New Horizons spots its next flyby target

administrator bridenstine visits our West Coast facilities and using data from space to fight a life-threatening disease a few of the stories to tell you about this week at NASA our New Horizons spacecraft has made its first detection of the Kuiper belt object it is scheduled to fly by on New Year's Day 2019 the small dim object nicknamed Ultima Thule was detected by the spacecraft's telescopic long-range reconnaissance imager from a distance of more than 100 million miles the flyby
will be the first ever close-up exploration of a small Kuiper belt object and the farthest exploration of any planetary body in history shattering the record New Horizons itself set at Pluto in July 2015 by about 1 billion miles the Kuiper belt is a ring of icy objects around the Sun that extends just beyond the orbit of Neptune and includes Pluto on August 27 our administrator Jim bridenstine kicked off a series of visits to our West Coast centers and facilities with a stop at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena
California while there he visited labs and test beds related to the insight.

Mars Lander the Mars 2020 Rover and the Mars helicopter the next day at our Armstrong Flight Research Center in Edwards California bridestine heard about a number of aeronautical research projects and visited Mojave Air and Space Port the administrators final stop was Ames Research Center in Northern California while there he talked to the Ames workforce and saw innovative thermal protection materials being developed to support the agency's space.
exploration missions he also spoke to

the NASA Advisory Council about our

plans to return humans to the lunar

surface this time when we go to the moon

we're going sustainably in other words

we're not going to do flags and

footprints again this time when we go

we're gonna go to stay

for the first time ever measurements

from our Earth observing research

satellites are being used to help combat

a potential outbreak of the

life-threatening disease cholera a

humanitarian effort in Yemen is

targeting areas identified by a NASA
supported project that precisely forecasts high-risk regions for the disease based on environmental conditions observed from space the forecasts are made using data from our global precipitation measurement mission and our Terra and Aqua satellites as well as measurements of phytoplankton concentrations in nearby coastal ocean areas our our ice set to mission will use the most advanced laser instrument of its kind to measure an unprecedented detail changes in the heights of Earth's polar ice the missions advanced
topographic laser altimeter system or
Atlas will fire ten thousand times each
second sending hundreds of trillions of
photons to the ground in six beams of
green light
Atlas measures the height of objects by
timing how long it takes individual
light photons to travel from the
spacecraft to earth and back ice satu is
scheduled to launch September 15th from
Vandenberg Air Force Base in California
that's what's up this week @nasa
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