Camper Power Notes

2018 Northern Lite 9'6" QSE Truck Camper

+

2015 Ford F350 SRW

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Dec 14, 2019

Thomas' Truck Camper Use Case

Pre-conditions

- 2015 Ford F350 SRW pickup with camper package, 7-pin outlet, and 200A alternator
- 2018 NorthernLite 9'6" QSE camper with 7-pin aux power in, 100W PWM solar panel, and 30A-AC / 45A-DC shore power. No existing components are lithium ready, and many power wires are undersized 🕾
- Mostly boondock on USFS, BLM, and Wildlife Refuge land
- Often take short/quick drives while boondocking in an area
- On long trips, often stay at an RV Park for a night every few days
- Always leave home with full batteries
- Do NOT want to deal with a noisy gas generator

User Requirements

- Be able to boondock for ~5 days in winter (10-40F)
- Be able to boondock for ~14 days in summer (>50F)
- Would like to top off batteries with a one-night RV Park stay
- Would like to top off batteries with one 8-hour drive day
- While boondocking, no need for microwave, air conditioner, or other heavy-draw devices
- While boondocking, would like to charge 2 laptop PCs off AC
- Would like to boondock in temperatures down to 10F outside
- Want reasonably accurate state-of-charge and time-left predictions for the sake of advanced warning, and time to react
- It is acceptable to have to prewarm the batteries prior to charging
- Want a safe, robust and unified system for charging the camper batteries off shore, solar and alternator sources

Upgrade Plan vs Use Case Goals

Upgrade Plan

- 200Ah LFP (from 100Ah FLA)
 - BattleBorn and some others over-size internally so that 100% of the marketed capacity can be safely
 used
 - When not over-sized internally, assume 90% usable
- 200W MPPT + LFP-profiled solar (from 100W PWM + FLA-profiled)
- 45A LFP-profiled shore (from 45A FLA-profiled)
- 30-60A LFP-profiled alternator (from ~10A FLA-profiled via 7-pin)
 - Without a DC-DC LFP charger, a 13.9V alternator will only charge an LFP to 70-90% capacity
 - Without a DC-DC LFP charger, even less LFP charging will occur when "smart alternators" reduce their output
- Upsize all wires
- Run dedicated higher-current wires to camper, bypassing 7-pin

Power Reduction Options

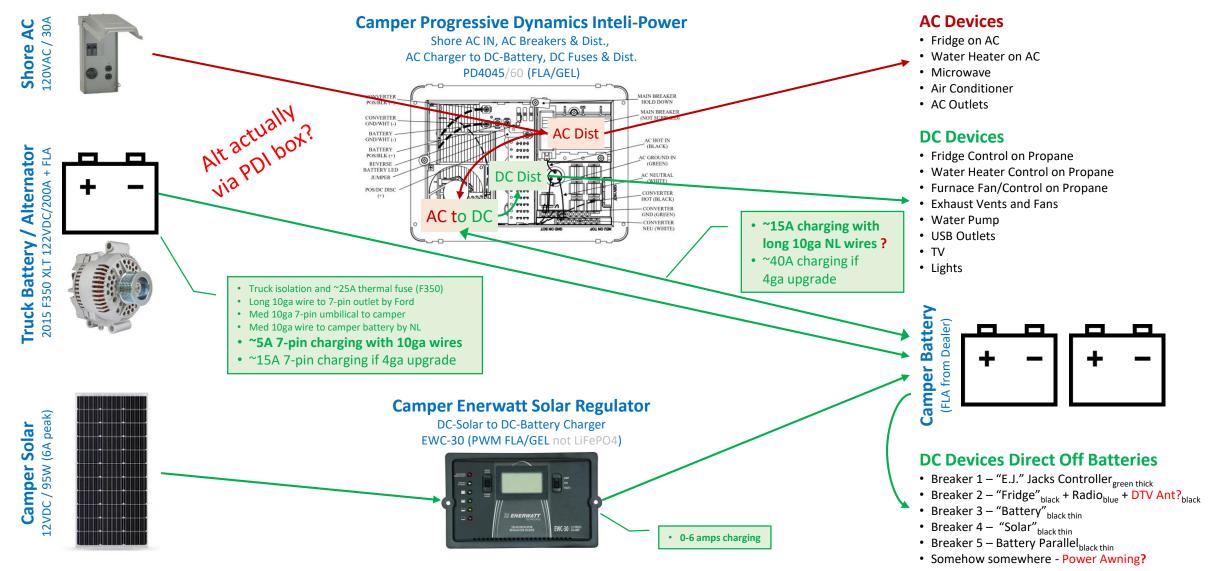
- When just a guy's trip, can conserve heat
- Can cut 12Ah/day by cutting Jenson media center and DVD watching

