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Boeing Delta 2 to launch satellite telescope for NASA

Boeing News Release

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. - Scientists will have another tool to study the origins of the universe when a Boeing Delta 2 places a satellite telescope into orbit on June 23 from Cape Canaveral Air Station, Fla. The 78-minute launch window opens at 11:39 a.m. EDT.

The Far Ultraviolet Spectroscopic Explorer (FUSE) satellite is sensitive to a portion of the energy spectrum of light that is invisible to the eye. FUSE will increase the ability of astronomers to study ultraviolet light wavelengths that are unobservable to other telescopes.

The satellite's scientific instrument will give astronomers a new view of the universe. Astronomers will seek answers to questions such as what were the conditions moments after the "Big Bang," or creation of the universe? Scientists also will be able to study how newly-formed elements are dispersed throughout galaxies, and how this affects the way galaxies evolve.

"This mission demonstrates the flexibility of Delta 2 rockets in meeting NASA's launch services needs," said Darryl Van Dorn, director of NASA and Commercial Programs. "FUSE will be the first launch with a payload enclosed inside a 10-foot-diameter fairing and carried aboard a two-stage Delta 2 equipped with three, instead of the usual nine solid rocket motors on the first stage," Van Dorn noted.

Over the years, Delta rockets have successfully placed into orbit an impressive number of scientific payloads and sent planetary spacecraft to the farthest reaches of our solar system.

The FUSE launch represents the 271st overall and the 78th scientific and technology development launch for the Delta family of rockets. Since 1960 Delta rockets have carried scientific and technology development payloads into space with a 98 percent launch success rate.

Delta rockets sent Mars Pathfinder and Mars Global Surveyor to the Red Planet in 1996. During 1998, Boeing Delta 2 rockets lifted Deep Space 1 and Mars Climate Orbiter into space. This year, Mars Polar Lander, Stardust and Landsat 7 were successfully launched for NASA. In addition, a Delta 2 will carry the NASA spacecraft EO-1/SAC-C into space later in the year.

The Delta 2 is manufactured in Huntington Beach, Calif., with final assembly in Pueblo, Colo., and is powered by the RS-27A engine built by Boeing in Canoga Park, Calif. The Delta launch team at Cape Canaveral Air Station will handle launch coordination and operations.

Alliant Techsystems, Magna, Utah, builds the graphite epoxy motors for boost assist. Aerojet, Sacramento, Calif., manufactures the second-stage and AlliedSignal, Teterboro, N.J., builds the guidance and flight control system.
