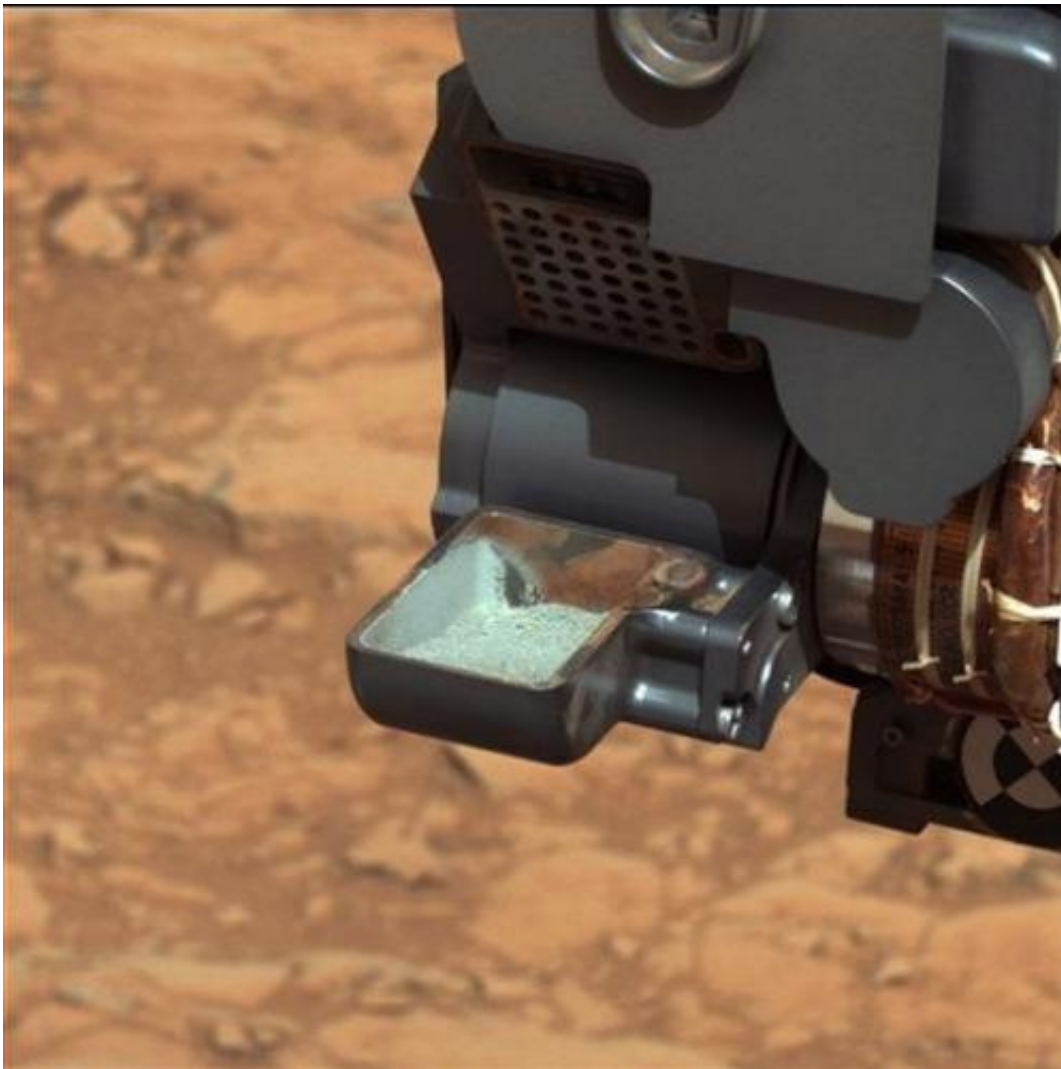


# NASA to reveal contents of drilled Martian rock

March 12 2013

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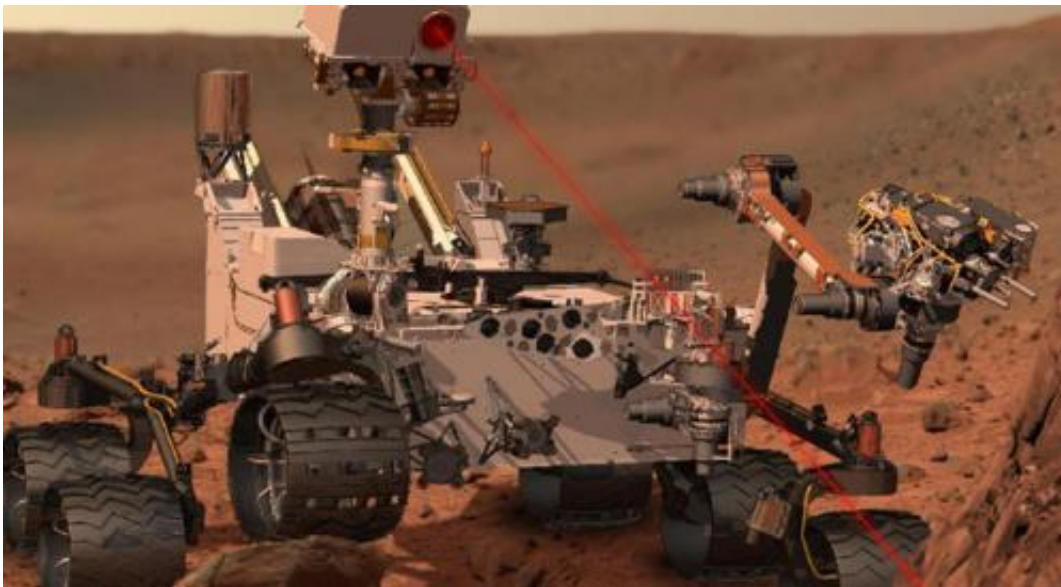


This image released by NASA shows the Curiosity rover holding a scoop of powdered rock on Mars. The rover recently drilled into a Martian rock for the first time and transferred a pinch of powder to its instruments to analyze the chemical makeup. (AP Photo/NASA)

The Mars rover Curiosity drilled into its first rock a month ago. Now scientists will reveal what's inside.

Gathering at NASA headquarters Tuesday, the rover team will detail the minerals and chemicals found in a pinch of ground-up rock.

The results come seven months after Curiosity made a dramatic landing in an ancient crater near the equator. It has been slow going since then as engineers learn to handle the car-size rover.



This artist's concept depicts the rover Curiosity, of NASA's Mars Science Laboratory mission, as it uses its Chemistry and Camera (ChemCam) instrument to investigate the composition of a rock surface. ChemCam fires laser pulses at a target and views the resulting spark with a telescope and spectrometers to identify chemical elements. The laser is actually in an invisible infrared wavelength, but is shown here as visible red light for purposes of illustration.

Scientists are thrilled with the latest achievement—a first on Mars. It involved boring a hole, scooping the powder and running it through Curiosity's instruments.

By analyzing the rock, researchers hope to determine whether the landing spot was ever habitable. They already have one hint—an ancient streambed that Curiosity crossed to get to the rock.

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