Note – despite the appearance of exact math and perfect charging/discharging rates here, it's all rough estimates

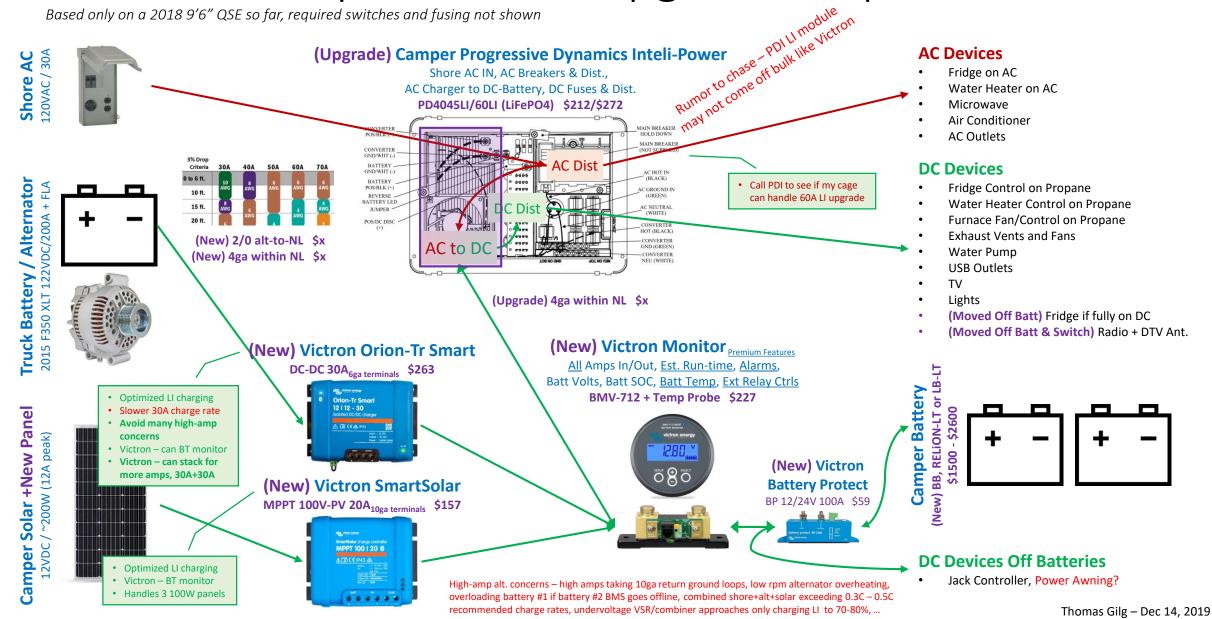
Raw Calculations

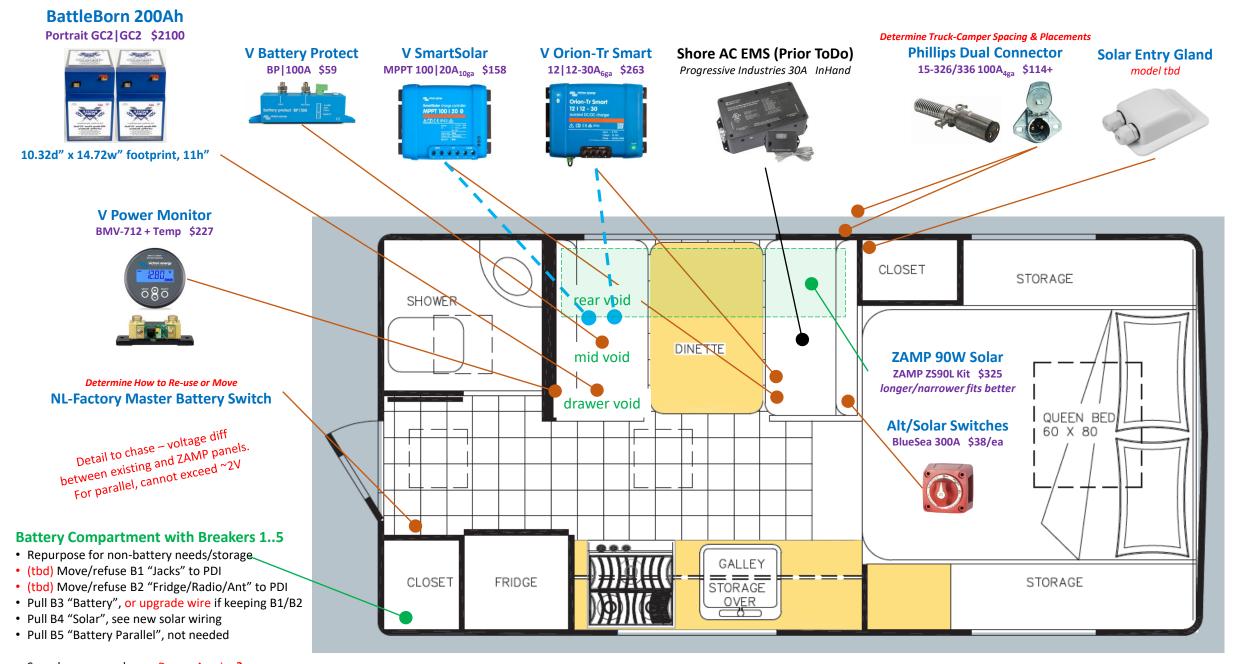
- Jan @ 10F 5 Days Winter Boondocking
 - tbd likely marginal, even with dialing-down thermostat from comfy levels below
- Nov @ 32F 5 Days Winter Boondocking
 - 57Ah daily LFP needed
 - 65Ah draw, 66% of estimated 12Ah recovery off 200W solar
 - Furnace alone 30Ah for 4hr@70F + 10hr@60F + 6hr@50F
 - 5-days boondocking can't do 285Ah off batteries/solar
 - 5-days boondocking with 3hr alt @ 30A can do with 5Ah spare
 - 3-days boondocking can do with 29Ah spare
- Mar @ 32F 5 Days Winter Boondocking
