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"I'm not young enough to know everything."

— J.M. Barrie

Streamlining ARM data access with AI-ready infrastructure

New storage, software and computing frameworks set the stage for next-generation data tools and research support Published: July 8, 2026 Updated: July 8, 2026 The ARM Data Center has been preparing its infrastructure, including the Cumulus high-performance computing cluster, for artificial intelligence. Credit: ORNL/U.S. Dept. of Energy As artificial intelligence becomes more integrated into scientific workflows, the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (ARM) User Facility continues to improve its computing, storage and software frameworks and develop new tools that enhance the ARM data user experience. The improvements aim to help researchers access observations and metadata more quickly and easily while reducing the time spent searching for, understanding, downloading, and managing large data sets. This is particularly important because ARM has collected more than 30 years of atmospheric data, totaling over 8 petabytes. "AI-ready infrastructure is no longer optional," says Giri Prakash, ARM's chief data and computing officer. Prakash, who manages the ARM Data Center at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) in Tennessee, describes the effort as a phased, incremental approach to enhancing data infrastructure to support ARM's growing computational demands. "These developments are being added to ARM's already very capable infrastructure to accommodate the demanding requirements of AI applications." Building an

AI-Ready Data Center ARM began preparing its infrastructure for AI about four years ago, starting with hardware. The ARM Data Center installed graphics processing units (GPUs) to the Cumulus high-performance computing cluster . Multiple projects used the GPUs, including data quality analysis, radar processing and data product generation. As AI use intensifies, a more significant upgrade is now underway. ARM is replacing its file server with an AI-ready storage platform that connects directly to the GPU environment. This will enable AI models to access ARM data and metadata at high speed, rather than waiting for slower file transfers. According to Prakash, ARM is acquiring 25 to 30 new GPUs, including processing units designed to accelerate AI workloads, to meet its computational needs over the next two to five years. Along with adding and upgrading computing and storage infrastructure, ARM's cybersecurity and network engineering teams are enhancing controls to manage access to ARM computing, data and AI resources and tools. The enhanced infrastructure extends beyond hardware. ARM has been developing a software environment that will enable large language models (LLMs) and agent-based systems to communicate with data holdings, metadata and quality records. As organizations like ARM build AI-ready infrastructure, they are focusing on AI agents that can reason through multi-step tasks, access external tools, and make limited autonomous decisions. Unlike traditional AI assistants that simply answer questions, agent-based systems can retrieve data, interact with software platforms and coordinate workflows with minimal human intervention. Prakash describes an LLM as "the brain

that understands and explains; an agent is the system that uses that brain to access data and get work done. While the LLM provides general reasoning and language ability, agents connect it to institutional knowledge, tools and actions.” For more information: Check out ARM’s new Artificial Intelligence web page . ARM Data Advisor: Putting the User First In this ARM Data Advisor example, the AI agent responds to a user request for recent research on cloud microphysics and atmospheric water properties. Credit: Wade Darnell/ORNL, U.S. Dept. of Energy One of the most noticeable changes for researchers in the near term will be the introduction of the ARM Data Advisor (ADA, which is pronounced “ā-duh”), an AI agent that will streamline ARM data discovery and access. ADA is currently being tested by a small group of ARM staff and users. According to Wade Darnell, an ORNL software developer and ADA’s lead developer, this new assistant will answer questions, suggest data sets, display data plots, explain data quality and even place data orders — all through a natural-language conversational interface. Basic data ordering will be available in the initial rollout, but more advanced ordering and data extractions will be added in future versions. Instead of navigating multiple panels or search fields to drill into data sets, users can tell ADA what they need. For example, users can request data sets with latent heat flux or observations from a specific campaign or instrument. ADA will identify relevant data sets and provide users with context explaining why the data are relevant. With one click, users will be able to order data from within ADA’s interface. This user-centric approach extends beyond search capabilities.

