

NOAA TO ISSUE SOLAR CYCLE 24 OUTLOOK

An international panel, led by NOAA, was convened last year to predict the upcoming 11-year cycle of space weather known as Solar Cycle 24. NOAA's Space Environment Center (SEC) will announce the panel's findings at its annual Space Weather Workshop in Boulder. The panel's prediction will estimate the month and year the cycle will begin, its maximum intensity (how many sunspots occur), and the month and year the maximum will occur. The Space Environment Center issues the nation's official space weather forecasts, warnings, alerts, and data. NASA sponsored the prediction panel. The National Science Foundation sponsors the annual Space Weather Workshop in Boulder.

WHAT: NOAA press briefing to announce findings of the Solar Cycle 24 prediction panel NASA's new 3-D footage of the sun from the STEREO satellites

WHERE: Suite 231, Hotel Millennium, 1345 28th Street, Boulder, Colorado

WHEN: 2:15 p.m. EDT, 12:15 p.m. MDT, April 25, 2007

WHO: Douglas Biesecker, scientist, NOAA Space Environment Center; chair, Solar Cycle 24 Prediction Panel

W. Dean Pesnell, project scientist, Solar Dynamics Observatory, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center; member, Solar Cycle 24 Prediction Panel

Daniel Baker, director, Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics, University of Colorado--Boulder; chair, Committee on Solar and Space Physics, National Research Council

Joseph Kunches, chief, Forecast Center, NOAA Space Environment Center

RSVP: Please RSVP to Anatta, 303-497-6288, anatta@noaa.gov

CALL IN: U.S. reporters may call into the briefing at 1-888-950-6750. International reporters may call in at 1-210-234-8001. Passcode is SOLAR CYCLE.

Solar cycle outlooks can be useful to spacecraft manufacturers, satellite operators, power companies, airlines, geophysical surveyors, and the military as they formulate plans for the coming decade. The U.S. and world economies have become highly vulnerable to space weather. Basic commercial infrastructures now rely on electronic equipment, wireless communications, and satellite services for daily operations. NOAA's Space Environment Center (SEC) is the first line of defense against damage to critical equipment.