



A large graphic featuring the word "Astronomy" in a large, white, serif font against a dark blue background with a starry sky pattern. Below the logo is the tagline "The world's best-selling astronomy magazine". At the bottom of this section are two green buttons: "STAR DOME Your sky tonight >>" and "STAR ATLAS Our all-sky atlas >>".

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LRO snaps Apollo sites

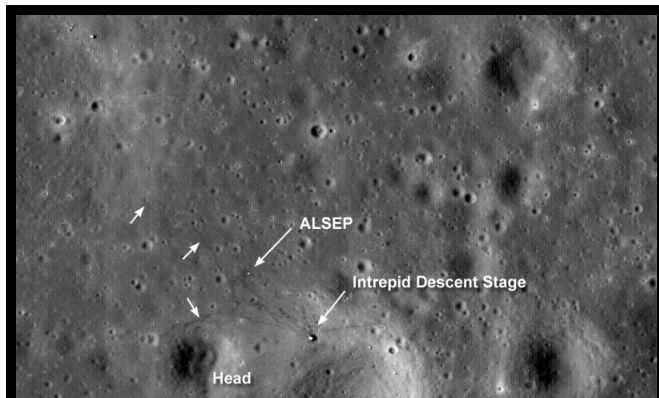
Posted 09-09-2009 by [Karri Ferron](#)

Now, I know the main science objectives of the [Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter \(LRO\)](#) — currently in orbit around the Moon — are to help NASA identify safe landing sites for future explorers, locate potential resources, describe the Moon's radiation environment, and demonstrate new technologies. Still, I admit I was most excited about seeing the LRO's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera (LROC) images of the Apollo landing sites.

And I wasn't disappointed.

This image to the right shows the spacecraft's first look at the Apollo 12 landing site. The Intrepid lunar module descent stage, experiment package (ALSEP) and Surveyor 3 spacecraft are all visible. Astronaut footpaths are marked with unlabeled arrows. The image is about 900 yards (825 meters) wide, with the top of the image facing north.

I think it's great that as LRO is helping NASA prepare for a return to the Moon, it's also helping us all look back at the amazing accomplishments of the Apollo program (and maybe squelching some of those conspiracy theories about humans never being on the



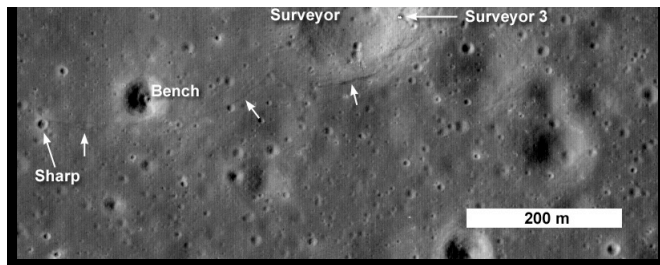
Moon — but I doubt it). And this is just a first-round image (images of the other sites can be found [here](#)). Future LROC images from the Apollo sites will have two to three times greater resolution.

Do you find these images as cool as do? Or are you waiting for even greater resolution? What are you most looking forward to about the LRO mission?

Image credit: NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center/Arizona State University

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Antitax said:

This is off-topic but check how someone made this catchy video to popularize science:

www.youtube.com/watch

It makes learning chemistry much less boring, right? Regarding the return to the Moon, I think government should get out of the way. An honestly competitive private market will get us there faster and cheaper.

September 10, 2009 5:48 AM

About Karri Ferron



[Karri Ferron](#) is a copy editor with *Astronomy* magazine.

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