Upon its release, ADA will also provide personalized recommendations for returning users, suggest new datastreams and deliver files in multiple formats suitable for analysis, workflow automation or downstream modeling. ADA's conversational interface allows users to easily pinpoint customized search results and deliver the data in their preferred format. Meanwhile, human support will always be available, providing manual oversight and direct assistance. ADA is expected to be introduced in July 2026, and it will evolve over time. The traditional search tool will remain in place until developers are confident that ADA is meeting the needs of ARM users. Those interested in participating in ADA testing can contact the ARM Data Center .

The Next Step: ATLAS

To enable AI-ready infrastructure, ARM developers are building a framework called the Agentic Tooling and LLM Augmentation Stack (ATLAS). ATLAS provides a shared platform enabling AI-driven tools to work together — from data discovery to workflow automation — while upholding ARM's standards for transparency, security, and scientific integrity. The purpose of ATLAS is straightforward: accelerate AI and machine learning adoption by offering shared, standardized infrastructure. This includes: providing model inference — the process that LLMs use to answer queries — through OpenAI-compatible endpoints (ATLAS exposes model access through standardized interfaces that follow OpenAI's format and conventions) converting information, such as data sets, metadata, documentation and prior knowledge, into a format that captures its semantic meaning, allowing systems to consistently retrieve and use relevant details for more

accurate, informed responses across workflows coordinating workflows guided by domain-specific agents delivering secure, governed access to ARM data and services. This simplified diagram of the Agentic Tooling and LLM Augmentation Stack (ATLAS) framework illustrates how this architecture can scale and extend with multiple users, clients, agents, tools and resources. ATLAS provides a common foundation for developing and integrating AI-powered tools used for ARM functions, including metadata generation, data quality analysis and enhanced website search capabilities with a forthcoming digital assistant called Ask ARM. ATLAS also supports connections to multiple model-serving environments that require GPUs, both internally and on external platforms. One example of an external platform is the American Science Cloud . This DOE initiative, which is part of the Genesis Mission , unifies national lab supercomputing resources into a secure cloud for AI-driven scientific discovery. Announced in late 2025, Genesis aims to build an integrated platform that connects AI models, curated scientific data, workflows and computing resources across DOE laboratories to accelerate discovery, enable autonomous science, and scale impact across the broader research ecosystem. A Rewired Research Environment ARM's AI-ready infrastructure extends to the representation of data, context, and scientific knowledge. Years of consistent ARM metadata and data quality records provided by ARM's Data Quality Office, instrument mentors, and translators now form the foundation for retrieval systems. Over the next three years, Prakash says ARM is expected to add 2 to 3 petabytes of storage for

vectorized content — searchable metadata embeddings, guidance pages, instrument handbooks and other supporting materials. To support advanced scientific AI workflows, ARM also plans to transform and chunk scientific variables and observational data into AI-readable contextual representations that can be efficiently indexed, retrieved and analyzed by agentic AI systems. By leveraging GPU Direct Storage and tightly integrated high performance storage architectures, ARM reduces data movement bottlenecks and accelerates AI model response times. Facility operations teams are now working together on energy, cooling and networking as GPU clusters expand. Through these efforts, ARM is reconfiguring how computing, storage and software systems interact so AI models can answer questions with grounded, authoritative information from the documentation developed over the years by ARM staff.

What Users Should Expect In the near term, researchers accessing the ARM Data Center will experience faster performance, more intuitive search results and early conversational interfaces to help with standard tasks. A broader range of agent-driven tools will become available as ATLAS matures, helping users automate workflows and navigate ARM data more effectively. Prakash emphasizes that user feedback will continue to guide their rollout. In turn, the ARM development team will incrementally update capabilities to improve their usability and accuracy, as well as their integration with other scientific systems. “ARM is not simply bolting AI onto existing systems,” says Prakash. “We are rearchitecting our data ecosystem around AI, and the result will be a dramatically improved and

more intuitive user experience.” ARM is not simply bolting AI onto existing systems. We are rearchitecting our data ecosystem around AI, and the result will be a dramatically improved and more intuitive user experience. - Giri Prakash, ARM chief data and computing officer

