GEOLOGIC SETTING OF APOLLO 16 LANDING SITE: DESCARTES
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Apollo 16 will land at the Descartes site (8°55'S, 15°25'E) in the Central Highlands of the Moon. This site is an exceptionally favorable locality to establish the nature of the varied and complex terra volcanism and thus is the highlands counterpart of the Apollo 11 and 12 mare missions.

Three formations dominate the region: Cayley Formation; rugged and bright Kant material that extends from the landing area south to Descartes; and other materials of the Kant Plateau (east of the landing site). All are believed to be of volcanic origin and Imbrian in age. The Cayley appears to be older than the maria and younger than the rugged Kant Plateau materials. Secondary craters from Theophilus and chain craters of possible volcanic origin are identifiable in the vicinity of the landing site.

Two kilometer-sized bright-rayed craters in the traverse area expose a multi-layered sequence in their walls. Sampling of these craters and others along the traverses should permit stratigraphic reconstruction of the Cayley Formation in this area and show its relation to the rugged materials of the Kant Plateau.

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