Every:** 3 **Transmissions**
- Power Control:**
- Power Delay:** 3 **Seconds**
- Use Timeslot:**
- Timeslot:** 0 **Seconds**
- Use PTT Input:**
- PTB2 Output:**
- Reporting Options:**
 - Altitude
 - Course/Speed
 - Time DHM HMS
 - GPS Quality
 - Temperature
 - Voltage
 - Compressed
- Position:** GPS Fixed
 - N:** [] ° []'
 - W:** [] ° []'
- Load Firmware From:**
- Switch Config Profile When:**
 - Any All of these conditions are met
 - Altitude > 15600 Meters
 - Speed > 294 Km/h
 - Temperature > -273 °C
 - Voltage > 0.00 Volts
 - ADC Input > 0
 - Jumper On Off
 - GPS Fix Valid Invalid
- Use SmartBeaconing:**
- Enable Counter
- Reset Counter on Transmit
- Counter Rearm:** 250 mSec
- Transmit when switching to this profile
- Invert Carrier Detect
- Suppress PTT out on PTT in
- Disable transmit if voltage < 0.00 Volts
- Allow transmit without GPS lock
- Send telemetry packet
- TX Level:** [Slider]

Language: Metric English

Buttons: Copy from Config 2 | Save to File | Load from File | Write | Quit

Configuration Profiles

The OpenTracker can store two separate configuration profiles. The profile currently being shown is selected using the tabs at the top of the window labeled 'Config 1' and 'Config 2'.

When it is first powered on, the OpenTracker will always start out using the Config 1 profile. After startup, profile selection depends on the settings in the lower-left pane of the configuration window.

The conditions to test are selected using the checkboxes to the left of each condition. The comparison can be either '>' (greater than) or '<=' (less than or equal to). Clicking on the button showing the comparison operator toggles it between these two settings.

The *Altitude* and *Speed* values are compared with those indicated by the GPS. Onboard sensors provide readings for comparison with the *Temperature* and *Voltage* fields. *ADC Input* refers to the unused analog-to-digital converter input on JP7. The possible values are 0 to 255, corresponding to a range of 0 to 5 volts. The jumper setting refers to JP2. Installing a jumper between pins JP1 and JP2 sets the 'On' condition. The *GPS Fix* is considered invalid if it has been more than 20 seconds since the last valid position was received from the GPS unit.

The selected tests are run once every second. If the conditions are met, the new profile is loaded. If *Transmit when switching to this profile* is checked in the new profile, a packet is transmitted immediately.

Once the switch to the new profile has been made, the criteria in the new profile take effect. **Another switch will not occur until the new criteria are met.** Often, the criteria in each profile will be complementary. For example, Config 1 might indicate a switch when the jumper is installed, and Config 2 would indicate a switch when the jumper is removed. However, the criteria may be completely independent of each other.

If the criteria in both profiles are met at the same time, the configuration will swap every second. Keep in mind that there may be a certain amount of noise or jitter on analog inputs such as voltage and temperature.

Loading and Saving Settings

After changing any configuration options, you must click the 'Write' button to write the changes to the tracker's firmware. You may also use the 'Save to File' button to save the configuration options to a file, which can be loaded later using the 'Load from File' button.

Basic Configuration Options

Callsign – The radio callsign to use when transmitting. Tactical callsigns may be used, but FCC and ITU rules require periodic identification. If the actual callsign is not used here, be sure to include it in the comment field.

Path – This specifies the digipeater path to use. Specific callsigns may be entered (e.g., 'K6SYV-10, K6TZ-10') but for APRS operation a set of common aliases are usually used. A suggested default path is 'WIDE1-1, WIDE2-1'. It is rarely necessary to use a path greater than WIDE3-3 (requesting three 'wide' digipeater hops), and excessive paths generate large amounts of traffic that degrade the performance of the network. If you're not sure what path should be used for your local area, check with a local digipeater operator. This field may be left blank.

TX Delay – All radios require a certain amount of time to stabilize on their transmitting frequency, and receivers also require time to lock on. This value specifies the number of milliseconds the tracker should wait after the start of the transmission before it begins sending data. Allowable values are 0 to 1023 milliseconds. Setting this value too high will keep the channel busy longer than necessary. Setting it too low will prevent packets from being transmitted properly. Finding the optimum value for your radio may require some experimentation.

