

# Mars Exploration Science Monthly Newsletter

A publication of the Mars Program Office and the Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group (MEPAG)

January 2021

## Mars Science News

### MEPAG Virtual Meeting #11 (VM11) January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

MEPAG Virtual Meeting #11 (VM11) will take place on Wednesday January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm PST. The agenda is below and includes updates about recent MEPAG, Mars Exploration Program, Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate, and Mars Sample Return (MSR) status and activities, including NASA responses to the recent MSR Independent Review Board (IRB) report. There will also be reports on Decadal Survey Mars Panel activities and a debrief on a recent Humans to Mars conference. We know it is a busy time, but this is a chance to catch up on the many changes in Mars exploration planning.

The 2nd Information Circular with full meeting agenda are available on the [MEPAG website](#).

Background reading: MSR Independent Review Board Report at:

[https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/nasa\\_esm\\_mars\\_sample\\_return\\_final\\_report\\_small.pdf](https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/nasa_esm_mars_sample_return_final_report_small.pdf)

### MSR Sample Caching Strategy Workshop January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021

The MSR Caching Strategy Steering Committee is holding an open community workshop on Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm EST. The CSSC was chartered by NASA and ESA in November, 2020 to review a set of scenario-based decision guidelines to inform operational decisions for future MSR systems (SRL, SFR) and strategic mission planning for Perseverance. The CSSC includes representatives of each of the MSR science stakeholder organizations: NASA, ESA, Perseverance, MSR, and the Mars science community.

The purpose of this workshop will be to share and discuss potential scenarios, and collect community feedback on the draft decision guidelines and approach to sample caching which would help realize the goal of delivering a scientifically-return worth set of samples to Earth. Topics to be presented and discussed at the workshop include operational constraints and notional mission scenarios for the Perseverance rover, Sample Retrieval Lander, and Sample Fetch rover, proposed definitions for what constitutes a scientifically-return worthy cache, approaches to duplicate sampling, and other related topics.

The first workshop announcement can be viewed [here](#). To receive the full workshop agenda, background information, and connection info please fill out the indication of interest [here](#).

## Near-term Due Dates (next three months)

Due	Conference
January 29	43 <sup>rd</sup> COSPAR Scientific Assembly – Registration Deadline
March 31	EGU General Assembly 2021 – Early Registration Deadline

## Upcoming Conferences

- Note that for civil servants and those under contract with NASA, foreign and NASA-sponsored conferences generally need to be forecasted via NCTS. Forecasting to NCTS is usually due 60 days in advance for domestic meetings. If you are unsure whether an event is a conference or not, or when the deadline may be, please consult with your NASA Center conference forecasting/travel unit.
- We have noted conference changes we are aware of – but the impact of COVID-19 continues to evolve. If we show a conference as still happening in the next few months, it is advisable to check the website and confirm with conference organizers.
- VM = virtual meeting.

2021 First-Second Quarter		
	January 11 -15, 2021 Virtual Meeting	<b>237th Meeting of the American Astronomical Society</b> <a href="https://aas.org/meetings/aas237">https://aas.org/meetings/aas237</a>
<b>NEW</b>	January 19, 2021 Virtual Meeting	<b>The Life Detection Knowledge Base</b> <a href="https://www.nfold.org/ldf-kbworkshop">https://www.nfold.org/ldf-kbworkshop</a>
<b>NEW</b>	January 21, 2021 Virtual Meeting	<b>MSR Sample Caching Strategy Workshop</b> <a href="https://forms.gle/gf4rxQ1BjFqdVe9BA">https://forms.gle/gf4rxQ1BjFqdVe9BA</a> (Indication of Interest form)
<b>NEW</b>	January 27, 2021 Virtual Meeting	<b>MEPAG Virtual Meeting 11</b> <a href="https://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/meetings.cfm">https://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov/meetings.cfm</a>
	January 28-February 4, 2021 Sydney, Australia	<b>43rd COSPAR Scientific Assembly NCTS #42197.21</b> <a href="http://www.cospar2020.org/">http://www.cospar2020.org/</a>
	March 6-13, 2021 Virtual Meeting	<b>IEEE Aerospace Conference</b> <a href="https://www.aeroconf.org/">https://www.aeroconf.org/</a>
	March 15-19 2021 Virtual Meeting	<b>52nd Lunar and Planetary Science Conference</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lpsc2021/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/lpsc2021/</a>
<b>UPDATE</b>	April 19-30, 2021 Virtual Meeting	<b>EGU General Assembly 2021 (vEGU21)</b> <a href="https://www.egu2021.eu/">https://www.egu2021.eu/</a>
	May 10-12, 2021 Long Beach, CA	<b>Space Tech Expo</b> <a href="https://www.spacetecheexpo.com">https://www.spacetecheexpo.com</a>
	May 17-20, 2021 Glasgow, Scotland	<b>IEEE Int'l Instrumentation &amp; Measurement Technology Conf. (I2MTC 2021)</b> <a href="https://i2mtc2020.ieee-ims.org/">https://i2mtc2020.ieee-ims.org/</a>
	June 8-11, 2021 Orleans, France	<b>Mercury 2020, Current and future science of the innermost planet</b> <a href="https://mercury2020.ias.u-psud.fr/main_1st.php">https://mercury2020.ias.u-psud.fr/main_1st.php</a>
	June 28-July 2, 2021 Flagstaff, AZ	<b>5th Planetary Data Workshop</b> <a href="https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/planetdata2021/">https://www.hou.usra.edu/meetings/planetdata2021/</a>

Seasons on Mars

	MY36	MY37	MY38
Start of Northern Spring / L <sub>s</sub> 0	02/07/2021	12/26/2022	11/12/24
Start of Northern Summer / L <sub>s</sub> 90	08/25/2021	07/13/2023	05/29/25
Start of Northern Autumn / L <sub>s</sub> 180	02/24/2022	01/12/2024	11/29/25
Start of Northern Winter / L <sub>s</sub> 270	07/21/2022	06/07/2024	04/25/26

U.S. Federal holidays to consider when scheduling conferences/workshops/meetings



Editors

Rich Zurek	<a href="mailto:Richard.W.Zurek@jpl.nasa.gov">Richard.W.Zurek@jpl.nasa.gov</a>	818-354-3725
David Beaty	<a href="mailto:David.Beaty@jpl.nasa.gov">David.Beaty@jpl.nasa.gov</a>	818-354-7968
Brandi Carrier	<a href="mailto:Brandi.L.Carrier@jpl.nasa.gov">Brandi.L.Carrier@jpl.nasa.gov</a>	818-354-9956
Barbara Saltzberg	<a href="mailto:Barbara.A.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov">Barbara.A.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov</a>	818-354-0226

Please send Mars Community Announcements and calendar items for inclusion in next month's newsletter to:

Barbara Saltzberg at [Barbara.a.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov](mailto:Barbara.a.Saltzberg@jpl.nasa.gov)

This newsletter (and all previous months') is also posted on the MEPAG website: <http://mepag.jpl.nasa.gov>

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