

Dear Colleague:

The fifth and final landing site workshop for the 2011 Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) mission will be held May 16-18, 2011, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Monrovia, California. All members of the scientific community are encouraged to participate in this important activity.

We are soliciting presentations related to the four final candidate sites (Eberswalde crater (23.8953°S, 326.7426°E), Gale crater (4.4868°S, 137.4239°E) Holden crater (26.4007°S, 325.1615°E), and Mawrth Vallis (23.9883°N, 341.0399°E). The final workshop is expected to focus on new science results related to evaluation of the sites, and talks relevant to outstanding issues and questions detailed at the fourth workshop are a priority. (see <http://marsoweb.nas.nasa.gov/landingsites/> and <http://webgis.wr.usgs.gov/msl/>). Overview and summary talks related to the sites are not being sought. Work will lead to fleshing out of a set of testable hypotheses for the rover for each site and presentations on specific investigations that accomplish mission objectives are also encouraged. The workshop will include sessions with talks on site characterization and emerging from advance studies by the Project science and engineering teams as well as those submitted to the workshop from the science community.

To be considered for an oral presentation (no posters), interested participants should submit a title and short statement of the topic (no more than 2-3 sentences) to both John Grant (grantj@si.edu) and Matt Golombek (mgolombek@jpl.nasa.gov) by April 11, 2011. There will be ample time for open discussion of each of the four sites remaining under consideration. Workshop outputs will include summary charts listing the relative merits and shortcomings of each site relative to MSL mission objectives.

In addition, the MSL Project continues to solicit specific targets for exploration by the rover within and outside of each of the final four candidate landing ellipses. Members of the science community are invited to propose science targets and will be asked to provide a short statement on why each target is important and what tools and instruments on MSL would be used in the target interrogation. These targets are being used to help to define the mission resources required to complete the science investigations at each site and are helping to inform integrated traversability and science evaluation studies conducted by the MSL Project, MSL Landing Site Working Group, and the science community. More information on submitting exploration targets can be found at: <http://msl.gps.caltech.edu>.

Input from the science community is critical to identifying the optimal landing site for the MSL. We look forward to your continued involvement!

Sincerely,
John Grant and Matt Golombek
Co-Chairs, Mars Landing Site Steering Committee