



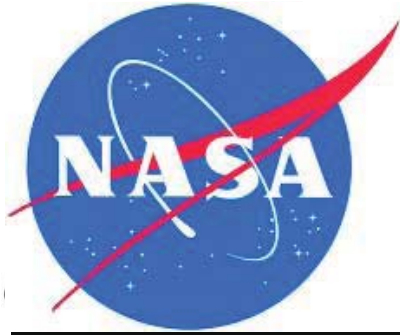
Atmospheric Processing Module for Mars Propellant Production

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NASA – Kennedy Space Center
**Department of Physics and
Astronomy Seminar**
Colgate University, Hamilton, NY
April 24, 2014



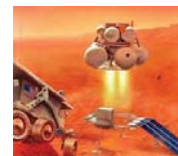
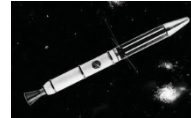
Outline

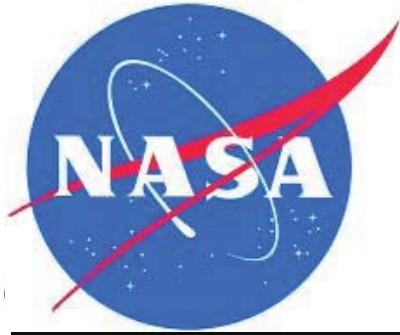
- **Introduction**
- **Project Goals**
- **Design and Construction**
- **Testing**
- **Current Status**
- **NASA Plans for Mars ISRU**
- **Other NASA ISRU Projects at KSC**



Introduction – Major Milestones in NASA’s History

- First American Satellite – 1958
- NASA Established – 1958
- First American to Orbit Earth – 1962
- First American Spacewalk – 1965
- First Astronauts to Orbit the Moon – 1968
- First Manned Lunar Landings – 1969 to 1972
- First American Space Station – 1973-1974
- First Robotic Landing on Mars – 1976
- Space Shuttle Flights – 1981-2011
- First Robotic Rovers on Mars – 2003
- First Spacecraft to Leave the Solar System – 2013
- First Mars Sample Return – 2026?
- First Humans on Mars – 2030’s?





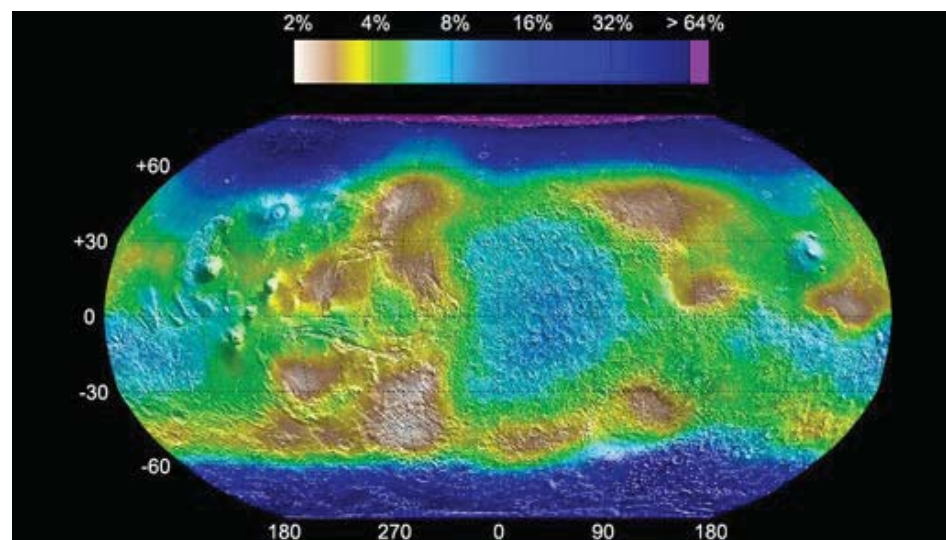
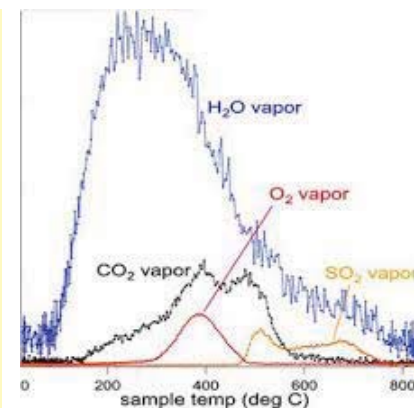
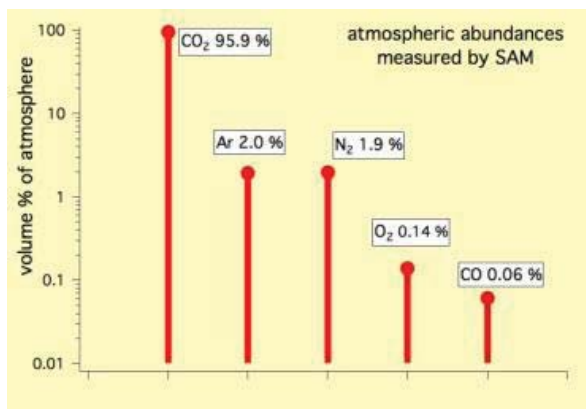
Introduction to ISRU

- **What is ISRU? – In Situ Resource Utilization**
 - “Living off the land”
 - Use Space Resources to reduce cost and risk for NASA missions
 - Already used with Solar Panels for power
- **Chemistry and engineering enable even more resources to be used**
- **Key space resources:**
 - Lunar regolith and polar water ice/volatiles
 - Asteroid regolith, metals, and volatiles
 - Martian atmosphere and water ice/hydrates



Martian Resources

- **Atmosphere of Mars**
 - 96% CO₂
 - 2% Ar, 1.9% N₂
 - <1% pressure of Earth's atmosphere (~7 mbar)
- **Significant Amounts of Water in the Top 1-Meter of Regolith**
 - Water ice caps at the poles
 - ~2% at least everywhere else
 - ~10% even at equatorial regions





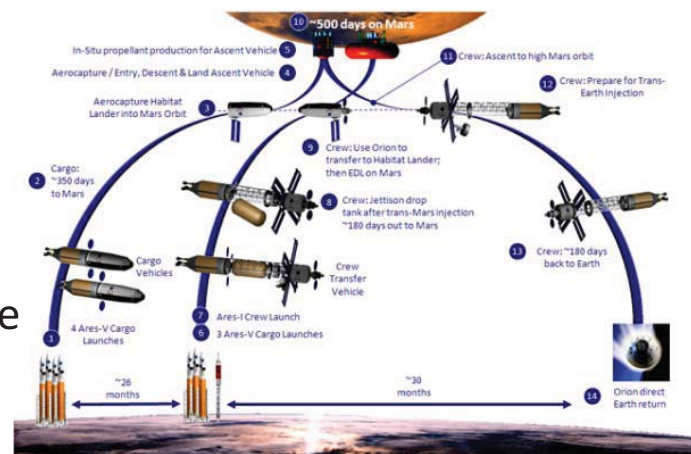
Utilizing Martian Water and CO₂/Advantages of ISRU

- **ISPP: In Situ Propellant Production**

- Electrolysis: $4 \text{ H}_2\text{O} \rightarrow 4 \text{ H}_2 + 2 \text{ O}_2$
- Sabatier Reaction: $\text{CO}_2 + 4 \text{ H}_2 \rightarrow \text{CH}_4 + 2 \text{ H}_2\text{O}$ (Ni or Ru catalyst, 300-600°C)
- Net Reaction: $\text{CO}_2 + 2 \text{ H}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \text{CH}_4 + 2 \text{ O}_2 = \text{Rocket Propellant! } I_{sp} = 369 \text{ s}$

- **Human Mars Mission Outline (DRA 5.0)**

- Launch Surface Hab/Lander and Mars Ascent Vehicle in Year 1
- MAV lands on Mars after 9 months
- MAV produces ascent fuel for 11 months
- Launch Transfer Vehicle and Crew (6) in Year 2
- Crew lands on Mars after 6-9 months
- Crew explores Mars for 1.5 years
- Crew launches MAV to return to Transfer Vehicle
- Crew returns to Earth in 6 months
- Total Crew time away from Earth is ~2.5 years



- **ISPP saves >25 metric tons of mass**
- **Also provides breathing oxygen for life support**
- **Eliminates two heavy lift launches!**

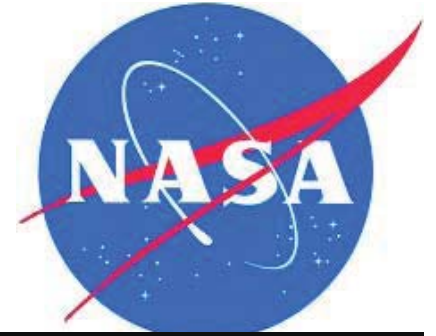


MARCO POLO Project

- **ISPP: In Situ Propellant Production**
 - Demonstrate production of Mars Sample Return propellant
 - Reduce risk for human Mars missions
- **MARCO POLO - Mars Atmosphere and Regolith Collector/Processor for Lander Operations**
- **The Mars Atmospheric Processing Module (APM)**
 - Mars CO₂ Freezer Subsystem
 - Sabatier (Methanation) Subsystem
- Collect, purify, and pressurize CO₂
- Convert CO₂ into methane (CH₄) and water with H₂
- Other modules mine regolith, extract water from regolith, purify the water, electrolyze it to H₂ and O₂, send the H₂ to the Sabatier Subsystem, and liquefy/store the CH₄ and O₂



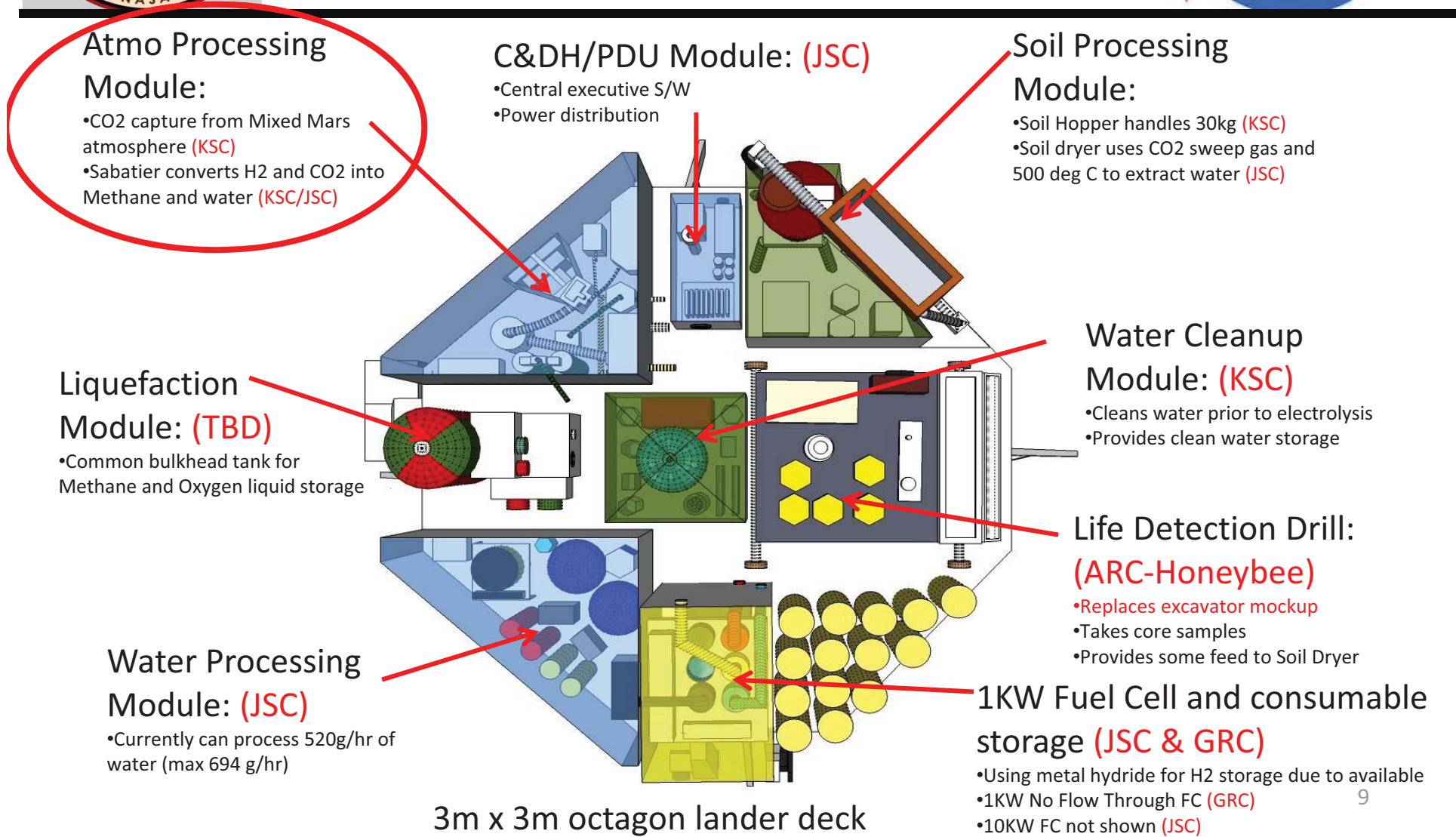
What is MARCO POLO?



