Image: Crawler-transporter passes milestone test at NASA's Kennedy Space Center

February 14 2014

Credit: NASA/Kim Shiflett

The crawler-transporter that will carry NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) and Orion spacecraft to Launch Pad 39B for launch on Exploration Mission-1 in 2017 recently passed the first phase of an important milestone test at Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

The Ground Systems Development and Operations Program completed testing of new traction roller bearings on crawler-transporter 2 (CT-2), on two of the massive vehicle's truck sections, A and C, in late January. The new roller bearing assemblies that were installed on one side of the crawler are visible in this Jan. 31, 2014 image. CT-2 returned to the Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) at Kennedy Space Center, where work continues to install new roller bearing assemblies on the B and D truck sections.

For more than 45 years the crawler-transporters were used to transport the mobile launcher platform and the Apollo-Saturn V rockets and, later, space shuttles to Launch Pads 39A and B. Upgrades to CT-2 are necessary in order to increase the lifted-load capacity from 12 million to 18 million pounds to support the weight of the mobile launcher and future launch vehicles, including the SLS and Orion.

Provided by NASA