# ARGOS Autonomous Rover for Ground-based Optical Surveillance

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# **Presentation Outline**

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  - b. Heritage Projects
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  - c. Communications

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  - c. Communications Feasibility Analysis
- 4. Summary
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  - b. Strategy for for Future Tests



# **Project Overview**



# Heritage Projects

JPL's Fire Tracker System is made to be a low cost, hands off tool for fire identification.



# Motivation

• The Fire Tracker System currently lacks the ability to take high quality photos/videos.

• Forest fires often are in an environment with obstacles blocking line of site, providing a camera mast will give a better perspective for operators.



# Mission Statement / Objectives

The ARGOS team shall design, build, and test a child rover that will :

- 1. **Navigate** to a fireline via commands from a ground station (GS) and mother rover (MR)
- 2. **Collect ambient temperature data** throughout the duration of the mission
- 3. Record photos/video of a flame front or fireline from the top of an extendable/retractable mast
- 4. Communicate temperature data, photos, and video to the GS/MR



# Definitions

- **Fireline** : a trench cleared of any flammable material, dug at the edge of a forest or brush fire to halt the spread
- **Flame Front** : the leading edge of the forest fire perimeter
- **Survey** : to record video/take photos
- **Fire Surveillance** : a subsystem of ARGOS consisting of the sensors and components needed to survey the fire line
- **<u>Tipping Condition</u>** : condition when rover tips too far to the side or in the front or back and falls over
- **Obstacles** : rocks, tree stumps, fallen branches, or other debris found on the forest floor which can have heights up to 7cm
- Tree density : measure of how many trees will be in an area (# trees/m<sup>2</sup>)
- **Terrain** : specification of the forest floor which ARGOS must traverse (detailed definition in backup slides)





# CONOPS





#### 

# **Functional Requirements**

Requirement ID	Requirement Description
FR.1	The child rover shall move from a starting location to a commanded location of interest and return back to the starting location.
FR.2	The child rover shall take pictures, videos and ambient temperature data to be sent to the ground station.
FR.3	The child rover shall use a mast to take photos and video from a vantage point above the rover's body.
FR.4	The child rover shall receive commands from both the ground station and the mother rover and transmit captured data back to the ground station and the mother rover.

Project Overview Baseline Design Feasibility Studies

Summary

# **Baseline Designs**



Wheelbase Length: 0.7m



# Critical Project Elements (CPEs)

**CPEs** 



# **Baseline Design: Drivetrain**

**Meets Functional Requirement FR.1** 

- **Options Considered:** 4 wheels, 6 wheels, Tank treads, and Rocker Bogie
- Key Criteria:
  - Obstacle maneuvering
    - 360 degree turn
    - inclines 20 degrees
    - Obstacles up to 7cm
  - Power consumption
- **Design Chosen**: 6 Wheel Configuration
  - 3 wheels and 2 motors on each side, middle and rear wheels connected by gear chain
  - Useful for maneuvering over obstacles and stability during motion without excessive power consumption





# **Baseline Design: Mast**

#### **Meets Functional Requirement FR.3**

- **Options Considered:** Telescoping, Scissor Lift, Dual Joint Fold-Over, Screw Lift, Rigging Pulley, Zippermast and Fold-Over + Telescoping
- Key Criteria:
  - Support Weight and Stability
    - Maximum weight capacity at full extension
    - Effect of small wind gusts and vibrations
  - Ratio of Extended to Compacted Height
  - Design/Manufacturing Complexity
- **Design Chosen**: Telescoping (hydraulic system) with 5 Stages
  - Nested hydraulic cylinders  $\rightarrow$  high support weight and stability
  - Multiple nested stages --> maximum height >> compacted height
  - Average complexity; est. **100-150 hours** to design and manufacture



Compacted

5

4

3

2

Stage 1 is stationary (attached to rover body)

Hydraulic Pump

# **Baseline Design: Communications**

**Meets Functional Requirement FR.4** 

#### **Options Considered:**

UHF (300MHz - 3 GHz) radio, SHF(3GHz+) radio, Ο cell-tower, and laser communications

#### **Key Criteria**:

- Data transfer rate: 6-24 Mbps  $\bigcirc$
- Line of Sight range: 1+ KM  $\bigcirc$
- Attenuation losses: less than 60 dB  $\bigcirc$
- Commercially available? Ο

#### **Design Chosen:**

- UHF 2.4GHz radio with point to point/multipoint Ο connectivity
  - Meets all key criteria



Mother Rover

250m

Child Rove

15

Data/Video

Ground Station

(GS)

# **Feasibility Analysis**



# Critical Project Elements (CPEs)

**CPEs** 



# 1. Navigation Feasibility Analysis

FR. 1 The child rover shall move from a starting location to a commanded location of interest and return back to the starting location.



