

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Headquarters

Washington, DC 20546-0001



NOV 22 2013

SMD/Heliophysics Division

Reply to Attn of:

David Hysell
Cornell University
2122 Snee Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Dear Dr. Hysell and CEDAR Steering Committee:

Thank you for your letter to the NASA Administrator expressing concerns over the future of Heliophysics science. As the Associate Administrator for NASA's Science Directorate, the Administrator asked me to respond to your letter on his behalf. The Coupling, Energetics, and Dynamics of Atmospheric Regions (CEDAR) community is an important partner in Heliophysics research and we share your overall concern regarding current budget constraints and how that may affect our ability to implement the National Academy of Sciences Decadal Survey's (DS) recommendations in a timely manner.

We are working to achieve as much of the DS priorities as possible given our current budget. In addition to following the DS recommendations, our decisions will be guided by these principles: (1) focus resources on the most important and highest quality research, (2) employ the full range of flight opportunities, and (3) enhance synergies and partnerships with other stakeholders for maximum leverage of our resources.

As mentioned in your letter, the top DS priority is to complete the current program, which now includes the Ionospheric Connection (ICON) and Global-scale Observations of the Limb and Disk (GOLD) missions. These two new Explorer missions were selected for development this year and will investigate core regions of CEDAR research, the ionosphere and thermosphere. NASA's Heliophysics program continues to benefit greatly from synergy with the observations and research from the CEDAR community, which has enabled significant advancements in our understanding of the Ionosphere, Thermosphere, Mesosphere (ITM) region. We look forward to continuing the close partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF) and CEDAR to maximize the science return from our two newly selected ITM missions.

NASA's Heliophysics program will continue to look to the community for innovative solutions toward accomplishing the highest-priority DS recommendations. We must find ways to maximize our current resources and sustain Heliophysics science in this constrained budgetary environment. Your letter of concern recognizes that our ability to understand the Heliophysics system is of growing importance to the science community, to NSF and NASA, and to our Nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Grunsfeld".

John M. Grunsfeld
Associate Administrator for
Science Mission Directorate