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00:00:00,450 --> 00:00:03,910

Preparing any vehicle for a thundering ride into space is no easy task.

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00:00:03,910 --> 00:00:09,620

It requires a prime location, massive facilities, just the right tools and equipment

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00:00:09,620 --> 00:00:11,780

and of course, a stellar work force.

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00:00:11,780 --> 00:00:14,889

For every one of NASA's human spaceflights,

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00:00:14,889 --> 00:00:18,590

that place is Kennedy Space Center.

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00:00:18,590 --> 00:00:22,590

Complex and challenging space missions begin here, amid this primitive Florida

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00:00:22,590 --> 00:00:27,040

landscape, where eagles soar and alligators roam.

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00:00:27,040 --> 00:00:31,330

Launch Complex 39 is made up of a collection of facilities custom-designed for

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00:00:31,330 --> 00:00:34,570

preparing, launching and landing the space shuttle.

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00:00:34,570 --> 00:00:38,410

The 3-bay Orbiter Processing Facility is where the space shuttle orbiters spend

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00:00:38,410 --> 00:00:42,650

most of their time. Each bay provides access to every square inch of the

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00:00:42,650 --> 00:00:46,640

spacecraft for the technicians who prepare it for flight.

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00:00:46,640 --> 00:00:50,470

With its 8-acre footprint, the Vehicle Assembly Building, or VAB,

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00:00:50,470 --> 00:00:54,970

is one of the largest buildings in the world. It dominates the Kennedy skyline and

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00:00:54,970 --> 00:01:00,079

is visible across Florida's Space Coast. In this mammoth facility, the shuttle

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00:01:00,079 --> 00:01:05,549

orbiter is joined with its external fuel tank and solid rocket boosters.

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00:01:05,549 --> 00:01:11,389

The shuttle's twin launch pads, 39A and 39B, have a prime beachside location

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00:01:11,389 --> 00:01:14,219

a perfect place to begin a mission.

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00:01:14,219 --> 00:01:17,130

And when the shuttle comes home, its preferred landing site is the

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00:01:17,130 --> 00:01:20,810

Shuttle Landing Facility just west of the VAB.