Building Guardrails, Accelerating Discovery Although today’s focus on AI seems new, AI capabilities and algorithms have been developed by groups across ARM and integrated at the ARM Data Center for several years. According to Prakash, the difference today is the rapid development of AI technology and its availability to the research community. As ARM moves forward in implementing AI infrastructure, the ARM Data Center team continues to develop software and plan the required AI infrastructure. Meanwhile, the AI in ARM Team is finalizing a governance document for the user facility that sets guardrails for the responsible use of AI, defines ethical standards aligned with DOE principles and establishes evaluation criteria and best practices for working with AI. By aligning ARM’s AI-optimized data flow with DOE’s Genesis Mission, the ARM Data Center team is helping to ensure that ARM’s data sets fuel a unified platform designed to shorten the time between observation and discovery. For the scientific community, this means more than just faster processing. It creates a trustworthy framework in which AI-driven insights remain grounded in high-fidelity observations. Watch a recording of the AI in ARM webinar , held on April 28, 2026, to learn more about ARM's AI infrastructure and other AI-focused initiatives. Chirag Shah, Wade Darnell and Giri Prakash of ORNL made technical contributions to this story.

ARM is a DOE Office of Science user facility operated by nine DOE national laboratories. This article was originally published on ARM's website . UT-Battelle manages ORNL for the DOE's Office of Science, the single largest supporter of basic research in the physical sciences in the United States. The Office of Science is working to address some of the most pressing challenges of our time. For more information, please visit energy.gov/science . Media Contact Kimberly A Askey , Communications Lead, Biological and Environmental Systems Science Directorate , 865.576.2841 | ASKEYKA@ORNL.GOV

Great Salt Lake sediments record thousands of years of earthquake history

Great Salt Lake sediments record thousands of years of earthquake history
By Coastal and Marine Hazards and Resources Program July 8, 2026 As the largest lake west of the Mississippi River with an average depth of around five meters (~16 feet), the Great Salt Lake offers an opportunity to explore acoustic and sedimentary archives of earthquake ruptures in a shallow terminal basin. A new USGS study addresses questions related to how Great Salt Lake sediments respond to surface rupture and earthquake shaking. Read the study [A Seismic Archive Beneath the Lake](#) The Great Salt Lake is the largest low-relief basin in the western United States, making it an ideal natural laboratory for studying how earthquakes disturb lake sediments. A new USGS study uses acoustic sub-bottom profiles and sediment cores to determine that the lake records sediment disturbance from both primary (surface-faulting) and secondary (shaking-related) earthquakes from the Great Salt Lake Fault and Wasatch Fault Zone. These two faults contribute to elevated probabilities of major earthquakes in the Wasatch Front region of Utah. To investigate the lake's geologic record, researchers combined two complementary approaches: Acoustic sub-bottom profiling, which uses sound waves to image sediment layers buried beneath the lake floor. Sediment core analysis, in which long cylinders of mud are collected from the lake bottom and examined layer

by layer to reconstruct past events. Together, these techniques allowed scientists to identify evidence of both direct fault movement and shaking-induced sediment disturbances preserved over thousands of years.

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The study found that the lake captures evidence of: Primary earthquake effects, produced when fault ruptures extend to the surface. Secondary effects, created when strong earthquake shaking disturbs and deforms lake-bottom sediments. Researchers identified evidence for four Holocene surface-rupturing (approximately magnitude 6.5 or greater) earthquakes along the Great Salt Lake fault. They also discovered four distinct earthquake-generated sediment deposits dating back approximately 1,700 years, preserving episodes of strong ground shaking within the lake. By comparing sediment disturbance with known fault activity, the researchers estimated that earthquake shaking needed to reach approximately Modified Mercalli Intensity VI before it consistently left recognizable evidence in lake sediments. At this intensity, earthquakes are typically felt by everyone in the affected area and can cause minor structural damage while strongly disturbing unconsolidated sediments. The study also found that the expression of fault scarps on the lake floor influences how effectively earthquake shaking is recorded, helping explain why some events leave clearer sedimentary signatures than others.

