

NASA ADVISORY COUNCIL  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Washington, DC 20546  
Hon. Harrison H. Schmitt, Chairman

July 30, 2008

The Honorable Michael D. Griffin  
Administrator  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Washington, DC 20546

Dear Dr. Griffin:

Enclosed are the NASA Advisory Council recommendations as agreed to in a public meeting on July 10, 2008 held at the Radisson Hotel Cleveland Airport. Prior to the meeting, members received a tour of the Glenn Research Center and used the Ohio Aerospace Institute facility to hold Committee fact-finding meetings. Dr. Woodrow Whitlow, Jr. and his staff should be commended for their hospitality and hard work.

The Council had a very productive day of deliberations with one recommendation proposed by the Science Committee and we believe will be of assistance as NASA continues its implementation efforts of the Vision for Space Exploration. The Council will continue to monitor and consider future recommendations that may be of assistance to you.

Science Committee Recommendation

- 1) **Features of a Venture-class mission line in Earth Science:** The Earth Science Division should issue yearly calls for Venture-class missions as recommended by the National Research Council (NRC) decadal survey; the Venture-class mission line should incorporate an optimal mix of space-based and suborbital missions; opportunities for space-based missions should place no restriction on possible overlaps with decadal survey strategic missions; and NASA should review its plans for implementing the Venture-class mission line with the Science Committee during its October 2008 meeting

If there are any questions on the proceedings of our meeting, please contact me.

Best Regards,



Harrison H. Schmitt  
Chairman  
Enclosures

NASA Advisory Council  
Council Recommendation  
[Tracking Number S-08-03](#)

Committee Name: Science Committee

Chair: Dr. Edward David

Date of public deliberation: July 10, 2008

Date of transmission: July 30, 2008

Short title of the recommendation

Features of a Venture-class mission line in Earth Science.

Short description of the proposed recommendation

- The Earth Science Division should issue yearly calls for Venture-class missions as recommended by the National Research Council (NRC) decadal survey
- The Venture-class mission line should incorporate an optimal mix of space-based and suborbital missions
- Opportunities for space-based missions should place no restriction on possible overlaps with decadal survey strategic missions
- NASA should review its plans for implementing the Venture-class mission line with the Science Committee during its October 2008 meeting

Major reasons for proposing the recommendation

The National Research Council's decadal survey report Earth Science and Applications from Space: National Imperatives for the Next Decade and Beyond (NRC, 2007), recommended NASA initiate a new Venture class of innovative, small missions to complement the strategic missions identified in the survey. NASA's Science Mission Directorate has accepted the NRC's recommendation, and is currently formulating the Venture class program. In order to be most effective, the Venture class program should include the features identified above. In particular it is important, given that the decadal survey's set of strategic missions exceeds the resources available, that the Venture class not be limited to science objectives outside those of the strategic mission set.

Consequences of no action on the recommendation

The Venture class of missions presents an important avenue of innovation, and failure to include the features identified above will reduce the scientific return from this new mission line and limit the possible synergy between strategic missions. This program must be carefully formulated and managed to be fully successful.