- First generation integrated Mars soil and atmospheric processing system with mission relevant direct current power
 - 10 KW Fuel Cell for 14 hrs of daytime operations
 - 1KW Fuel Cell for 10 hrs of night time operations
- Demonstrates closed loop power production via the combination of a fuel cell and electrolyzer.
 - The water we make and electrolyze during the day provides the consumables for the 1KW Fuel Cell that night
- Planned for remote and autonomous operations



Lander Design Concept

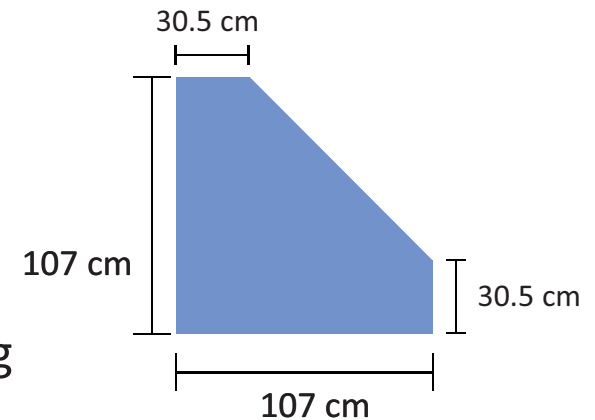




APM Goals/Requirements

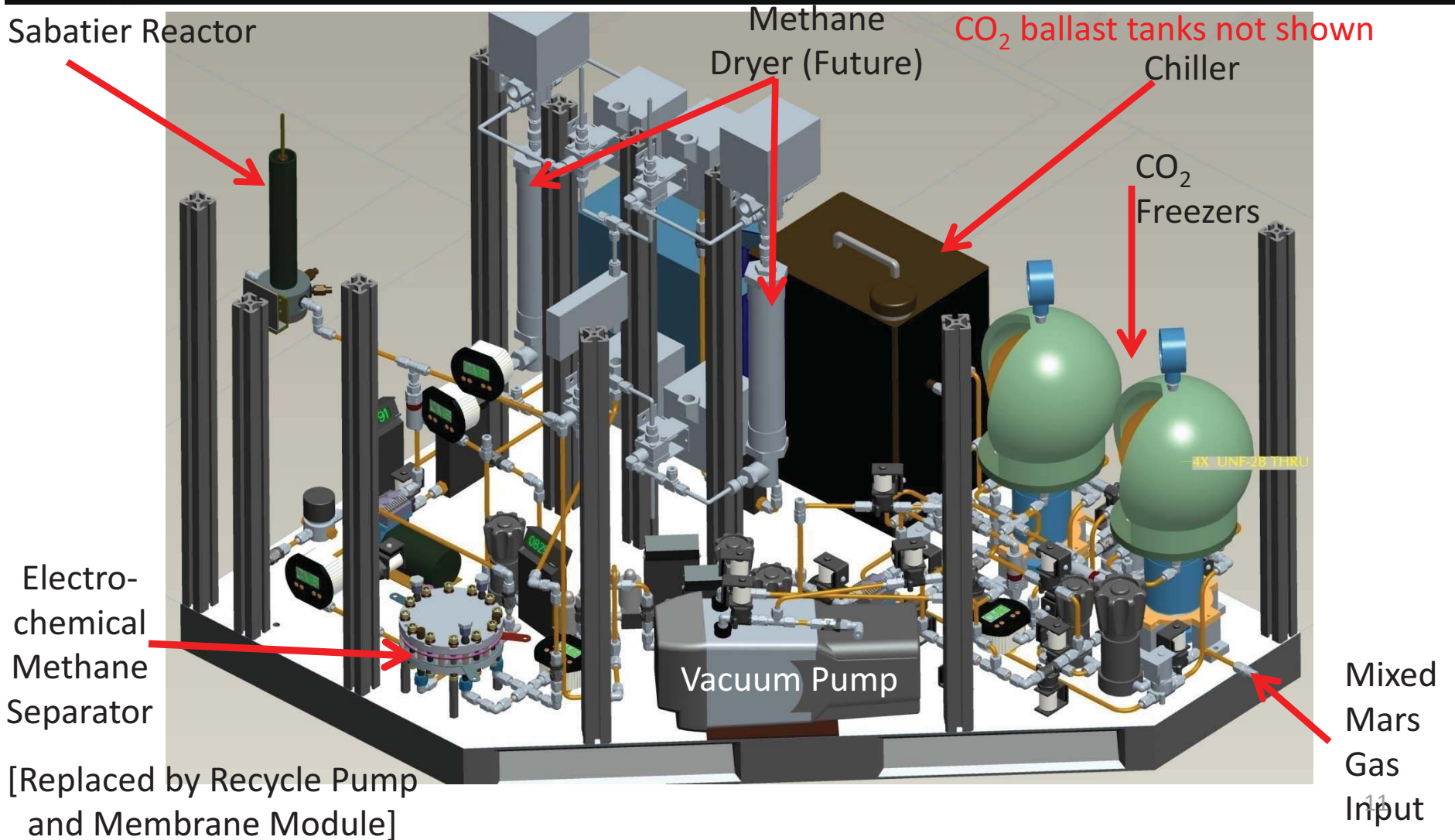


- **Collect and purify 88 g CO₂/hr (>99%)**
 - From simulated Martian atmosphere
 - 10 mbar; 95% CO₂, 3% N₂, 2% Ar
- **Supply 88 g CO₂/hr at 50 psia to the Sabatier reactor**
- **Convert CO₂ to 32 g CH₄/hr and 71 g H₂O/hr**
- **Operate autonomously for up to 14 hr/day**
- **Minimize mass and power**
- **Fit within specified area and volume**
 - 9,000 cm² hexagon
 - 44 inches tall (112 cm, same as Water Processing Module)
- **Support MARCO POLO production goals of 444 g CH₄/day and 1.77 kg O₂/day (50% of O₂) for a total of 2.22 kg propellant/day**
- **Sufficient for a Mars Sample Return Mission**



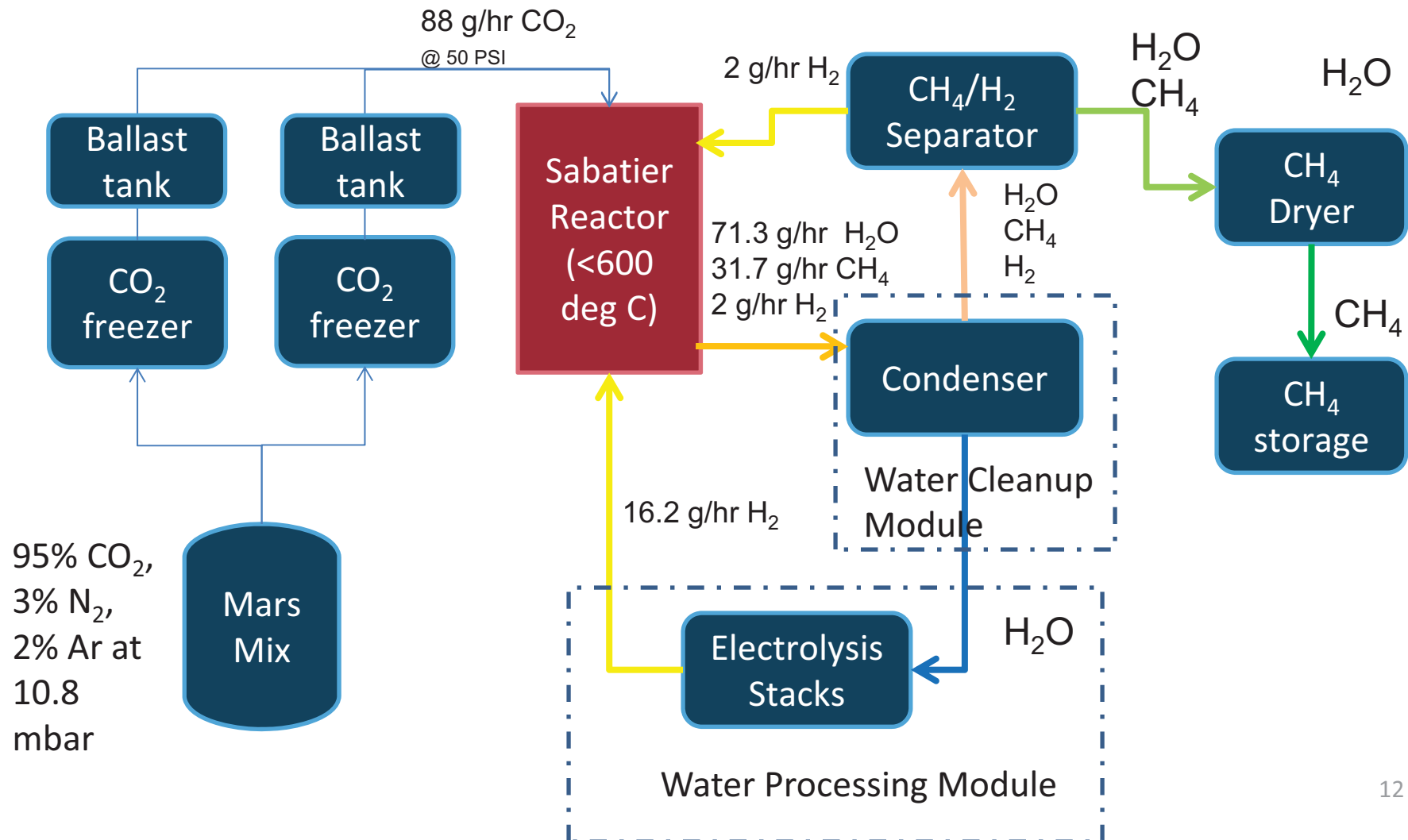


Atmospheric Processing Module



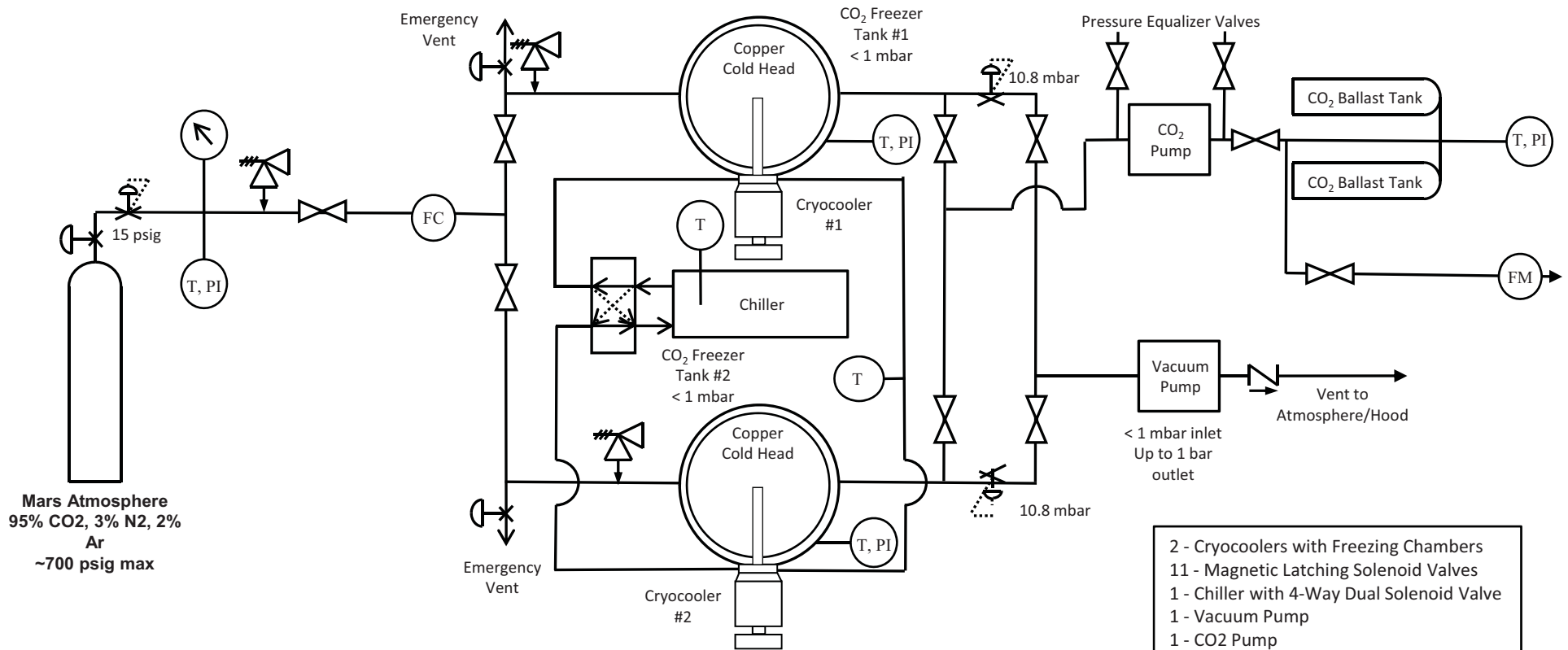


Atmospheric Processing Operations





CO₂ Freezer – Final Design

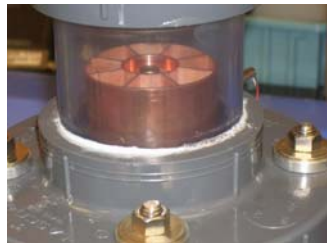
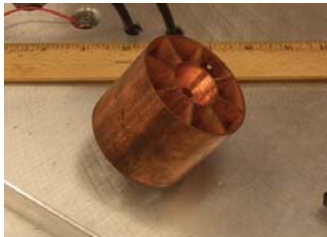


