



PRESS RELEASE

February 5, 2014

Contact: Manley Fuller, Florida Wildlife Federation, (850) 656-7113, [wildfed@gmail.com](mailto:wildfed@gmail.com) ;  
Preston Robertson, Florida Wildlife Federation, (850) 656-7113, [preston@fwfonline.org](mailto:preston@fwfonline.org)  
Sarah Owen Gledhill, Florida Wildlife Federation, NE Florida Planning Advocate,  
(904)461-1161, [northeastfwf@fwfonline.org](mailto:northeastfwf@fwfonline.org)

### **Florida Wildlife Federation Opposes Shiloh Launch Complex;**

**urges those who care about the Indian River Lagoon to attend hearings next week.**

Florida Wildlife Federation has joined an unprecedented coalition of national, state, and local conservation organizations to voice opposition to the proposed Shiloh Launch Complex within Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Space Florida is seeking a Launch Site Operator License to shoot heavy lift commercial rockets from within a pristine area of Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. Unlike rockets which currently launch from Cape Canaveral and go out over the Atlantic, the Shiloh Launch Complex would launch rockets over the pristine waters of Mosquito Lagoon within Canaveral National Seashore.

"The proposed Shiloh launch site is the wrong site", said Manley Fuller President Florida Wildlife Federation. "Shiloh lies in Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge known for its superlative fish and wildlife habitat. It is known across the country for outstanding outdoor recreation including salt water fishing, wildlife observation and hunting for the American public and international visitors. Industrialization of the Refuge is counter to its mission and there are other suitable sites off this valuable conservation and recreation area. Our issue is not with the spaceport but with this location," said Fuller.

Space Florida has asked NASA to release 200 acres within the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge to construct the Shiloh Launch Complex. It plans to launch up to 24 launches per year from two proposed launch pads. An unknown amount of acreage around the launch facility would be closed for security purposes which would have significant impacts on hunting, fishing,

boating, and wildlife viewing opportunities that are currently enjoyed within the Refuge and adjoining Canaveral National Seashore.

Space Florida has applied to the FAA for a license to operate the facility. An Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared for the review. The only opportunity that the public will have to speak on this proposal will be next week.

THE PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE HELD AT NEW SMYRNA BEACH HIGH SCHOOL AT 5 PM FEBRUARY 11 AND AT THE EASTERN FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE TITUSVILLE CAMPUS AT 5 PM FEBRUARY 12.

Comments can be sent by email to Stacy M. Zee, FAA Environmental Specialist - [faashiloheis@cardnotec.com](mailto:faashiloheis@cardnotec.com) but must be received by February 21<sup>st</sup> to be considered.

The Indian River Lagoon, Mosquito Lagoon, Canaveral National Seashore and Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge are the most pristine lands and waters remaining on Florida's east coast. It is habitat for migratory birds and endangered species and its waters are by a large number of anglers, hunters, bird watchers, manatee watchers, paddlers and other wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts consider the area a prime destination. The economic benefit from this has been measured in the billions of dollars.

The Mosquito Lagoon is one of Florida's premier saltwater fishing areas. Anglers from all over the world come to fly fish for huge redfish in the clear shallow waters of the Lagoon. The refuge has issued permits for 71 fishing guides in the Refuge.

###

*The Florida Wildlife Federation is a statewide citizens conservation and education organization working for the protection, enjoyment and wise use of Florida's fish, wildlife and other natural resources. The Florida Wildlife Federation encourages the public's appreciation of Florida's environment through sustainable, resource-based outdoor recreation.*