

APPENDIX D
SCOPING MEETINGS COURT REPORTING RECORD

1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

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3 STATEMENT FOR THE PUBLIC SALE OF PLUM ISLAND, NEW YORK

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Hearing taken at the Old

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11 Saybrook Middle School Auditorium, 60

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14 Sheffield Street, Old Saybrook,

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16 Connecticut, before Clifford Edwards, LSR,

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18 Connecticut License No. SHR.407, a

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20 Professional Shorthand Reporter and Notary

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22 Public, in and for the State of

23

24 Connecticut on May 19, 2010, at 6:28 p.m.

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S :

2

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15

16 PHIL YOUNGBERG, GSA

17

18 JOHN DUGAN,

19

20 DANA BOULEY, DHS

21

22 GABRIELLE SIGEL, GSA

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1 ALSO PRESENT:

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3 MATTHEW FRITZ, Office of the Governor

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5 CURTIS JOHNSON

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7 MARGUERITE PURNELL

8

9 FRED GRIMSEY

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11 BILL PEACE

12

13 CHRISTOPHER MITCHELL

14

15 DAVID SUTHERLAND

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17 MELLIE PLOSZEY

18

19 CHARLES HALBING

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1 CINDY MINTER: Good evening, ladies
2 and gentlemen.

3 Can you hear me okay?

4 All right.

5 Thank you.

6 Thank you for coming tonight. We are
7 going to be beginning our presentation for
8 the public scoping hearing.

9 We've got a couple stragglers still
10 coming in in the back, if we can just give
11 them a few more minutes to get seated.

12 Before we get started, there's a
13 couple of housekeeping items. Restrooms
14 are actually out in the lobby where you
15 saw the display boards, just through that
16 area.

17 If you have brought a cell phone with
18 you tonight, would you kindly turn it off
19 or turn it on mute just as a courtesy to
20 your neighbor. I would appreciate that.

21 My name is Cindy Minter, I'm a public
22 relations officer with MACTEC Engineering
23 and Consulting.

24 We are a consulting firm that is
25 under contract with the General Services

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1 Administration, commonly referred to as
2 GSA.

3 We are here tonight to prepare -- we
4 are preparing an environmental impact
5 statement for the sale of Plum Island.

6 I will be the moderator for tonight's
7 event. I hope you've had a chance to sign
8 in. If you haven't, please do so before
9 you leave tonight.

10 That is our method of trying to
11 maintain communication and keep contact
12 with you.

13 So it's really important that we have
14 the e-mail or a mailing address so that we
15 can stay in contact with you.

16 This meeting is being held in
17 accordance with the provisions for the
18 National Environmental Policy Act, also
19 referred to as NEPA.

20 GSA is the lead federal agency that
21 will analyze the potential environmental
22 impacts concerning the sale of Plum
23 Island.

24 Notice of this scoping meeting has
25 been -- the scoping meeting for

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1 preparation of the environmental document
2 has been placed in the Federal Register.

3 It's also been placed in local
4 newspapers, including Harbor News and
5 Shoreline Times in Connecticut, and the
6 Suffolk Times and Newsday in New York, as
7 well as on the project website.

8 Note that our focus tonight is
9 concerning the sale of Plum Island. Prior
10 federal actions concerning those related
11 to the ongoing cleanup at the site as well
12 as the change in use of the property by
13 the Department of Homeland Security are
14 not part of tonight's focus.

15 Before we begin, I'd like to just
16 kind of introduce some of the players you
17 may not have gotten introduced to who are
18 with us tonight.

19 John Dugan and John Kelly and Phil
20 Youngberg and Gabrielle Sigel with GSA.
21 Dana Bouley and Christine Garland with the
22 Department of Homeland Security are here.
23 And then with MACTEC, Mark Stelmack and
24 Josh Jenkins.

25 Feel free to approach this team.

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1 They are here to help you tonight. This
2 will also be the team that will be
3 preparing the environmental documents.

4 I'd also like to recognize one of our
5 VIP's that are here tonight. Matthew
6 Fritz, with the -- special assistant to
7 the Office of the Governor.

8 And then one more important guest is
9 our court reporter, Cliff Edwards, who is
10 here reporting tonight's comments.

11 Do note that your comments that are
12 made verbally tonight are being recorded
13 and will be part of the environmental
14 documentation.

15 Our format tonight is a 30-minute
16 presentation followed by, we'll take a
17 short break after that presentation, and
18 then we'll open up for public comments.

19 During the presentation the members
20 of the team will describe the purpose and
21 need for the action, the NEPA analysis
22 process, and some summary information that
23 will be collected for the environmental
24 documentation.

25 If you would like to speak, you
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1 have -- please let us know. Most of you
2 have checked off a box as you were signing
3 in.

4 If you change your mind and you'd
5 like to be added or subtracted from that,
6 it's not a big deal, just let us know and
7 we'll provide additional opportunity to
8 speak. You can also sign up during the
9 break.

10 Public input into the decision-making
11 process into the sale of Plum Island helps
12 us ensure that your local needs and
13 concerns relative to the process and
14 actions of any environmental documentation
15 are considered before the environmental
16 action is taken.

17 Tonight we invite your participation,
18 we request your comments on the scope and
19 the scope for that environmental document.
20 Your comments will be used to assist GSA
21 in evaluating those environmental
22 features.

23 It's important that you help us
24 identify those issues and concerns. We
25 may ask you for a clarifying statement so
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1 that we understand what your issue and
2 concern is tonight.

3 But we're really trying to get the
4 questions and concerns down on paper.

5 We will try our best to answer any
6 kind of regulatory or procedural type
7 questions that you have.

8 But the details in terms of the
9 answers to intense environmental questions
10 will be what comes out of the process of
11 preparing this environmental document.
12 Right now we are trying to get the scope
13 of it defined.

14 You may provide your comments in two
15 ways tonight. There are blank comment
16 sheets, cards that we have in back, feel
17 free to take those and write your comments
18 down on them.

19 You can also give us verbal comments
20 to the court reporter tonight. You can
21 also continue to send comments in after
22 tonight's meeting. We ask that they are
23 in by June the 2nd.

24 We would ask that with each comment
25 that you, at a minimum, provide your name

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1 and your state of residence because that
2 does help us.

3 If you've brought something with you
4 tonight you are prepared to read, feel
5 free to read it into the record. You can
6 also just hand it over to the court
7 reporter as well. That's also a means for
8 you to comment.

9 You also should have received some
10 fliers in the back. If you haven't picked
11 those up, the frequently asked questions,
12 feel free to take those as well if you
13 missed that.

14 With that, I'd like to begin with
15 some opening remarks by Dana Bouley with
16 the Department of Homeland Security. He's
17 going to provide us with a recent history
18 of Plum Island.

19 DANA BOULEY: Good evening. Thank
20 you very much for coming. Just a little
21 about myself. I represent DHS.

22 I'm the chief administrative officer
23 for science and technology, which is a
24 director of DHS.

25 Plum Island is one of those
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1 facilities, activities that falls within
2 my purview simply from the perspective of
3 real property and personal property,
4 collectively as asset management.

5 And so with that, then, the disposal
6 or the sale, excuse me, of the island
7 really falls within my consideration.

8 So with that, what I'm going to do is
9 just give you a very high level overview
10 of the island, and most likely there are
11 people out there, probably most of you,
12 who actually know the island and its
13 history far better than I do.

