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Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter

NASA's First Step Back to the Moon

Image Feature

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LRO's First Moon Images

07.02.09

NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter has transmitted its first images since reaching the moon on June 23. The spacecraft's two cameras, collectively known as the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera, or **LROC**, were activated June 30. The cameras are working well and have returned images of a region in the lunar highlands south of Mare Nubium (Sea of Clouds).

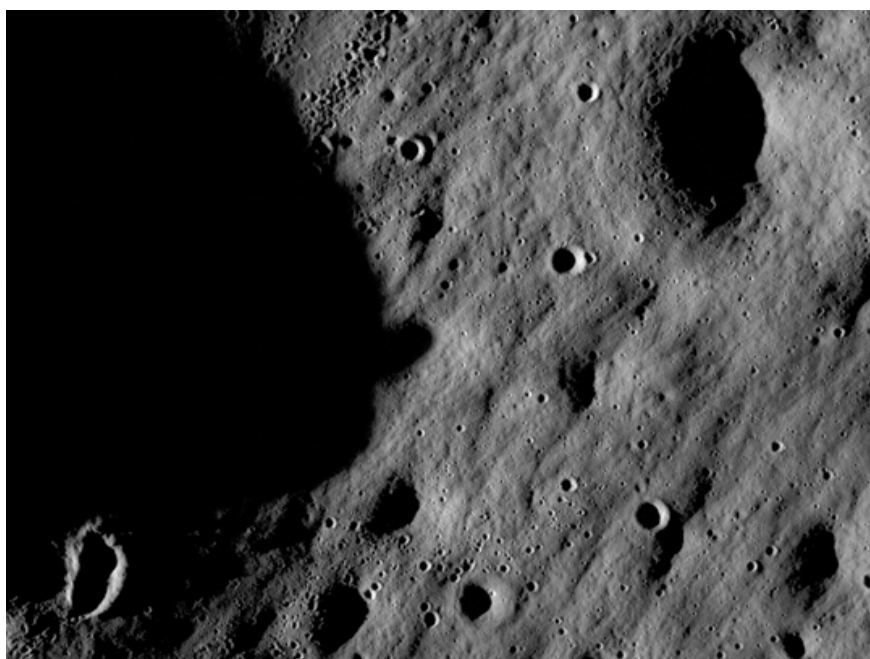
As the moon rotates beneath LRO, LROC gradually will build up photographic maps of the lunar surface.

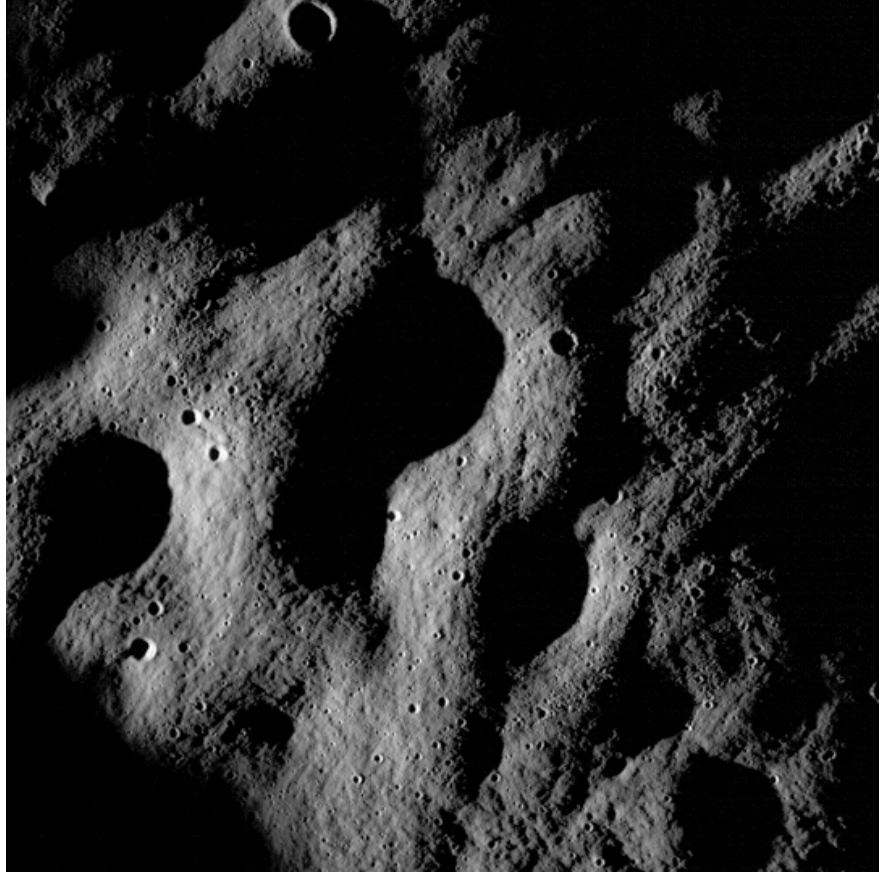
"Our first images were taken along the moon's terminator -- the dividing line between day and night -- making us initially unsure of how they would turn out," said LROC Principal Investigator Mark Robinson of Arizona State University in Tempe. "Because of the deep shadowing, subtle topography is exaggerated, suggesting a craggy and inhospitable surface. In reality, the area is similar to the region where the Apollo 16 astronauts safely explored in 1972. While these are magnificent in their own right, the main message is that LROC is nearly ready to begin its mission."

[Read the related press release](#)



1994 Clementine image of the moon with Mare Nubium labeled. LRO's first lunar images show an area near this region. Credit: NASA



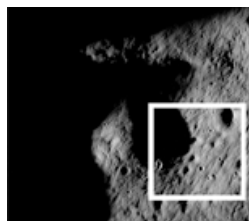


These images show cratered regions near the moon's Mare Nubium region, as photographed by the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter's LROC instrument. Impact craters feature prominently in both images. Older craters have softened edges, while younger craters appear crisp. Each image shows a region 1,400 meters (0.87 miles) wide, and features as small as 3 meters (9.8 feet) wide can be discerned. The bottoms of both images face lunar north.

The image below shows the location of these two images in relation to each other. The locator image shows an area 3,542 meters (2.2 miles) wide by 14,000 meters (8.7 miles) long. The scene is at the lunar coordinates 34.4 degrees South by 6.0 degrees West.

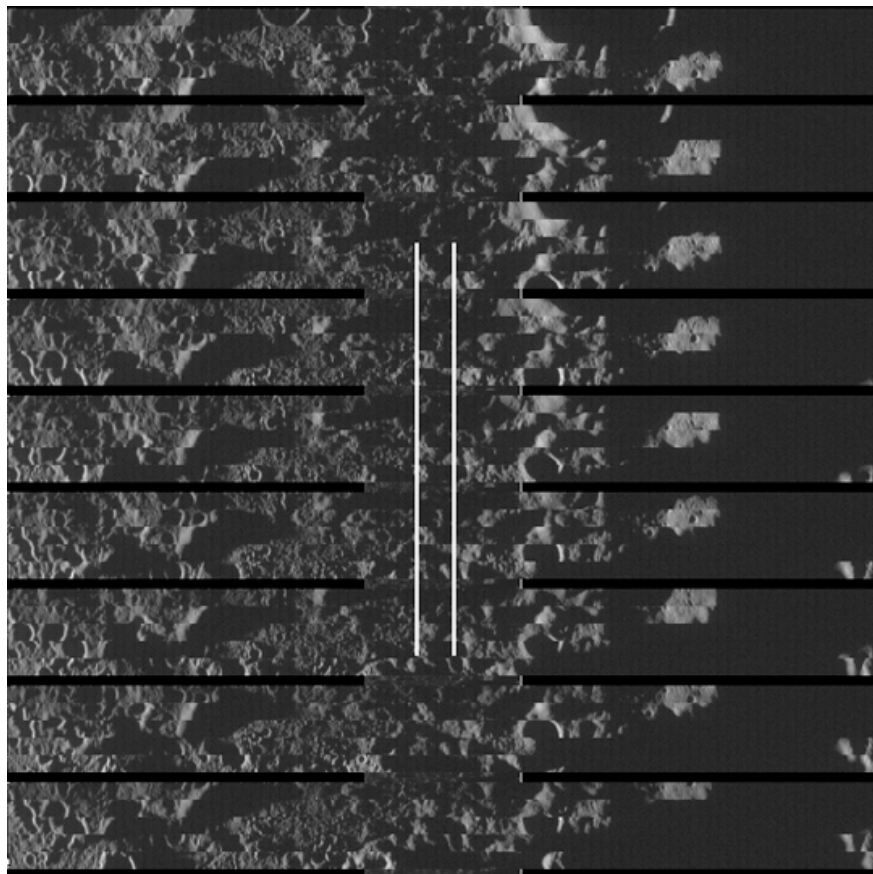
Credit: NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center/Arizona State University

- › [Larger version of top image](#)
- › [Larger version of bottom image](#)
- › [Larger version of locator image](#)





The image below shows a raw image of the region photographed by one of the LROC cameras. Each band in this "venetian blinds" image is about 90 km (55.9 miles) wide. For comparison, the width of the locator image above is shown here as two white lines.



[› Larger image](#)

Credit: NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center/Arizona State University

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Keep comments relevant. Inappropriate or offensive comments may be edited and/or deleted. Line breaks and paragraphs are automatically converted - no need to use <p> or
. Quotes, apostrophes, and double-dashes are automatically converted to smart punctuation. Be careful when copying and pasting portions of entries or other comments.

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Post Comment

On Jul 2, 2009 11:52 AM **mcgali** wrote:

increiblemente bellas

On Jul 2, 2009 11:49 AM **Knight in white cotton** wrote:

I might have the lamest question/comment in the solar system but here goes. My mother is lunar land hoax person. One of their arguments is that you can't see where we landed on the moon. Obviously not possible to view from Earth because you would need a telescope lens the size of Wyoming. However,would it be now be, with the LRO cameras, possible to capture images of the actual landing site with the LM descent section still there?

Again my apologies for the inanity of the question but I am curious.

Thanks so much,
KIWC

NASA Moderator: Yes, we will be taking images of Apollo sites. Should be able to see a good amount of detail.

On Jul 2, 2009 11:46 AM **Aniemoo** wrote:

I can't wait to see more!!!

On Jul 2, 2009 11:46 AM **Velroy** wrote:

wow! cheers to u NASA guys esp.the LRO folks but apollo lunar module on lunar surface is not seen..

NASA Moderator: That will come a little later.

On Jul 2, 2009 11:39 AM **Guest** wrote:

Wonderful! It makes me wish that there were two pictures of each so that we could see 3D via cross-eye stereograph!

On Jul 2, 2009 11:37 AM **Guest** wrote:

Awesome!!!!

On Jul 2, 2009 11:34 AM **Scooter** wrote:

I am just freaking out, these are great,glad to see my tax dollars doing something really useful.

On Jul 2, 2009 11:31 AM **Jay** wrote:

Hope we go beyond this.....

NASA Moderator: Many more images of the lunar surface will be taken by LROC and LRO's six other instruments. The future looks bright for human exploration of space.

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