 - 42Ah daily LFP need
 - 65Ah draw, 66% of estimated 33Ah recovery off 200W solar
 - Furnace 30Ah for 4hr@70F, 10hr@60F, 6hr@50F
 - 5-days boondocking can almost do
 - 5-days boondocking with 1hr alt @ 30A can do with 20Ah spare
 - 4-day boondocking can do with 32Ah spare
- Jun @ 50F 14 Days Summer Boondocking
 - 9Ah daily LFP need
 - 50Ah draw?, 66% 62Ah solar recovery 200W solar
 - Furnace 15Ah?
 - 14-days boondocking can do with 74Ah spare

NL Truck Camper OEM Power Overview



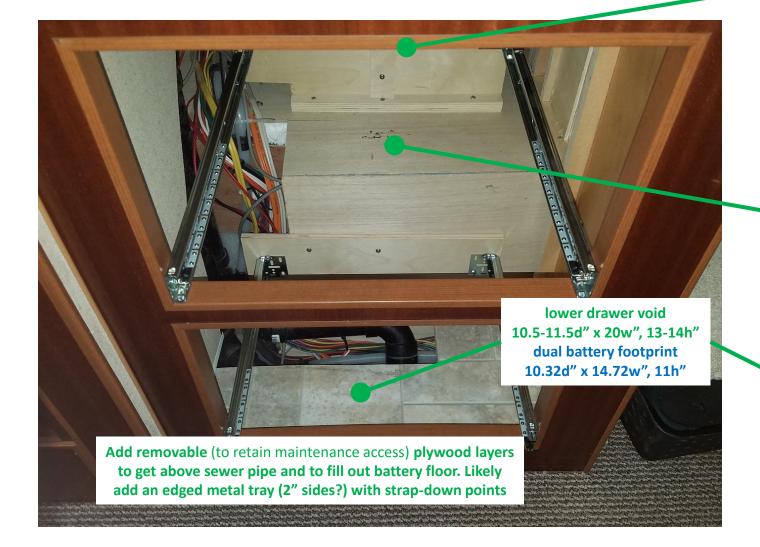
NL Truck Camper Lithium Upgrade — Option #1 most likely to do

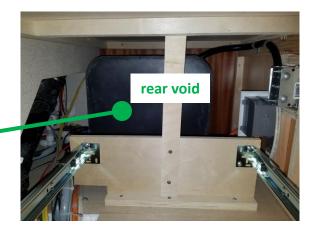




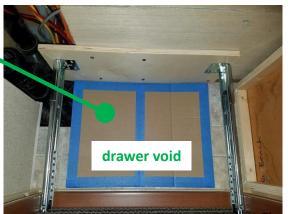
• Somehow somewhere - Power Awning?