14 But again, with that, for those
15 people that have not had that opportunity
16 or that are not fully acquainted with the
17 island, what I'll do is just give you that
18 opportunity.

19 Starting with the first line, again,
20 most of the island prior to any type of
21 government involvement was primarily
22 privately owned and dedicated to
23 agriculture.

24 Around 1829, three acres were
25 purchased primarily for the establishment
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1 of the White House -- or excuse me, the
2 lighthouse. White House, former Secret
3 Service guy, unfortunately.

4 Anyway, with that, the lighthouse was
5 constructed around 1829, and for those
6 people that have had availability to the
7 coast and have ridden around or floated
8 around the coast, can see the island in
9 its great and glorious grandeur.

10 However, it's not in service at this
11 time. The lighthouse has actually been
12 placed aside with modern navigational
13 aids.

14 But in 1869, the existing lighthouse
15 was built. Excuse me. 1829 was the first
16 purchase, 1869 the lighthouse constructed
17 at that point.

18 Following that, 1898 became some of
19 the first true construction on the island,
20 which was the Fort Terry establishment,
21 which was all part of the coastal defense
22 system.

23 This was developed around the Spanish
24 American War and continued on through the
25 World War II era.

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1 And for those people who are
2 acquainted with the coastal defense system
3 know well that it extends primarily from
4 New England on through down the mid
5 Atlantic, extensive, extensive network of
6 forts and most of those are still in part
7 in place today.

8 1954 really became the first bit of
9 transition. There was a transfer from the
10 Army over to USDA, at which time we really
11 began some of the true mission or the
12 existing mission that exists today on the
13 island.

14 And again, this was in the research
15 primarily for foot and mouth disease.
16 19-- -- excuse me -- 2003, which was right
17 around the inception as well of DHS, the
18 island was then transferred to DHS, in
19 which we became cooperating partner with
20 USDA.

21 As noted in the slide, you can see
22 that the USDA still remains on the island.
23 They are there as a partner with DHS, and
24 the research continues, again primarily
25 dedicated towards foot and mouth
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1 disease.

2 Plum Island itself includes a myriad
3 of different structures today. For those
4 people that had the opportunity to wander
5 in the main foyer as you came in, you can
6 actually see the full development of the
7 island.

8 You saw that there was still some
9 remaining remnants of Fort Terry. As well
10 you saw other structures on there which
11 were represented as laboratories, but for
12 a lot of people who don't know, and
13 Mr. Kelly will get into this a little bit
14 later, there's also a very extensive
15 infrastructure that exists as well.

16 And so that consists of roadways, it
17 consists of power plants. You also have
18 water treatment out there as well.

19 So again, what has happened since the
20 inception and development of the island,
21 you know, over 198 years worth of
22 maturity.

23 And so again, what you have back at
24 the island again is a very robust and
25 dedicated commitment by DHS at this

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1 point.

2 Talking about some additional assets
3 as indicated, there are still out of the
4 840 acres of land that are currently out
5 there, a large portion of it still remains
6 untouched.

7 I believe again, that it's also home
8 to a lot of animals, birds, et cetera,
9 that still call that home.

10 And again, that's pretty indicative
11 of the type of environment that still
12 takes place, even though there's some
13 very, very serious work that takes
14 place.

15 We also have a facility, a related
16 facility at Orient Point, about 9.5
17 acres, that essentially remains there as a
18 point of departure and receipt for our
19 ferry system that continues back and
20 forth.

21 Okay. That's it in a nutshell.
22 Again, just a grand overview of what
23 exists at Plum Island, a little about what
24 happens there.

25 And for more detail specifically

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1 related to the sale, what I'm going to do
2 is turn it over to Mr. John Kelly.

3 Thank you very much.

4 JOHN KELLY: Good evening. My name
5 is John Kelly. I'm the director of GSA's
6 Office of Property Disposal Division.

7 I'd first like to thank you for
8 attending tonight's scoping meeting on the
9 sale of Plum Island. I look forward to
10 hearing your comments this evening.

11 Tonight I'll be reviewing the
12 authority for sale, GSA and its role,
13 ongoing due diligence efforts, necessary
14 environmental reviews, and the marketing
15 and sales process for the property.

16 In 2008 Congress enacted Public Law
17 110-329, which mandated the sale of Plum
18 Island, if the animal research would be
19 located to another site. Proceeds from
20 the sale would be used to offset the cost
21 of the move.

22 In 2009, Department of Homeland
23 Security made the decision to locate the
24 new facility in Manhattan, Kansas. Plum
25 Island property will be used for current

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1 operations until the new National Bio and
2 Agro-Defense facility, or NBAD, is
3 completed. Currently, the projected
4 completion date for NBAD is fiscal year
5 2018.

6 The decision to locate NBAD in Kansas
7 and not on Plum Island set in motion a
8 sale process that brought about GSA's
9 involvement in the project. It's why we
10 are here this evening to talk about the
11 sale of Plum Island.

12 Go to the next slide, Mark, please.

13 For those of you not familiar with
14 GSA, GSA is the federal government's real
15 estate organization, and its property
16 disposal division handles disposition of
17 unneeded federal assets government wide.

18 In addition to disposing of federal
19 property, GSA consults on asset management
20 issues. For over 60 years, GSA has
21 successfully sold a wide range of
22 government properties and has developed
23 some expertise in this field, and a
24 thorough understanding of the activities
25 and processes involved in such sales.

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1 One of the most important roles of
2 GSA is to ensure the sales process is
3 equitable, transparent, and competitive.
4 To that end, we engage in an open process
5 and are committed to sharing results of
6 our efforts throughout the process.

7 Mark, if we can go to the next slide.
8 Thank you.

9 In regard to the sale of Plum Island,
10 effectively GSA has been charged with
11 facilitating the orderly transition of
12 this asset from federal ownership by
13 navigating through a host of laws,
14 regulations and policies that safeguard
15 the value of the asset, protect
16 resources, require formal decision making,
17 and promote transparency and
18 collaboration.

19 GSA is the lead agency for all
20 activities necessary to bring the asset to
21 the marketplace, including
22 characterization of environmental
23 conditions, preparation and execution of
24 terms of sale and marketing materials, and
25 ultimately the execution of conveyance

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1 documents.

2 Hopefully, most of you will get the
3 opportunity to view the boards this
4 evening and speak to some of the GSA
5 representatives or perhaps some of you
6 fortunate enough can visit the island.
7 I'm sure you'd all agree this is a very
8 complex piece of real estate that will
9 generate significant interest for a wide
10 variety of people.

11 It's essential that we engage this
12 information, that it's comprehensive,
13 accurate, timely and responsive to the
14 respective areas or areas of interest.

15 We cannot simply put a for sale sign
16 on the property and wait for bids. Going
17 to market without a full understanding of
18 the asset is in no one's best interest and
19 it's not how GSA approaches sale of
20 property.

21 To gather and compile required
22 information, GSA in partnership with DHS,
23 is and will be engaging in several
24 complementary processes.

25 In particular, we'll going to be
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1 taking a due diligence review, regulatory
2 compliance actions, and marketing and
3 sale. I'll touch on each of these in the
4 following slides.

5 As Dana mentioned, in addition to the
6 840-acre island, the nine and a half acre
7 Orient Point facility and personal
8 property, such as ferries, will be
9 included in the reviews as they too will
10 be included in the sale offering.

11 Mark.

12 One of the first of those reviews is
13 basic due diligence, understand the
14 baseline condition of the real property
15 asset, its physical condition, unique
16 features, capacities and constraints.

