

Best Bets in the Pacific Northwest

By Bruce Portzer

A few years ago, Bill Hardy wrote an excellent article in which he listed the most likely targets for logging the 50 states, DC, 10 provinces, and two territories. Since then, there have been many changes in the AM dial, especially in this corner of the country. Enough, in fact, to make it desirable to reexamine the relative ease (or difficulty) of hearing each of these political entities.

In this article I've ranked the states and DC from 1 to 51, and the provinces & territories from 1 to 12, then interleaved the two lists to give an even better perspective of where each ranks. For example, Alberta is the second easiest province to receive here and it ranks just behind the seventh easiest state, Utah.

Rankings themselves are somewhat subjective, based on my own experiences and those of other DXers in the region. The rankings are based on current and projected interference levels from co-channel and adjacent channel stations. There's a slight bias towards Seattle, since 1) it's near the center of the region, 2) it has the highest concentration of DXers in the region, and 3) I live there. However, I've tried to consider the whole region (WA, OR, and southern BC) in reaching this list. To a lesser degree, this list is also valid for an area bounded by San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Edmonton, and Juneau.

CATEGORY I: Very Easy

The following states and provinces can be heard on any receiver worth DXing with, on almost any night of the year (barring extreme auroral or sporadic-E conditions). Some can even be heard in the daytime.

1. Washington. No surprise here, hi. KIRO-710, KOMO-1000, and KGA-1510 have the biggest coverage areas, but you should be able to hear dozens of stations with no trouble.
1. British Columbia. This province has no shortage of 50kw powerhouses, such as CKDA-1220, CKWX-1130, CKLG-730, ad nauseum.
2. Oregon. If you live in Oregon, you may rank this one higher, hi. KEX-1190 and KPNW-1120 are the most potent.
3. California. Like BC, this place has lots of 50 kwers, like KFI-640, KNBR-680, and KGO-810.
4. Idaho. KBOI-670 is the leader here. Honorable mention goes to KRLO-1350 and KIDO-630.
5. Nevada. KROW-780 and KDWN-720 are quite potent at night. Depending on your location, you may have interference from KIRO-710, CKLG-730, KXA-770, KGMI-790, etc.
6. Utah. KSL-1160 is the winner by a mile. KLO-1430 is a distant runner-up.
2. Alberta. Several stations to choose from: CBR-1010, CBX-740, CFRN-1260, CFAC-960, and others. It all depends on who's on the same channel or the adjacent channel in your area.
3. Saskatchewan. CBK-540 is the winner by a wide margin.
7. Montana. KOPI-1180 should be easy unless you have a local on 1170 or 1180. KGHL-790, KGVO-1290, and KEIN-1310 are respectable alternates.
8. Wyoming. KFTW-1030 is quite easy to receive everywhere in the region.
9. Texas. WBAF-820 is audible most evenings. WOAI-1200 is likewise.
10. New Mexico. It's a tossup between KOB-770 and KBCQ-1020, depending on your co-channel interference (KXA-770 or KTNQ-1020).

CATEGORY II: Easy

The following states and provinces can be heard on most receivers in most locations on most nights of the year. Poor conditions, co-channel interference, and/or adjacent channel splatter can make these places more difficult to hear than the above states and provinces. However, it should be possible to hear them during evening hours on a decent radio, but it may be necessary to null out an offending semi-local on the same or an adjacent channel.

11. Colorado. KOA-850 should be easy to hear unless you live near the KTAC or CPVR transmitter sites. Otherwise, try for KREX-1100 with KFAX nulled.
12. Minnesota. WCCO-830 is the easy winner here. KSTP-1500 is also audible evenings w/CKAY nulled, and may become the easiest Minnesota if something unmentionable happens....
13. Iowa. WHO-1040 is the winner, with no easy-to-hear alternates.
14. Oklahoma. Try for KV00-1170, KGYN-1210, or KOMA-1520, depending on your local interference.
15. Kentucky. WHAS-840 is the winner here.
4. Manitoba. CBW-990 puts a good signal into the Northwest, but some of us have KOMO-1000 or CKNW-980 to contend with.
16. Hawaii. Several possibilities here: KORL-650, KIKI-830, KAIM-870, KPOI-1040, and KGU-760 are all well-heard when conditions are just right.
17. Illinois. WLS-890 is the only unduplicated clear channel left in Illinois and that probably won't be for much longer. If KIXI-880 or CJVI-900 are

- too much for you, try nulling out Nevada and hearing WGN-720 or WBEM-780.
18. Tennessee. WSM-650 is relatively easy to hear.
19. Ohio. WLW-700 gets out well, but in some areas has CBU-690 and/or KIRO-710 to contend with. Undoubtedly, 700 will be assigned to someone in Washington or Oregon (if it hasn't been already), in which case, you might want to consider WWWE-1100 with KFAX nulled, after KREX signoff.
20. Michigan. WJR-760 isn't too hard to hear with KFMB nulled.
21. Nebraska. This state was a lot easier to hear before KIXI & KWIP moved to 880. KRVN can still be heard in some parts of the Northwest, though. For me, the best bet has been KFAB-1110, which is in most nights with CHQT nulled.