Mars Atmosphere
95% CO₂, 3% N₂, 2% Ar
~700 psig max

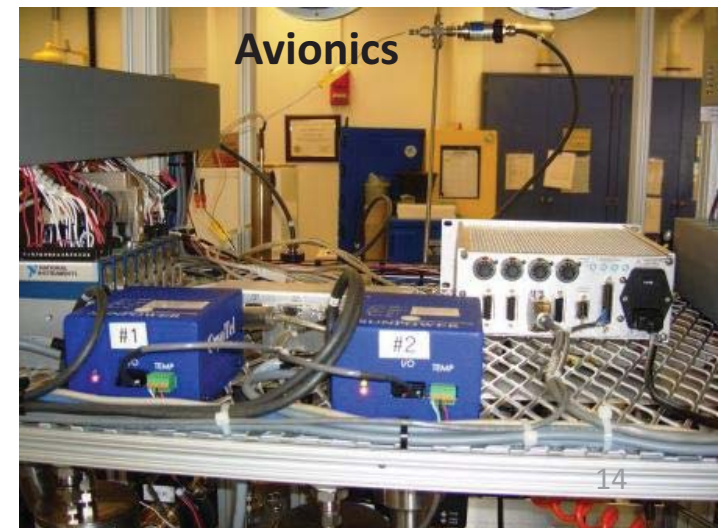
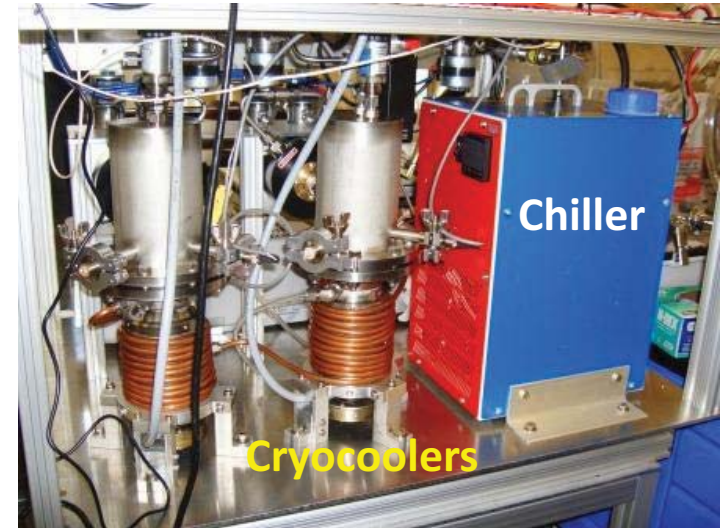
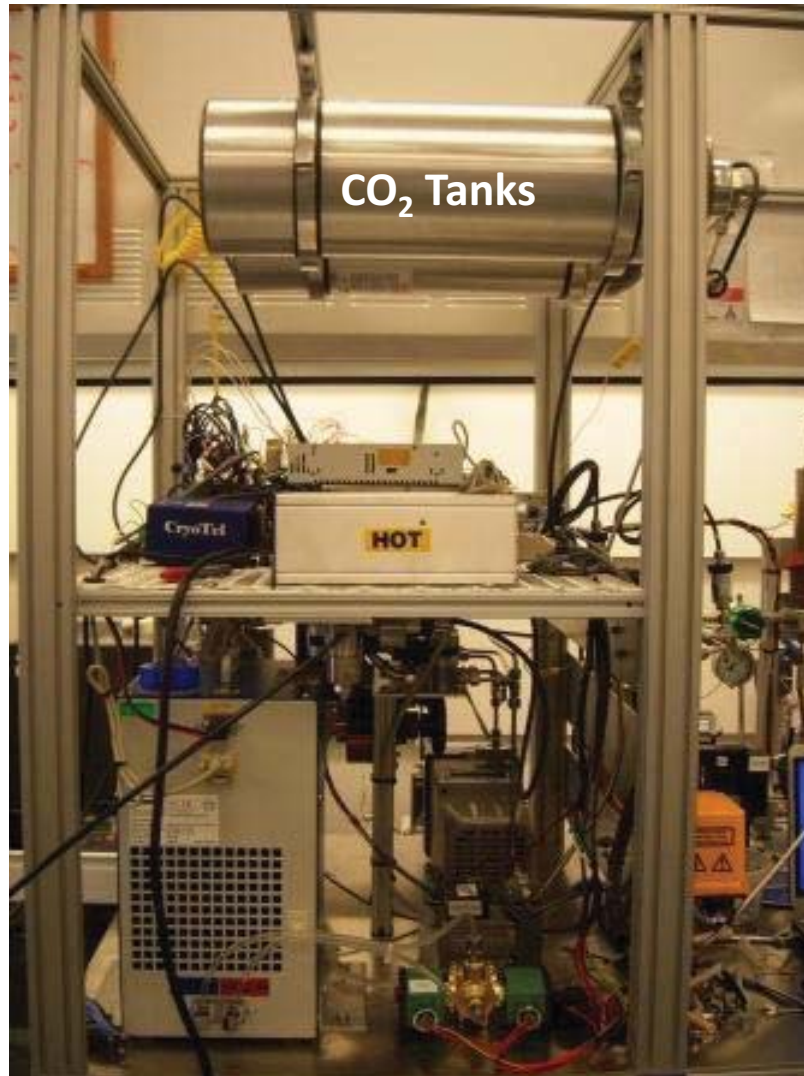
- 2 - Cryocoolers with Freezing Chambers
- 11 - Magnetic Latching Solenoid Valves
- 1 - Chiller with 4-Way Dual Solenoid Valve
- 1 - Vacuum Pump
- 1 - CO₂ Pump
- 2 - CO₂ Ballast Tanks
- 2 - Vacuum Back Pressure Regulators
- 3 - Pressure Relief Valves
- 1 - Flow Controller
- 1 - Flow Meter
- 3 - Thermocouples and 2 RTDs
- 3 - Pressure Transducers, etc.