17 This view will also identify areas
18 that require further or more timely
19 review.

20 Not only is this information
21 fundamental to developing a sound
22 marketing strategy, it will be of critical
23 importance to any potential buyer to fully
24 understand what they are buying.

25 Over the years, the island has
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1 supported a broad range of use, including
2 agricultural, administrative, research,
3 housing and military operations.

4 These uses resulted in significant
5 development across the island, and today
6 the island is essentially self sufficient,
7 with established infrastructure and
8 diversity of its buildings, such as an
9 historic lighthouse and a more than 55,000
10 square foot administration building, and
11 other improvements, like the two harbor
12 facilities and parking areas.

13 On the island is over four miles of
14 paved roads, eight miles of gravel roads
15 and utilities including undersea cables
16 for power and communication, a power
17 plant, backup generators and tank farm,
18 fresh water wells and a water distribution
19 system, as well as a wastewater treatment
20 facility.

21 All these utilities are in good
22 condition and are capable of supporting a
23 wide range of future uses.

24 In addition, to the built-up
25 environment there are areas of wetlands,

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1 open space, wooded tracts, and over six
2 miles of coastline that offer sandy
3 beaches along Gardiners Bay, and a rocky
4 shoreline along the Sound. The island has
5 elevations from sea level to 90 feet.

6 We have reviewed the title, it's
7 certainly an interesting history, and
8 continue to gather information on the
9 condition of the various structures and
10 utility systems and personal property.

11 Once completed, much of this
12 information will be incorporated into the
13 regulatory review process and ultimately
14 into the marketing strategy.

15 Mark. Thank you.

16 Since we are dealing with federal
17 property, there's a well-established
18 regulatory framework designed to safeguard
19 the human environment, natural, cultural
20 and historic resources when property is
21 conveyed from federal ownership.

22 These laws and regulations not only
23 highlight significant resource issues,
24 they also require consultation with
25 several regulatory officials at the

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1 federal, state, county and local level.

2 One such law is the National
3 Environmental Policy Act, which is the
4 basis for tonight's scoping meeting. Josh
5 will be discussing this in greater
6 detail.

7 In conjunction with the NEPA
8 analysis, GSA in partnership with DHS will
9 be engaging in several other regulatory
10 compliance efforts to protect eligible
11 historic resources, to assess wetlands, to
12 consider effects on the coastal zone, to
13 determine the presence of threatened and
14 endangered species, and to ensure the
15 property is conveyed in a manner that's
16 protective of human health and the
17 environment, and if necessary, take
18 appropriate immediate action to address
19 hazardous materials and substances.

20 Each of these mandated reviews has
21 its own tailored process and compliance
22 criteria that must be adhered to before
23 GSA can convey title to the property.

24 Once sufficient information is
25 collected from the environmental and due
26

1 diligence reviews, we'll commence the
2 formal marketing process.

3 Mark. Thanks.

4 The knowledge gained from
5 comprehensive due diligence and
6 environmental reviews will allow GSA to
7 develop a suitable and targeted marketing
8 strategy that fully discloses the
9 property's physical condition, its
10 challenges and opportunities.

11 Additionally, any restrictions and
12 other mitigation measures resulting from
13 the preceding reviews that may impact the
14 future use or uses of the property will be
15 included in the terms of sale and made
16 part of the marketing and outreach
17 efforts.

18 As I mentioned earlier, GSA has the
19 responsibility to compile all relevant
20 property and environmental information in
21 a manner that will be most responsive to
22 all potential inquiries.

23 Whether it be to address regulatory
24 concerns, perceived environmental risks,
25 utility capacities, title questions,

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1 conditions of improvements or similar
2 concerns, the more informative we are, the
3 more successful we will be in reducing any
4 perceived risks in the marketplace and
5 ultimately promoting maximum competition
6 to achieve the greatest return for these
7 assets.

8 We'll be contracting with a national,
9 experienced real estate firm to complement
10 our own marketing efforts and to assist in
11 the development and execution of the
12 marketing strategy and materials.

13 Once the marketing gets underway, GSA
14 will utilize several outreach methods to
15 ensure the property information is widely
16 available, including publication of
17 marketing documents, establishment of a
18 marketing and outreach office at the
19 Orient Point facility, and regular updates
20 to a dedicated Plum Island website.

21 In addition to disseminating
22 information, GSA will be available to
23 answer questions about the property and
24 the sales process.

25 We'll be working with DHS for the
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1 next few weeks to develop a projected
2 schedule of sale and will make this
3 information available once it's
4 finalized.

5 Mark. Thank you.

6 Well, unlike privately-owned
7 property, federal property is not subject
8 to local zoning or taxation.

9 So while the island property has been
10 actively used by the government for over a
11 hundred years for a variety of purposes,
12 it's never been zoned nor had any zoning
13 designation.

14 This certainly limits GSA's ability
15 to answer questions about allowable uses
16 once the property leaves federal
17 ownership.

18 This reuse issue is further
19 highlighted by the fact we are selling
20 such a complex and unique piece of real
21 estate, essentially a self-sufficient
22 island of significant size with an
23 established infrastructure, a variety of
24 terrain, and an array of historical and
25 modern improvements, and a pretty

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1 substantial utility system.

2 I think it's safe to assume there's
3 no comparable property in the region.

4 Once property leaves federal ownership,
5 much like other privately-owned property,
6 it's subject to all applicable
7 environmental and land use regulations.

8 Given this aspect of federal
9 property, prospective bidders will be
10 strongly advised to undertake their own
11 due diligence, including engaging planning
12 officials to determine if their future
13 vision for the property is consistent and
14 compatible with any proposed zoning or
15 other reuse considerations prior to
16 bidding on the property.

17 GSA has no authority to regulate
18 future uses. So state, county and local
19 governments will all have roles in guiding
20 future reuse of the property.

21 GSA recognizes the important role and
22 is committed to collaborate with state,
23 county and town throughout the sale
24 process.

25 We are committed to sharing all
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1 relevant information and to support all
2 levels of government in preparing for the
3 sale of the property and its transition
4 from federal ownership.

5 It is our expectation that the
6 information we produce from our due
7 diligence, environmental reviews and
8 marketing sales efforts will be of great
9 value to these officials as they prepare
10 for a new relationship with this
11 property.

12 While we cannot guarantee specific
13 outcome of any competitive process, we can
14 guarantee a process that will be
15 transparent and collaborative.

16 Thank you for your interest and your
17 time this evening. I'm going to turn it
18 over to Josh, he's going to explain more
19 about the NEPA process.

20 JOSH JENKINS: Thank you, John. My
21 name is Josh Jenkins.

22 I am with MACTEC Engineering and
23 Consulting, and MACTEC is working for GSA
24 to support their development of the EIS.
25 And I function as MACTEC's NEPA

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1 coordinator on this project to support
2 GSA.

3 So why is an EIS being prepared?

4 Well, an EIS was selected for this project
5 because it provides the highest level of
6 analysis with the greatest opportunity for
7 input by interested parties before
8 decisions and commitments are made.

9 It will be prepared in draft form,
10 circulated for public comment, and issued
11 as a final document. The EIS will also
12 include responses to agency and public
13 comments that it will receive during the
14 scoping process, as well as during review
15 of the draft EIS.

16 After completion of the final EIS,
17 GSA will issue a record of decision, or
18 the acronym is ROD, that will be signed by
19 GSA and will document GSA's final action
20 decision.

