

# NASA offers guidelines to protect historic sites on the Moon

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(Phys.org) -- NASA and the X Prize Foundation of Playa Vista, Calif., announced Thursday the Google Lunar X Prize is recognizing guidelines established by NASA to protect lunar historic sites and preserve ongoing and future science on the moon. The foundation will take the guidelines into account as it judges mobility plans submitted by 26 teams vying to be the first privately-funded entity to visit the moon.

NASA recognizes that many spacefaring nations and commercial entities are on the verge of landing spacecraft on the moon. The agency engaged in a cooperative dialogue with the [X Prize Foundation](#) and the Google Lunar X Prize teams to develop the recommendations. NASA and the next generation of lunar explorers share a common interest in preserving humanity's first steps on another [celestial body](#) and protecting ongoing science from the potentially damaging effects of nearby landers.

NASA assembled the guidelines using data from previous lunar studies and analysis of the unmanned lander Surveyor 3's samples after [Apollo 12](#) landed nearby in 1969. Experts from the historic, scientific and flight-planning communities also contributed to the technical recommendations. The guidelines do not represent mandatory U.S. or international requirements. [NASA](#) provided them to help [lunar mission](#) planners preserve and protect historic lunar artifacts and potential science opportunities for future missions.

The Google Lunar X Prize will award \$30 million total in prizes. First place will go to a privately-funded team that builds a rover which lands

successfully on the moon, explores it by moving at least one third of a mile and returns high-definition video and imagery to Earth.

Additional bonus prizes will be awarded for photographing a Lunar Heritage, Apollo or Surveyor spacecraft site. The contest ends whenever all prizes are claimed or at the end of 2015.

**More information:** To view the full set of guidelines, visit:  
[go.nasa.gov/JDYo9v](http://go.nasa.gov/JDYo9v)

Provided by JPL/NASA

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