CO₂ Freezer

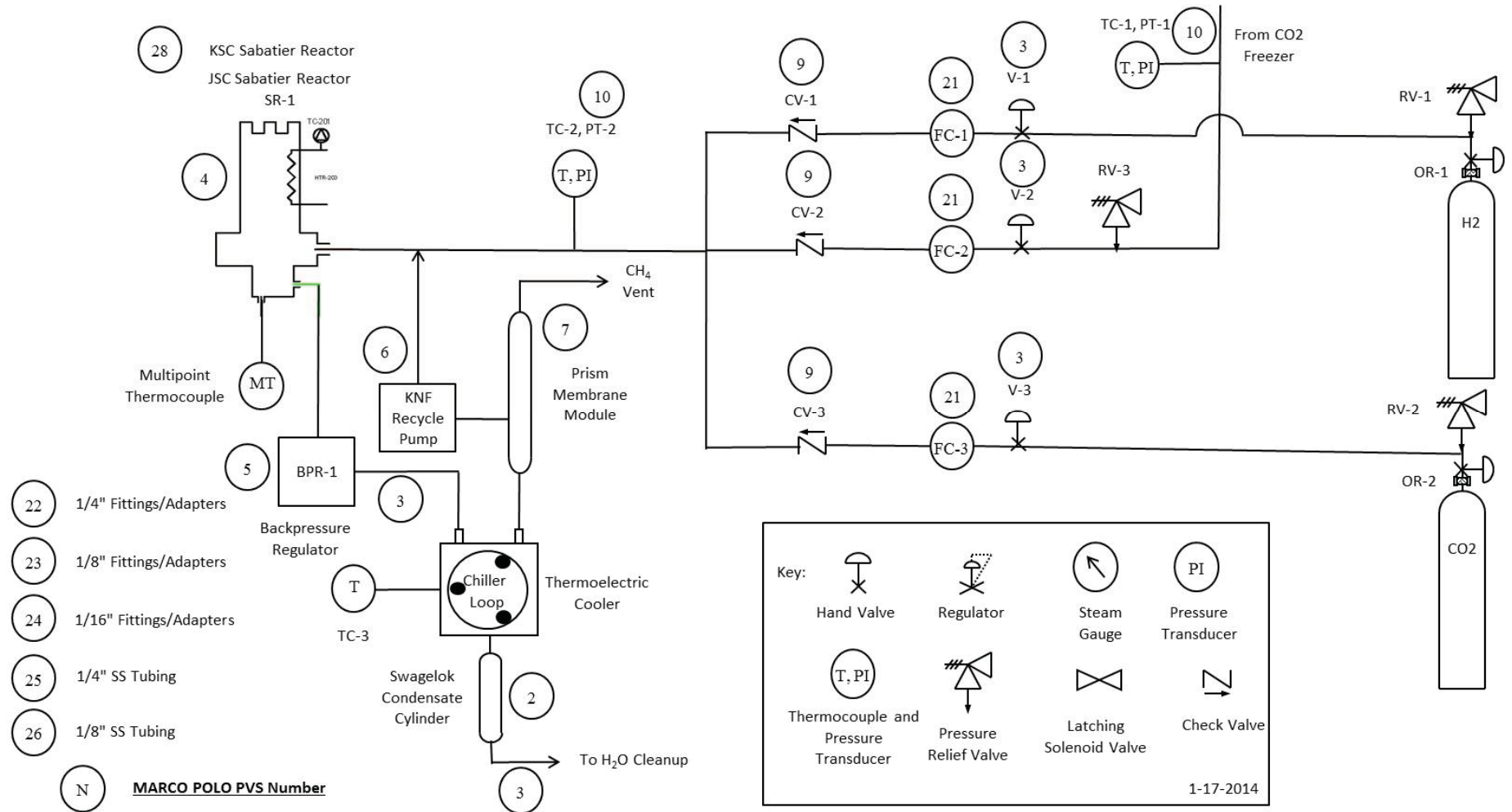


Copper Cold Head



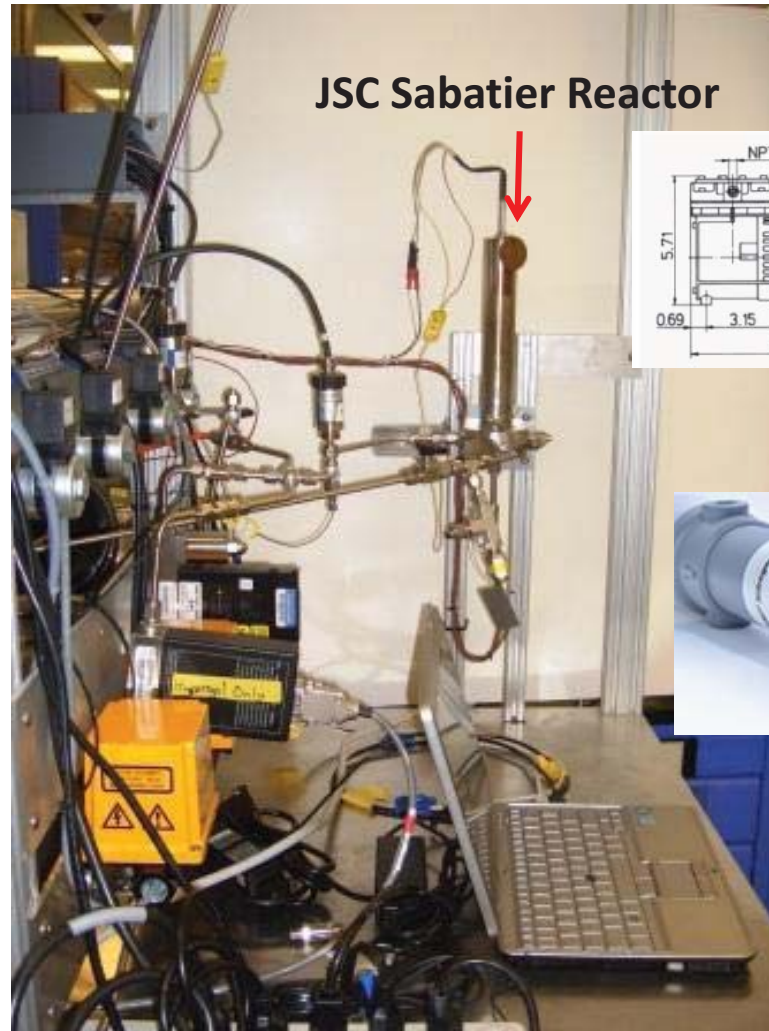
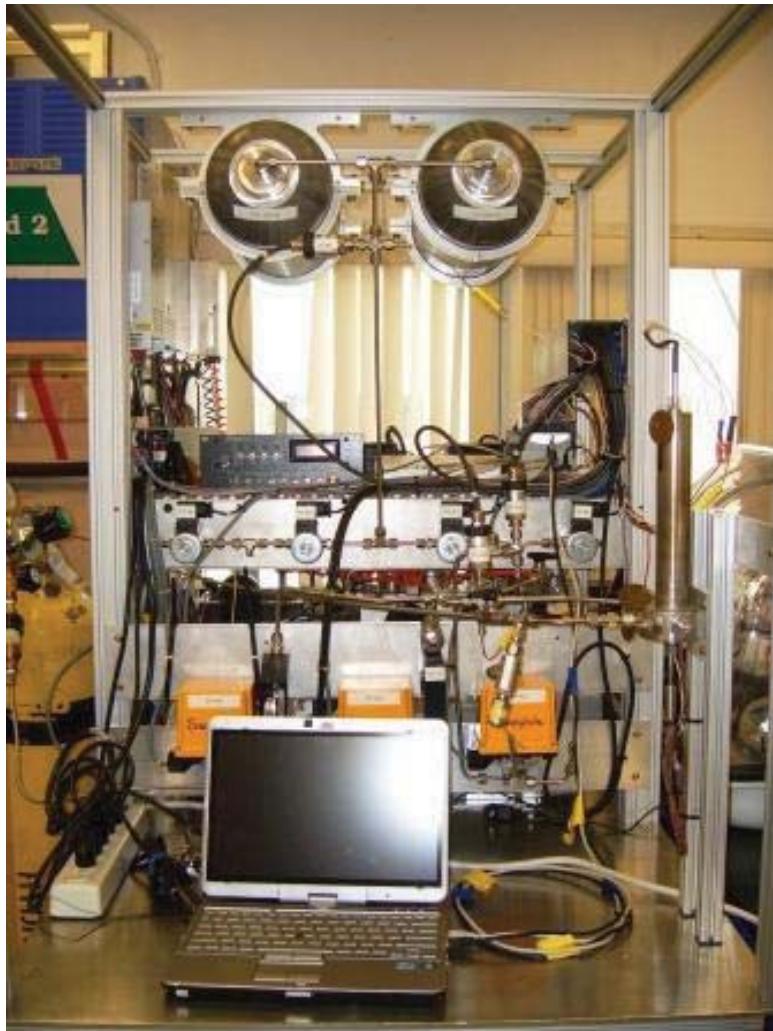


Sabatier Subsystem Design

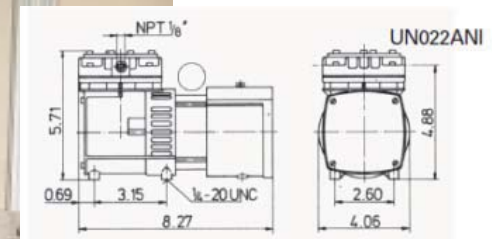




Sabatier Subsystem



JSC Sabatier Reactor



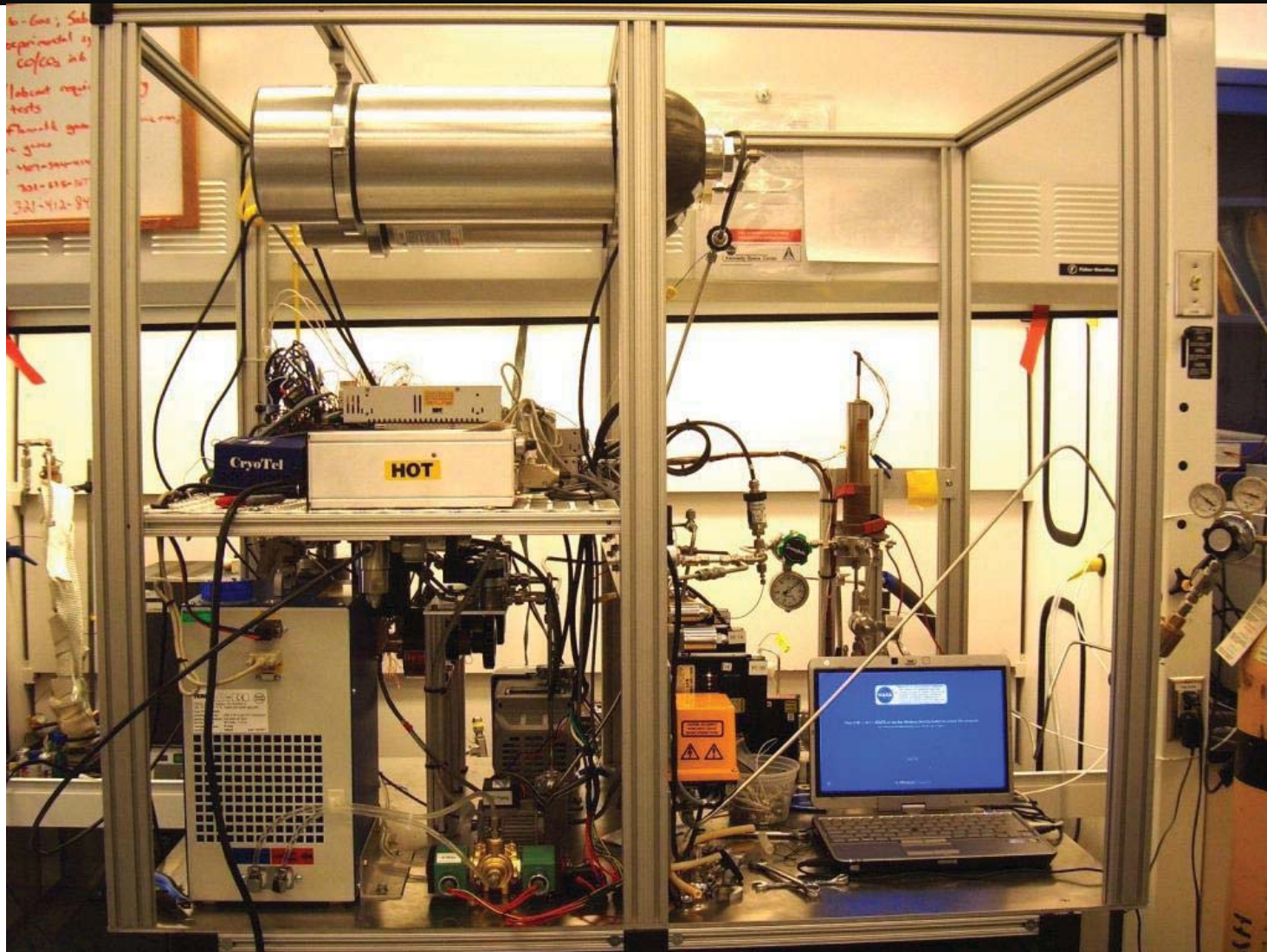
Recycle Pump



Membrane Module (Cut-Away View)

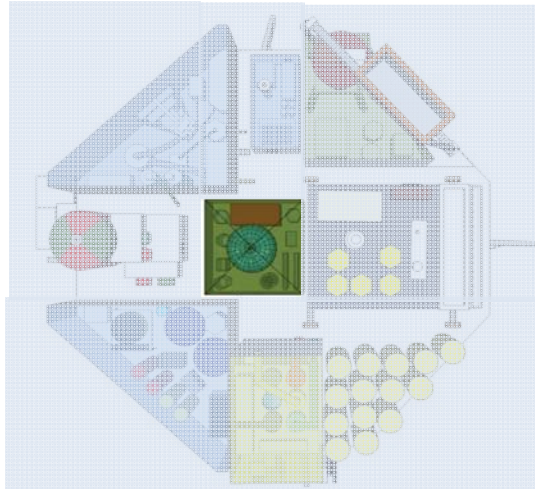


Atmospheric Processing Module

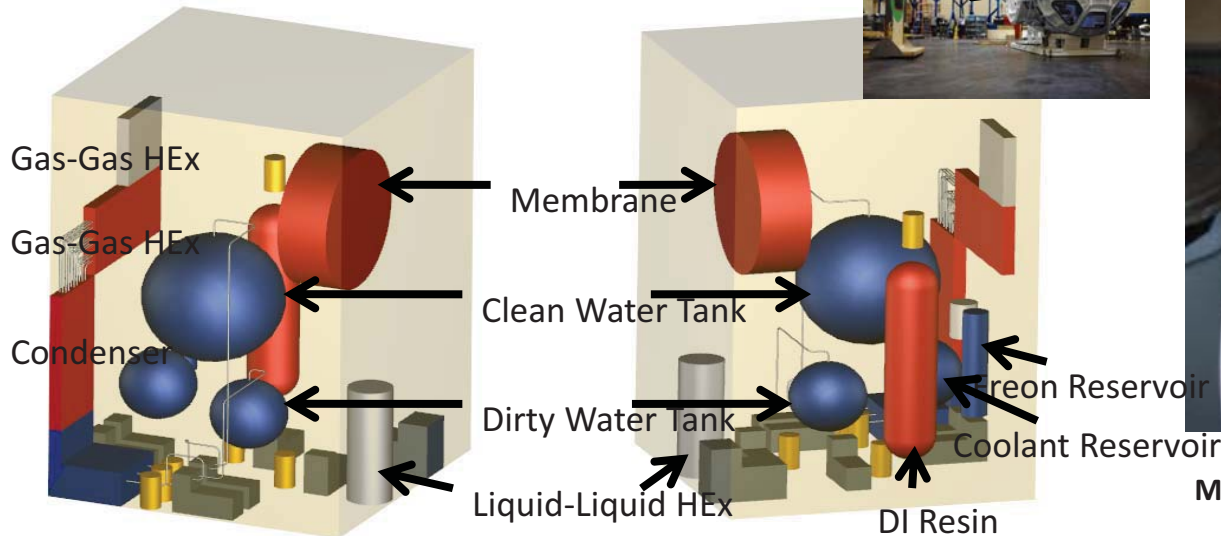




Water Cleanup Module (KSC)



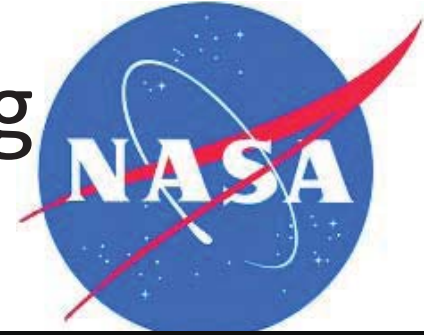
- Tested with Water Processing Module at JSC
- Used to recycle fuel cell water from the MMSEV to H₂ and O₂
- MMSEV = Multi Mission Space Exploration Vehicle



Membrane separator not included in the final version



Lander and Soil Processing Module (KSC)



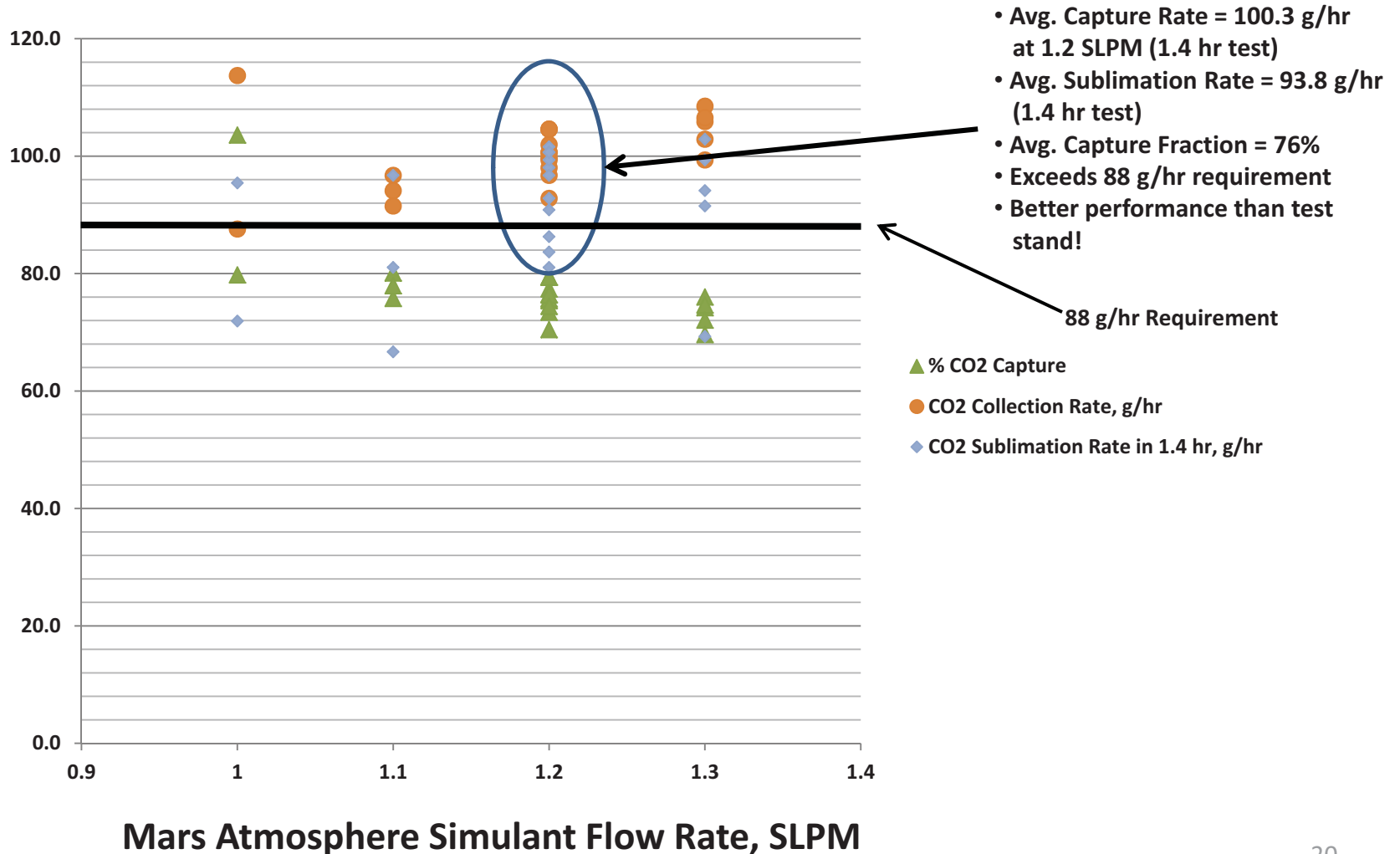
Van Townsend (KSC/ESC) with MARCO POLO lander and Soil Processing Module (under construction)