21 Under NEPA, the purpose of the EIS is
22 to examine the effects associated with the
23 anticipated sale of Plum Island and the
24 support facility at Orient Point, New
25 York.

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1 NEPA was -- the NEPA act was passed
2 in 1969 and serves as the national charter
3 for the protection of the environment. It
4 provides the framework for evaluating the
5 consequences of major federal actions that
6 may affect the environment.

7 The EIS process for the sale of Plum
8 Island includes a public scoping period
9 which includes this meeting tonight and
10 another meeting tomorrow night over on
11 Long Island as well as coordination with
12 federal, state and local agencies.

13 Our next step is to develop the draft
14 EIS, which will incorporate scientific and
15 technical data about Plum Island as well
16 as the comments received during the
17 scoping period.

18 The draft EIS will then be made
19 available for review to interested
20 parties, and the comments received will be
21 addressed in the final EIS. GSA will then
22 make a formal record of decision with the
23 final EIS.

24 NEPA encourages federal agencies to
25 explore alternatives where possible, with
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1 the objective of eliminating or lessening
2 environmental impacts.

3 It also provides an analysis of the
4 no-action alternative, which is
5 essentially a baseline of potential
6 impacts of the status quo versus any
7 changes.

8 The no-action serves as a baseline
9 for comparison to the alternatives. In
10 this case the no-action alternative cannot
11 be selected because it does not meet the
12 project purpose and need of selling the
13 property as mandated by the act of
14 Congress.

15 The action alternative for this
16 project is the sale of Plum Island by GSA.
17 It is noted that DHS will continue
18 operations at the existing facility until
19 the new impact facility Manhattan, Kansas,
20 is operational.

21 The action alternative will further
22 be defined into a series of reasonably
23 foreseeable land use options. In
24 response, they will add certain future
25 re-use of the property. EIS will identify

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1 regional land use options that could
2 result upon the sale of the property.

3 Next slide.

4 The proposed land use options for the
5 action alternative include an adaptive
6 re-use. This option would use existing
7 facilities in an infrastructure on the
8 island for commercial and other uses.

9 The second option would be to
10 evaluate land use and zoning based upon
11 other comparable neighbor islands,
12 emphasizing low density development. And
13 a third option would be to evaluate land
14 use and zoning based on high density
15 development.

16 Of course, these options are only
17 drafts at this point and we expect to
18 revise and refine as the scoping process
19 progresses.

20 Other options for the action
21 alternative may be evaluated as a result
22 of the scoping process, and we invite you
23 to give us our input.

24 GSA has no authority to determine
25 future land uses, so at this time we do

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1 not know who will be purchasing the
2 property, or what their intended land uses
3 would be.

4 When the property leaves federal
5 ownership, any future re-use would be
6 subject to all local, state -- all local
7 state and federal permitting and
8 environmental land use approvals and
9 regulations.

10 Next.

11 The EIS will identify potential
12 impacts on numerous resources listed
13 above. The topics on this slide are some
14 of the resources that will be
15 considered.

16 For potential significant impacts the
17 EIS may determine mitigation measures to
18 reduce these impacts where feasible.

19 If other significant resources are
20 identified through the scoping process,
21 they will be considered as well. Your
22 comments on resources of potential concern
23 are invited as well.

24 Next slide.

25 The following slides will show a

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1 brief summary of some of the resources EIS
2 will consider. For the natural
3 environment, EIS will evaluate the
4 existing biological resources on the
5 island, which consist of a diverse coastal
6 ecosystem.

7 GSA will consider protected plants
8 and animals, wildlife and wildlife
9 habitat, and the coastal and marine
10 resources that may occur on or in the
11 vicinity of the island.

12 GSA has begun coordination with the
13 US Fish and Wildlife Service, National
14 Marine Fishing Service, and the State of
15 New York as required.

16 GSA will also consider potential
17 impacts to geology and soils on the
18 island.

19 And Plum Island has an aquifer
20 beneath it that is currently used as a
21 source of water. Also the geology sources
22 on the island as well as slopes and bluffs
23 may restrict development in certain areas.
24 So we'll be looking at that.

25 Next slide.

26

1 Other natural resources to be
2 addressed in the EIS will include air
3 quality, noise and water resources. Those
4 resources could be affected by future uses
5 of the island.

6 The EIS will identify current
7 conditions and develop possible scenarios
8 for future re-use and determine how these
9 future scenarios may affect the national
10 environment.

11 Next.

12 As part of the NEPA process, GSA must
13 determine if the proposed action would
14 affect any resources listed on or eligible
15 for the National Register of Historic
16 Places.

17 These resources include the Plum
18 Island lighthouse, structures and
19 batteries associated with Fort Terry as
20 well as other potentially historic
21 structures and prehistoric archaeological
22 sites.

23 Next.

24 There are a number of ongoing or
25 complete hazardous waste cleanups located

26

1 on Plum Island. The status of these areas
2 as well as their result, re-use
3 restrictions will be noted in the EIS.

4 Also, the existing infrastructure and
5 future infrastructure upgrades or any
6 additions will be considered.

7 The island has existing utilities,
8 including water, waste water, natural gas
9 and oil, electrical and communications as
10 previously mentioned by John.

11 Island roads and ferry services will
12 be a part of this discussion. Future
13 re-use could require an upgrade of these
14 services or development of additional
15 services. Potential zoning for Plum
16 Island will also be evaluated through
17 working with the town of Southold to
18 determine potential land uses and
19 zoning.

20 The EIS will evaluate socioeconomic
21 factors such as impacts to the local
22 economy, medical services, schools and
23 housing demand.

24 Also, the EIS will discuss potential
25 impacts of action -- alternatives to low
26

1 income and minority populations.
2 Additional traffic and transportation
3 demands including changes to traffic or
4 commuting patterns will be evaluated.

5 Waste management issues will be
6 addressed, including potential changes or
7 upgrades to the existing wastewater
8 treatment facility on the island.

9 Next slide.

10 Here's a summary of proposed NEPA EIS
11 schedule for this -- for the project. The
12 notice of intent to prepare the EIS was
13 published in the Federal Register
14 March 18th, 2010.

15 That served as the official kickoff
16 in this process. We are now in the
17 scoping phase of the project, we are
18 asking you to provide comments on the
19 project.

20 We ask that you get any comments to
21 us by June 2nd, 2010 so that we may be
22 able to incorporate substantive comments
23 into the draft EIS.

24 After the scoping process is
25 completed, the team will prepare the draft

26

1 EIS during the summer. The draft EIS
2 should be available during the late summer
3 of this year.

4 Once the draft EIS is complete, it
5 will be made available for public comment
6 for a period of 45 days.

7 During that 45-day comment, there
8 will also be another opportunity such as
9 this for a public meeting where you all
10 will be invited to air your comments on
11 the draft EIS.

12 After the 45-day comment period is
13 over, we will respond to all substantive
14 comments that are received and prepare the
15 final EIS, which right now is intended to
16 be completed this fall.

17 Once the final EIS is completed, GSA
18 will prepare the record of decision to
19 document the final decision.

20 CINDY MINTER: Thank you. With this
21 we are going to take a small break, about
22 ten minutes.

23 And we'll gather back in open forum
24 for public comments.

25

26

1 (THEREUPON, THERE WAS A RECESS
2 TAKEN.)

3 CINDY MINTER: As noted on the slide
4 behind me, if you have comments related to
5 the sale of Plum Island and you prefer not
6 to speak tonight or if you think of a
7 comment after you've gone home this
8 evening, you can mail your comments in.

