

Eric Reyier, Aquatic Biologist
Inomedic Health Applications

Kennedy Space Center
Ecological Program



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00:00:05,440 --> 00:00:11,160

Narrator: As part of NASA Kennedy Space Center's first Innovation Expo, aquatic biologists with

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00:00:11,160 --> 00:00:18,500

Inomedic Health Applications took employees on a boat tour of the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge,

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00:00:18,500 --> 00:00:24,060

An expansive piece of Florida paradise that has been protected from commercial and residential

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00:00:24,060 --> 00:00:26,940

development for the past five decades because of spaceflight

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00:00:26,940 --> 00:00:31,330

operations at Kennedy and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

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00:00:31,330 --> 00:00:39,000

The island's nooks and crannies have become a sanctuary for more than 1,500 species of plants and animals

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00:00:39,000 --> 00:00:40,460

Doug Scheidt, Aquatic Biologist/Inomedic Health Applications: (10:40) From a regional standpoint, we have

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00:00:40,460 --> 00:00:46,340

over 70 percent of the wetlands, we have one of the largest expanses of sea grass beds in the area and this

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00:00:46,340 --> 00:00:53,640

is important outside the KSC gates basically because these are high quality habitats.

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00:00:53,640 --> 00:00:58,200

Narrator: Biologists are able to track the movements and survival rates of sport fish,

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00:00:58,200 --> 00:01:04,500

sharks and protected sea turtles with the Florida Atlantic Coast Telemetry Array.

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00:01:04,500 --> 00:01:09,490

The strategically placed constellation of sensors tracks tagged animals as they move through

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00:01:09,490 --> 00:01:17,460

Kennedy and the rest of the Indian River Lagoon, sending data back to various government agencies and univ

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00:01:17,460 --> 00:01:22,660

They've even detected other researchers' animals from as far north as Connecticut and New York.

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00:01:22,660 --> 00:01:25,290

Eric Reyier, Aquatic Biologist/Inomedic Health Applications: (2:06) The technology is sort of expensive

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00:01:25,290 --> 00:01:28,020

and so by teaming up with some of these other groups,

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00:01:28,020 --> 00:01:33,720

we're able to only provide a fairly small percentage of the infrastructure but

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00:01:33,720 --> 00:01:39,110

we're able to answer some pretty important questions.

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00:01:39,110 --> 00:01:43,930

Narrator: The reasons for protecting the area are three-fold, according to biologists.

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00:01:43,930 --> 00:01:49,400

First, federal mandates are in place protecting the wetlands and surrounding lagoonal waters,

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00:01:49,400 --> 00:01:53,690

as well as several threatened or endangered species of animals.

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00:01:53,690 --> 00:01:59,040

Second, through stewardship, the space agency is working diligently to execute

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00:01:59,040 --> 00:02:03,090

its mission without compromising our planet's resources.

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00:02:03,090 --> 00:02:07,390

And third, there is a substantial role that the ecological health of Kennedy's

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00:02:07,390 --> 00:02:10,610

wildlands and the refuge play in our economy.

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00:02:10,610 --> 00:02:12,740

Eric Reyier, Aquatic Biologist/Inomedic Health Applications: (4:07) The economic value of the

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00:02:12,740 --> 00:02:18,140

Indian River Lagoon was estimated at about 3.7 billion dollars with a "B" every year.

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00:02:18,140 --> 00:02:24,060

Fisheries alone is worth \$330 million a year to the region in terms of benefit.

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00:02:24,060 --> 00:02:27,280

That's got to be hundreds of jobs directly, or indirectly.