



New Mexico Spaceport Authority

PRESS RELEASE •
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SPACEPORT AMERICA INSTALLS LUNAR LANDER LAUNCH PADS Lunar Pad to be Named for the Winning Team

UPHAM, NM – Spaceport America, the world's first purpose-built commercial spaceport, has installed three launch pads for NASA's 2009 Northrop Grumman Lunar Lander Centennial Challenge, which is administered by the X PRIZE Foundation to spur innovation and technology development. Called 'Tranquility Base' to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing on July 20, the trio of lunar lander launch pads was constructed the week of June 22 in preparation for this year's competition, which begins as early as July 20 and continues through October 31, 2009.

The circular reinforced concrete pads are similar in size but different in design. Two are smooth and flat, and the other has built-in 'lunar craters' and rocks to more closely resemble the terrain of the moon. Spaceport America will name the lunar pad in honor of the first team that successfully completes the level-two challenge at Spaceport America. The launch pads will also be available for other commercial space companies and educational opportunities.

Spaceport America's lunar lander launch pads are designed for the 2009 Northrop Grumman Lunar Lander Challenge, marking the fourth year of the competition which awards prize money to private companies that can meet the requirements set forth by NASA and the X PRIZE Foundation. After awarding \$350,000 to Armadillo Aerospace last year for winning level one, \$1,650,000 remains available for prizes. In its first three years, the Northrop Grumman Lunar Lander Centennial Challenge has helped to demonstrate that NASA's prize program is one of the most innovative and efficient programs in the development of the next generation of lunar landing vehicles.

"The addition of these launch pads to Spaceport America provides a great low-cost resource for NASA, the X PRIZE Foundation and the teams participating in the Lunar Lander Challenge," said Steve Landeene, Executive Director for the New Mexico Spaceport Authority (NMSA). "With the fortieth anniversary of the Apollo moon landing on July 20, it's important to continue finding new ways to return to the surface of the moon. Over the next few months, we look forward to welcoming the Lunar Lander teams to Spaceport America, and continuing the great relationship between the State of New Mexico, the X PRIZE Foundation and NASA."

Spaceport America is now under construction in the State of New Mexico. After marking the official groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, June 19, construction of the airfield is underway. Road improvements and bridge construction are nearly complete, and the latest Requests for Proposal (RFP) and Invitations to Bid (ITB) can be found online at www.spaceportamerica.com. Spaceport America will have a 10,000-foot runway complete by late summer 2010 with the Terminal Hangar Facility projected to be complete by early 2011.

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For images of the launch pads, go to <http://www.spaceportamerica.com/press-access.html#lunarlanding>
For information on the Lunar Lander Challenge, go to <http://space.xprize.org/lunar-lander-challenge>

For additional information and images of Spaceport America go to www.spaceportamerica.com or contact David Wilson @ 575-524-8118 or email: dwilson@wilson-binkley.com