9 John, do you want to -- thank you.

10 We do ask that you return these
11 comments by June the 2nd, so that you have
12 time to get them into the scoping process
13 for this document.

14 We are now going to open the floor to
15 public comment. Because we've got a
16 reasonably light turnout tonight, we
17 actually have a roving microphone that
18 will be, if the identified speaker can
19 just raise your hand, we'll bring the
20 microphone to you, and we'll let you put
21 your comment down.

22 If you did not register to speak,
23 we're going to go through those that have
24 registered first and open it up for
25 additional comments. I'd like to start
26

1 with Matthew Fritz.

2 MATTHEW FRITZ: Good evening. My
3 name is Matthew Fritz, I'm special
4 assistant to Connecticut governor Jodi
5 Rell.

CT-8

6 Cindy, thank you very much. I want
7 to thank GSA and Homeland Security for
8 sponsoring this scoping meeting this
9 evening. I am going to read some
10 comments, some additional comments we have
11 and we'll go from there.

12 While I'm primarily here to listen
13 and while the governor will formally
14 submit comments to GSA by June 2nd, I want
15 to outline some concerns the governor and
16 the State of Connecticut has with the
17 proposed future sale of Plum Island.

18 Upon receiving the notice of the
19 scoping meeting, Governor Rell assembled a
20 so-called SWAT team to coordinate the
21 state's response to the federal action.

22 The team is comprised of
23 representatives from various state
24 agencies, including the Department of
25 Homeland Security, Department of Public

26

1 Health, Department of Environmental
2 Protection, Department of Agriculture and
3 Connecticut's Military Department.

4 I should point out that the State of
5 Connecticut has already initiated action
6 to have its voice formally considered as
7 this process moves forward.

8 On March 31st, 2010 the State's
9 Department of Environmental Protection
10 sent a letter to GSA informing them of
11 their obligation to submit a report to the
12 department a federal consistency
13 determination that identifies possible
14 effects future activities associated with
15 the sale of Plum Island might have on its
16 coastal resources.

17 In addition to this concern, the
18 governor of the State of Connecticut is
19 also concerned about the following
20 unknowns.

21 While general information exists
22 about the types of research performed
23 within its laboratories, very little is
24 actually known about the types of diseases
25 currently stored and studied on Plum

26

1 Island.

2 Very little information currently
3 exists as to the types of vaccinations
4 that are being researched or tested on
5 Plum Island.

6 Information of this nature is
7 important in formulating of potential
8 emergency responses in the event something
9 happened during movement of these
10 materials off of the island.

11 At present a transition plan has not
12 been put forth for the actual transition
13 of materials to the new laboratory being
14 built in Manhattan, Kansas.

15 Absent a plan for consideration, it s
16 difficult to engage all the direct or
17 indirect future impacts of the future sale
18 and transition will have on the residents
19 and resources of Connecticut.

20 If the facility is demolished, how
21 will the materials, including the material
22 for the lab be disposed of or transported;
23 where and how will the materials be
24 brought for the potential disposal into
25 Connecticut harbors or over Connecticut

26

1 roads, for example.

2 What types of security arrangements
3 will be made to safeguard the contents of
4 the laboratory, both during the transition
5 process and along the routes chosen for
6 transporting materials.

7 How will the materials from military
8 operations that once took place on the
9 island be handled. How will the remnants
10 be transported and disposed of.

11 At this time there are many unknowns
12 associated with the future disposition of
13 this property.

14 The governor is hopeful that this
15 process that we are starting here this
16 evening is the first of many opportunities
17 to engage in a dialogue concerning of the
18 transition of the lab work to the
19 yet-to-be constructed national
20 laboratory.

21 In an effort to continue this
22 dialogue, Governor Rell will be scheduling
23 a briefing in the coming weeks with the
24 appropriate federal agencies, including
25 GSA and Homeland Security to discuss the

26

1 federal government's plans for
2 transitioning the lab's function to the
3 new lab and the potential future sale of
4 the island.

5 Thank you very much for your time.
6 We will continue to stay involved in the
7 process as it moves forward.

8 CINDY MINTER: Thank you. Our next
9 speaker is Curtis Johnson.

10 CURTIS JOHNSON: Forgive me. I'm
11 going to stand up here because I have some
12 materials to hand to you, so instead of
13 trotting back and forth I thought it would
14 be a little bit easier up here.

15 My name is Curt Johnson, I'm a senior
16 attorney with Connecticut Fund for the
17 Environment, Save the Sound, and I'm here
18 tonight to explain why the sale of this
19 island is a really, really big deal from a
20 ecological and federal policy point of
21 view.

22 And also to start a conversation and
23 start an exploration on how you all who
24 are directed under the public act to sell
25 the land can do that in a way that is

26

CT-9

1 consistent with other key federal
2 government interests that have already
3 been expressed and worked out related to
4 Plum Island over a very long period of
5 time. So that's really what I'm here
6 for.

7 Before I go into my presentation, I
8 just want to talk a little about
9 Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Save
10 the Sound so you understand a bit more
11 about us.

12 We are a nonprofit environmental
13 advocacy group for the protection of all
14 Connecticut's air, land and water. Save
15 the Sound, the preservation of Long Island
16 Sound.

17 I'm also the cochair of what's called
18 the Citizens Advisory Committee of the
19 Long Island Sound Study. It's a long,
20 fancy name. I'm not here speaking for the
21 CAC tonight.

22 It is the group of 36 members who sit
23 on that advisory committee for our
24 national -- National Estuary Program, our
25 Long Island Sound Study National Estuary

26

1 Program.

2 So I'm not speaking for that group.
3 My belief and assumption is you will hear
4 from that group perhaps during the scoping
5 period.

6 About us and CFE, we use science and
7 the law and bringing people together to
8 get results. I'll just tell a brief story
9 about some of the work we've done just a
10 few miles from here.

11 Just about three miles inland from
12 here, two miles inland is a thousand acre
13 coastal forest called The Preserve. And
14 we have worked with the town of Old
15 Saybrook over, and many, many others in a
16 legal advocacy role to protect that piece
17 of property.

18 We intervened in a proposal to
19 develop that. Not only intervened at the
20 administrative level, we brought one of
21 the decisions to the appellate court and
22 won. We also supported the town in
23 denying the application and one.

24 We were told by Lehman Brothers
25 attorneys when we started this that we

26

1 didn't have a chance. Lehman now is
2 experiencing some difficulties in
3 bankruptcy court, and so far we have a
4 hundred percent track record before the
5 courts.

6 They've had some of the largest
7 lawyers that could be put into effect in
8 Connecticut.

9 So with that brief introduction, I
10 want to talk a little bit about the issue
11 at hand here, why it's a big deal.

12 First of all, Plum Island has been
13 identified as a crown jewel of coastal
14 resources within Long Island Sound, which
15 is really an urban sea.

16 It's not just been recognized by us
17 at Save the Sound, but it's been
18 recognized by the Long Island Sound Study
19 Program, our National Estuary Program,
20 which is coordinated, led by the federal
21 EPA office, and it's been signed off in
22 terms of its importance as a crown jewel
23 in the Long Island Sound stewardship
24 program by the EPA Region 1 administrator,
25 the EPA Region 2 administrator, the

26

1 commissioners of the Department of
2 Environmental Conservation in New York,
3 and the commissioner of the Department of
4 Environmental Protection.