TX Interval – How often the tracker should transmit. Allowable values are 0 to 65,535 seconds. This setting will depend on your intended use. One transmission every two minutes is acceptable for most mobile stations. A fixed station (e.g., a solar powered site reporting battery voltage and temperature) might choose an interval in the range of 5 to 30 minutes. If you require transmissions more often than every two minutes or so, consider using the Smart-Beaconing™ options detailed below. Special events with many trackers and short transmission intervals should be operated on a separate frequency, not on the shared APRS channel. An interval of zero will disable timed transmissions.

Symbol Table and **Symbol Code** – These settings control the symbol used to indicate the station's position when drawn on a map. See Appendix B for a listing of available symbols.

Temp. Adjust – Calibration offset for onboard temperature sensor. The sensor used on the OpenTracker is fairly linear across its operating range and requires a single-point calibration. The easiest way to accomplish this is to set a thermometer next to the tracker. Subtract the temperature reported by the tracker from the temperature shown by the thermometer, and enter that value in this field. For example, if the thermometer shows the temperature as 26°C and the tracker reports 29°C, enter -3 for the adjustment value.

Quiet Time – This setting determines how long the channel must be clear before the tracker will transmit. Each unit is approximately 1/56 second. Setting the quiet time to zero causes the tracker to ignore detected traffic.

Text – This is a freeform text field. Anything entered here will be displayed in the comment portion of the transmission or in a separate status packet, as selected. Keep comments as brief as possible to avoid wasting channel capacity, or use the 'Every __ Transmissions' option to reduce how often the text is sent.

Altitude, Course/Speed, Time – When checked, report these values as indicated by the GPS receiver. The timestamp may be in Days/Hours/Minutes or Hours/Minutes/Seconds.

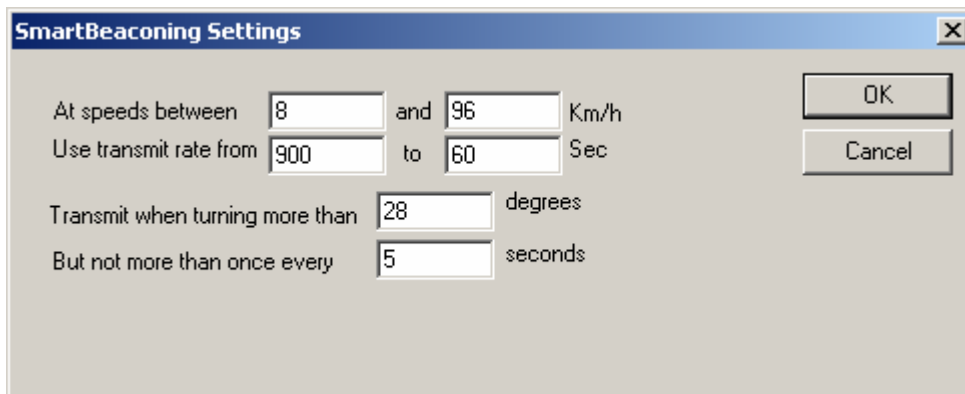
GPS Quality – Report fix type, number of satellites in use, and dilution of precision information as reported by the GPS receiver.

Temperature – Report temperature as indicated by the onboard temperature sensor in the comment field, in degrees C.

Voltage – Report input voltage in the comment field. The maximum value is 15 volts, and the minimum is the dropout voltage of the regulator – typically 6.7 volts.

SmartBeaconing™ – Originally developed for the HamHUD by Tony Arnerich, KD7TA, and Steve Bragg, KA9MVA, the SmartBeaconing™ algorithm allows the tracker to operate more efficiently by changing how often it transmits depending on its speed and direction of travel.

When stopped or moving at a speed below the low speed setting, the tracker will transmit at a fixed rate determined by the lower rate setting. Above the specified high-speed threshold, the higher rate setting is used. Between these two extremes, the interval varies between the low and high rates depending on the speed. A turn angle can also be specified to cause the tracker to transmit when turning.



Power Control – When selected, the tracker will assert a 5-volt signal on JP1 before each transmission. This can be used to drive a relay or MOSFET to control power to the transmitter. The tracker will pause for the specified number of seconds to give the transmitter time to power up. The power control feature is especially useful for solar-powered weather or telemetry stations. Do not exceed 25 mA load on JP1.

