



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Richardson Announces New Mexico Wins Bid to Host X PRIZE CUP

New Mexico establishes itself as premier inland spaceport

SANTA FE, NM-Governor Richardson today announced that New Mexico has officially won its bid to host the X PRIZE CUP, an international space exhibition destined to energize the state's economy through tourism, global public interest and significant job growth.

"By prevailing over Florida, California, and Oklahoma in the competition to host this landmark event, New Mexico has emphatically established itself as a worldwide leader in space commercialization," said Governor Bill Richardson.

Working with the Legislature, Governor Richardson committed 9-million dollars in capital money to this project. Of that \$4 million dollars will be used to help develop the infrastructure - the launch and landing facilities needed for this competition - and \$5 million dollars will pay for engineering, planning and design, operations and marketing expenses for the creation of the X PRIZE CUP and to develop our inland spaceport near Las Cruces.

An X PRIZE CUP exhibition is planned for the summer of 2005 and the competition is expected to begin in the summer of 2006.

“The X PRIZE CUP is coming to New Mexico because of the tremendous collaborative support we have received from the Governor, New Mexico legislature, New Mexico Office of Space Commercialization and White Sands Missile Range,” said Peter H. Diamandis, Chairman, X PRIZE Foundation.

The X PRIZE Foundation, originator of the current \$10 million Ansari X PRIZE competition, has developed plans for a public event showcasing the capabilities of Reusable Launch Vehicles (RLVs) through competitive spacecraft races now set to launch from the Southwest Regional Spaceport in New Mexico. X PRIZE class vehicles will compete for cash prizes in an annual race that is intended to be in the spirit of CHAMP CAR and the America’s CUP.

“Winning the competition for hosting the X PRIZE CUP firmly secures New Mexico’s place as the world leader for a commercially viable inland spaceport. The X Prize CUP will also provide New Mexico with a steady stream of national and international media opportunities and will help shape our image as a cutting-edge state,” said Rick Homans, Secretary New Mexico Economic Development Department.

With the selection of New Mexico as the launch site for the X PRIZE CUP, New Mexico is poised to reap a multitude of economic benefits. From the restaurants, hotels and souvenir shops to the development of aerospace-related industries, the possibilities for economic development in southern New Mexico are endless. Being selected as the launch site will accelerate the process of New Mexico becoming the country’s first licensed inland spaceport, which will enable the state to move forward rapidly in its quest to secure its rightful place in the space-related business market.

“Teams and their fans from around the world will gather annually in New Mexico to participate in the competition for the X PRIZE CUP. This event will underpin the evolution of a new era in space, unleashing new developments in space planes, establishing new markets and operational concepts for spaceports, and enabling the public to become part of the visionary efforts to open the space frontier,” said Peter Mitchell, Director of the Office of Space Commercialization.

As a result of the cooperation of White Sands Missile Range with the State of New Mexico, the initial launch for the X PRIZE CUP may be held at White Sands Missile Range. Development of facility infrastructure at Upham, near Las Cruces, New Mexico, home of the Southwest Regional Spaceport, will progress simultaneously. According to Brigadier General Robert J. Reese, “White Sands Missile Range has a long-standing agreement with the State of New Mexico and we are proud to continue that partnership.”

Southern New Mexico’s combination of low population density, controlled air space, excellent launch trajectories, and more than 4,000 foot elevation provide all the natural elements needed to establish a permanent and lucrative spaceport. Combine these naturally occurring components with the vision of community and political leaders throughout the state, and role of New Mexico as a leader in the space industry is assured.

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