**Mission**
- Protects habitat for state & federal endangered species including Florida Scrub Jay
- Water impoundment management to create a nesting place for migratory birds
- Prescribed burns to manage habitat for sensitive species

**Federal Agency Partners**
- NASA
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection

**Attraction**
- Attracts 1 million visitors a year
- 36,000 acres of public use areas
- Over 260 miles of trails

**Location**
- Along Florida’s eastern coast
- 35 mile long barrier island
- Nestled among highly developed communities
- Within hour’s drive of 4 cities

**Environmental Concerns**
- With 36,000 acres of public use areas and over 260 miles of trail, the expansion of the Refuge poses challenges

**Assessing the Refuge’s Potential for Transit**

*How can a transit system reach a more diverse group of users while improving visitor experiences?*

**Expand access opportunities to the Refuge through multimodal transportation options for a diverse group of current and potential visitors.**

*63% of current visitors are non-locals traveling an average distance of 472 miles*

*94% of current visitors access the Refuge using a private vehicle*

**Improve connectivity between the Refuge & the surrounding region.**

Diagram below shows local partners incorporated in study.

**Bringing Bicycling to the Refuge**

**Bicycling Within the Refuge**

**MINWR – Visitor Services Plan 2008 – Bicycling Objective**
- "Develop three bicycle trails and make other facility improvements to move bicycle riders into appropriate areas where wildlife disturbances and visitor impacts would be reduced."

**Research**
- Shows that bicycling can disrupt wildlife however bicycling can connect Refuges regionally and enhance visitor experience. To provide for safe bicycling, I’m working on a road safety audit, focusing on the following areas:

**Vehicle – Bicycle conflicts on Black Point Wildlife Drive**
- Developing bicycle access and infrastructure in the Visitor Center
- Turning existing gravel/native roads into bicycle paths

**Bicycling Objective**
- Alignment of proposed Titusville to Edgewater Trail (see map below)

**Connection to State and Regional Bicycle Paths**

**Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge with Alternative Transportation**

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**Unit:** Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge  
**Location:** Titusville, FL

**What is the Transportation Scholars Program?**
- The Public Lands and National Park Foundation’s Transportation Scholars programs provides parks and public lands the opportunity to assess the impacts of transportation activity and improve transportation systems to help parks and public lands reduce traffic, congestion and pollution while improving visitor experiences.  
- Programs are designed to place a student with substantial knowledge and expertise in transportation planning and related areas. See footer for a list of sponsors.