Timeslot – The timeslot option is typically used to coordinate multiple trackers, especially for special events where many transmitters will be sharing the same channel with a high beacon rate. The number entered selects the timeslot's offset, in seconds, from the start of the hour. The tracker will transmit at this time, and every transmit interval after that. The timeslot value should be smaller than the transmit interval.

Use PTT Input – When this checkbox is enabled, the tracker can be connected inline with a microphone to operate in burst-after-voice mode. A packet will be transmitted whenever the microphone PTT is released.

PTB2 Output – This checkbox controls the output level of pin PTB2 (jumper JP7). Because this pin is shared with the spare ADC input, the checkbox is ignored if the ADC input is used. The output can be used as an indication of the configuration profile currently in use.

Enable Counter – This checkbox enables the digital counter function. When this function is enabled, the tracker will no longer transmit immediately when JP4 is shorted to ground. Instead, it will increment a counter and include the current count in the status text, e.g., 'CNT00001'. The maximum count is 65535, after which the counter rolls over to zero.

Reset Counter on Transmit – Setting this checkbox causes the counter to reset with every transmission. Hence, the count reported is the number of events since the last transmission.

Counter Rearm – This is a 'debounce' delay applied to the counter input. After a counter event is registered, all subsequent events are ignored until the specified time has elapsed.

Invert Carrier Detect – Usually used with mobile radios, this checkbox indicates that the channel is busy when the carrier detect input is low.

Suppress PTT Out on PTT In – This option allows the tracker to be used in burst-after-voice mode without breaking any lines between the microphone and radio. PTT is not asserted by the tracker until the microphone PTT is released.

Disable Transmit on Low Voltage – To avoid over-discharging batteries, enable this option and enter the minimum voltage at which the tracker should operate the transmitter.

Allow Transmit Without GPS Lock – Normally, while in GPS mode, the tracker will not transmit without a valid fix. When this option is selected, the tracker will continue to transmit its last known position if GPS lock is lost for more than 30 seconds. This condition is indicated by the text 'NOFIX' in the status message. If the tracker has received no valid fix since startup, no position will be reported. Status text and telemetry packets will be unaffected. This option is particularly useful for applications like high altitude balloons that may lose GPS lock after landing, but still need to transmit to be found.

Send Telemetry Packet – Enabling this option causes the tracker to transmit a standard APRS telemetry packet after each position packet. The telemetry packet contains raw readings from the three analog-to-digital converter inputs, the low eight bits of the counter, the GPS HDOP reading, the profile in use, and the status of the jumper input.

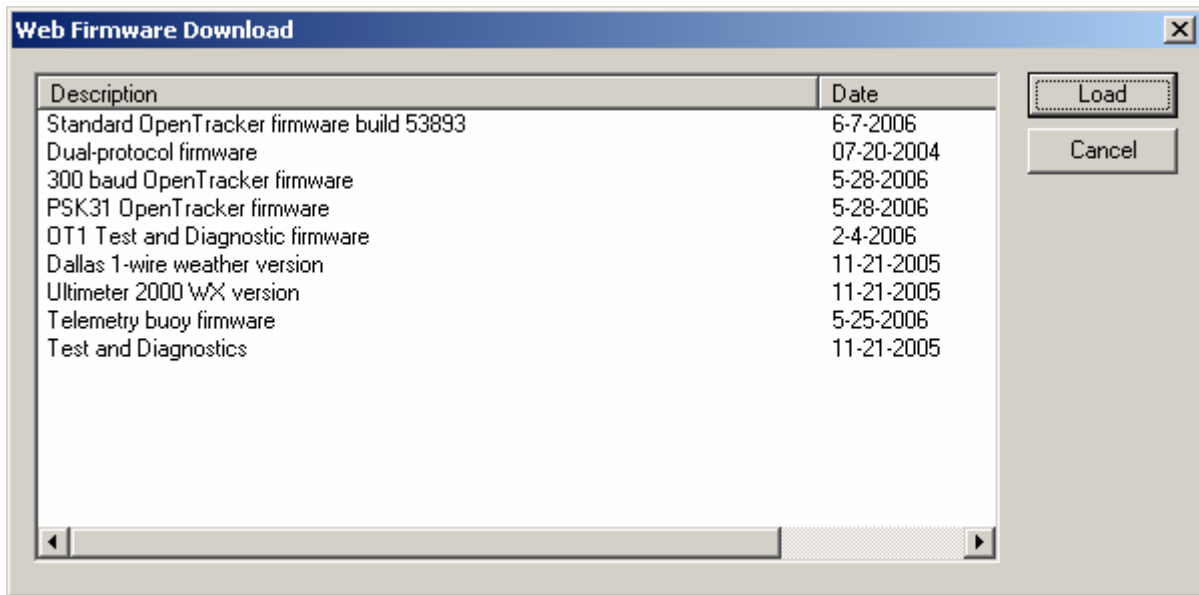
TX Level – This slider sets the audio output level. It is functionally similar to the ‘TX’ potentiometer on the board, but allows different audio levels to be set for each profile.