Lower Drawer Sacrifice

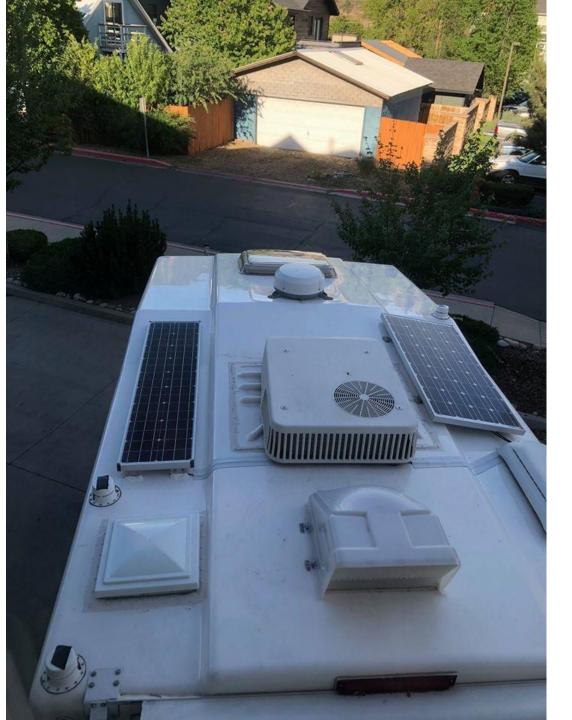








Gregory Parker Zamp install





Battery Placement Options

- Under dinette benches (preferred)
 - Batteries under rear bench tbd. Need to pull plywood and check space
 - Semi-warm due to nearby 2" duct
 - Controllers under front bench, all existing/new DC power points within 6 feet
- Under dinette table (most likely)
 - Batteries in new wood boxes below table. Install boxes while re-doing carpet
 - Good-warm due to being in-cabin. Will take some leg space
 - Controllers under front bench, all existing/new DC power points within 4 feet
- In existing battery compartment
 - Unheated, hence low battery temp concern in winter
 - Really no nearby places for new controllers
 - On opposite corner from truck power in and DC distribution panel
 - Likely some ~10+ foot wire runs back-and-forth (i.e. 20+ foot)

Philips Dual Socket Plug/Connector

- 4ga connectors
- 100A continuous rating
- 200A surge rating
- p/n 15-326 and 15-336



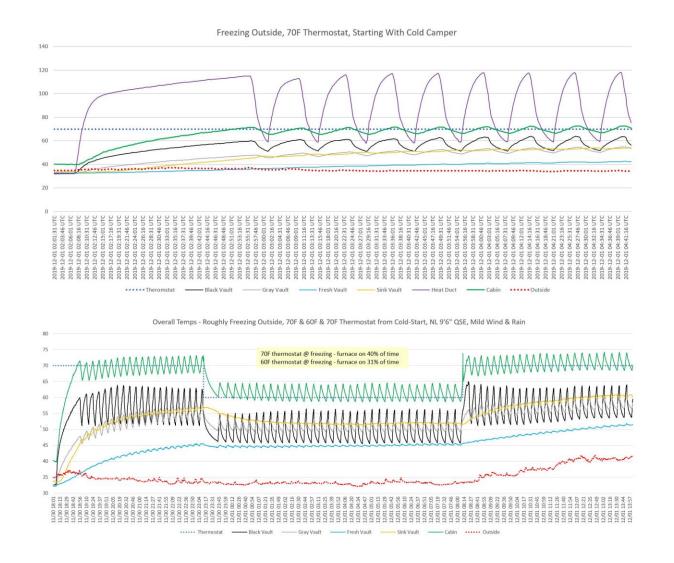


Phillips QCS2 Plug/Connector

- New w/o amps specs
- 4ga and 2ga versions



Furnace & NL Monitoring shared with Northern Lite Truck Camper Enthusiasts group on Facebook