RASSOR (Regolith Advanced Surface Systems Operations Robot) will feed the hopper

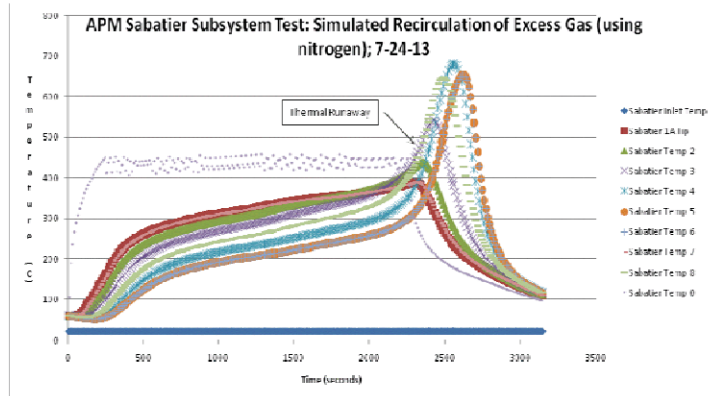
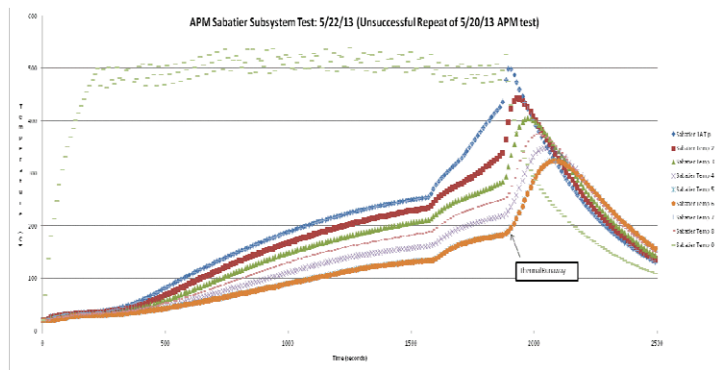
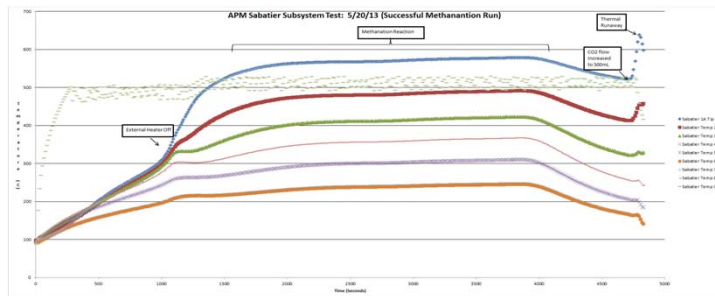


CO₂ Freezer Testing





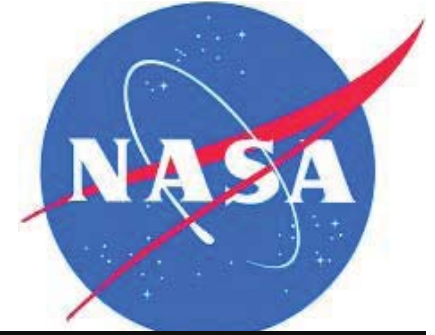
JSC Sabatier Testing



- JSC Testing was successful (>99% conversion at 4.5:1 H₂/CO₂ ratio)
- First three KSC tests overheated
 - >600°C
- One test did not overheat (top) at 250 sccm CO₂ vs. 747 sccm desired (1000 sccm H₂)
 - Duplicate run did overheat (middle)
- Twelve tests at various flow rates overheated
- Two tests with simulated recycle gases (N₂/H₂/CO₂ = 6.0/3.35/0.75 SLPM) was slower to overheat, but still did so (bottom)
- Built a redesigned Sabatier reactor



Current Status



- **CO₂ Freezer Subsystem essentially complete**
 - Fully automated and fluid system functional
 - Need to test replacement CO₂ pump to reach 100 psi for overnight storage capability
- **Sabatier Subsystem**
 - Fluid system automated and functional
 - New reactor being installed
 - Based on proprietary design by Pioneer Astronautics
 - Testing needed to verify operation
- **Plan integrated MARCO POLO testing in Swamp Works “Big Bin” regolith bin**
 - Date TBD
- **Testing will support Mars ISRU design studies**
- **Long Term Goal is to continue to refine the ISRU technologies for potential 2021 robotic Mars mission using a SpaceX ‘Red Dragon’ capsule as part of an Ames-led science effort**



NASA Plans for Mars ISRU



- Mars 2020 Mission Science Definition Team Report (July 1, 2013):
- “The highest priority HEOMD payload is the demonstration of CO₂ capture and dust size characterization for atmospheric ISRU” p. 63
- “Collect atmospheric carbon dioxide. Analyze dust (size, shape, number) during CO₂ collection. Produce small quantities of oxygen and analyze its purity (option).” p. 61
- “Reduces risk for human missions and possible Mars sample return” p. 61

Instrument/Demo	Purpose	SKG Addressed	P-SAG Priority	HAT Priority	Comments
O ₂ production from atmosphere	Collect atmospheric carbon dioxide. Analyze dust (size, shape, number) during CO ₂ collection. Produce small quantities of oxygen and analyze its purity (option).	B6-1: Atm. ISRU B4-2: Dust properties	H	H	Reduces risk for human missions and possible Mars sample return

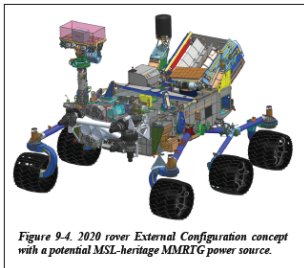


Figure 9-4. 2020 rover External Configuration concept with a potential MSL-heritage MMRTG power source.

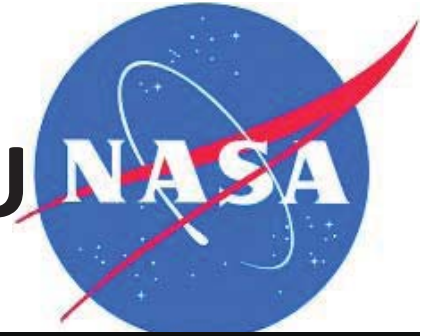
Table 5-4. Spacecraft resource requirements for candidate HEOMD Payloads

Instrument/Demo	Mass (kg)	Power (W)	Operational Concept
MEDLI+	15.1	10	Operates during EDL
Surface weather station	1.3	19	Sampling (approximately 24 times a day)
Atmospheric ISRU demo - CO ₂ capture + dust - CO ₂ capture + O ₂ production	10 20	30-50 100-150	Operate 7 to 8 hrs per sol, and as many sols as possible. Operate CO ₂ capture and O ₂ production on separate days to maximize production rate





NASA Plans for Mars ISRU



- Mars 2020 Mission Announcement of Opportunity (Sept. 24, 2013):
- “A successful precursor mission is both prudent and required before incorporating ISRU into a mission-critical role for either crewed or robotic exploration missions. NASA’s Mars 2020 mission presents an ideal opportunity to validate critical ISRU technologies in an extraterrestrial environment.”

ISRU Plant Capabilities for Mars 2020 and Future Exploration Missions.

	Mars 2020	Subscale Validation Class Missions	Future Human Missions
Minimum Oxygen Production Rate	0.02 kg/hr	0.44 kg/hr	2.2 kg/hr
Minimum Operational Life	50 sols	500 sols	1,200 sols

- Proposal selection in June 2014



Other KSC ISRU Projects: RESOLVE

Regolith & Environment Science and Oxygen & Lunar Volatile Extraction



RESOLVE is an internationally developed payload (NASA and CSA) that that can perform two important missions for Science and Human Exploration of the Moon

Prospecting Mission: (Polar site)

- ✓ **Verify the existence of and characterize the constituents and distribution of water and other volatiles in lunar polar surface materials**
 - Map the surface distribution of hydrogen rich materials
 - Determine the mineral/chemical properties of polar regolith
 - Measure bulk properties & extract core sample from selected sites
 - To a depth of 1m with minimal loss of volatiles
 - Heat multiple samples from each core to drive off volatiles for analysis
 - From <100K to 423 K (150 C)
 - From 0 up to 100 psia (reliably seal in aggressively abrasive lunar environment)
 - Determine the constituents and quantities of the volatiles extracted
 - Quantify important volatiles: H₂, He, CO, CO₂, CH₄, H₂O, N₂, NH₃, H₂S, SO₂
 - Survive limited exposure to HF, HCl, and Hg

ISRU Processing Demonstration Mission: (Equatorial and/or Polar Site)

- ✓ **Demonstrate the Hydrogen Reduction process to extract oxygen from lunar regolith**
 - Heat sample to reaction temperature
 - From 423 K (150 C) to 1173 K (900 C)
 - Flow H₂ through regolith to extract oxygen in the form of water
 - Capture, quantify, and display the water generated



RESOLVE Analog Field Tests



Nov. 2008

- RESOLVE Gen II on Scarab Rover
- Power, avionics, and ground support equipment on separate trailer



FEB. 2010

- RESOLVE Gen II+ on CSA Juno Rover
- Power, avionics, and ground support equipment on separate Juno



July 2012

- RESOLVE Gen IIIA on CSA Artemis Jr. Rover
- Everything on single rover platform



RESOLVE Gen III



Purpose: Develop a flight-like unit that can fit on a rover and operate in the lunar environment

Sample Acquisition System

Auger Drill Subsystem

- Collect and transfer subsurface material down to 1 m below surface
- Maintain sample stratigraphy and volatiles (below 150 K)
- Meter samples for processing
- Auger material to surface for evaluation
- Measure geotechnical properties of regolith during drilling

Surface Mineral/Volatile Evaluation

Near Infrared Volatile Spectrometer Subsystem (NIRVSS) - ARC

- Measure surface bound OH/H₂O while traversing (at min. of 0.5% by mass)
- Detect form of water (ice/hydration) in auger tailings
- Detect water vapor in evolved gases
- Image surface and drill tailings

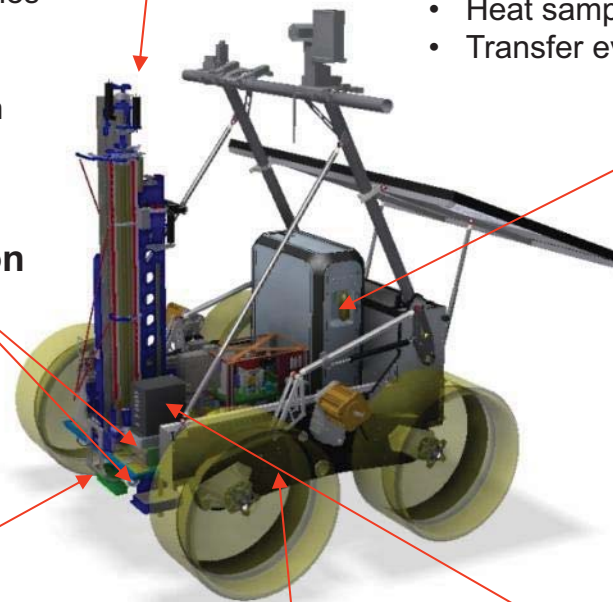
Resource Localization

Neutron Spectrometer Subsystem (NSS) -ARC

- Locate hydrogen and hydrogen bearing volatiles down to 1 meter below the surface while traversing (at min. of 0.5% by mass)