# Navigation: Drivetrain Turning Study

- Validation:
  - Can the turn be performed?
  - What are the axial loads?
- Assumptions:
  - Constant angular velocity
  - In place turn
  - Weight evenly distributed on each wheel
  - Geometrically centered COM
- Max axial load on wheel while turning found:
  - 30 Newtons given:
    - $\omega = 1 \text{ rad/s}$ , Length = .7m, Width = .5m,
      - $\mu$  = .7, total mass = 30 kg
    - From referencing heritage projects



$$F_{A,fr} = \frac{m}{6} \left( \frac{\mu g L_y}{\sqrt{L_x^2 + L_y^2}} + \omega L_x^2 \right)$$



# Navigation: Drivetrain Incline Maneuvering Study

- Validation
  - Can it make it up an incline?
  - What is the max torque?
- Assumptions
  - Roll w/o slipping
  - Wheel is a Point Mass
  - Center of Mass is in the Center of the Chassis
- $\mu \ge .7$  for no slipping up the incline
- Max τ experienced (on 20 degree incline) with max acceleration of 1 m/s<sup>2</sup> was 32.95 Nm



#### The max τ per motor (4 motors) is 8.24 Nm



# Navigation: Drivetrain Obstacle Maneuvering Study

- Validation:
  - Can the rover maneuver a 7cm obstacle?
  - Minimum radius of the wheel?
    - Total mass of 30kg
    - *μ* = 0.7
    - $\mathbf{\tau}_{motor} = F_{f,max} r$
- Assumptions:
  - Roll no slip
  - Negligible roll resistance
  - Mass equally distributed on each wheel





Minimum Radius required: .1 m ~ 4 in

Feasible

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# Navigation: Drivetrain Power Study

- Validation
  - Is the power required acceptable for a DC motor?
- Assumptions
  - The efficiency ( $\eta$ ) for a DC motor is about 70%
  - Using max torque values
  - Ranged Velocity of 0-3 m/s

Project

**Overview** 

• The max power required for each motor is 3.86 Watts

Feasible

**Studies** 

**Baseline** 

Design

- Max power was determined at 3 m/s
- Total Power (4 motors) is 15.44 W
- The max RPM is 4.7



# Navigation: Waypoint and Obstacle Avoidance

- Validation
  - Can ARGOS navigate to a waypoint while avoiding obstacles?
- Assumptions
  - Terrain simplified to trees modeled as cylinders
    - Level ground, no underbrush
  - LiDAR has 120° FOV
  - Rover can turn in place

#### Simulation

- Start and waypoint location randomized with constant distance
- Gazebo using Open Dynamics Engine (ODE)
- Clearpath Jackal used to represent ARGOS
  - Identical degrees of freedom, similar size
- All terrain types simulated 100 times each



Gazebo sim terrain type D



# Navigation: Waypoint and Obstacle Avoidance

#### Robustness

- Type A (0 tree/acre)
  - **100%**
- Type B (100 trees/acre)
  - **97%**
- Type C (170 trees/acre)
   96%
- Type D (200 trees/acre)
  - 89%
- More complex simulations will be run before CDR
  - Realistic ARGOS model
  - Full terrain







# 2. Mast Feasibility Analysis

FR. 3 The child rover shall use a mast to take photos and video from a vantage point above the rover's body.



