

march 10, 2009

LITTLE BLUE SQUARES

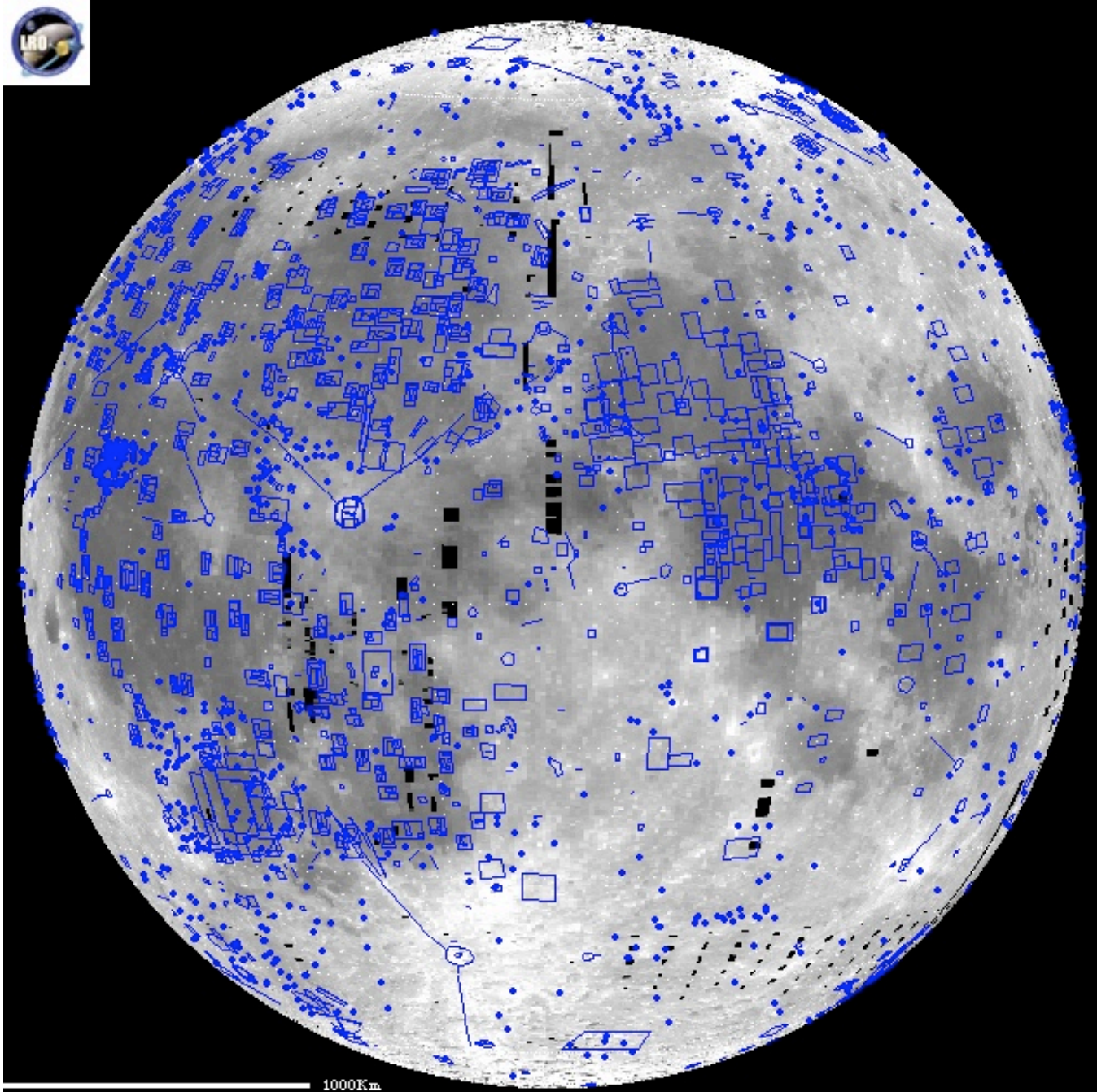


image from [LROC Targeting Update](#) (PDF)

The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter spacecraft has three [cameras](#) , a wide angle camera (WAC) with 100 m resolution through 7 color filters, and two narrow angle cameras (NAC) with the phenomenal resolution of half a

meter. The WAC will image the entire Moon in swaths 60 km wide, but there are [constraints](#) that keep the NACs from imaging everywhere. That is why NASA must select what limited number of 5 km wide by 25 km long rectangles to target the NACs. The LRO camera team includes members who get to [select](#) these NAC targets; the blue squares represent the targets selected so far (and the black ones are data gaps in the Clementine mosaic). The majority of targets seem to be in the mare and, although you can't tell from this single hemisphere map, on the nearside. Targets include both polar regions from 80° to 90°, sites where spacecraft previously landed/crashed, lava tubes (interesting for potential human habitation), domes, spectral anomalies (like the Gruithuisen Domes), and thousands of other features of interest to the team. But they also will image some targets proposed by the public, and that means you and me! By two months before launch (now semi-scheduled for May 20) the LRO/LROC Target Selection Interface will be online and we all can add targets for possible addition to the official list. This is a chance to see favorite areas in extremely high resolution - Danny Caes can look at some of the small bright craters that fascinate him, but only 5 targets a day can be submitted. Arizona State University, which runs LROC will host an open [meeting](#) on June 9-11 to discuss NAC targeting, and since this should be a month after launch perhaps there will be some new sample images to admire.

[Chuck Wood](#)

Technical Details

Excel [list](#) of 4,628 targets as of Jan 20, 2009.

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