

Update on MSL Landing Site Selection Process:

The fourth Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) Landing Site Workshop was recently held in Monrovia, CA, from September 27-29, 2010, and was strongly focused on discussion of the science merits of the four remaining candidate landing sites and development of summary statements of their merits as measured against the major science objectives of the MSL mission.

There was unanimous agreement from workshop participants that all four of the sites (Gale Crater, Mawrth Vallis, Holden crater, and Eberswalde crater) represent acceptable science targets for exploration by MSL and that all four should remain under consideration. Summary statements emerging from the workshop represent strong community consensus on the science merits of the sites and can be viewed in the "Workshop Summary Letter" at <http://marsoweb.nas.nasa.gov/landingsites/> and <http://webgis.wr.usgs.gov/msl>. The science community is encouraged to review the summary statements and provide comments to John Grant (grantj@si.edu) and Matt Golombek (mgolombek@jpl.nasa.gov) that will be reviewed by the MSL Landing Site Steering Committee.

Between now and the next MSL Landing Site Workshop, to be held in the spring of 2011, the MSL Project would like to collect suggestions from the community of specific targets for study at each of the four landing sites. To participate, please go to <http://msl.gps.caltech.edu> which provides directions for suggesting targets for study at the 4 landing sites, including a brief description of its attributes and motivation for study [questions can be directed to Jen Griffes (griffes@gps.caltech.edu)]. At some future date, probably in January of 2011, the Project will host a series of telecons where these targets can be presented and discussed with members of the community.