Copy from Configuration – This button copies the contents of one profile to the other. Be sure to check the profile switching options in the lower left pane if you use this feature – having the same criteria here in both profiles is usually not desired.

5. Installing New Firmware

New firmware for the OpenTracker is frequently released to provide new features, fix bugs, or even completely change the nature of the device – from a GPS-connected tracker to a remote weather station or CW keyer, for example.

Two methods are provided to install new firmware images. First, the files may be downloaded from the website manually and uploaded to the device using the ‘File’ button. This is particularly useful if you will be configuring devices on a computer without Internet access. Second, by clicking on the ‘Web’ button, the configuration program will retrieve a list of currently available firmware images. Selecting one of these will automatically download the file from the website and upload it to the device.



Firmware files are in Motorola S19 format. If you compile your own firmware, the S19 file generated by the linker can be used without modification. Interrupt vectors are automatically rewritten by the configuration program.

6. Weather Station Operation

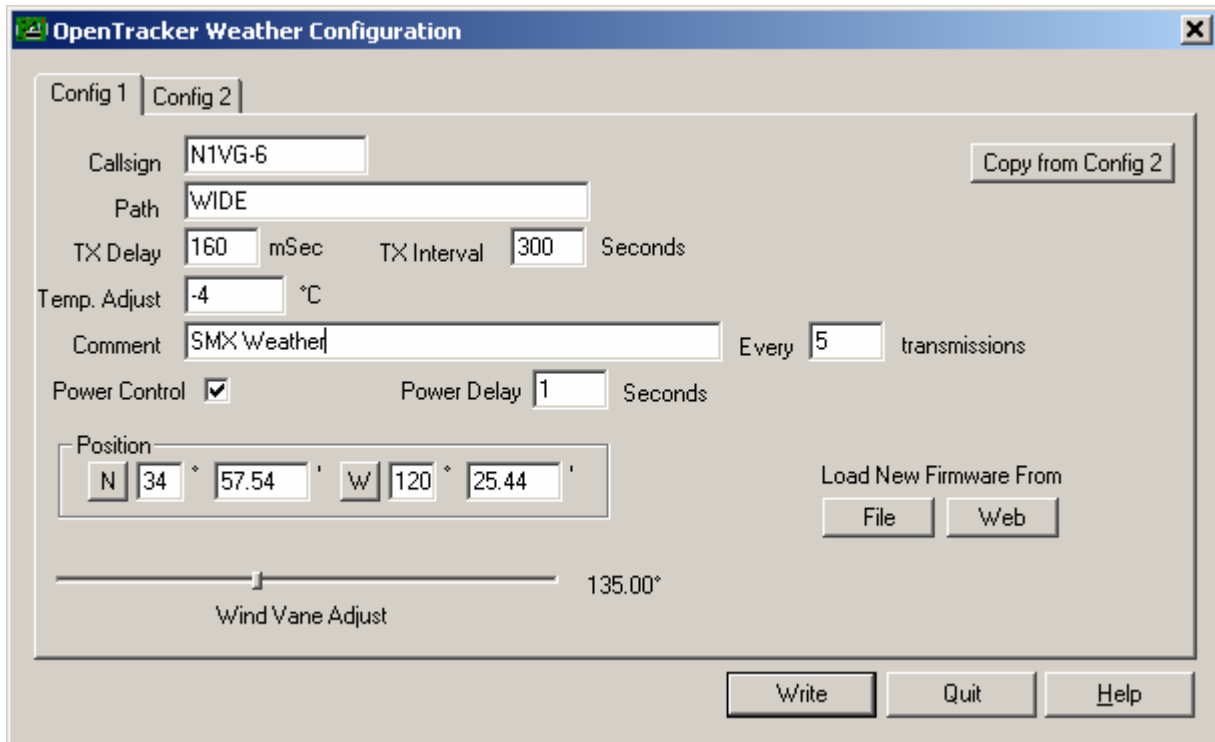
Connecting to a Weather Station

The OpenTracker can be used with the 1-Wire Weather Instrument from AAG Electronica, the Peet Bros. Ultimeter II, and the Peet Bros. Ultimeter 2000 series weather stations, including the Ultimeter 800 and 2100. In Dallas/1-Wire mode, the microcontroller's PTB2 line is used as the 1-wire data bus. This signal is available at pin 7 of the data connector. All other weather stations connect to the serial port.