# Mast Structures Study

- Validation:
  - Can rover traverse obstacles at  $\bigcirc$ various inclines and declines without tipping?
  - How does height and mass on  $\hat{\mathbf{x}}$ Ο top of the mast affect tipping?
- **Assumptions:** 
  - Camera/top of mast is a point Ο mass
  - Rover is a rigid body Ο
- **Different Cases Considered:** 
  - Side-to-side tipping about  $\hat{\mathbf{X}}$ Ο
  - Front/back tipping about  $\hat{\mathbf{y}}$ Ο

Project

**Overview** 

Design



# Mast Structures Study: Longitudinal Results



### Mast Structures Study: Lateral Results



# Mast Power Study

- Validation:
  - Estimate the power required to Ο extend the mast
  - How does the extension time affect  $\bigcirc$ power required?
- **Assumptions:** 
  - Center of mass of camera is at  $\bigcirc$ mast top
  - Center of mass of each section is at Ο its middle
  - Change in height of hydraulic fluid Ο and camera dominate power required

**Baseline** 

Design

Pump efficiency: 0.7 Ο

Project

**Overview** 



# 3. Communications Feasibility Analysis

FR. 4 The child rover shall receive commands from both the ground station and the mother rover and transmit captured data to the ground station and the mother rover.



# **Communication Study**

- Validation:
  - Can the rover communicate with the GS and MR at 250m through forest?
- Assumptions:
  - Trees begin at 0 meter
- Different Cases Considered:
  - Obstacle free link budget
  - Various models of forest attenuation





# Communications: Link Budget

#### **Key Parameters:**

Distance (d) = 250m	Transmitter Power (Tx) = 28 dBm	Antenna Gains (Gr/x) = 13 dB		
Frequency (f) = 2400 MHz	Receiver Power (Rx) = -97 dBm	Estimated Losses (L) = 4 dB		
*Values taken from heritage are subject to c	compatible hardware and estima hange with part choice	ates		
FSPL = 20log(d)	+ 20log(f) - 27.55	=88 dB		
Link Margin $= T_x$	$-FSPL + G_x + G_y$	$r - R_x - L = 58 \ dB$	Radio Transmitter	
P	roject Baseli erview Desig	ine gn Feasibility Studies	Summary	

# **Communications: Attenuation Study**

**Baseline** 

Design

Link Margin with Attenuation = Link Margin - Attenuation > 10 dB

- Three different models for vegetal attenuation, all models show success.
- Each model assumes that vegetation begins at zero meters.

Project

**Overview** 

Feasible



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# Summary



# **Status Summary**

Element	Feasible?	Justification	FR
Navigation	Yes/Plausible	<ol> <li>Axial loads while turning reasonable to make 360 degree turn</li> <li>Wheel radius required to go over 7cm obstacle is reasonable</li> <li>Successfully moves to waypoint. More complexity needed</li> </ol>	FR.1
Mast	Yes	<ol> <li>Tipping condition is met at an angle greater than that created by max obstacle height</li> <li>Tipping condition for various masses and mast heights higher angle than designed 20 degree incline</li> </ol>	FR.3
Communications	Yes	<ol> <li>Link Budget with attenuation above 10 dB</li> </ol>	FR.4



# Strategy for Future Studies

Element	Test/Model	FR	=continuation
Navigation	<ol> <li>GAZEBO - ARGOS model</li> <li>Model various wheel widths</li> <li>FEM on chassis</li> </ol>	FR.1	of PDR feasibility studies
Mast	<ol> <li>Vibration Testing/Vibrations Mode Modeling</li> <li>Buckling Model</li> <li>Hydraulic Fluid Mechanics</li> </ol>	FR.3	=continuation of backup slides
Thermal	1. Model convective winds caused by forest fire	FR.4	
Controls	<ol> <li>Select, procure, and test sensors for obstacle avoidance</li> <li>Test pan/tilt controls of camera</li> </ol>	FR.1	started
Camera/Sensors	1. Select, procure and test temperature sensors and camera accuracy/resolution	FR.2	
	Project Baseline Feasibility Dverview Design Studies	Summar	y 36

# Questions?

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# **Backup Slides**

# **Terrain Definition**

- 4 terrain types increasing in difficulty
- Tree Blue Spruce
  - Trunk Width: 0.91m
  - Spacing: 3 m