CATEGORY III: Moderate

Some of these places can be heard only between midnight and 5 am PST. Others require conditions to be just right for evening reception (or even after-midnight reception). You'll have to work a bit to log these places, but you should hear all of them eventually.

22. Georgia. WSB-750 can still sometimes be heard in Seattle mixing with Radio Sandino with KXL nulled. In Portland, you'll have to wait for a KXL silent period or try for something like WGSA-1190, which Bill Hardy heard a few months ago.
23. Louisiana. WWL-870 is the favorite here. I ranked this state much higher when I first wrote the article, but then found out KORD had moved to 870. WWL should probably still pop through when conditions are good. If not, KNOE-540 sometimes makes it up here after CBK signs off.
24. Alaska. KFGD-750 was the best bet until KXL went full time. It's still sometimes heard o/u WSB & Sandino with KXL nulled. Best bets may now be newcomers KABN-830 (with WCCO nulled) and KRSA-580 (on sunrise skip after KFXD fades out), but it's too early to tell. KYAK-650 is another good bet
25. South Dakota. KKA-1560 can often be heard after KPNC signs off.
26. Arizona. KXEG-1010 can be heard mixing with XEHL after CBR signs off. Other possibilities include KNIX-1580 (after XEDM s/off), KOY-550 (on MMs) or KTAR-620 (during rare KGW silent periods).
27. Pennsylvania. Two possibilities: KDKA-1020 with KTNQ and KBCQ nulled, or WCAU-1210 if you can get past CKDA-1220.
28. New York. The only unduplicated clear channel station, WNBC-660, is very rarely heard here for some reason. I'd put my money on WHAM-1180 with KOPI off (MM at midnight MST, plus other mornings at odd times). Or possibly WCBS-880, if KIXI goes off.
29. Massachusetts. WBZ-1030 can be heard Monday mornings with KTW0 off. Once or twice a year it can even be heard mixing with KTW0.
30. North Dakota. No clear-cut choices here. Try for KKO-1390 at MM s/on (0355 PST) if you can get past KSLM and/or CJGY. Or KPYR-550 with KARI, KAFY, KOY, and CFJC nulled. Or KEYZ-1360 on a Monday morning just before KMO signs on (0445 PST). Or KPNW-1200, currently a daytimer with 10 kw.
31. Indiana. WOWO-1190 is sometimes heard mixing with KLIIF and/or Colombia on Monday mornings with KEX off. Second choice is WGHK-1380, which is occasionally heard Monday mornings with KRKO off and California nulled.
32. Missouri. KMOX-1120 can occasionally be heard with KPNW nulled or on occasional Monday mornings with KPNW off.

CATEGORY IV: Difficult

These states and provinces are places you'll probably have to struggle to hear, but with perseverance, good equipment, and luck, you'll eventually manage to hear them.

5. Ontario. Best bet looks like CBL-740 on a Sunday morning with KCBS off, but I don't know of anyone who's heard them recently. Other possibilities include CJBC-860 with XEMO off or nulled (don't confuse CJBC with CBKF2, both are French stns), CJRN-710 with KIRO off (alternate MMs), CFRB-1010 with KXEG & XEHL nulled, CFTR-680 with KNBR off (rarely), or.....
33. Kansas. All the best bets require nulling a pest (or waiting for it to go off) or waiting for an NSP superpest to have a rare silent period. KGGF-690 is probably the easiest at 0300 PST signon with XETRA off or nulled. KKOW-860 might be possible with XEMO off or nulled. WREN-1250 is feasible with KKFY off (not too often). Also KPH-1330 with KUPL off (also not too often).
34. Florida. VOA-1180 can sometimes be heard just before KOPI signs on. WGBS-710 is sometimes heard on ETs on MMs when KIRO is off.
35. South Carolina. WESC-660 is occasionally heard at signon (0300 PST, I believe). WCCP-1560 & WAGL-1560 have been heard here in the last 10 years but KKA, KCJJ, XEFAJ, & WPAD can make things rough.
6. Quebec. CBJ-1580 and CKO-1470 are sometimes heard in this neck of the woods.
36. Arkansas. KAAY-1090 is sometimes heard on Monday mornings with KING off and XEPRS nulled, but you'll still have CHEC to contend with.