5 I'm just going to give you a little
6 brief history of how that came to happen,
7 and give you some materials to document
8 that.

9 I also want to comment that we will
10 be submitting formal scoping comments, and
11 I reserve the right to do that. I'm not
12 going to be doing that this evening, but
13 I'll start out with the 2003 Long Island
14 Sound agreement which I'll hand to you.

15 This agreement was signed by, again,
16 those parties that I just discussed. It
17 is consistent and done pursuant to our
18 National Estuary Protection Act, and the
19 Clean Water Act with EPA, federal
20 government taking charge of that.

21 And I refer you to a key component of
22 that act that talks about Section 5, I
23 believe it is -- actually Section 4,
24 Living Resources and Their Habitat, to
25 develop a stewardship system for Long
26

1 Island Sound.

2 It directs the agencies to look at
3 what are the most critical areas
4 surrounding Long Island Sound. And these
5 are all things I'd like to put on the
6 record this evening.

7 The next thing that occurred was an
8 action by a work group of this National
9 Estuary Program system, a work group of
10 the Long Island Sound program that looked
11 at these sites and identified the Plum
12 Island and Gull Islands complex as one of
13 the inaugural stewardship sites in Long
14 Island Sound. And that was completed as
15 the 2006 Stewardship Atlas.

16 And I just want to note the agencies
17 that were involved in that. It was the
18 federal agencies of US Fish and
19 Wildlife, federal EPA, it also involved
20 DEC, our state DEC in New York and our
21 state Department of Environmental
22 Protection.

23 It involved Save the Sound. It
24 involved the Audubon New York, Audubon
25 Connecticut, and the Regional Plan

26

1 Association, as well as the Westchester
2 County Parks Department and the Trust for
3 Public Land.

4 So it was a three-year effort to look
5 all the way around Long Island Sound and
6 ask the question what are the most
7 critical resources that are worthy of
8 protection, of stewardship, that have the
9 greatest ecological value and the greatest
10 recreational value.

11 It points out that there are five
12 goals in identifying those locations,
13 preserving native plants and animal
14 communities that are unique habitat types,
15 improving recreation and public access
16 opportunities, protecting threatened and
17 endangered species, preserving sites that
18 are important for long-term scientific
19 research, and promoting efforts to plan
20 for multiple uses.

21 I'm going to read what it says about
22 the location and why I said this is a
23 crown jewel in that system.

24 And I quote, "Ecological significance
25 of Plum and Gull Islands in Southold, New
26

1 York. Ecological significance, exemplary
2 Colonial water bird habitat including
3 sites that are of national if not
4 international significance. Identified by
5 US Fish and Wildlife as a significant
6 coastal habitat."

7 Again, you know, exemplary of
8 national if not international
9 significance.

10 So I'm now going to hand in that
11 report to you.

12 The third thing that occurred was
13 this so far is just a work plan of the
14 Long Island Sound study. Again, that
15 National Estuary Program established by
16 federal law pursuant to the National
17 Estuaries Act.

18 But the next step was that again, the
19 two regional administrators from EPA of
20 Region 1 and Region 2, Region 2 obviously
21 having jurisdiction over this area, as
22 well as our two commissioners signed a
23 2006 agreement, which I am looking for
24 right now.

25 JOHN DUGAN: You dropped something,

26

1 Curt.

2 CINDY MINTER: You can provide that
3 to --

4 CURTIS JOHNSON: Okay. Well, I can
5 hand that in later this evening, but what
6 it does state is that it -- formally,
7 these four entities formally adopted
8 pursuant to, as the policy committee, the
9 policy committee is established pursuant
10 to the National Estuary Program, Long
11 Island Sound Study, as the decision-making
12 body of that program, and they formally
13 adopted these 33 inaugural stewardship
14 sites as the policy pursuant to this
15 federal law.

16 So obviously you've also identified
17 tonight and are already aware of other
18 federal programs that are activated by the
19 state, the Coastal Zone Management Act as
20 well as others. You've mentioned the
21 Endangered Species Act.

22 You will be getting materials from
23 other groups identifying the fact that
24 there are at least a couple of species
25 that are listed as endangered species out
26

1 at the property.

2 So what we have here is a conflict,
3 in a sense, of law. You all are directed
4 pursuant to the act that you've identified
5 tonight, and the reason for the meeting,
6 to sell the property as a public
7 process.

8 The National Estuary Program and the
9 decisions that have been made pursuant to
10 that identified the critical importance of
11 these few super-high priority sites around
12 Long Island Sound for protection.

13 The federal government already owns
14 this property. The federal government has
15 opportunities now to decide how this sale
16 is going to be completed, and we are here
17 to really request that in the process of
18 this environmental impact analysis
19 pursuant to NEPA that you all undertake
20 certain procedures. And I'm going to move
21 into those now.

22 The first one, and I think the most
23 important one is when there is a conflict
24 in priorities, and you I think laid out
25 very nicely earlier this evening that

26

1 generally your purpose is to get the
2 highest and best seller and be very
3 transparent and meet regulatory processes,
4 but get it on the market.

5 And you are also identifying a very,
6 very aggressive timeline. My
7 recommendation first of all is to move
8 very slowly when we have this conflict in
9 law that we are talking about, so that we
10 can work out a solution in an
11 environmental analysis that meets the true
12 purpose of NEPA, which is to make informed
13 decisions to protect very important
14 resources which clearly exist and which
15 have a high government, federal government
16 recognition of their importance.

17 The second -- so move slowly.

18 The second thing that I'll point out,
19 and I very much liked to see within your
20 Federal Register announcement of the fact
21 that you are moving towards an
22 environmental impact statement, was that
23 you are interpreting the act under which
24 you are operating as the Homeland Security
25 Act on which you are making your sale as

26

1 you have the duty to represent and fulfill
2 important government interests.

3 And my point tonight is that the, an
4 important government interest that has
5 come up through a major collaborative
6 effort established pursuant to federal
7 law, endorsed by the Region 1 and Region 2
8 administrators is protection and
9 preservation of the assets on that
10 island.

11 The third point I want to make is
12 that that island as you have pointed out,
13 because it is a location with a lot of
14 very important but -- important research
15 that, you know, it doesn't allow people on
16 it, there's a lot that certainly on our
17 side of the world don't know about the
18 resources that are out there.

19 And because of its ecological
20 importance, it's clearly worth an entire
21 season at least of ecological study. And
22 there are many, many partners who are, I'm
23 sure will be willing to do that with you,
24 but to move forward as quickly as you are
25 recommending with a draft EIS submitted

26

1 this summer, simply will not allow that to
2 happen.

3 Take this season to really analyze
4 the importance of the values out there,
5 because they have been clearly identified
6 by no fewer than four US Fish and Wildlife
7 scientists who were involved in the
8 stewardship site selection process, by EPA
9 scientists and again by regional
10 administrators, et cetera.

11 And then the final, or maybe not
12 final, but an additional point which I
13 think is very important is to really open
14 up a dialogue about an adaptive re-use
15 opportunity.

16 One of the alternatives you talked
17 about and you've pointed out I think very
18 ably tonight, that there are areas of the
19 island that are already developed, already
20 being used, already in human use,
21 combination of the tanks you showed,
22 combination of the 50,000 square feet I
23 believe is commercial facility.

24 Obviously one would assume that they
25 will have very low ecological value.

26

1 Right?

2 But it is that balance of the open
3 property that we have discussed that
4 maintains that value.

5 And also, as you'll hear from other
6 groups, the fact that again it's been
7 identified, this whole region has been
8 identified for its ecological values, but
9 also for its potential recreation value.