Improving Earthquake Hazard Assessments

Northern Utah is crossed by several active fault systems, including the Wasatch Fault Zone, one of the most significant sources of earthquake hazard in the Intermountain West. By combining evidence of

surface faulting with shaking-related sediment deposits, scientists can build a more complete history of prehistoric earthquakes than either method could provide alone. This integrated approach not only improves understanding of the Great Salt Lake fault and the Wasatch Fault Zone, but also demonstrates that shallow lake basins can serve as valuable archives of past seismic activity. Interpreting these archives can inform future seismic hazard assessments and preparedness across the region. Related Science December 26, 2022 Intermountain West Geology The Intermountain West contains some of the fastest growing urban centers in the United States, and several are exposed to a substantial level of seismic hazard. It is critical to accurately quantify this hazard, and ultimately, the associated risk. By Natural Hazards Mission Area , Earthquake Hazards Program Intermountain West Geology December 26, 2022 Intermountain West Geology The Intermountain West contains some of the fastest growing urban centers in the United States, and several are exposed to a substantial level of seismic hazard. It is critical to accurately quantify this hazard, and ultimately, the associated risk. Learn More Items per page 6 12 Label October 15, 2021 Coastal and Marine Geohazards of the U.S. West Coast and Alaska Coastal and marine geohazards are sudden and extreme events beneath the ocean that threaten coastal populations. These underwater hazards include earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, and tsunamis. The tectonically active west coast of the Americas is prone to such hazards, as it lies along the boundaries of major tectonic plates that make up the Earth's crust—the North American, Caribbean... By Natural

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When we protect water, we protect pollinators

When we protect water, we protect pollinators Jul 7, 2026 Written By Mara Koenig Healthy wetlands and clean water support far more than fish and wildlife. They also help the bees, butterflies, moths, beetles and other pollinators that keep the ecosystem flourishing. Across the country, we at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are restoring wetlands, improving rivers and rebuilding habitat. From the coastal marshes of the Great Lakes to the cottonwood forests of the Colorado River Basin, projects designed to protect water are also creating healthier places for pollinators. At first glance, water conservation and pollinator conservation might seem unrelated. One focuses on rivers, wetlands and water quality. The other focuses on flowering plants and the insects and other animals that pollinate them. In reality, they depend on each other. Healthy wetlands grow diverse native plants that feed pollinators, and pollinators help those plant communities reproduce and stay resilient. Image Details Why water and pollinators are connected Wetlands are among the most productive habitats on Earth. They filter pollutants, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater and support many native plants. These plants bloom throughout the growing season, giving pollinators food and homes when they need it most. Research increasingly shows that wetlands are important habitat for native bees, butterflies, hoverflies and other pollinating insects. Restored wetlands often support more pollinator species than degraded

areas especially where native flowering plants grow along wetland edges and adjacent uplands. These habitats benefit wildlife while also supporting agriculture by boosting wild pollination. Studies show protected aquatic lands can increase soybean yields by more than 5% when managed with pollinator habitat in mind. Clean water matters too. When wetlands are drained or rivers are damaged, flowering plants disappear, leaving pollinators without food or nesting areas. Healthy wetlands with natural water fluctuations support a shifting mosaic of plants that bloom at different times, helping a variety of pollinator species throughout the season. Protecting water, in other words, means protecting the habitats pollinators depend on.

Conservation in action Across our agency, programs that improve water quality are increasingly designed to deliver benefits far beyond the water's edge. Bringing conservation together

Image Details The Center for Pollinator Conservation brings together scientists, land managers and conservation partners to address pollinator declines. The center coordinates research, develops mapping tools and supports habitat planning, so pollinator needs are included in wetland restoration, floodplain management and river conservation. This work helps partners identify priority habitat, promote plants adapted to wet landscapes and design restoration projects that benefit both waterways and pollinators.