Weather Firmware Setup

If the OpenTracker has the weather station firmware loaded, the configuration program will detect this and display a different screen on startup. Most of the options function as with the standard tracker firmware. However, the weather station operates only in fixed position mode – it cannot interface with a GPS receiver. Also, the comment text is always sent in a separate packet from the weather data.

The 'Wind Vane Adjust' slider is used to calibrate the 1-wire weather station's wind vane. The wind vane should be pointed in a known direction and the slider adjusted until the direction is reported properly. Peet Bros. stations should be configured in 'complete' data mode.



7. Telemetry Operation

With the telemetry option enabled, the OpenTracker will transmit an APRS-formatted telemetry packet after each position packet:

```
T#011,155,218,000,000,000,00000000
```

Six three-digit fields follow the 'T#' header. Each field has a range of zero to 255. The fields are interpreted as follows:

Sequence number: Incremented with each transmission.

ADC0: Multiply by 1.9608 for temperature reading in kelvins.

ADC1: Divide by 17 for supply voltage reading in volts.

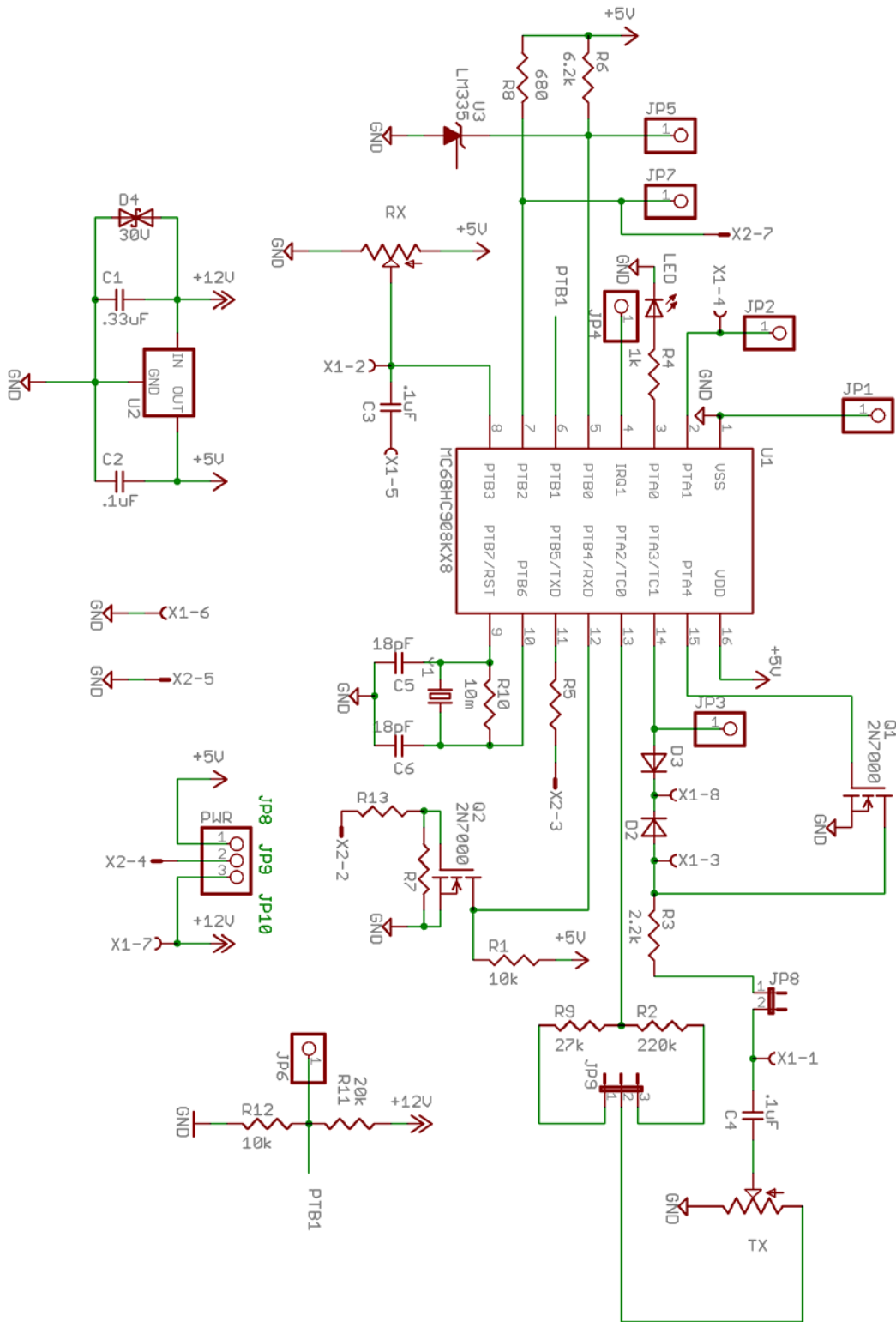
ADC2: Divide by 51 for auxiliary analog input reading in volts.

