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International Remote Sensing Conference Descending on Denver July 31-Aug 4

FORT COLLINS - They're studying global warming in both the Arctic and Antarctic, as well as closer to home, developing advanced flood and tornado prediction systems from Oklahoma's tornado alley to Puerto Rico, and tracking dust storms across Africa to understand their influence on hurricanes.

On July 31, they'll be in Denver: More than 1,000 remote-sensing scientists from around the globe will converge at the Colorado Convention Center July 31-August 4 to exchange ideas and practices at an international conference jointly hosted by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) and the Canadian Remote Sensing Society (CRSS). The theme of the 2006 International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium is "Remote Sensing: A Natural Global Partnership."

The conference is being organized by scientists from several Front Range institutions and companies, including Colorado State University, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), and Ball Aerospace and Technologies Corp.

Scientists use remote sensing such as radar to study the Earth's atmosphere, oceans, lands surfaces, and climate so they can improve predictions of the environment and hazard warning systems. Conference topics range from measuring soil moisture and weeds in crops to lessons learned from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and thermal monitoring of the world's active volcanoes. At the focus of the conference will be satellite systems used for monitoring all aspects of the global environment, including temperature, pollution and the biosphere.

Brian Vogt, director of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, will make welcoming remarks at the conference on Monday, July 31. A detailed agenda can be found at <http://www.igarss06.com/index.html>.

"Each year, as populations in all regions of the world grow in number and standard of living, we also increase strains on the Earth's natural resources and our sociopolitical systems," said V. "Chandra" Chandrasekar, co-chairman of the conference and a Colorado State University electrical and computer engineering professor. "Optimal management of our environment, improved public safety and sustained prosperity increasingly depend on timely and accurate information on a number of global and regional environmental factors."

The Front Range institutions hosting IGARSS have been at the forefront of remote sensing research. The University of Colorado at Boulder is host to the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Science (CIRES), which works jointly with NOAA in studying the Earth's weather and climate, including monitoring changes in the massive Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets. CU is also home to a new Center for Environmental Technology (CET) with a mission to support NOAA in developing new environmental sensor technology. One of the projects at CET is research on a new geostationary weather satellite that can stare downward through the clouds to help predict the paths of destructive storms and hurricanes.

In April, Colorado State University joined NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in launching CloudSat, the

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world's first orbiting cloud radar, which is providing scientists with a unique glimpse at the water and ice contents of clouds. Additionally, the university is one of four partners in a National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center for Collaborative Adaptive Sensing of the Atmosphere (CASA). Based at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, CASA will significantly increase warning and response times for tornadoes, floods, and other severe weather events.

In addition, the NOAA Earth System Research Laboratory in Boulder is involved in monitoring greenhouse gases at several locations around the globe, and NCAR is operating a new aircraft for atmospheric observations. At Colorado State, the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere or CIRA exists to increase the effectiveness of atmospheric research in areas of interest between Colorado State and NOAA and has developed into a leader in many areas of climate research.

"Denver is a great location for this conference with many U.S. federal centers on remote sensing and several major aerospace companies in the Denver area and Colorado," said Professor Leung Tsang, president of the IEEE's Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS). "Both the University of Colorado and Colorado State University run outstanding programs in geoscience and remote sensing."

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