- 1) Black vault down-low air
- 2) Black tank surface at 1/4 full position *
- 3) Gray vault down-low air
- 4) Fiberglass inner surface near gray vault **
- 5) Fresh vault down-low air
- 7) Heater vent output (using 1 of 2 two-inch basement ver
- 8) Bedroom head-high air TO BE WIRED

- 11) Outside air circa propane vent ****
- * See water thermal-mass aspects
- ** See surface v free air diffs, consequences for water line mount: *** Mostly to see propane furnace on/off
- **** Minor concern about propane tank cooling effects

Sensors equalized to +/- 0.1F of each other, about 0.1F steps, about +/- 1.0F accuracy over well below freezing to near boiling ter



- DS18B20 temp sensors x11
- BME680 for humidity, barometric, altitude and VOC-gas sensing x1
- Simple low-voltage 24ga wires around camper

ESP8266 Arduino

- WiFi to home LAN
- Sensor data streamed to Adafruit MQTT Service every 15 seconds Live MQTT dashboards
- Data download to MS-Excel for better analysis and graphing

When Freezing Outside

- 70F thermostat : furnace/fan on 40% of time @ 4.8A
- 60F thermostat : furnace/fan on 31% of time @ 4.8A
- 50F thermostat : furnace/fan on 24% of time @ 4.8A

NL Power Calculator shared with Northern Lite Truck Camper Enthusiasts group on Facebook

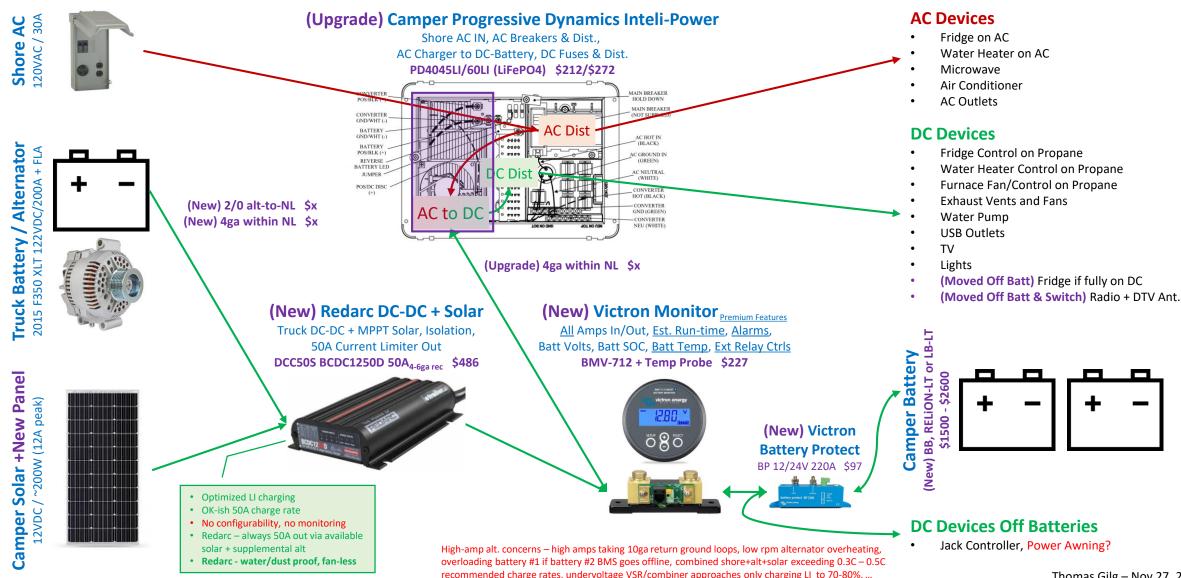
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Daily Furnace Draw:	29.5	
Daily Entertainment/HDTV Draw:	12.7	
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Daily Solar Contribution:	16.7	
Solar Adjusted Daily Total Draw:	48.5	

