**Conspiracy theories**

HAARP is the subject of numerous conspiracy theories. Various individuals have speculated hidden motives and capabilities to the project, and have blamed it for triggering catastrophes such as floods, droughts, hurricanes, thunderstorms, earthquakes in Iran, Pakistan, Haiti and the Philippines, major power outages, the downing of TWA Flight 800, Gulf War syndrome, and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Allegations include the following:

* A Russian military journal wrote that ionospheric testing would "trigger a cascade of electrons that could flip earth's magnetic poles".
* The European Parliament and the Alaska state legislature held hearings about HAARP, the former citing "environmental concerns".
* Nick Begich Jr., the son of former U.S. Representative Nick Begich and author of Angels Don't Play This HAARP, has claimed that HAARP could trigger earthquakes and turn the upper atmosphere into a giant lens so that "the sky would literally appear to burn", and maintains a website that claims HAARP is a mind control device.
* Former Governor of Minnesota and noted conspiracy theorist Jesse Ventura questioned whether the government is using the site to manipulate the weather or to bombard people with mind-controlling radio waves. An Air Force spokeswoman said Ventura made an official request to visit the research station but was rejected-"he and his crew showed up at HAARP anyway and were denied access".
* Physicist Bernard Eastlund claimed that HAARP includes technology based on his own patents that has the capability to modify weather and neutralize satellites.

Stanford University professor Umran Inan told Popular Science those weather-control conspiracy theories were “completely uninformed,” explaining that “there’s absolutely nothing we can do to disturb the Earth’s [weather] systems. Even though the power HAARP radiates is very large, its minuscule compared with the power of a lightning flash—and there are 50 to 100 lightning flashes every second. HAARP’s intensity is very small.”

Computer scientist David Naiditch characterizes HAARP as "a magnet for conspiracy theorists", saying that HAARP attracts their attention because "its purpose seems deeply mysterious to the scientifically uninformed". Journalist Sharon Weinberger called HAARP "the Moby Dick of conspiracy theories" and said the popularity of conspiracy theories often overshadows the benefits HAARP may provide to the scientific community. Austin Baird writing in the Alaska Dispatch said, "What makes HAARP susceptible to conspiracy criticism is simple. The facility doesn't open its doors in the same way as other federally-funded research facilities around the country, and it doesn't go to great efforts to explain the importance of its research to the public."