- 37. Alabama. Try for WBAM-740 at sunrise s/on (with 50kw) with KCBS off. WMOB-840 is another possibility (also at s/on). WHHY-1440 is sometimes heard mixing with KPUR during rare CFCP silent periods.
- 38. Wisconsin. WGEE-1360 is heard on rare occasions during KMOs Monday silent period. WIZM-1410 can sometimes be heard with CFUN off (which is about once every 4 years). WEMP-1250 has been heard here with KKFY off (not too often these days...). If you desperately want to hear Wisconsin you might consider moving there, hi.
- 39. Mississippi. WOKJ-1550 might be a possibility, mixing with KRGO on Monday mornings with KVAN/KKHI off. WSJC-810 might be possible at power change with KGO off (3 or 4 SMS a year) or nulled. WMOX-1010 has been heard out here at power/pattern change, but not too often. And WKKE-1180 might be audible with KOFI off.

CATEGORY V: Very difficult

You can consider yourself fortunate if you hear any of these places these days. Some have been heard here once or twice in recent years, others haven't been heard in several decades! In a few cases, my suggestions are mere conjecture, based on current levels of interference. Good luck!

- 7. New Brunswick. CBA-1070 has been heard in California with KNX off, but we still have CFAX to contend with.
- 40. Virginia. If conditions are exceptionally good, WRVA-1140 might be heard mixing with CKXL on a Monday morning with KGEM off and KRAK off or nulled.
- 41. North Carolina. A few stations have made it this far west. WTRQ-1560 and WFGW-1010 have been heard on the west coast during equipment tests (maybe someone should arrange a DX test from one of them). WBT-1110 has been heard on the west coast on rare occasions, but CHQT & KFAB make things really tough. WEUY-1440 has been heard on RS in Seattle a couple times, but you'll have to wait for a CFCP silent period.
- 8. Newfoundland. CBT-540 is a theoretical possibility--the frequency is wide open (except for LPRTs) at their 0130 PST s/on, but as far as I know they've never been heard this far west. Likewise CBN-640 is a possibility with KFI off (not often). These two might be worth trying for on mornings after good TA openings.
- 9. Prince Edward Island. CHTN-1190 has been heard as far west as Chicago and could be heard on a Monday morning with KEX off, probably at their local sunrise, when they go non-directional.
- 42. Connecticut. WTIC-1080 might be audible out here if KWJJ ever goes off. A distant runner-up is WNLC-1510 which was tentatively logged here about 10 years ago. 1510 is relatively clear on Monday mornings.
- 43. West Virginia. WCAW-680 was heard well on a DXtest a few years ago with KNER off. You might be able to hear it at power change with KNER off or nulled. WHIS-1440 has been heard in Seattle once or twice with CFCP off.
- 44. Maryland. WBAL-1090 is a remote possibility with KING off and XEPRS off or nulled. WPGC-1580 is an even more remote possibility at s/on with KDAY & KNIX off or nulled.
- 45. New Hampshire. WKBR-1250 was heard in Seattle several years ago, but now you'll have to wait for KKFY to go off as a bare minimum. Even then your chances are rather remote. And the other possibilities are even more unlikely....
- 10. Yukon Territory. CKRW-610 has been heard in Seattle a couple of times (once with KFRG on!) but that was before CHNL and KONA went NSP.
- 11. Northwest Territories. It's a pity CFFB moved off of 1210. The best suggestion I've heard comes from Nick Hall-Patch: point a Beverage antenna at Inuvik on a winter day when northern BC & Alberta are in well, then try for CHAK-860.
- 46. Vermont. WHWB-1000 might be audible at MM s/on with KOMO off, or on an ET or DX test. WCFR-1480 or WSYB-1380 might be audible on MM DX tests.
- 47. Rhode Island. The WHJJ-920 DX tests never made it this far west, but maybe we can try again some day. Ditto WHIM-1110 or.....
- 48. District of Columbia. WTOP-1500 might be audible some MM with Calif. nulled and KSTP off. The others are even less likely....
- 12. Nova Scotia. CKEW-1000 might be possible at MM pattern change with KOMO off; other possibilities are even more remote.
- 49. New Jersey. Assuming you want a station licensed to New Jersey and not just a NYC station with a NJ xr site; try moving to Africa, since that's where most NJ stations beam their signals to, hi. Maybe one of the stations on 1360 or 1510 might be heard on an East-West Beverage on a DX test, ET, or unusually good conditions, but it would be a real fluke.
- 50. Maine. Your guess is as good as mine.
- 51. Delaware. WAMS-1380 looks like the only one with a snowball's chance in wherever of making it this far west, provided they run a DX test (non-directional), KRKO is off, conditions are superb, and KGMS/KTOM are off or nulled.