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April 3, 2014

RELEASE**Media Invited to View NASA Cutting-edge Landing Technology Before Test Flight**

NASA's Low-Density Supersonic Decelerator (LDSD) project will be flying a rocket-powered, saucer-shaped test vehicle into near-space this June from the U.S. Navy's Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai, Hawaii.

Media are invited to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) on Wednesday, April 9, for a brief mission overview and visit to the clean room where this near-space experimental test vehicle is being prepared for shipment to Hawaii. The mission overview and tour will take place from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. PDT at JPL, located at 4800 Oak Grove Drive, Pasadena, Calif., off the Berkshire/Oak Grove off-ramp of the 210 Freeway.

The LDSD crosscutting demonstration mission will test breakthrough technologies that will enable large payloads to be safely landed on the surface of Mars, or other planetary bodies with atmospheres, including Earth. The technologies will not only enable landing of larger payloads on Mars, but also allow access to much more of the planet's surface by enabling landings at higher altitude sites.

Interview opportunities for members of the LDSD team will be offered after both the briefing on the project in JPL's von Karman auditorium and in the "High Bay 2" clean room where the saucer-shaped craft currently resides.

Journalists who would like to attend the event must arrange access in advance by emailing JPL Media Relations' Elena Mejia at elena.mejia@jpl.nasa.gov by 11 a.m. PDT Tuesday, April 8. Valid media credentials are required. Non-U.S. citizens also must bring a valid passport. Detailed instructions will be given to media who RSVP about the options for entering the clean room or viewing from a gallery. Media in the clean room must wear flat, closed-toe shoes and long pants and will be required to don special outerwear and have any recording equipment cleaned.

More information about the LDSD space technology demonstration mission is online at:

http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/tdm/ldsd/

The LDSD mission is part of NASA's Space Technology Mission Directorate, which is innovating, developing, testing and flying hardware for use in future missions. NASA's technology investments provide cutting-edge solutions for our nation's future. For more information about the directorate, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov/spacetech>

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