Transcript of National Key Deer Refuge audio slideshow by Phil Kloer

Kristie Killam: Hi, my name is Kristie Killam and I'm an SCA (Student Conservation Association) intern with the National Key Deer Refuge on Big Pine Key in Florida. And I'm working on a project that's been funded by the federal stimulus money. What we're doing is cataloguing and identifying fresh water solution holes in the lower Florida Keys and comparing that information to historical information. And we're looking for evidence of wildlife that uses these holes, and that can be anything from alligators to egrets and ibises to key deer or marsh rabbits.

Joshua Albritton: My name is Joshua Albritton and I'm an SCA (Student Conservation Association) intern with the National Key Deer Refuge in the lower Florida Keys. My partner Kristie and I, our primary project we are working on is a reinventory of all of the fresh water resources on Big Pine Key and adjacent keys. And what we're focusing on are the classic fresh water solution holes that are scattered throughout the island, and also the bigger fresh water wetlands or slews that are also mixed in and out on the island.

The main purpose behind it is here we have the endemic Key deer, which is restricted to the lower Florida Keys, and their primary source for fresh water are these solution holes so we want to look at how the salinity changes over time. And then also the effects of sea level rise that have been occurring for decades in terms of being monitored. So we want to see how a sea level rise affects the salinity of the holes.

Kristie Killam: I think the intent is to almost have this be like a baseline project that can be carried into the future. All the refuges are having to deal with the climate change issue and sea level rise and come up with a management plan to deal with those things. One of the things this study can be used for is not only looking backwards in time how salinity has changed over time, but you can also use it as a baseline to move forward.