Counter: Low eight bits of the digital counter input.

HDOP: Divide by 10 for GPS horizontal dilution of precision reading.

Of the final eight-digit field, only two binary digits are used – the rightmost bit reflects the jumper input, and the next bit indicates the configuration profile in use.

8. OpenTracker Circuit Details



Theory of Operation

The heart of the OpenTracker circuit is a Freescale MC908KX8 microcontroller unit (MCU). The MCU contains 192 bytes of RAM and roughly 8 kilobytes of Flash program memory. It runs at a clock speed of 7.3728 MHz.

U2 is a linear voltage regulator that provides regulated 5 VDC power to the circuit, and optionally to an external device connected to Vext. C1 and C2 are the input and output filter capacitors, respectively.

Y1, C5, C6, and R10 form the clock oscillator circuit. The oscillator frequency of 29.4912 MHz is divided by four in the MCU's clock module to produce the bus clock signal.

Audio output originates at pin 13 of the MCU. This pin is configured as a timer channel output and generates a pulse-width modulated signal between 0 and 5 volts. Audio tones are generated in software using a sine wave lookup table. R2, R9, and the TX POT limit the audio output level, and C4 couples the AC component of the signal to the audio output at X1 pin 1.

Pin 15 of the MCU produces the PTT output signal. It switches Q1, pulling the audio output down through R3 for handheld PTT, and pulling X1 pin 3 to ground for other radios.

An externally applied PTT signal on X1 pin 8 will pull the PTT output low through D2, and will pull pin 14 of the MCU low (it is normally held high by an internal pull-up resistor) through D3.

The audio input from the radio is AC-coupled by C3 and biased by pot RX., which sets the carrier detect threshold. X1 pin 2 provides a DC-coupled input for radios with a squelch or carrier operated relay output.

R7, R13, and Q2 form an inverter/buffer circuit for the RS-232 input. The RS-232 output polarity is controlled in software. The output level swings between 0 and 5 volts, and may not be compatible with all RS-232 devices.

U3 is a temperature sensor with an output of 10 mV per Kelvin. R6 limits its input current, and its output drives one of the analog inputs on the MCU.

R11 and R12 form a voltage divider, the output of which is one third of the supply voltage. This voltage drives another analog input on the MCU.

The LED is driven by a high-current output line from the MCU, through current limiting resistor R4. Lowering the value of R4 will increase the brightness of the LED.

Appendix A – Test Procedures

Measurements

Disconnect the tracker, remove U1 from its socket, and use an ohmmeter to check the following connections. Nominal values are approximate.

| Connection | Nominal Value | Circuit Description |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| U1-1 to U1-16 | 2.6 k Ω | Power to Ground |
| U1-9 to U1-10 | 10 M Ω | Crystal oscillator |
| TX pot outer leads | 10 k Ω | TX level adjust pot |
| U1-5 to U1-1 | 7.5 k Ω | Temperature sensor |

With U1 removed, connect the tracker to its power source. Using U1 pin 1 or JP2 as ground, check the following voltages.

| Connection | Nominal Value | Circuit Description |
|------------|----------------|---|
| U1 pin 16 | 5 V \pm 0.25 | Voltage regulator output |
| U1 pin 5 | 10 mV / K | Temperature sensor: 2.95 V = 295 Kelvin = 71.3 °F |

Remove power, re-install U1, and power up the tracker. With a typical digital voltmeter, U1 pins 9 and 10 should indicate approximately 2.4 V and 2.2 V, respectively. A frequency counter or oscilloscope should show a 29.4912 MHz signal at these pins. Absence of this signal indicates a problem with U1 or the crystal oscillator.

