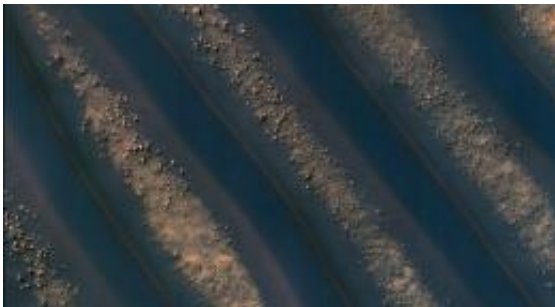


Dunes of Sand: Resumed Mars Orbiter Observations Yield Stunning Views

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Dunes of sand-sized materials have been trapped on the floors of many Martian craters. This is one example, from a crater in Noachis Terra, west of the giant Hellas impact basin. Image Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/University of Arizona

(PhysOrg.com) -- Dunes of sand-sized materials have been trapped on the floors of many Martian craters. This view shows dunes inside a crater in Noachis Terra, west of the giant Hellas impact basin in Mars' southern hemisphere.

The [High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment](#) (HiRISE) camera on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter captured this view on Dec. 28, 2009. The orbiter resumed making observations in mid-December following a three-month hiatus.

A set of new images from the HiRISE camera is on the camera team's site, at hirise.lpl.arizona.edu/nea.php .

The dunes here are linear, thought to be due to shifting wind directions. In places, each dune is remarkably similar to adjacent dunes, including a reddish (or dust-colored) band on northeast-facing slopes. Large angular boulders litter the floor between dunes.

The most extensive linear dune fields known in the [solar system](#) are on Saturn's large [moon Titan](#). Titan has a very different environment and composition, so at meter-scale resolution they probably are very different from Martian dunes.

Provided by JPL/NASA

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