



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 25, 2016

PISCES AND PARTNERS TEAM-UP FOR ROCKET ENGINE FIRING TEST AT LUNAR LANDING PAD SITE

The test will take place at 2:30 p.m. on March 20, 2016

Hilo, Hawaii – The Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES) is conducting a special rocket engine firing test on their recently constructed basalt lunar landing pad at 2:30 p.m. on March 20.

The test will consist of a four second burn of a rocket engine whose power is equivalent to 26.5 lbs. of dynamite and could launch a 960 lbs. rocket. The experiment is being conducted to test the durability of the recently-built Vertical Take-off/Vertical Landing pad (VTVL) bullseye that consists of 100 basalt pavers that were robotically set in place.

For months PISCES scientists, along with engineers from NASA and Honeybee Robotics, have been working together to construct the world's first robotically-built lunar landing pad using indigenous Hawaiian basalt material mined from a quarry near Hilo, Hawaii. The basalt found in Hawaii is nearly identical to that found on the Moon and Mars. The initiative will help test methods of construction for the Moon and Mars. Landing pads offer a flat, stable surface to prevent damages that occur when spacecrafts take off or land on planetary objects.

This project is part of PISCES' Additive Construction for Mobile Emplacement project and is a partnership with NASA, Honeybee Robotics, ARGO, Hawaii County Department of Research and Development and the state of Hawaii and Ena Media. Following the test scientists will analyze test data to determine the strength and durability of the pavers.

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