

NASA moon rocket stage for Artemis II moved, prepped for shipment

July 9 2024, by Lee Mohon



Credit: NASA/Michael DeMocker

NASA is preparing the SLS (Space Launch System) rocket core stage that will help power the first crewed mission of NASA's Artemis campaign for shipment. On July 6, NASA and Boeing, the core stage

lead contractor, moved the Artemis II rocket stage to another part of the agency's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans. The move comes as teams prepare to roll the massive rocket stage to the agency's Pegasus barge for delivery to NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida in mid-July.

Prior to the move, technicians began removing external access stands, or scaffolding, surrounding the rocket stage in early June. NASA and Boeing teams used the scaffolding surrounding the core stage to assess the interior elements, including its complex avionics and propulsion systems. The 212-foot core stage has two huge propellant tanks, avionics and flight computer systems, and four RS-25 engines, which together enable the stage to operate during launch and flight.

The stage is fully manufactured and assembled at Michoud. Building, assembling, and transporting is a joint process for NASA, Boeing, and lead RS-25 engines contractor Aerojet Rocketdyne, an L3Harris Technologies company.

NASA is working to land the first woman, first person of color, and its first international partner astronaut on the moon under Artemis. SLS is part of NASA's backbone for [deep space exploration](#), along with the Orion spacecraft, supporting ground systems, advanced spacesuits and rovers, the Gateway in orbit around the moon, and commercial human landing systems. SLS is the only rocket that can send Orion, astronauts, and supplies to the moon in a single launch.

Provided by NASA

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