Restoring the Great Lakes The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative shows how this shared approach works. Across the Great Lakes Basin, our staff and partners restore coastal wetlands, reconnect rivers and improve water quality. They are also rebuilding native meadows, marshes

and dune systems, which provide habitat for pollinators. Image Details As co-lead of the Great Lakes Pollinator Task Force, we work with federal, state and local partners to incorporate pollinator habitat and monitoring into water projects. Native flowering plants help stabilize shorelines, reduce erosion, improve habitat connectivity and provide nectar and pollen for native pollinators throughout the growing season. The result is healthier waterways and more resilient plant and wildlife communities

Along the Colorado River, every drop matters Image Details Nowhere is the connection between water and pollinators clearer than along the Colorado River. Flowing through some the driest landscapes in North America, the river supports millions of people, tribal nations, farms, national wildlife refuges and countless species. Even in this arid landscape, ribbons of wetlands, cottonwood forests and flowering riparian

riparian Definition of riparian habitat or riparian areas. Learn more about riparian habitat create oases for native pollinators. Service biologists work with federal and state agencies, tribal nations, conservation organizations and local communities to restore these vital habitats. They remove invasive species

invasive species An invasive species is any plant or animal that has spread or been introduced into a new area where they are, or could, cause harm to the environment, economy, or human, animal, or plant health. Their unwelcome presence can destroy ecosystems and cost millions of dollars. Learn more about invasive species , like Russian olive trees, that crowd out native vegetation, and plant diverse native wildflowers, shrubs and trees, that provide resources for pollinators and

other wildlife species. Image Details "Every time we work with a partner to restore a stretch of riparian habitat, we're creating benefits both above and below the waterline," states Sarah Quadt, fish and wildlife biologist based at the Colorado Ecological Services Field Office. Restoration is about more than making places look greener. The types of plants chosen determine whether native pollinators return. Biologists, like Quadt, collaborate with federal and state agencies to provide guidance to ensure partner-led projects incorporate appropriate conservation measures for pollinators. This often means recommending native plants that bloom across the growing season, helping land managers stabilize streambanks, improving wildlife habitat and strengthening ecosystems. Partnerships extend beyond individual sites. In the Colorado River Basin, we collaborate with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and state agencies to improve our understanding of native bumble bees and other invertebrates. Through coordinated surveys and community science efforts like the Mountain States Bumble Bee Atlas, thousands of new observations are helping scientists understand where species live, and what they need to survive. What this means for conservation Many questions remain. Researchers are studying how changes in water availability and invasive species impact wildlife across our nation. Filling these knowledge gaps will guide future restoration and help focus conservation resources where they are most effective. When agencies, tribal nations, landowners and communities invest in healthier waterways, they also rebuild native plant communities that pollinators rely on for food and habitat. Clean,

functioning wetlands reduce flooding, improve water quality and create diverse, resilient landscapes that support wildlife and people. Because pollinators help maintain these plant communities, the benefits ripple far beyond conservation lands. Pollinators support agricultural lands. It is estimated that about one in every third bite of food you eat depends on pollinators. Investing in one strengthens the other. Conserving water and pollinators together ensure stronger habitats, more stable food supply and healthier communities now and into the future.

Image Details How you can help Everyone can help protect water and pollinators. Plant native species that grow well in your region Support wetland and river habitat restoration projects in your community Reduce or avoid pesticide use when possible Share the message that healthy water and healthy pollinators are connected Each restored wetland, improved stream and planted native flower builds healthier ecosystems. When we protect clean water, we also protect the pollinators that keep our landscapes productive and resilient for future generations.

