

CoPP March 2024: Selected Highlights

- The Committee commends the agency for continuing to mature planetary protection as a technical authority and further appreciates the efforts of the NASA Office of Planetary Protection (OPP) to clarify PP requirements and implementation options, to engage the community, and to periodically update the NASA policy based on the latest scientific evidence
- The Committee looks forward to engaging with the OPP once a draft of the new Handbook is ready for distribution and comment
- There is concern on the Committee about potential effects of recent JPL layoffs on PP workforce, coupled with concerns about budget uncertainty and the future of MSR
- The Committee appreciates the quantitative approach the COSPAR PPP is taking in their proposed revisions to the guidelines The Icy Worlds panel discussion was fruitful, and the Committee looks forward to future engagements of this format.
- PP considerations for future Ceres missions are an important topic of interest for future Committee work
- The Committee will continue to monitor legislative proposals on novel space activities that potentially affect U.S. planetary protection policy, particularly as it relates to space missions conducted by nongovernmental actors.