RESOLVE Mission Requirements

- Nom. Mission Life = 5+ Cores; 14 Days
- Mass = 170 kg rover/80 kg payload
- Ave. Power; 200-300 W



Volatile Content/Oxygen Extraction

Oxygen & Volatile Extraction Node (OVEN) - JSC

- Accept samples from Sample Acquisition System
- Heat samples from <150 K to 423K for volatile extraction
- Heat samples to 1173 K for oxygen extraction
- Transfer evolved gases to LAVA volatile analyzer

Volatile Content Evaluation

Lunar Advanced Volatile Analysis (LAVA) - KSC

- Accept evolved gas from OVEN; provide hydrogen for oxygen extraction
- Perform analysis in under 2 minutes
- Measure water content in evolved gas
- Characterize volatiles of interest (below 70 amu)
- Measure D/H and O^{16/18} isotopes
- Capture & image water evolved

Operation Control Flight Avionics - KSC

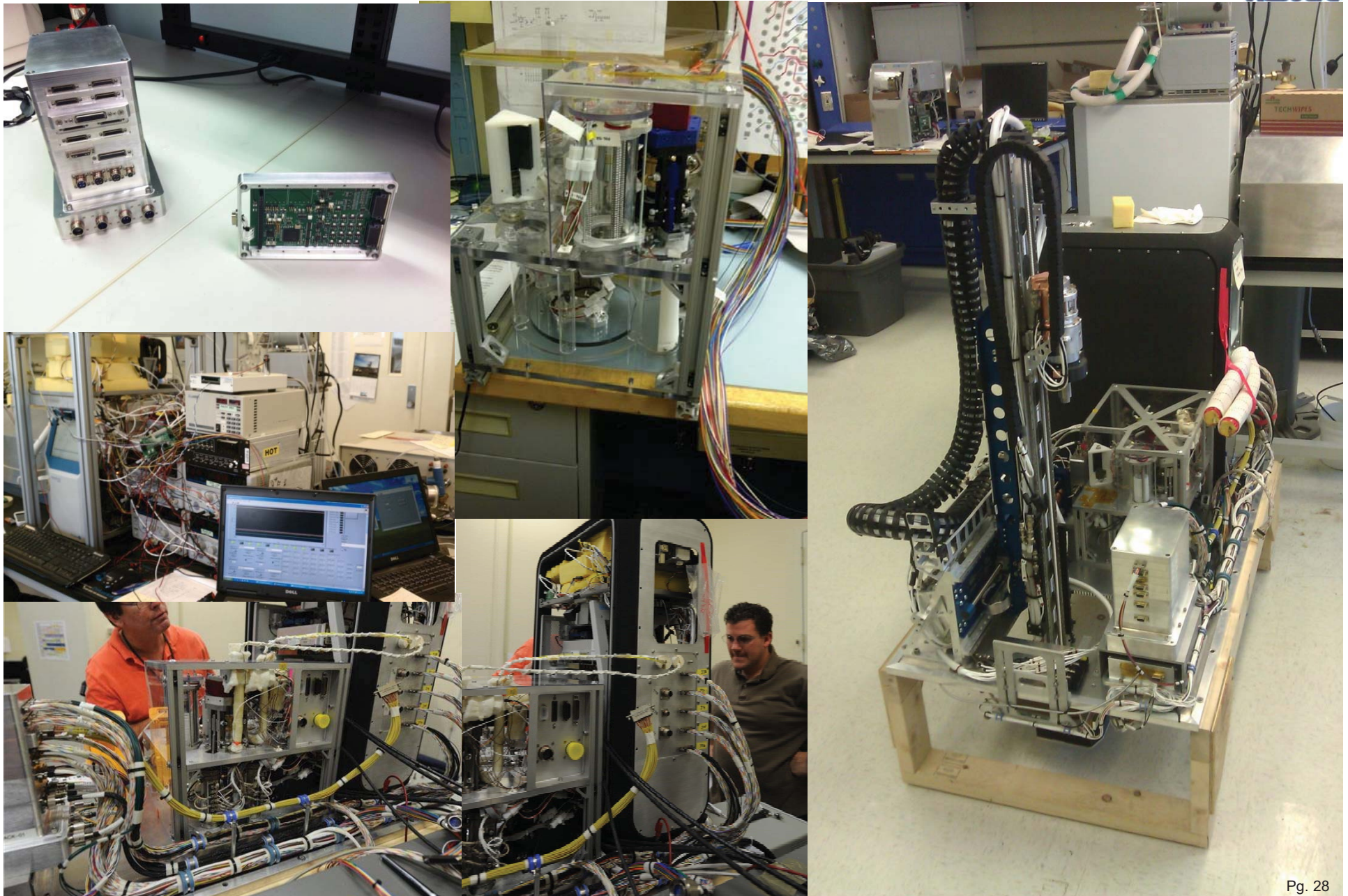
- Space-rated microprocessor
- Control subsystems and manage data

Surface Mobility

- Traverse wide range of lunar surface/material conditions
- Tele-operation and autonomous traverse modes
- Carry RESOLVE payload; provide power, comm., and thermal management



RESOLVE Gen IIIA Field Development Unit (FDU) Assembly & Integration (1)

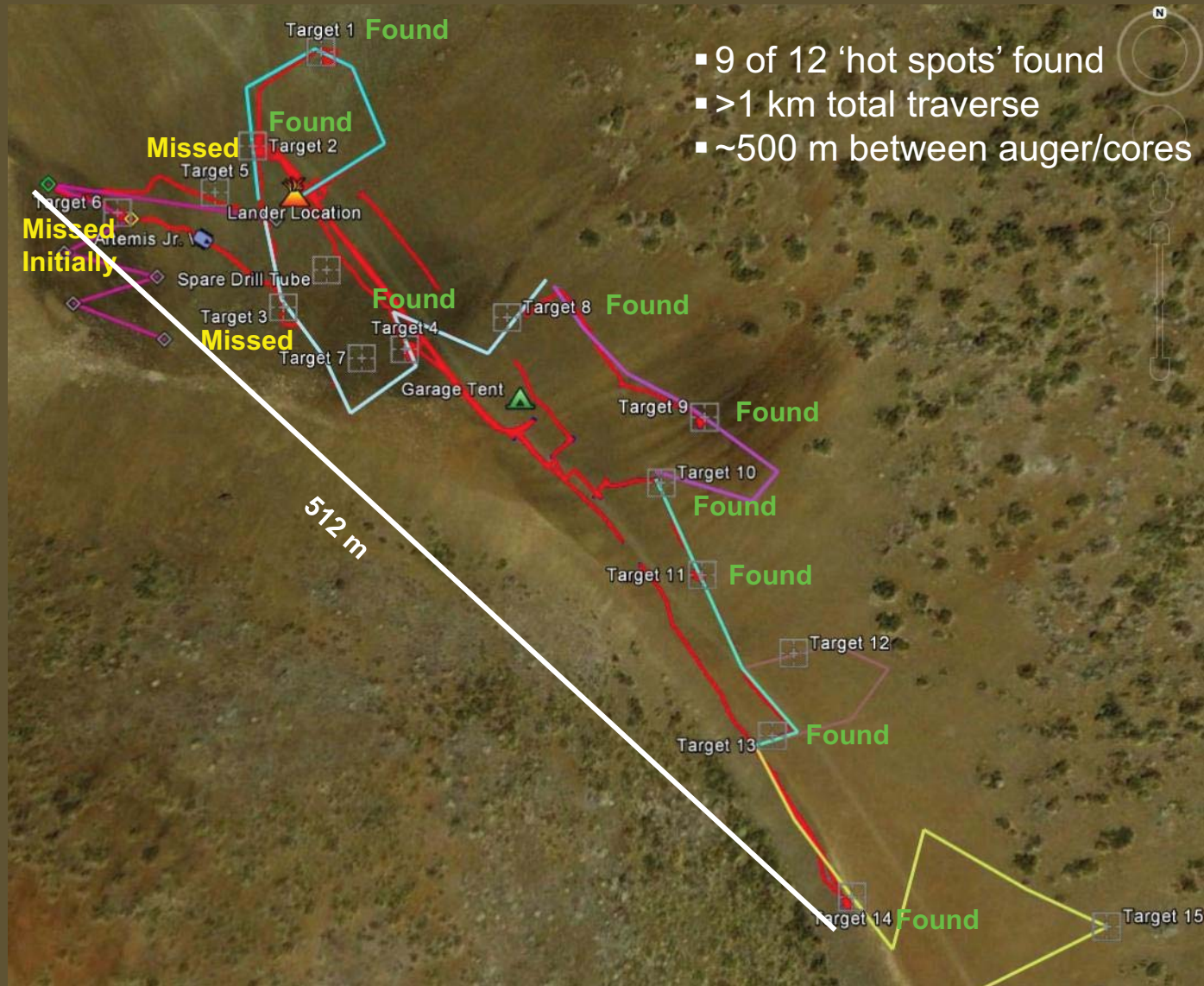




RESOLVE Gen IIIA Field Development Unit (FDU) Assembly & Integration (2)



Complete RESOLVE Mission Traverse on Mauna Kea

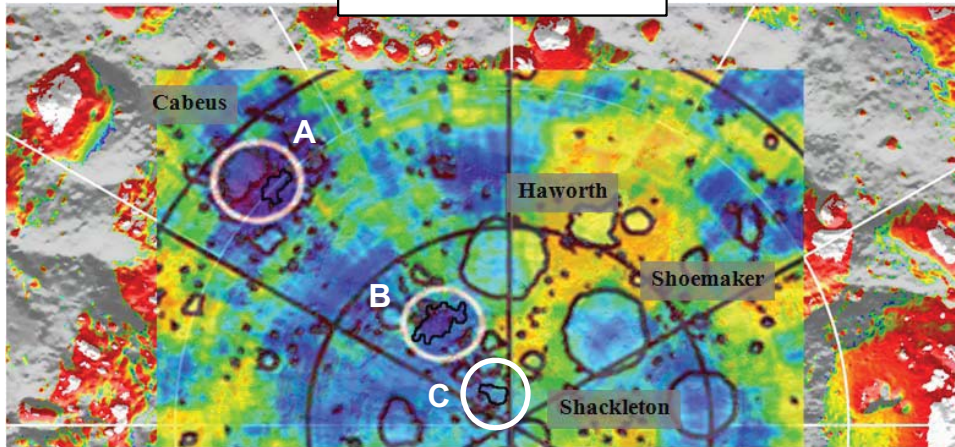




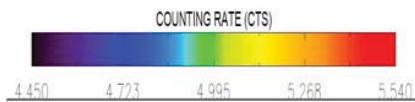
RESOLVE Mission Options – Potential South Pole Landing Sites



LEND Results

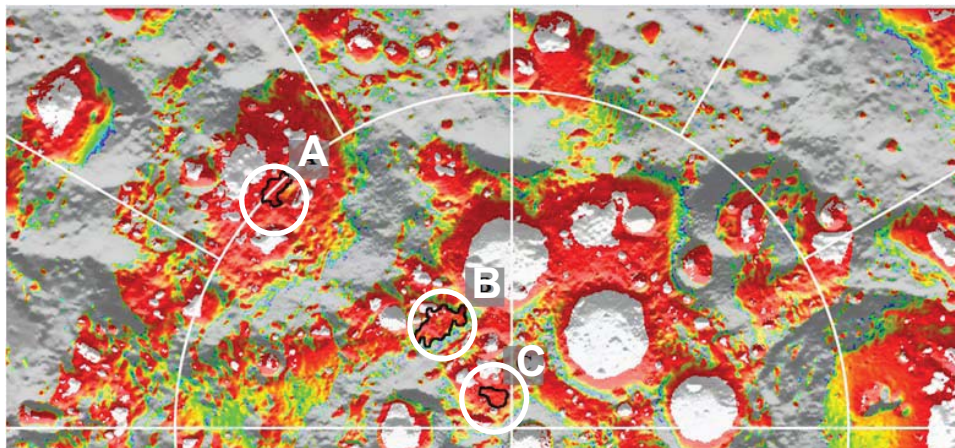


LEND Data (circa Fall 2009)

