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The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter: Plans for the Science Phase

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The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter spacecraft (LRO), which was launched on June 18, 2009, began with the goal of seeking safe landing sites for future robotic missions or the return of humans to the Moon as part of NASA's Exploration Systems Mission Directorate (ESMD). In addition, LRO's primary objectives included the search for resources and to investigate the Lunar radiation environment. This phase of the mission was completed on September 15, 2010 when the operational responsibility for LRO was transferred from ESMD to NASA's Science Mission Directorate (SMD). Under SMD, the mission focuses on a new set of goals related to the history of the Moon, its current state and what its history can tell us about the evolution of the Solar System.

We will present here recent results from the LRO mission and lay out the objectives for the science mission.