Terrain	Forest	Ground	Underbrush	Incline
Туре А	Open: 0 trees per acre	Mud: Grain size: 0.00006 - 0.0039 mm (< .0002 in)	Dirt with no vegetation: - Refer only to ground classification - Scattered leaves	Maximum 0 degree incline, level ground
Туре В	Understocked: ~24700 trees per square km (100 trees per acre)	Silt: Grain Size: 0.0039 - 0.0625 mm ( < .003 inch)	Grass, Fallen Leaves, and No shrubbery: - Full ground coverage by leaves - Grass between 2cm - 10cm height (.8 - 4 inches) - Small roots 1-2 cm (.48 inches) in diameter	Maximum 10 degree incline
Туре С	Fully Stocked: ~42000 trees per square km (170 trees per acre)	Sand: Grain Size: 0.0625 - 2.00 mm (< .08 inch)	Grass, Fallen Leaves, and Scattered Shrubbery - Shrubbery spaced by at least 1 meter - Includes type A and B underbrush - Medium roots: 3-4 cm (1.2 - 1.6 inches) in diameter	Maximum 20 degree incline
Type D	Overstocked: ~49400 trees per square km (200 trees per acre)	Gravel: Grain Size: 2.00 - 4.096 mm (< .2 inch)	Grass, Fallen Leaves, and Dense Shrubbery - No spacing between shrubbery - Includes type A, B, and C underbrush - Large Roots: 5-7 cm (2 - 2.7 inches) in diameter	Maximum 20 degree incline



### Levels of Success

	Rover Movements	Surveillance	Communications
Level 1	Rover can travel on flat ground for 100m. Rover can travel in both forward and reverse and can turn 360 degrees with a turn radius less than two rover body lengths.	Ambient temperature data is recorded from a temperature sensor with an accuracy of +/-1 °C throughout the mission. Rover records timestamped photos of the flame front via a camera on a mast.	Rover can receive GPS commands from the ground station and the mother rover. Rover can transmit temperature data and video/images to the ground station and mother rover at 1 Hz 0m from ground station or in the same room via radio remote control.
Level 2	Rover can travel on various terrain, including leaves, scattered underbrush, dirt and mud, while staying upright. Rover can travel on a 20 degree incline. Rover can turn 360 degrees with a turn radius less than one rover body length.	Rover records timestamped video of the flame front via a camera on a mast.	Rover can communicate with the ground station and the mother rover up to 100m with no obstacles (0 trees/m2).
Level 3	Rover can turn 360 degrees on the spot. Rover can follow GPS waypoints and detect large obstacles, such as trees and dense bushes, in its path and avoid hitting them. Rover can detect a tipping condition by measuring its angular motion.	Rover's mast is extendable and retractable.	Rover can communicate with the ground station and the mother rover with obstacles (0.25 trees/m <sup>2</sup> ).
Level 4	Rover can detect small obstacles, such as rocks and small bushes, and navigate a path around them. Rover can navigate to a GPS waypoint within +/-5m of the coordinates.	Rover records the distance of the fire line and the flame front over time and calculates the speed of travel of the flame front.	Rover can communicate with the ground station and the mother rover up to 250m.

# **Drivetrain Backup Slides: Turning**

Force Balance:

$$F_c = \frac{m}{6} (\omega L_x^2)$$



# **Drivetrain Backup Slides: Turning**

#### Sensitivity Analysis



# **Drivetrain Backup Slides: Incline Maneuvering**

- Definitions of Forces
  - Fn = normal Force of the Wheel
  - Ff = friction force from the Terrain
  - Fm = force of the motor
  - Fw = weight of the wheel
  - $\theta$  = inclination angle
- Force Equations
  - $Fs ≤ \mu^*Fn$  for no slipping
  - **Fw = m\*g**
  - Fm =  $\tau/r$
- Sum of Forces
  - $\Sigma Fy = 0 = Fn-cos(\theta)mg$
  - $\Sigma Fx = ma = (\tau/r) \mu \cos(\theta) mg \sin(\theta) mg$





# **Drivetrain Backup Slides: Power Study**

**Baseline** 

Design

- Equations
  - RPM = V /  $\pi$ \*diameter
  - Frequency = (1/60) \* RPM
  - $\circ \quad \omega = 2^* \pi^* Frequency$
  - $\circ \quad \tau = r^*(ma + \mu \cos(\theta) + \sin(\theta)mg)$
  - Power = Fm\*V\*(1/ $\eta$ ) =  $\tau *\omega^*(1/\eta)$
- Conditions where maxP was obtained
  - At max torque
  - At 20 degree incline

Project

**Overview** 

• At 1 m/s<sup>2</sup>



### Mast Backup Slides: Case 1



## Mast Backup Slides: Case 2

Governing Equations for Incline:

$$M_A = mg(h_{cg}sin(\theta) - l_{cg}cos(\theta)))$$

Governing Equations for Decline:

