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Report: Obama to ax moon shot



NASA's Ares I-X rocket sits on launch pad 39-b at the Kennedy Space Center. (Joe Raedle/Getty Images)

The Obama administration plans to kill a program to return astronauts to the moon, the Orlando Sentinel [reported](#) Wednesday, quoting unnamed White House officials.

The budget proposal that the White House is set to release Monday will include no money for the Constellation program, the late, over-budget Ares I rocket or its bigger brother, the Ares V cargo rocket, the Sentinel said.

Instead, the administration would have NASA focus on a new "heavy-lift" rocket that could be as much as a decade away, Earth-science projects such as climate change and a new program that would one day make human exploration of asteroids and the inner solar system possible, the story said. It would also fund private companies to develop capsules and rockets that could ferry astronauts on fixed-price contracts to and from the International Space Station.

While Boeing is [heavily involved](#) in these programs, it also could benefit from the new programs.

The proposed change would have to overcome significant congressional opposition, so stay tuned.



Posted by [Aubrey Cohen](#) at January 27, 2010 2:52 p.m.
Category: [Space](#)

COMMENTS

Posted by [Soccer.Guy](#) at 1/27/2010 3:28 p.m.

#450425

So we've spent \$billions already on the Aries program, and now we're just going to mothball it and start over? What the h#!?!?!? What a waste of money...

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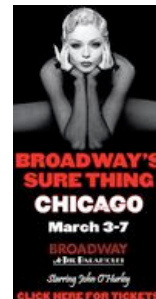
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Posted by [avanti6565](#) at 1/27/2010 3:40 p.m.

#450443

It would seem that the Aries is already a waste of money. How much more do you want to pour down the hole? I'd rather spend the money here than the space program myself.

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Posted by [unregistered user](#) at 1/27/2010 3:45 p.m.

#450449

It is a shame, but I don't want to fund a trip to the moon on Chinese credit. A more focused commitment to heavy lift is what we really need anyway. Sounds like the right plan for a cash strapped economy.

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Posted by [unregistered user](#) at 1/27/2010 3:46 p.m.

#450453

Blame Wall Street.

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Posted by [unregistered user](#) at 1/27/2010 4:11 p.m.

#450488

What ever is done, we must not lose the technology developed to date on Ares and associated programs. Remember how technologies from Apollo drove innovation into the general public industries? Not to mention how high-tech development eventually breeds expanded employment.

Moreover, the research & development efforts must continue, lest we stagnate and find ourselves borrowing technology from the PRC in addition to the \$trillions we use to sustain our government largesse.

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Posted by [enuff_already](#) at 1/27/2010 4:51 p.m.

#450525

I'm a long-time space geek, watched the moon landings as a kid, grew up to go work on Space Station, the Shuttle and a host of other space programs.

Frankly I was appalled at the Bush Admin in their quest to have NASA (i.e. us taxpayers foot the bill for) building next gen launchers using retro 1960s designs when a nascent commercial space industry is coming into its own. Ares it appears was more about creating a legacy than actually addressing the future of space flight.

NASA needs to get out of the business of long-haul trucking into low-earth orbit and back into the business of real science and exploration.

Yes, leverage what NASA technology is out there and make it open source so that any company who chooses to incorporate it into their design may do so.

Let's encourage commercial spaceflight wherever possible, and make it easier for commercial operators to maintain and grow their businesses.

It truly is the next frontier.

EA

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Posted by [unregistered user](#) at 1/27/2010 8:16 p.m.

#450665

I don't mind going to the moon again if it produces more than a few bags of rocks, and some fancy photos. Frankly, we wasted all the moon effort last time by adopting the ISS and the space shuttle. What a big mistake.

I suppose NASA leadership don't really care what they work on as long as the big bucks continue to roll in to fuel their fancy. But, if we go to the moon we should have a plan allowing private American business to explore and mine the heck out of the place for the benefit of us and other American business.

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BUILDING THE DREAMLINER

In newly built factories in Japan, Italy and South Carolina, production is about to begin on The Boeing Co.'s 787 Dreamliner. Boeing recently took a dozen journalists on a tour of the global factories where the composite wings and fuselage of the Dreamliner will be manufactured.

