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## EARTH Magazine: The Geology of Middle-earth

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alexandria, Va. — The vaguely familiar, yet primeval landscape of New Zealand served as the backdrop for the blockbuster film adaptations of the entire “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy and “The Hobbit” trilogy, the third and final installment of which opens widely this week. The geology that created this landscape is front and center in EARTH’s February cover story, “The Geology of Middle-earth.”

Since the release of the first installment in the trilogy in 2001, millions of tourists have flocked to New Zealand to see “The Lord of the Rings” locations for themselves. The movie producers filmed at more than 100 locations across New Zealand’s North and South Islands — everything from the Southern Alps (which stood in for the mythical Misty Mountains) to the Rangitata River Valley (Edoras) to Mount Ngauruhoe (the other-worldly Mount Doom). They even built towns, such as Hobbiton (near the real town of Matamata), where visitors can now tour hobbit holes and enjoy libations at the Green Dragon.

Read more about the epic tale of the geology of this spectacular landscape and how it is portrayed in the movies in the February issue of EARTH magazine: <http://bit.ly/1DoLKqA>.

For more stories about the science of our planet, check out EARTH magazine online or subscribe at [www.earthmagazine.org](http://www.earthmagazine.org). The January issue of EARTH is now available on the digital newsstand, featuring stories on how geoscientists are helping Afghanistan find and develop sustainable water supplies, how geoscientists are being put to work in U.S. national parks, and how clays from Crater Lake in Oregon have been found to fight antibiotic-resistant bacteria, plus much, much more.

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