



Simulating Human-Made Temporary Atmospheres on the Moon

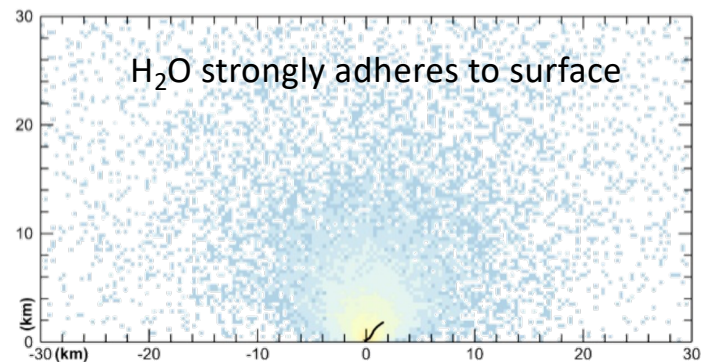
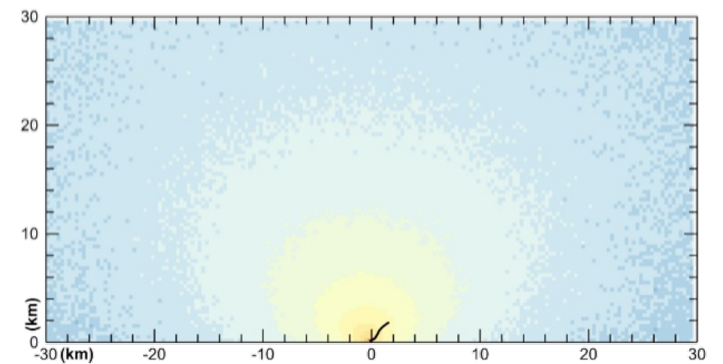
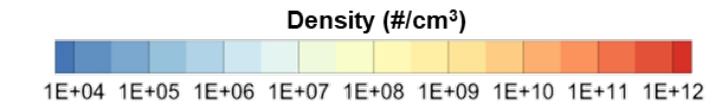
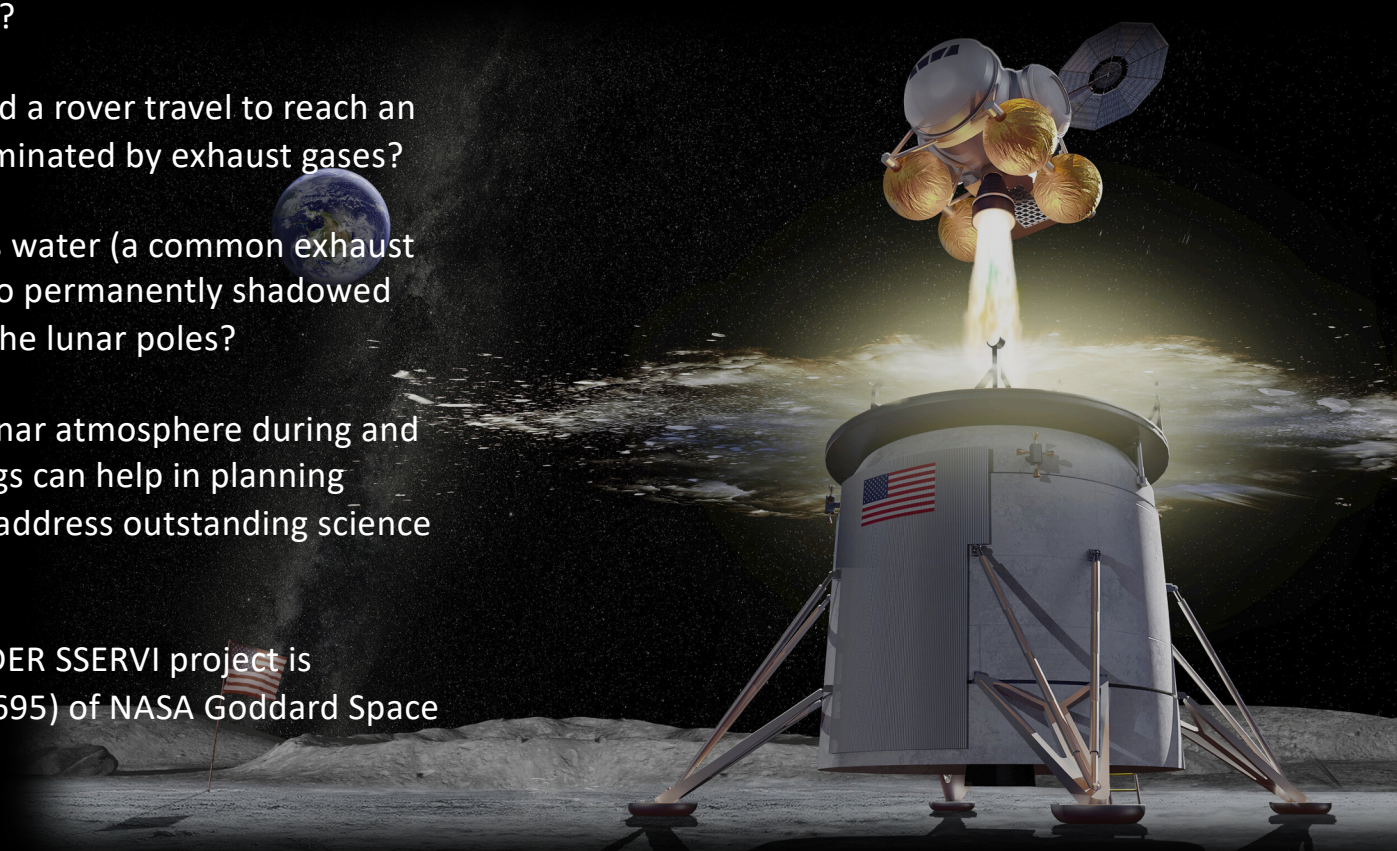


A lunar landing will release spacecraft exhaust gases into the environment, creating a thin, temporary lunar atmosphere. Computer simulations can predict how these gases behave. Comparing simulation results to observations of the lunar exosphere during future lunar landings can address important questions, such as:

- How do spacecraft systems alter their environments?
- How far should a rover travel to reach an area uncontaminated by exhaust gases?
- How fast does water (a common exhaust gas) migrate to permanently shadowed regions near the lunar poles?

Monitoring the lunar atmosphere during and after lunar landings can help in planning missions and can address outstanding science questions.

The PI of the LEADER SSERVI project is Rosemary Killen (695) of NASA Goddard Space Flight Center.



Views showing the H₂O gas density at 155 s after thruster firing commences. The descent trajectory is marked in black. Possible outcomes depend on how strongly water adsorbs to the surface.