- [The 787 World Tour becomes an adventure](#)
- [Boeing Dreamliner 'coming to life'](#)
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Get rid of all of other stuff, like the Hubble star gazing telescope. Who really benefits from that except those who build it, and those who produce the far far away photos of galaxies most don't really care about. They spent so much, now we don't have any money to go mine the moon.

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Posted by **BuildingAirplanes** at 1/27/2010 10:07 p.m.

#450701

After watching the State Of The Union address tonight, it would appear that the writing is on the wall for the moon shot. Hopefully it won't be cancelled, just postponed as we use the money to get our country back in financial shape. Once that's done, we can continue to the moon with the majority of financial control, as it always has been and always should be. We would still require partnership from other friendly nations.

But when we do go back, it should certainly be for more than just a few bags of rocks, as stated by UR#450665. What we need to do, if we are going to get serious about manned space exploration, is to build a launch base on the moon, for missions to Mars & beyond.

Getting out of the Earth's atmosphere takes up most of the fuel for a moon mission, and probably nearly as much fuel as it would the remainder of the trip to Mars. Launching from the moon would require far less fuel, thus allowing for a smaller craft, or to use what would've been the vessel for rocket fuel to carry human survival supplies instead. The Mars spaceship can be ferried in pieces to the moon base, and assembled and fueled there.

Of course, this will still take a very large amount of money, and will require the partnership of other nations. So as I said at the beginning of this, let's put this moon thing on hold for now, not cancel it, and bring it out and go for it again once the USA have oits financial act together, and have fixed the imminent issues within our own country.

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Posted by **BuildingAirplanes** at 1/27/2010 10:09 p.m.

#450705

oops... Earth's atmosphere.. (paragraph 3)

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Posted by **BuildingAirplanes** at 1/27/2010 10:12 p.m.

#450707

oops again.. its financial act together (paragraph 4)

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Posted by **unregistered user** at 1/27/2010 10:34 p.m.

#450718

Saving a couple of bucks by canceling a return to the moon is a drop in the bucket compared to the 134 trillion dollars of contingent debt that the USA is currently saddled with.

This country is flat out broke. It's hard to imagine how we as a country are going to come up with the money to pay for anything.

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Posted by **unregistered user** at 1/27/2010 11:39 p.m.

#450743

Go to the moon and mine it, Obama is such a alternative fuel nut, there is you H3 you can process for alternative fuels. Like the Indians say Washington speaks with many Forked Tongue.

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Posted by **unregistered user** at 1/28/2010 6:31 a.m.

#450813

Which Indians?

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Posted by **unregistered user** at 1/28/2010 12:50 p.m.

#451098

#450718 unregistered user at 1/27/2010 10:34 p.m.

"134 trillion dollars of contingent debt"

Are we just now waking up with "debt" issues? We've been going in debt for decades. And today's big debt growth accumulated over the past 9 years. Undoubtedly, the big numbers are scary, but just, oh, 25 years ago \$1B was big big bucks. Then, out 1940's post depression/war debt was around 110-120% of GDP. We're not there, yet, but projects are for 101-102% then declining.

Maybe we should blame the media for not including inflation in comparisons (Avatar is not the "biggest grossing" movie... it has quite a way to go to beat Gone with the Wind), or showing debt as a % of GDP. It's much more in context.

Where's my nickle loaf of bread?

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Posted by **ckaylor26** at 1/29/2010 3:55 p.m.

#451855

NASA's budget it small...consider this, in 1999 the Urban Housing Development LOST more money than the entire NASA budget.

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Posted by **unregistered user** at 1/31/2010 3:49 p.m.

#452752

There is no space race That "race" has been over for decades. Obama does not want manned space travel because it would create jobs, new technologies and advances in science in the private sector. Obama does not want to create advanced and efficient space travel, human or otherwise. His administration told the state controlled media that NASA's plan to "colonize" the moon was shelved. There was never a plan to colonize the moon. The moon base was to be developed because it is far easier to launch from the moon to other parts of the solar system and beyond then from the earth requiring the development of new propulsion systems. The whole point of the program was to create a self sustaining base to launch vehicles and for scientific research.

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