This mosaic, taken October 2, 2000, includes just four of the thousands of image frames being taken during this mapping phase.
And This Just In, From Eros

The NEAR Shoemaker spacecraft continues its regional mapping of Eros' southern hemisphere from a 62-mile (100-kilometer) altitude. The illuminated part of the asteroid is being blanketed with image mosaics, some taken in color to measure compositional properties of the regolith, others taken from stereo viewing geometries to measure variations in topography. This mosaic, taken October 2, 2000, includes just four of the thousands of image frames being taken during this mapping phase.

(Mosaic of images 0145906610, 0145906672, 0145906734, 0145906548)

NEAR Mission

As the first launch in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) Discovery Program, the Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous (NEAR) mission is setting the stage for asteroidal exploration and forming a base of knowledge that will be the framework for future asteroid missions. The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL) designed and built the NEAR Shoemaker spacecraft and manages the mission for NASA. The Mission Team is drawn internationally from universities, government agencies and private industry.

Launched February 17, 1996, NEAR Shoemaker began its orbital mission at asteroid 433 Eros on February 14, 2000. From May through August 2000, the spacecraft traveled in a circular orbit at a radius of 31 miles (50 kilometers) from the center of Eros. It was then boosted to a higher orbit to view Eros from the direction of the sun. In late December 2000, NEAR Shoemaker will descend to a 22-mile (35-kilometer) orbit and operate at that altitude or lower for the remainder of the mission. By February 2001, the NEAR mission will provide the first comprehensive data on the physical geology, composition and geophysics of an asteroid.

For more information visit the NEAR Web site: http://near.jhuapl.edu.