
**Characterization Track**

If an NEO is detected to be a threat to the Earth, beyond a certain threshold, then the central facility will assemble an observer to be launched as soon as possible.

Alternatively, if the NEO scientific community identifies an NEO of particular scientific interest, then the observer spacecraft is assembled and launched at an optimum point to achieve a full scientific analysis.

**Deflection Track**

If an NEO is found to pose a significant threat, then a mitigation system will be launched. The mitigation system used can be one of a variety of options. These options are shown here, but others could easily be included.

**Exploration Track**

This system fulfills the promise of enabling NEO characterization experiments as well as in situ resource utilization for further space exploration. This track will be investigated at a later date.

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**Acknowledgments**


Advisors: Michael LaPointe, Ph.D., NASA MSFC

Research: NASA MSFC is investigating hosting an interdisciplinary workshop on the issue of orbital debris. This workshop would entail collaboration between NASA design engineers and anyone with a concept for reducing the population or mitigating the debris that exists in low-Earth orbit.

Participants would provide their own resources to produce a design that could be funded with MSFC’s launch vehicle and spacecraft development tools to produce an integrated design concept. A workshop is anticipated in the fall 2009 timeframe for all participants to refine their concepts and comment on the other proposals.

For more information or to express your interest in this workshop, please e-mail: mla@msfc.nasa.gov.