

Terry Watson
Former NASA Mission Controller

I was disappointed, but not surprised to hear that the current administration decision to cancel the manned portions of NASA's future programs. As a veteran of the Apollo and Skylab Programs at NASA JSC, and as a NASA shuttle "customer" for getting several scientific satellites on orbit, I can say with a certain degree of experience that man is needed in space.

While I have reservations about attempting to put man on Mars, mainly due to the extreme expense involved, and concerns about the need to return to the moon, I do believe it is important to maintain a US ability to put men into space.

First, we are the leading super power in the world today in part due to our strong commitment to aerospace and defense. With the emergence of China as a new world power, we must maintain our superiority.

Second, we need programs that will inspire our young people to advance in math, science and engineering. Man in space is a much more compelling image for our future leaders.

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