10 So an adaptive re-use situation could
11 involve a possible sale of the areas that
12 are in human use with -- and then most
13 importantly a federal action by you to
14 sell the property pursuant to strict third
15 party conservation easements, which I'm
16 sure you are aware of, but for those in
17 the audience who aren't, they are
18 legally-binding restrictions on the land
19 that can be designed in a way that
20 prevents the kinds of damaging human
21 activities that will degrade these natural
22 resources, and actually allow and
23 encourage some of the potential habitat
24 recreation activities that may be able to
25 occur on that site as well.

26

1 So that is a critically important
2 dialogue that we want to open. I do want
3 to say that if you -- if you choose to
4 move strictly in the form of believing
5 that your mandate is simply to sell it and
6 sell it, you know, to the highest bidder,
7 and that the federal government does not
8 have any real policy role in determining
9 the future use of this property, then, I
10 believe our group and many others will be
11 very, very upset and perhaps this process
12 will extend far longer than any of us
13 would desire.

14 So I'm trying to begin a constructive
15 dialogue with your agency this evening. I
16 think it may be perhaps new territory for
17 all of us in this room.

18 I think what the beauty of law,
19 conflicting law is that it creates a
20 fertile opportunity for creative thought
21 and creative outcomes where, perhaps
22 conflicting on the surface, federal
23 policies and federal directives can be
24 brought together so that everyone perhaps
25 can live with the solution, and that

26

1 stewardship site can be protected in the
2 ways that are envisioned pursuant to the
3 National Estuary Program.

4 CINDY MINTER: Thank you,
5 Mr. Johnson.

6 CURTIS JOHNSON: Any questions or
7 comments? Or maybe this isn't the time.

8 I will submit written comments on
9 that. And I'm just going to share with
10 you one last thing which is the -- a map
11 of the stewardship sites, the inaugural
12 stewardship sites.

13 I just want to make sure I don't have
14 anything else, and I will again bring back
15 to you with some other materials. Thank
16 you.

17 CINDY MINTER: Appreciate it. Okay.
18 Our next speaker, Margaret Purnell.

19 I will mention if you have written
20 documents that you would like to submit,
21 you do not have to read them into the
22 record. You are welcome to.

23 You may just hand the document over
24 and we'll make sure it's part of the
25 record.

26

CT-10

1 MARGUERITE PURNELL: Thank you. I'm
2 dreadful at these things, so I apologize
3 in advance. My name is Margaret
4 Purnell.

5 I'm the director of Fisher's Island
6 Conservancy. Fisher's Island is on the
7 eastern part of Long Island Sound New
8 York.

9 I'm getting feedback. I'll go back
10 here.

11 The conservancy is a small nonprofit.
12 We are, our mission is dedicated to the
13 preservation of Fisher's Island's natural
14 resources.

15 I don't think that's working.

16 CINDY MINTER: Would you like to come
17 up to the microphone here?

18 MARGUERITE PURNELL: All right.
19 Thank you for your patience.

20 Fisher's Island, the Fisher's Island
21 Conservancy, the mission is to preserve
22 the natural resources of Fisher's Island
23 and the surrounding waters.

24 Fisher's Island is very lucky in the
25 sense that it is also one of the inaugural
26

1 stewardship sites.

2 And that is -- we are part of the
3 same geological formation, the marine that
4 forms the north fork of Long Island
5 continues out through Plum Island, through
6 the Gulls, the two Gull Islands, and then
7 through The Race and then Fisher's Island,
8 and actually ends up in Rhode Island
9 itself.

10 I'm sorry to say that we had very
11 short notice for this particular scoping
12 hearing, so I don't really have formal
13 comments tonight.

14 The proposal -- there's a proposal by
15 a group which is called Preserve Plum
16 Island Coalition. It would be certainly
17 consistent with the Fisher's Island
18 Conservancy's mission.

19 They are proposing that Plum Island
20 be considered as a national wildlife
21 refuge, and perhaps during the EIS process
22 that needs to be teased out of the
23 adaptive re-use options as a specific
24 option that would be looked at in closer
25 scrutiny.

26

1 We will be submitting additional
2 formal comments by June 2nd, and we look
3 forward to continued cooperation. Thank
4 you very much.

5 CINDY MINTER: Our next speaker, Fred
6 Grimsey.

7 We are adding another item from
8 Mr. Johnson, a resolution of the Long
9 Island Sound Study Policy Committee
10 concerning Long Island Sound
11 stewardship.

12 FRED GRIMSEY: Thank you for the
13 opportunity to speak. My name is Fred
14 Grimsey.

CT-11

15 I'm president of an environmental
16 organization on the Niantic River in
17 Waterford-East Lyme, called Save The
18 River-Save The Hills.

19 I want to thank Mr. Johnson for
20 saying in much more cogent form a lot of
21 the things that I would like to say.
22 Luckily I'm a member of the CAC and I've
23 attended the meetings for years trying to
24 get the Oswegatchie Hills on the in
25 Niantic River designated as one of these

26

1 sites.

2 In listening to Mr. Johnson, I said,
3 Fred, what do you need to talk for?

4 He said it so well.

5 So I decided I'd try to put a human
6 face on what he's talking about. I
7 retired about 25 years ago and started
8 sailing the east coast in a 33-foot
9 sailboat.

10 I've sailed from Matinicus Island off
11 the coast of Maine all the way down the
12 coast to the Chesapeake Bay. Spent a
13 summer on the Chesapeake Bay, came back,
14 spent other years going up the Hudson
15 River and spent summers on the lake.

16 In traveling the islands from the tip
17 all the way down to Smuttynose in the
18 Isles of Shoals, in spite of the fact that
19 I'm a retired ed engineer, I had a kind of
20 spiritual experience in pulling into these
21 islands and spending time swimming in the
22 bays, exploring the islands, that kind of
23 thing.

24 And what I'd like to communicate to
25 you guys is there's something even more

26

1 important than what we've been talking
2 about ecologically. There's a human
3 spiritual dimension to the preservation of
4 these kind of lands.

5 If you spent a couple days on
6 Matinicus Island the way I have, it's the
7 "easterlymost" island in the United
8 States.

9 It's way out in the gulf of Maine.
10 And it sort of puts you in touch with a
11 kind of primordial feeling that this lady
12 talked about and referred to.

13 And those islands that connect --
14 they once were one long piece of land, but
15 I guess about seven or 8,000 years ago
16 they broke through to form the islands.

17 I feel very strongly that the highest
18 and best use of Plum Island would be to
19 make it into a wildlife nature preserve.
20 I -- years ago I tried to get on the
21 island.

22 I anchored off and I tried to row
23 in, and I was discouraged from that
24 activity.

25 I have done that on Gull Island. You
26

1 are not supposed to do it on Gull Island,
2 and I've done it. And there's something
3 very different about that.

4 I was raised in New York City and did
5 my boating on the Jamaica Bay, which was
6 mostly polluted in those days.

7 So I really would like to get across
8 this -- the human side of what Mr. Johnson
9 was talking about.

10 He said it very well, and I enjoy
11 meetings of the citizens advisory
12 committee because of the good work and the
13 legal work that they are doing to protect
14 this kind of resource.

15 I hope that my organization can join
16 with the coalition that it is trying to
17 join together to encourage this use of
18 this island as a natural resource and as a
19 wildlife refuge. Thank you.

