

Rachel Kronyak



Rachel was born and raised in NJ. She received her B.S. in Geobiology from Penn State and Ph.D. in Geology from the University of Tennessee. In graduate school, Rachel specialized in Mars sedimentary geological research, utilizing data from several Mars missions, including the Mars Curiosity rover and Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. She also performed laboratory research focusing on rock and fracture mechanics. It was here Rachel had her first experience with rover operations as part of the Curiosity team; she served in a few operations roles during her time in grad school. Rachel joined JPL as a postdoctoral researcher on the Mars 2020 mission, mapping Perseverance's landing site and participating in training exercises for the operation teams. Soon after, Rachel became a permanent JPL employee, continuing to work on the science operations team on Mars 2020, fulfilling a number of strategic and tactical operations roles. She also worked on the Mars Sample Return mission, working to ensure that sample integrity was maintained during the different planned phases of the mission. Most recently, Rachel serves as the line manager and subject matter expert for the Science Planning and Engineering group at JPL.