Project Details

ROSES ID: NRA-03-OSS-01
Selection Year: 2004
Program Element: Independent Investigation: LWS

Project Title:
Physical Processes Responsible for Relativistic Electron Variability in the Outer Radiation Zone over the Solar Cycle

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Summary:
Our basic understanding of the physical processes responsible for the variability of relativistic electrons in response to solar activity is currently incomplete. These extremely energetic electrons have important effects on life and society ranging from the disruption of satellites to the modification of the chemistry of the middle atmosphere and associated effects on climate and the quality of life. As an integral contribution to the LWS program we propose to investigate the basic non-adiabatic processes responsible for the injection, transport and loss of relativistic electrons in the outer radiation zone. Most of the important processes that violate the adiabatic invariants involve interactions with various plasma waves. We propose to utilize existing satellite data to characterise the properties of relevant waves and their variability with solar activity, and then use this data base to evaluate diffusion coefficients to describe the non-adiabatic dynamics of relativistic electrons over the solar cycle. This will allow us to quantify the rates of electron acceleration and loss under different geomagnetic conditions, and thus understand why some disturbances lead to electron enhancement while others lead to net loss. This research is central to NASA's interests in understanding the dynamic response of the near-space environment to solar activity and the coupling between the magnetosphere and the middle atmosphere.

Publication References:

Summary: "

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Summary: no summary


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