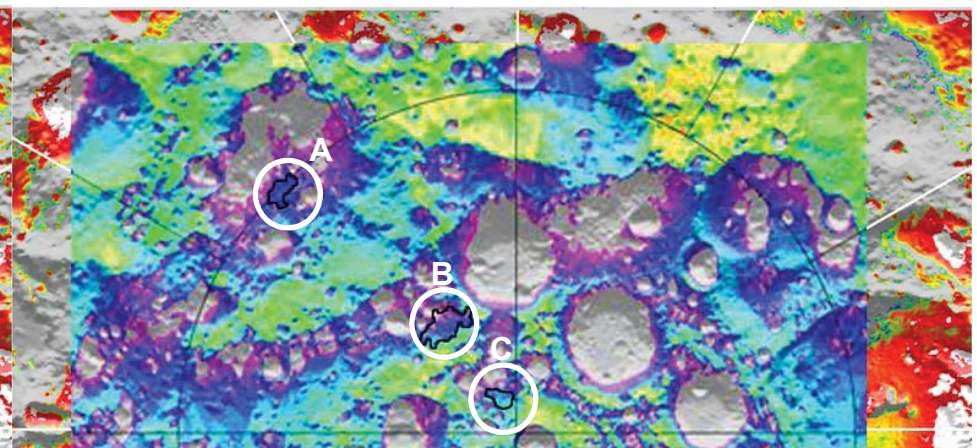
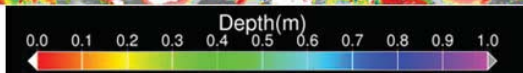


Site Analysis

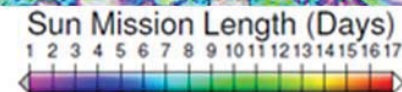
Site:	A	B	C
Shallow "Frost Line"	<0.1 m	<0.2 m	<0.1 m
Slopes	<10	<15	<10
Neutron Depletion	4.5 cps	4.7 cps	4.9 cps
Temporary Sun*	4 days	2-4 days	5-7 d
Comm Line of Sight*	8 days	17 days	17 days
* may not coincide			



Depth to where water loss is < 1 kg m⁻² per Gyr



Solar illumination for May 2017

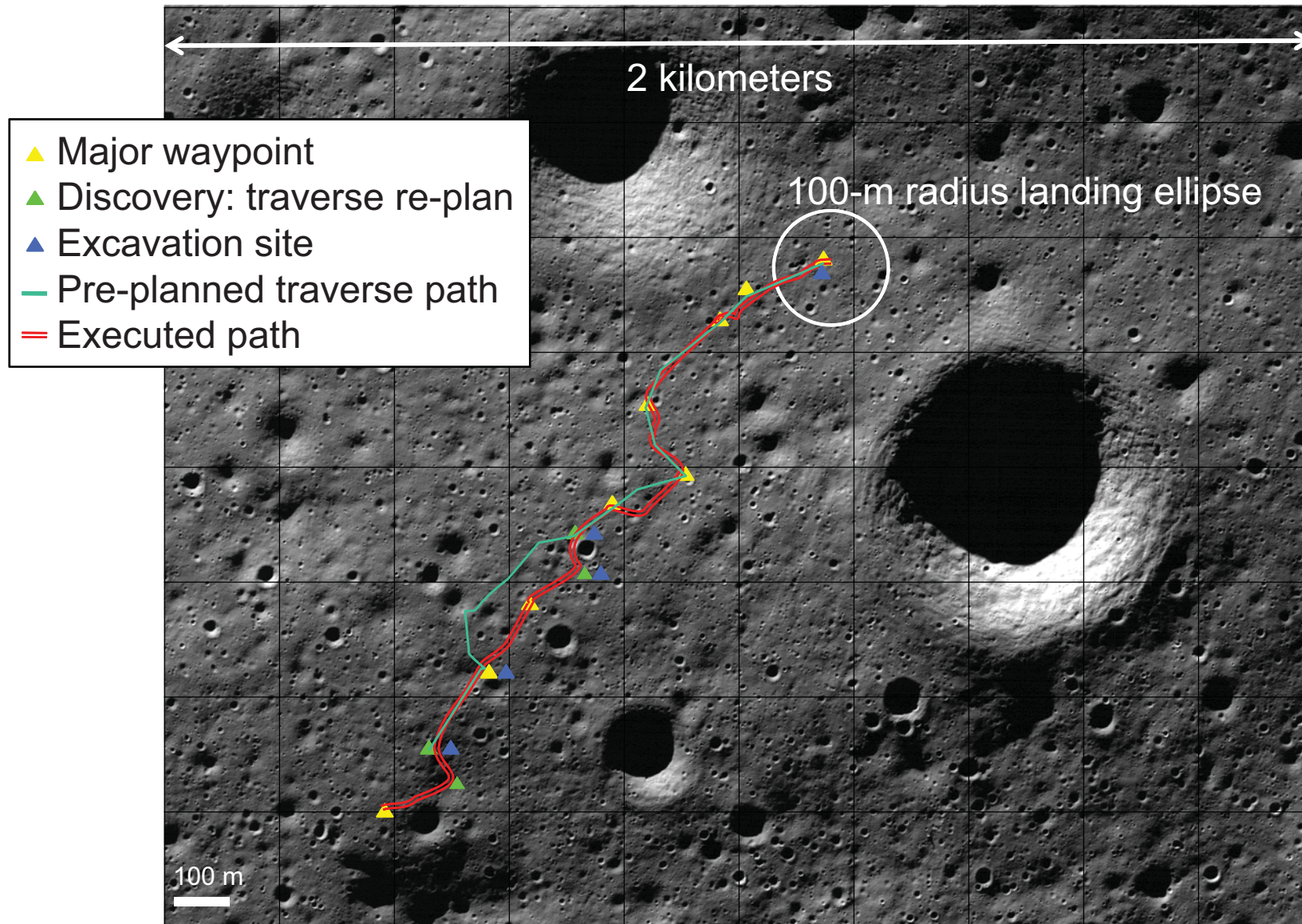


Predicted Volatile Stability

Solar Power Potential



RESOLVE Mission Options – Notional Traverse

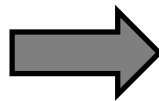
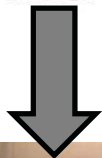




Other KSC ISRU Projects: Trash to Gas



- Logistics, Reduction and Repurposing (LRR) Project Overview
- TtSG overview and processes





TtSG Overview



Human Spaceflight Produces Trash!



- Long term effects include:
- Pollution
 - Wasteful spending
 - Planetary protection
 - Bad press



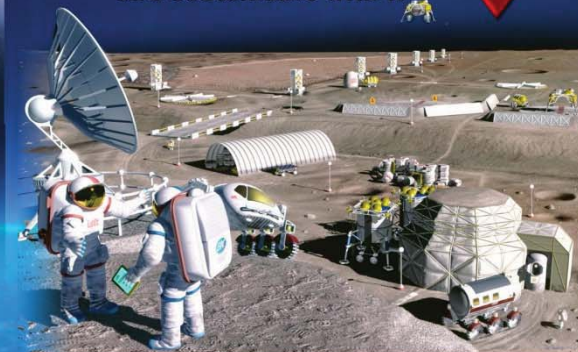
Human spaceflight trash includes:

- Food packaging (adhered/uneaten)
- Clothing
- Human waste products
- Paper products
- Etc.



Presently the trash is brought back home to earth or burned during Earth atmospheric re-entry

To maximize our resources, reduce trash volume, and minimize polluting in space habitats and long duration missions we need to re-evaluate the trash produced and do something innovative and sustainable with it

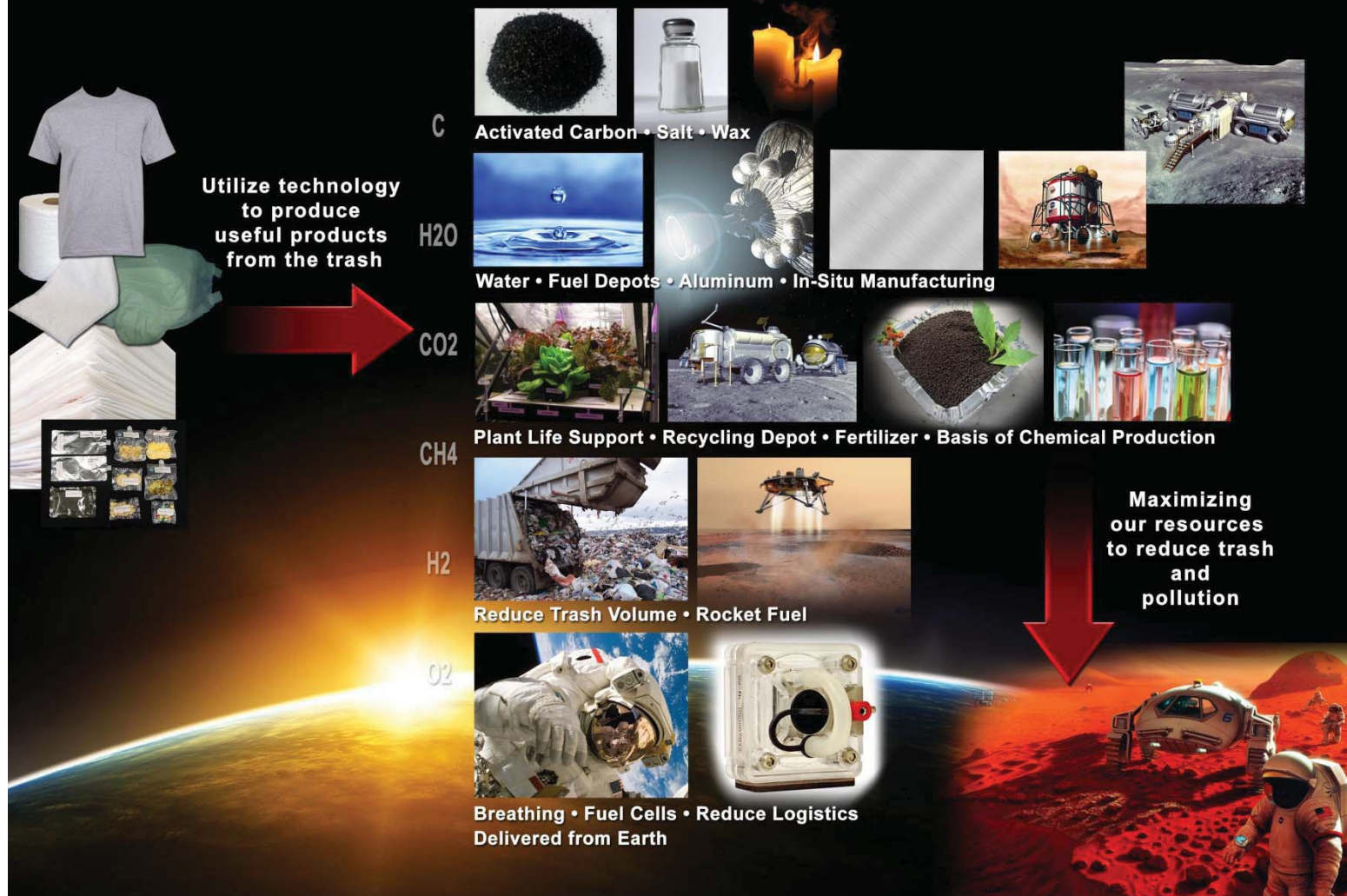




TtSG Overview



Utilizing Spaceflight Trash!



- Strayer et al. AIAA-2011-5126; Characterization of Volume F trash from four recent STS missions: weights, categorization, water content



Photo 1. Shuttle Volume F trash.



Photo 2. Shuttle trash, not Volume F trash, contained in a large ziplock plastic film bag.



Photo 5. A food 'football' from the Shuttle Volume F trash.



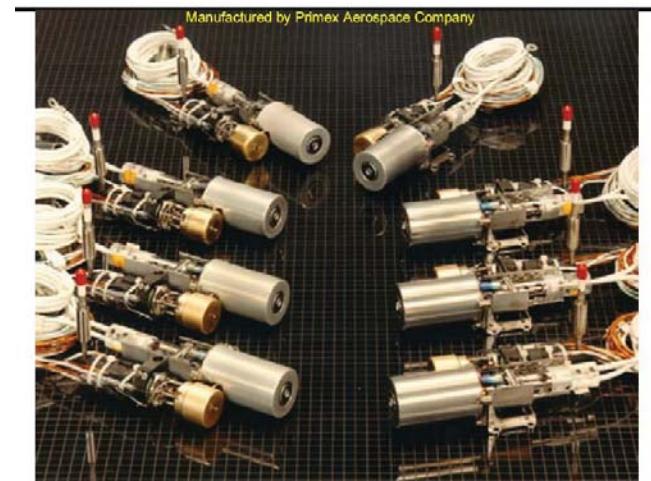
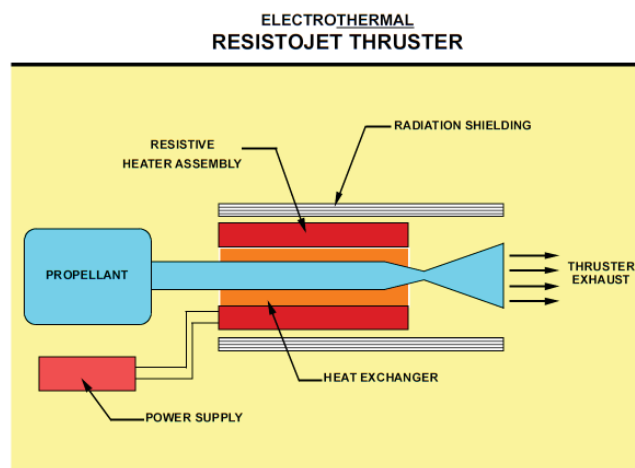
Photo 6. A Maximum Adsorption Garment (MAG, EVA diaper) 'football' from the Shuttle Volume F trash.