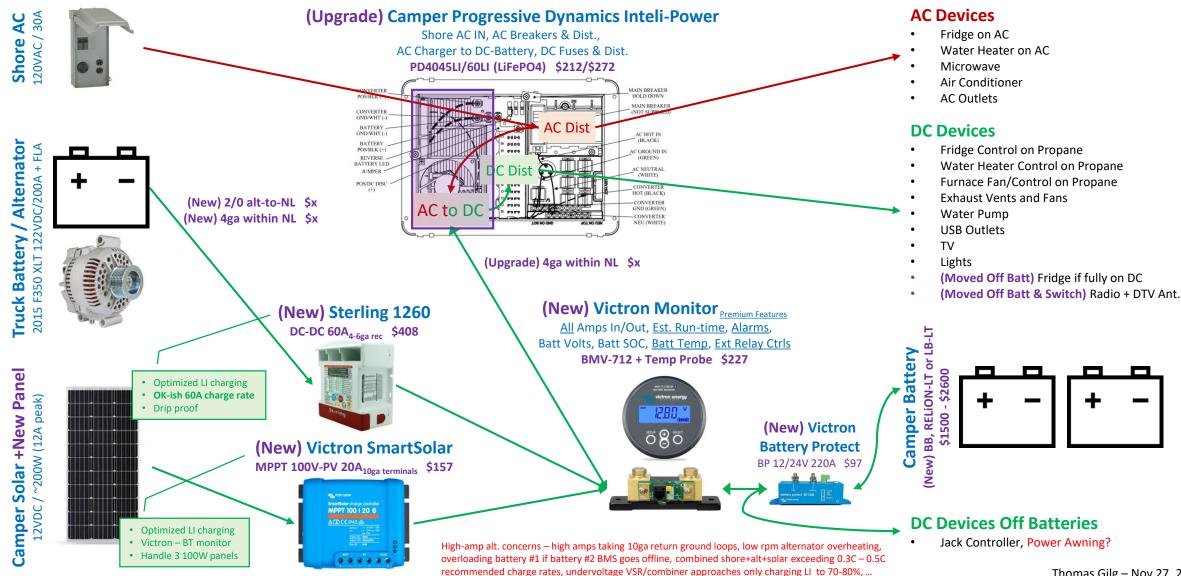
Upshot With 200W Solar

- Winter cold + poor solar = heavy dependency on batteries
- Summer warmth + great solar = almost break even

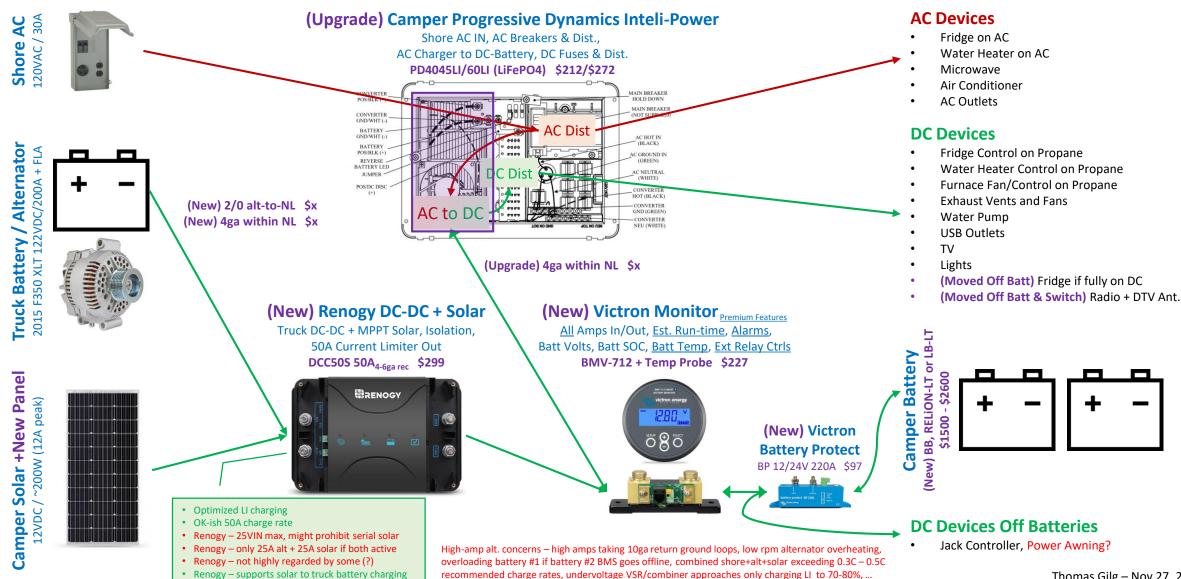
NL Truck Camper Lithium Upgrade — Option #2 nice mount + simple



NL Truck Camper Lithium Upgrade — Option #3 max alt. amps strategy



NL Truck Camper Lithium Upgrade – Option #4



NL Truck Camper Lithium Upgrade — Option #5 least likely to do