Story Tags Aquatic environment Aquatic plants Pollinators Water conservation Wetland restoration

Written By Mara Koenig **Published** Jul 7, 2026 **Featured in the Story** Sarah Quadt **Wildlife Management Facilities** Colorado Ecological Services Field Office

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Global Partners Gather in Japan to Advance Electron-Ion Collider

Global Partners Gather in Japan to Advance Electron-Ion Collider International funding agencies and researchers deepen collaboration on the future Electron-Ion Collider July 8, 2026 enlarge Representatives from funding agencies and research institutions from around the world gather in Tokyo, Japan, for the seventh Electron-Ion Collider (EIC) Resource Review Board meeting in June 2026. The meeting brought together international partners to review progress, coordinate contributions to the future EIC and its flagship ePIC detector, and strengthen the global collaboration building the world's first polarized electron-ion collider. (MEXT) International momentum behind the Electron-Ion Collider (EIC) was on full display in Tokyo in June as representatives from funding agencies, research institutions, and scientific collaborations convened for the seventh EIC Resource Review Board (RRB) meeting and the fifth EIC Asia Workshop. Hosted by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the RRB brought together leaders from organizations supporting the EIC and its flagship detector, ePIC. The meeting provided an opportunity to review project progress, discuss international contributions, and strengthen coordination among the growing global partnership supporting construction of the EIC at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Brookhaven National Laboratory. The EIC is a next-generation nuclear physics facility being built at Brookhaven Lab in partnership

with DOE's Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility (Jefferson Lab). The EIC will enable scientists to probe the fundamental building blocks of matter with unprecedented precision, revealing how quarks and gluons combine to form the protons, neutrons, and atomic nuclei that make up the visible universe. "By bringing together expertise, resources, and talent from many nations, we are building a facility that will serve as a destination for the world's best scientists." — Regina Rameika, Office of Science Acting Associate Director for Nuclear Physics "This meeting highlighted the strong international partnership supporting the EIC," said Brookhaven Lab Director John Hill. "I was impressed at the depth of interest and commitment from around the world from both funding agencies and scientists alike in being part of the EIC. Our international partners strengthen and enrich this wonderful facility, and I am looking forward to seeing them grow further in the coming years." Prominent leaders in government and science attended the meeting, including Regina Rameika, Office of Science Acting Associate Director for Nuclear Physics; Office of Science Facilities and Project Management Division Director for Nuclear Physics Paul Mantica; and Brookhaven National Laboratory Director John Hill. Japanese leadership included representatives from MEXT, the University of Tokyo, RIKEN, and other institutions that play key roles in advancing Japan's contributions to the EIC program. enlarge Researchers at the High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK) test a prototype silicon timing sensor for the future ePIC detector using KEK's Photon Factory

Advanced Ring test beamline in Tsukuba, Japan, in June 2026. The sensor will help identify particles created in high-energy collisions, allowing scientists to better reconstruct the collisions and understand how matter is built from its smallest components. (Masashi Kaneta/Tohoku University)

“The EIC will be a transformational facility for nuclear physics and plays a vital part in maintaining U.S. leadership in this field,” Rameika said. “At the same time, it is very much an international endeavor. The enthusiasm and commitment we see from our partners around the world reflect the unique scientific opportunities the EIC will provide. By bringing together expertise, resources, and talent from many nations, we are building a facility that will serve as a destination for the world's best scientists and enable discoveries that no single institution or country could achieve alone.” The RRB serves as a key forum for aligning technical, financial, and workforce contributions from partner nations as the project advances toward major construction milestones. Discussions reflected the strong commitment of institutions from eight countries to deliver the world's first polarized electron-ion collider. Immediately following the RRB, scientists gathered at the University of Tokyo for the fifth EIC Asia Workshop, hosted by the University of Tokyo and RIKEN. The workshop attracted researchers from across Asia, the United States, and Europe to discuss detector technologies, accelerator developments, and the scientific opportunities that will be enabled by the EIC. “We in the Japanese nuclear physics community have recently launched a new framework for an international quantum physics network, and we increas-