Appendix B – APRS symbol tables

APRS symbols are identified by a single character, and may be chosen from either the primary or alternate table. Additionally, some of the symbols from the alternate table may be overlaid with an alphanumeric character by substituting the character to be overlaid (0-9, a-z, or A-Z) in place of the '\ ' table designator.

| Symbol | Primary Table (/) | Alternate Table (\) |
|--------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| ! | Police Station | Emergency |
| " | <Reserved> | <Reserved> |
| # | Digipeater | Digipeater w/ overlay |
| \$ | Phone | Bank or ATM |
| % | DX Cluster | <Reserved> |
| & | HF Gateway | Diamond w/ overlay |
| ' | Small Aircraft | Crash site |
| (| Mobile Sat Station | Cloudy |
|) | Wheel Chair | MODIS Earth Observation |
| * | Snowmobile | Snow |
| + | Red Cross | Church |
| , | Boy Scouts | Girl Scouts |
| - | House (VHF) | House (HF) |
| . | X | Question Mark |
| / | Red Dot | Destination (Red Dot) |
| 0 | Circle <Obsolete> | Circle w/ overlay |
| 9 | <Obsolete> | Gas/Petrol Station |
| : | Fire | Hail |
| ; | Campground | Park or Picnic Area |
| < | Motorcycle | Advisory |
| = | Railroad Engine | <Reserved> |
| > | Car | Car w/ overlay |
| ? | File server | Info Kiosk |
| @ | Hurricane Prediction | Hurricane / Tropical Storm |
| A | Aid Station | Box w/ overlay |
| B | BBS | Blowing snow |
| C | Canoe | Coast Guard |
| D | <Reserved> | Drizzle |
| E | Eyeball | Smoke |
| F | Farm Vehicle (tractor) | Freezing Rain |
| G | Grid Square | Snow Shower |
| H | Hotel | Haze |
| I | TCP/IP | Rain Shower |
| J | <Reserved> | Lightning |
| K | School | Kenwood |
| L | Logged-On User | Lighthouse |
| M | MacAPRS | <Reserved> |
| N | NTS Station | Navigation Buoy |

| | | |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------|
| O | Balloon | Rocket |
| P | Police | Parking |
| Q | <Reserved> | Quake |
| R | Rec. Vehicle | Restaurant |
| S | Shuttle | Satellite |
| T | SSTV | Thunderstorm |
| U | Bus | Sunny |
| V | ATV | VORTAC |
| W | NWS Site | NWS Site w/ overlay |
| X | Helicopter | Pharmacy |
| Y | Yacht | <Reserved> |
| Z | WinAPRS | <Reserved> |
| [| Jogger | Wall Cloud |
| \ | Triangle | <Reserved> |
|] | PBBS | <Reserved> |
| ^ | Large Aircraft | Aircraft w/ overlay |
| _ | WX Station | WX Station w/ overlay |
| ` | Dish Antenna | Rain |
| a | Ambulance | ARES |
| b | Bike | Blowing Dust/Sand |
| c | ICP | Civil Defense w/ overlay |
| d | Fire Station | DX Spot |
| e | Horse | Sleet |
| f | Fire Truck | Funnel Cloud |
| g | Glider | Gale |
| h | Hospital | HAM store |
| i | IOTA | Indoor BOXn digi w/overlay |
| j | Jeep | Work Zone |
| k | Truck | SUV (off-roader, 4x4) |
| l | Laptop | Area Locations |
| m | Repeater | Signpost (3-digit) |
| n | Node | Triangle w/ overlay |
| o | EOC | Small Circle |
| p | Rover | Partly Cloudy |
| q | Grid square | <Reserved> |
| r | Antenna | Restrooms |
| s | Ship / Power Boat | Boat w/ overlay |
| t | Truck Stop | Tornado |
| u | Truck (18 wheeler) | Truck w/ overlay |
| v | Van | Van w/ overlay |
| w | Water Station | Flooding |
| x | xAPRS | <Reserved> |
| y | Yagi | Skywarn |
| z | Shelter | Shelter w/ overlay |
| { | <Reserved> | Fog |
