

# NASA's OSIRIS-REx passes another review

July 13 2015, by Nancy Neal Jones

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The first U.S. mission to return a sample from an asteroid is readying itself to take on the complex operations necessary for its journey in space. NASA's Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification and Security-Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) mission passed a key milestone last month by completing a Mission Operations Review (MOR).

The MOR demonstrated the team's progress in developing the procedures to execute the complicated activities needed to return a sample from a primitive asteroid named Bennu. Spacecraft operations will be conducted at the Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company campus in Littleton, Colorado, with science operations for the [mission](#) being performed on the University of Arizona campus in Tucson.

"This was the first of a number of operations-related reviews where the team will get to demonstrate its increasing maturity as we march toward launch next September, and they did an excellent job," said Mike Donnelly, OSIRIS-REx project manager at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland.

Goddard administered the review. The MOR focused specifically on OSIRIS-REx's operational readiness and its progress to launch. The panel of experts assessed the mission's approach to data processing and analysis, commanding and planning of the spacecraft and instruments, navigation, and the verification and validation plans required before the spacecraft takes flight.

"The MOR provided each of the OSIRIS-REx team members the opportunity to demonstrate how they will operate together after launch to accomplish the work of this mission," said Dante Lauretta, principal investigator for OSIRIS-REx at the University of Arizona. "So many aspects of our mission have never been attempted before, and this review showcased the innovative approach to finding solutions that the entire OSIRIS-REx [operations](#) team brings to the mission."

After launch in September 2016, the spacecraft will travel to the near-Earth asteroid Bennu and bring at least a 60-gram (2.1-ounce) sample back to Earth for study. The mission will help scientists investigate the composition of the very early solar system and the source of organic materials and water that made their way to Earth, and it will improve our

understanding of asteroids that could impact our planet.

**More information:** For more information on OSIRIS-REx; go to:  
[www.nasa.gov/osiris-rex](http://www.nasa.gov/osiris-rex) and [asteroidmission.org](http://asteroidmission.org)

Provided by NASA

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