ingly view the EIC as a catalyst not only for advances in nuclear physics but also for broader developments across related scientific fields,” said Taku Gunji, a professor at the Quark-Nuclear Science Institute at the University of Tokyo. “Hosting both the EIC Resource Review Board meeting and the EIC Asia Workshop provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the strong and growing commitment from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and other countries to the EIC through detector development, computing, and physics expertise. The participation of nearly 100 researchers in the workshop highlights the broad interest in the EIC throughout Asia and reinforces the region’s important role in the success of the project.” “We increasingly view the EIC as a catalyst not only for advances in nuclear physics but also for broader developments across related scientific fields.” — Taku Gunji, Quark-Nuclear Science Institute Professor at the University of Tokyo Sessions highlighted Japanese and South Korean contributions to critical detector systems, including tracking, timing, calorimetry, and computing, while providing opportunities for researchers to identify new areas for collaboration. The workshop also showcased the growing engagement of Asian institutions in the ePIC Collaboration and the broader EIC scientific program. Together, these two events underscore the increasingly international nature of the EIC effort, with strong participation reflecting broad enthusiasm for the project and confidence in its scientific mission. As international partnerships grow stronger, the meetings reinforced a shared commitment to delivering a world-leading research

facility that will unlock new scientific discoveries and inspire generations of researchers around the world. Brookhaven National Laboratory is supported by the Office of Science of the U.S. Department of Energy. The Office of Science is the single largest supporter of basic research in the physical sciences in the United States and is working to address some of the most pressing challenges of our time. For more information, visit science.energy.gov . Follow @BrookhavenLab on social media. Find us on Instagram , LinkedIn , X , and Facebook . Tags: EIC physics 2026-23019 | INT/EXT | Newsroom

NASA Transfers ‘Hundred Acre Wood’ to Patuxent Research Refuge

2 Min Read NASA Transfers ‘Hundred Acre Wood’ to Patuxent Research Refuge Following a ceremony on July 7, 2026, officials hold up a U.S. 250th pennant at “Area 400,” a 105-acre parcel previously part of NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., and now part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Patuxent Research Refuge. NASA ceremonially transferred ownership of about 105 acres of wooded land at its Goddard Space Flight Center’s Greenbelt, Maryland, campus Tuesday to the adjoining Patuxent Research Refuge, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The property, formerly known as NASA Goddard’s Area 400, is now part of the largest block of unfragmented forest between Washington and Baltimore. The nearly 13,000-acre woodland is the nation’s only refuge specifically established to support wildlife research. The refuge also supports recreational uses, such as walking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, and hunting. At a ceremony on July 7, 2026, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Brian Nesvik (left) and Jamie Dunn, center director, NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md., sign certificates that ceremonially transfer a 105-acre parcel of property known as “Area 400” from NASA Goddard to the Service. NASA “For over six decades, NASA Goddard has helped shape humanity’s understanding of Earth,” said Jamie Dunn, center director, NASA Goddard. “We’re glad to present this land to our colleagues in the Fish and

Wildlife Service, whose conservation and research helps do the real legwork in preserving our Blue Marble for future generations.” NASA Goddard had used Area 400 for propellant research beginning in the 1960s. That work has largely since shifted to NASA facilities in other states or to commercial providers, and the property had long been a candidate for divestment. NASA and the Service began discussing a potential transfer in 2021. Following remarks from attending dignitaries and the signing ceremony, assembled guests participated in a monarch butterfly release and milkweed seed dispersal. NASA Prior to the transfer, Area 400 was still almost entirely wooded aside from a two-and-a-half-acre clearing with 11 small structures. The interagency transfer was effective on Feb. 23, and NASA recently completed its final closeout activities at the property, deconstructing the buildings, roadway, and utility service. This aerial photograph shows Area 400’s appearance in 1984. The surrounding forest has remained largely unchanged since NASA Goddard occupied the property in the 1960s. NASA “Through working with partners on the best use of land, as exemplified with this land transfer, we can continue to conserve America’s natural beauty and expand outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Brian Nesvik. Media contacts: Rob Garner News Chief, Office of Communications NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center Keith Shannon Regional Communications Lead – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Northeast Region U.S. Department of the Interior

Activity Time - Word Search

Find the words below in the puzzle. Words go across or down only.

Words to Find:

