

Observatories gear up for Friday lunar crash

LCROSS, short for Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite, will search for water ice on the Moon by crashing into a crater located near the lunar South Pole. Writer Leonard David published an article titled "Targeting the Moon: Observatories Gear Up for Friday Lunar Crash" on Space.com focusing on the upcoming impact. He rounded out the story with quotes from professor Mark Robinson, principal investigator of the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera.

Scientists and amateur sky watchers are anxiously awaiting the impact, ready to observe the dust and water vapor cloud that will result from the impact into the lunar surface. From west of the Mississippi all the way to Hawaii is in prime viewing conditions because the sky will be dark. Only a 10 to 12-inch telescope will be necessary to view the impact, which is scheduled for Oct. 9 at 7:30 a.m., EDT.

Robinson said that LRO is ready for LCROSS. LRO will fly perpendicularly past the impact site about 60 seconds after LCROSS hits. Robinson told *SPACE.com* that the orbiter won't fly directly over the impact, but off to the side. In the article, Robinson also added that LROC will attempt shadow imaging with long exposures the day before the impact as the spacecraft passes over the site. An attempt will also be made after the impact.

If LCROSS impacts in a single shadowed region, LROC might find the impact crater. "In a double-shadowed region all bets are off," Robinson says.

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<http://www.space.com/business/technology/091007-lcross-observation-satellites.html>

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