



New Mexico Spaceport Authority

PRESS RELEASE •
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SPACEPORT AMERICA RECEIVES FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT, MATCHING FUNDS FROM VIRGIN GALACTIC

LAS CRUCES, NM -Spaceport America has received its first federal grant from a newly funded spaceport infrastructure program at the Federal Aviation Administration.

The funding, \$43,000 from the FAA matched with \$4,300 from Virgin Galactic, will allow for the acquisition of an Automated Weather Observation System III (AWOS III).

This important project will be made possible through the Federal Aviation Administration's FAA/AST Commercial Space Transportation Grant Program.

New Mexico Spaceport Authority (NMSA) Executive Director Rick Homans said, "This announcement highlights the increasing attention that the federal government is paying to the commercial spaceflight industry and to Spaceport America. While the grant amount may be small, the symbolism is much greater and we look forward to seeing this grant program increase and expand in the years to come."

The value of the FAA/AST grant combined with Galactic Venture's matching money is estimated at about \$47,300. The balance of the cost of the AWOS, \$86,000, will be paid by the NMSA.

The project is crucial to the safe and efficient operation of the spaceport. The AWOS III will provide timely and accurate meteorological information relevant to aircraft and spacecraft operations at Spaceport America. This will provide full AWOS capability to the spaceport, including visibility information and cloud data.

Spaceport America has been providing commercial launch services since 2006. The state-of-the-art launch facility is under construction near Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, and is expected to become fully operational in 2011. Officials at Spaceport America have been working closely with leading aerospace firms such as Armadillo Aerospace, Virgin Galactic, Lockheed Martin, Moog-FTS, and UP Aerospace to develop commercial spaceflight at the new facility. The economic impact of launches, tourism and new construction at Spaceport America are already delivering on its promise to the people of New Mexico.

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(For additional information and images of Spaceport America go to www.spaceportamerica.com or contact David Wilson at david@wilson-binkley.com or at 575-524-8118)