

Dawn Status Report: Vesta Exploration Completed; Ceres Planning Begins

C.T. Russell (1), C.A. Raymond (2), A. Nathues (3), M.C. DeSanctis (4), T.H. Prettyman (5), H.Y. McSween (6), R. Jaumann (7), and the Dawn Science Team

(1) Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1567 USA

(2) Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA 91109

(3) Max-Planck-Institut für Sonnensystemforschung, Max-Planck-Strasse 2, 37191, Katlenburg-Lindau, Germany

(4) National Institute of Astrophysics, Istituto di Astrofisica Spaziale e Fisica Cosmica, Via del Fosso del Cavaliere 100, 00133 Roma

(5) Planetary Science Institute, Tucson, AZ 85719

(6) Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996, USA

(7) DLR, Institute of Planetary Research Rutherfordstrasse 2, 12489 Berlin, Germany

(ctrussell@igpp.ucla.edu / Fax: 310-206-8042)

Abstract

The Dawn mission will have completed its exploration of Vesta by the time of the 2012 EPSC meeting. On May 1, the spacecraft began thrusting to raise its orbit from the 210 km altitude LAMO orbit to a second High Altitude Mapping Orbit (HAMO) that would take advantage of the changed solar illumination conditions to get increased stereo coverage in the northern hemisphere. On August 26, Dawn is scheduled to depart from Vesta, returning to its solar orbit and transfer to Vesta, arriving on February 1, 2012. This paper summarizes the scientific results obtained at Vesta and the current plans for Ceres.