TtSG Overview



- LOX Methane engines
- Resistojets
 - Electrothermal propulsion for station keeping, reboost and orbit maintenance
 - Detailed systems were designed for past space stations (Freedom)
 - Can use multiple fuels (CO_2 , CH_4 , H_2O , etc...) in same thruster





TtSG Overview



- Why TtSG?
 - Reduce volume of trash - Current human spaceflight missions either carry trash during the entire round-trip mission or discard trash inside a logistic module which is de-orbited into Earth's atmosphere for destruction.
 - Cleans waste
 - Produce something useful from a waste product



KSC-01PP-0726: Workers in the Space Station Processing Facility are removing contents from the Multi-Purpose Logistics Module (MPLM) Leonardo to begin removing the contents after STS-102. The MPLM brought back nearly a ton of trash and excess equipment from the Space Station.



TtSG General System Analysis

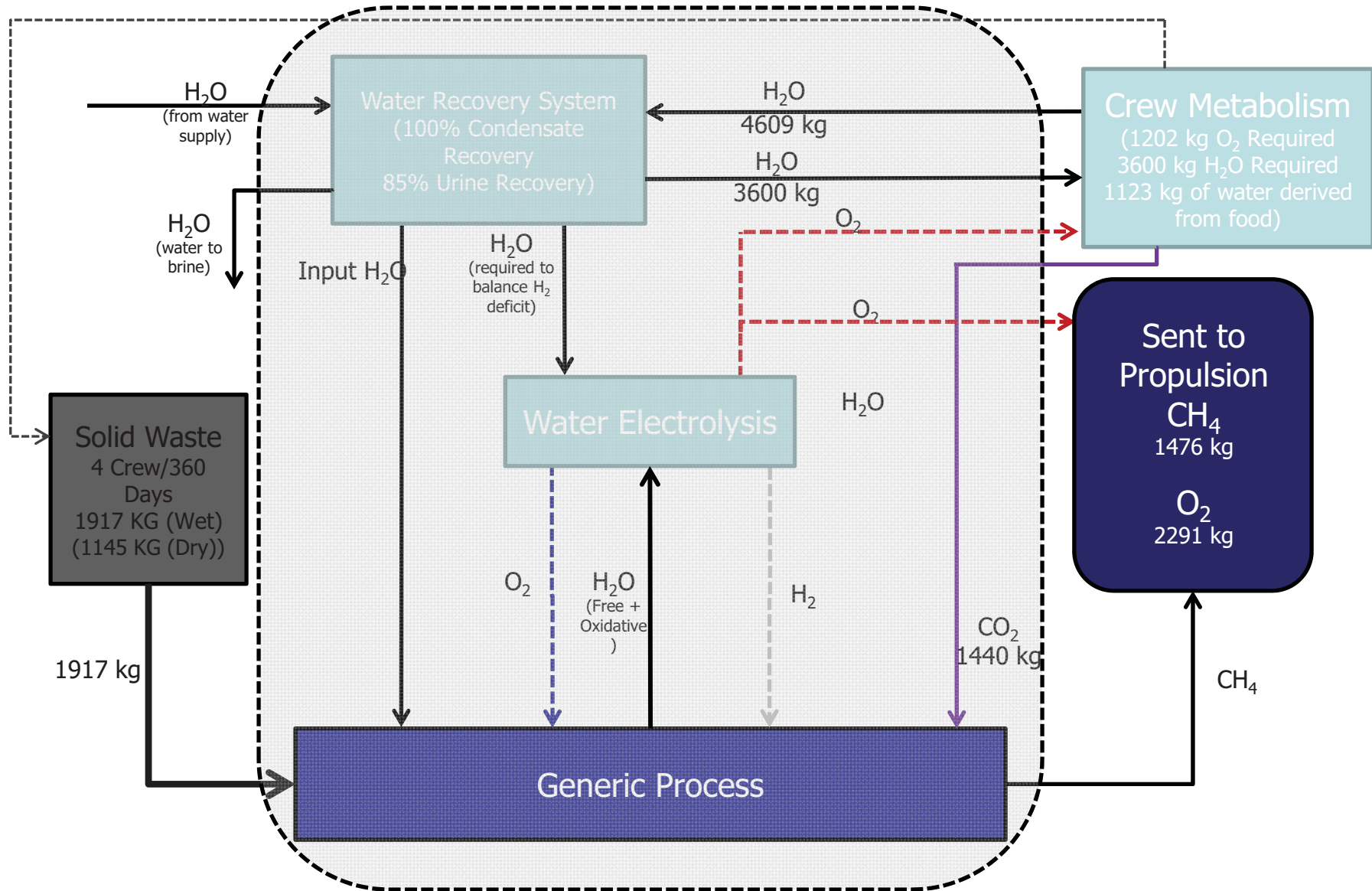


- Assumptions
 - Crew of 4 for 360 days
 - Waste types: Human Waste, packaging, food, MAGs, tape, clothing, towels, washcloths, paper
 - Total waste: 1900 kg wet waste, 4200 kg from crew metabolism (CO_2 , H_2O)
- Production
 - 800 – 1500 kg of methane/year
 - Carbon is limiting reagent, so if CO_2 is used you have to find a hydrogen source
 - Enough for 1 lunar ascent vehicle
 - ~800 kg of oxygen
 - ~900 kg of water
 - ~1100 kg of CO_2



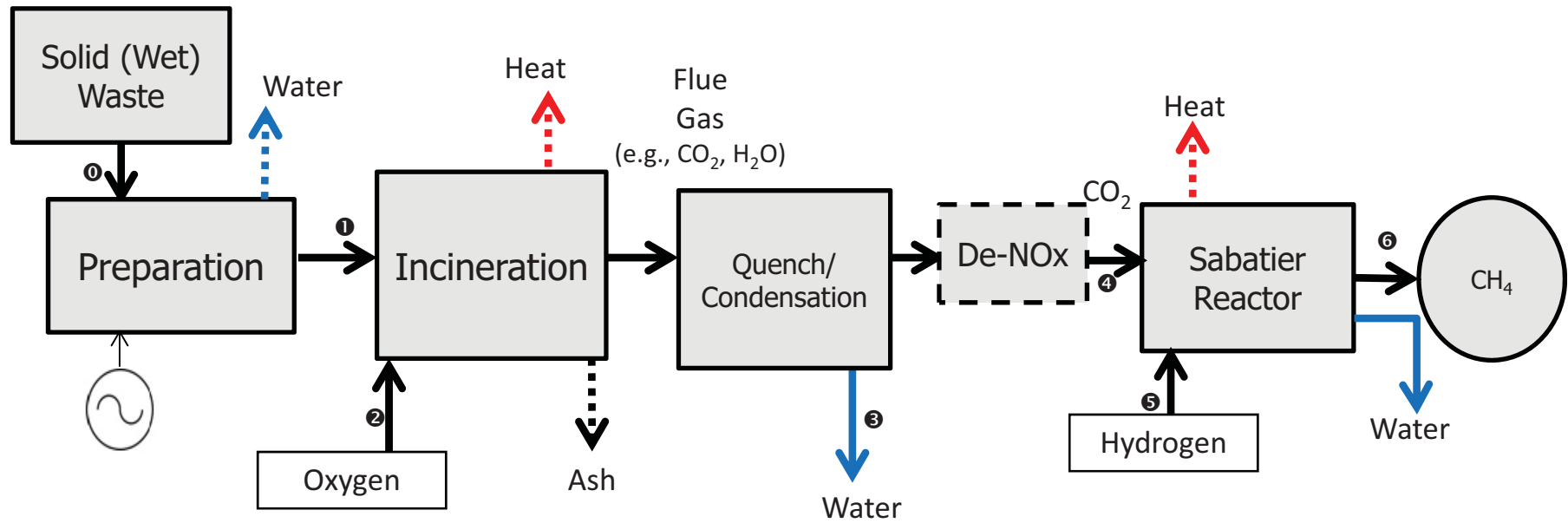


TtSG General Systems Analysis





TtSG General Systems Analysis

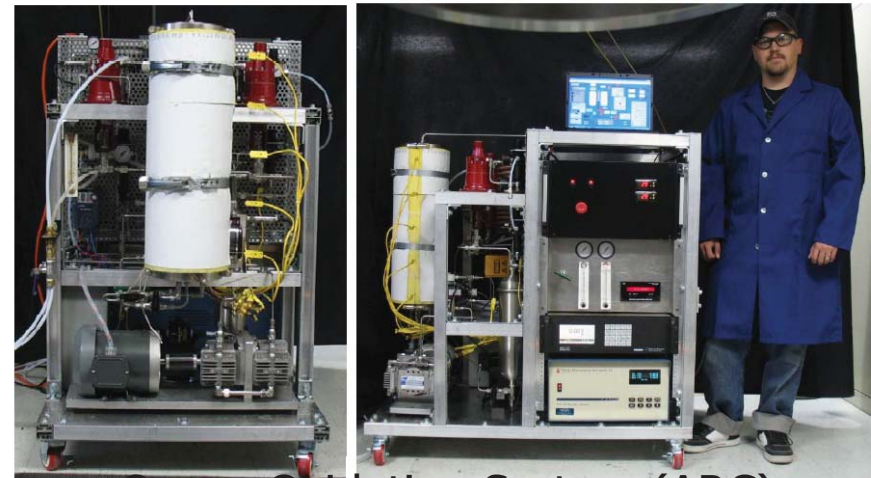




TtSG Processes



- KSC, GRC, ARC have hardware that they are testing
- All processes have a 3-4 TRL
 - Pyrolysis
 - Decomposition of waste materials with heat in the absence of oxygen
 - Gasification
 - Decomposition of waste materials with heat in the presence of oxygen and/or steam
 - Incineration
 - Decomposition of waste materials with combustion
 - Steam Reforming
 - Decomposition of waste materials with heat in the presence of steam
 - Catalytic Decomposition- Low Temperature Decomposition of waste materials in the presence of a catalyst
 - Wet air oxidation
 - Photocatalytic oxidation
 - Ozone Oxidation
 - Decomposition of waste materials with heat in the presence of ozone



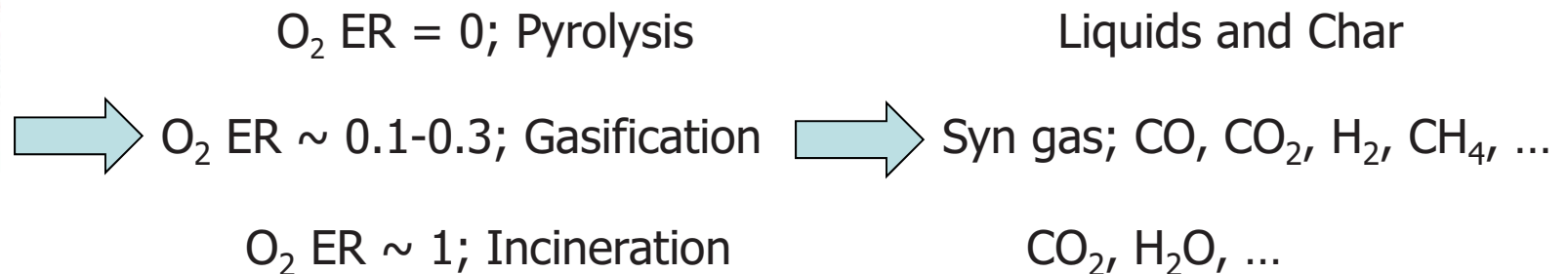
Ozone Oxidation System (ARC)



KSC Processes



- **Pyrolysis:**
 - On-going effort at ARC as part of SBIR program
 - Thermal decomposition of waste material under inert environment or vacuum
 - Main products are a mixture of hydrocarbons (typically $>C_4$)
 - KSC will characterize this process as part of the Gasification effort; ARC has existing hardware from SBIR program
- **Gasification:**
 - Previous effort at KSC (CDDF 2009)
 - Thermal decomposition of waste material in the presence of oxygen
 - Main products: syn gas with mixture of carbon oxides, hydrogen, methane, hydrocarbons
 - Previous experience resulted in significant amount of wax material
- **Incineration:**
 - Combustion of waste material under the presence of oxygen
 - Main combustion products: mixture of carbon oxides and water
 - Trace products: other trace elements within waste
 - ARC has existing hardware from SBIR program



ER: Equivalence ratio equals 1 for stoichiometric oxygen



TtSG Schedule



- **FY12:**
 - Testing existing prototypes
 - Efficiency analysis
 - Waste characterization analysis
- **FY13:**
 - Mixed trash testing
 - Down-selection to two processes for breadboard design
- **FY14:**
 - Complete breadboard design testing
 - Upgrade analysis
- **FY15:**
 - Build upgraded prototype
 - Provide mission architecture recommendations
- **FY17:**
 - ISS flight project design complete



Thermal oxidation reactor at KSC



Future MARCO POLO Historic Marker?



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Any Questions?

Ultimate Destination - Mars

