

October 11, 2023

League of Women Voters of the Space Coast  
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Mr. Donald Dankert  
KSC Environmental Management Branch  
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Kennedy Space Center, FL 32899  
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Telephone: 321.861.1196

Subject: Comments Concerning Roberts Road SpaceX Operations Area Expansion & Supporting Infrastructure Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), KSC, Florida

Dear Mr. Dankert,

First, we would like to congratulate NASA on its successful history of Space Launch, and its multitude of inventions and product spinoffs, besides being a global leader in studying Earth's changing climates. Society has benefited in many ways from NASA within public safety, transportation, health and medicine, information technology, industrial productivity, and others.

For Environmental Assessment comments:

All development on Roberts Road SpaceX Operations Area will consider utilizing the use of Low Impact Development techniques to minimize the amount of freshwater that enters the wildlife refuge impoundments and the Indian River Lagoon. The Department of Defense is using LID extensively and as a partner, so should NASA to show the many benefits of LID for the nation.

This expansion has a considerable amount of wetlands. We suggest mitigation land is purchased in Brevard County to ensure the Indian River Lagoon's overall system is maintained. Mitigation outside of the inlets to our Indian River Lagoon will not aid in its recovery.

Areas must be created to hold stormwater and treated industrial wastewater for possible reuse and irrigation to decrease any demand for water from the aquifer.

Ensure significant amounts of freshwater runoff from development does not go into the Indian River Lagoon where clams are being cultured or seagrass restoration and growth is required.

This area will be greatly impacted by climate change. Not only will seas be rising, but land in this area is sinking.

Our Indian River Lagoon has seen dramatic seagrass loss due to repeated algae blooms consistent with excessive nutrients flowing into the system decreasing the seagrass area coverage by thousands of acres. We must ensure this does not continue.

We are very concerned that the expected increase in launch rates could cause closures of Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and Canaveral National Seashore for 100 days or more each year. We hope a solution can be made that prevents any impact to these areas.

Sincerely,

*Maureen Rupe*

Maureen Rupe,  
League of Women Voters Board Member &  
Co-Chair, Natural Resource Committee  
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