Project

**Overview** 

$$M_B = mg(h_{cg}sin(\theta) - (l - l_{cg})cos(\theta))$$

**Baseline** 

Design



# Mast Backup Slides: Power Required

Volume of Each Section:

1: 0.002m<sup>3</sup> 2: 0.0016m<sup>3</sup> 3: 0.00129m<sup>3</sup> 4: 0.00098m<sup>3</sup> 5: 0.00073m<sup>3</sup>

Density of Hydraulic Fluid:

880 kg/m<sup>3</sup>

Mass of Camera and Each Section:

 $M_{cam}$ : 5kg  $M_1$ : 1.77kg  $M_2$ : 1.43kg  $M_3$ : 1.1kg  $M_4$ : 0.87kg  $M_5$ : 0.64kg Equation:

$$P_{req} = \frac{(m_{cam}\Delta h_{cam} + m_1\Delta h_2 + m_2\Delta h_2 + m_3\Delta h_3 + m_4\Delta h_4 + m_5\Delta h_5)g}{t} \frac{1}{\eta_{motor}}$$
(1)  

$$P_{req} = \frac{P_{req} + m_1\Delta h_2 + m_2\Delta h_2 + m_3\Delta h_3 + m_4\Delta h_4 + m_5\Delta h_5)g}{t} \frac{1}{\eta_{motor}}$$
(1)  

$$P_{req} = \frac{P_{req} + m_1\Delta h_2 + m_2\Delta h_2 + m_3\Delta h_3 + m_4\Delta h_4 + m_5\Delta h_5)g}{t} \frac{1}{\eta_{motor}}$$
(1)

# Fire Surveillance: Thermal Model

- Validation:
  - What temperatures might ARGOS experience at various distances from the flame front?
- Simplifying Assumptions:
  - No wind (no forced convection)
  - Radiation is the only form of heat transfer accounted for (all natural convection goes directly upwards, away from the rover)
  - The fire stays stationary and burns at a constant temperature





Variable	Value(s)
As	50m²
Ts	1073K
Tsurr	288.15K (std day)
Arover	(0.5x0.3) = 0.15m <sup>2</sup>
Ts,rover	288.15K (std day)
٤	0.551 (max)
a	[0.2,1]
Δx	[0,100m]

## Thermal Model: Governing Equations

Rate of heat transfer  
emitted by fire :
$$\dot{Q}_{emit} = \epsilon * \sigma * A_s * (T_s^4 - T_{surr}^4)$$
  
Inverse Square LawRate of heat transfer  
absorbed by rover: $\dot{Q}_{rad,rover} = \frac{\dot{Q}_{emit}}{x^2} = \epsilon * \sigma * A_{rover} * (T_{surr,rover}^4 - T_{s,rover}^4))$ Temperature of air  
immediately  
surrounding rover: $T_{surr,rover} = (\frac{\alpha * \dot{Q}_{rad,rover}}{\epsilon * \sigma * A_{rover}} + T_{s,rover}^4)^{\frac{1}{4}}$ Project  
OverviewBaseline  
DesignFeasibility  
StudiesSummary

# **Thermal Model: Results**

Takeaways:

- Max allowable distance from fire ~125 -275m depending on material (still less than 300m)
- Model is an optimistic estimate without accounting for convection

Project

**Overview** 

**Baseline** 

Design

Feasible, but requires further investigation



Summary

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**Studies** 

# Navigation: Motion Plan Edge Case: Local Minimum



# Navigation: LiDAR FOV Sensitivity



# Navigation: Motion Planning Flow Chart



Project Baseline Feasibility Summary

# Navigation: Motion Planning

- Built on ROS Navigation package
- Costmap = discretized grid of the space
  - If node in grid contains an obstacle the cost is 1
  - If node is empty the cost is zero
- Global planner (run once)
  - Global = entire space (250  $m^2$ )
  - A<sup>\*</sup> search on global costmap
    - Find shortest path to goal
    - A\* = best-first search on a weighted graph
  - Shortest path becomes path to goal

Project

**Overview** 

- Local planner (run continuously)
  - $\circ$  Local = 10 m<sup>2</sup>
  - Trajectory Rollout
    - Sample local space, perform forward simulation

**Baseline** 

Design

- Score = relation to goal, path, obstacles
- Highest score becomes the local path



**Global Planner Example** 