20 CINDY MINTER: Thank you. Thank you
21 for your comments tonight. Our next
22 speaker, Bill Peace.

23 We do have a microphone that we can
24 bring it to you if you'd like.

25 BILL PEACE: Let me introduce myself

26

CT-12

1 first. My name is Bill Peace. I'm a
2 selectman in Old Saybrook. I've been a
3 selectman now for 13, 14 years.

4 It's been a while. I want to thank
5 Chris Crider, first of all, for letting me
6 know there was a meeting tonight.

7 Apparently, this meeting and the
8 meeting that was held several years ago at
9 Saybrook Point, there was no notice to
10 elected officials.

11 I was disappointed with the outcome
12 of the meeting that was at Saybrook Point.

13 Is the mic working okay?

14 CINDY MINTER: Yes it is.

15 BILL PEACE: And let me tell you why.
16 You know, the idea to close Plum Island
17 and basically sell the property just
18 strikes me as being ludicrous.

19 And pyramid it on scientific
20 ignorance. I mean, I'm just absolutely
21 amazed by this. Right.

22 It affects our community too, I mean,
23 obviously quite frankly I'm a tree hugger,
24 and I would love to see at least half the
25 island preserved. I strongly support all

26

1 the groups that are for that.

2 But the fact of the town of Old
3 Saybrook could be losing at least losing
4 maybe 150 good jobs, you know, it's bad
5 enough when the State of Connecticut only
6 gives about 60 percent of our dollars back
7 from the federal government, but to be
8 shipping these jobs off to Kansas just
9 doesn't make sense.

10 I also understand that you have
11 similar facilities in downtown Atlanta.
12 There's no particular issue. But this
13 sort of the rush to judgment to close the
14 facility and rush to sell is, you know,
15 surprising to me in that regard.

16 What can one little selectman do to
17 overturn the wishes of Congress?

18 And quite frankly some of the
19 hyperbole I've heard from some of our
20 elected officials after the meeting a
21 couple years ago, I mean, the study of
22 science, people seem to have a fear of the
23 study of science, and I don't know why
24 they would chose to operate in
25 ignorance.

26

1 I've had the opportunity, I should
2 tell you, first of all, to go to Plum
3 Island at least twice. It's just an
4 ordinary research facility from my
5 perspective.

6 And just so you know the rest of my
7 skill, back in '58, I guess now we have to
8 be very truthful about our military
9 service, I was a PFC and I caught a course
10 in chemical, biological and radiological
11 warfare. That's not a heck of a
12 qualification.

13 I did read the book, Plum Island. I
14 think one of the reasons, the fear of the
15 community and the fear in our other
16 elected officials is because there's been
17 a little mystique and mystery about the
18 island.

19 If some years back half of the island
20 was opened up to public access, either a
21 national forest or national park of some
22 sort -- right? -- and people were -- more
23 people were given an opportunity to go
24 there, we wouldn't have gotten here.

25 But I have to say, with ten percent
26

1 unemployment in Connecticut, and we are
2 getting a short deal from the federal
3 government on return -- right? -- and our
4 state borrowing is a billion dollars and
5 it's sinking fast -- right? -- the fact
6 that our elected officials would just
7 stand by and let 150 jobs disappear, and
8 eventually that's what's going to
9 happen.

10 Under every scenario the facility
11 will be fully closed in maybe three years
12 or four years, five years, and the one in
13 Kansas, Kansas will embrace you guys, and
14 they're nice people and it's a nice
15 state.

16 I want to just get on the record that
17 at least one selectman is opposed to
18 closing the facility and selling the
19 island. And I think there is a middle
20 ground here, and that would be preserving
21 well over half the island.

22 I mean, from what I can see our
23 habitat is living quite happily out there,
24 and I would certainly love to see Congress
25 reconsider their action. I think it's
26

1 predicated on ignorance. thank you.

2 CINDY MINTER: Thank you. I will
3 point out just in terms of reference
4 material, the environmental documentation
5 on, for the prior actions for the
6 relocation facilities is available on
7 DHS's website, DHS.gov.

8 So that information is out there for
9 your review. Our focus again tonight is
10 on the sale of the property.

11 Our next speaker is Christopher
12 Mitchell.

13 CHRISTOPHER MITCHELL: I'll be brief.
14 My name is Christopher Mitchell. I live
15 in Lyme, Connecticut, I grew up in Old
16 Saybrook.

CT-13

17 To be honest, in full disclosure, I
18 currently work on Plum Island. I've
19 worked there for approximately almost 12
20 years. I can respect why the government
21 would want to sell that island. It is
22 beautiful.

23 I'm one of the guys that drives the
24 tour bus around the island when we do
25 tours. They would probably find many good
26

1 uses for that island.

2 Ever since this process started, it
3 seems to miss the element of the human
4 element of a lot of people losing their
5 jobs. And I respect the town selectman
6 for mentioning that.

7 I would have liked to have heard that
8 from the governor tonight also. I'm sure
9 she would feel the same way.

10 I feel that when I see meetings up at
11 Plum Island you have two general people up
12 there.

13 You have your government employees
14 who are pretty much guaranteed to find
15 work elsewhere, but you also do have a
16 tremendous amount of contract support
17 personnel like myself who would be out of
18 a job in eight years.

19 I'm currently 42 years old. I'm an
20 able-bodied seaman on a ferry boat that
21 goes back and forth, and I absolutely love
22 my job. But I can be perfectly honest
23 with you.

24 When I turn 50 I'm not going to be
25 top on somebody's list for another job as

26

1 an able-bodied seaman. I won't be as
2 strong, I won't be as tall.

3 But it's just something I hope the
4 government considers when they let an
5 island like this go and they move to
6 Kansas, and all those people in Kansas get
7 hired and they are happy, what about the
8 people that dedicated 12 years plus, and
9 there's a lot of us that have many more
10 years than me, out on an island?

11 You know, believe me, the mission
12 that they do out there, when they get that
13 notice, thank you, Chris, for your
14 support, but you are not needed anymore.

15 Thank you for giving me the
16 opportunity to speak. Thank you.

17 CINDY MINTER: That concludes the
18 list of individuals who have registered to
19 speak tonight.

20 Are there additional members of our
21 audience who would like to make some
22 comments?

23 Please state your name and where you
24 are from.

25 DAVID SUTHERLAND: Sure. I just
26

1 wanted to ask a couple of questions, if I
2 could.

3 I'm not sure if you'll be able to
4 answer them.

5 My name is David Sutherland, and I'm
6 with the Nature Conservancy Connecticut
7 Chapter.

8 One of my colleagues will be
9 submitting some comments at tomorrow
10 night's meeting over in Long Island.

11 But a couple questions that I had.
12 In terms of the schedule for the sale once
13 you finish the EIS, I'm wondering if --
14 what kind of latitude GSA and DHS have in
15 terms of stalling a sale until it's
16 cleared that the facility in Kansas will
17 actually be constructed and completed.

18 As I understand it, there's been
19 some -- some types of stall in the
20 progress of that facility. I'm not sure
21 if my information is up to date or not.

22 But I'd be curious as to what kind
23 of -- because it would be a real tragedy
24 if this facility were closed down, or I
25 guess the island, you couldn't sell it

26

1 until after it had been closed down, I
2 presume, but I'm wondering about any
3 discretion in that regard.

4 And the second question I would have,
5 I'm not familiar with New York law, but
6 I'm wondering if the town involved now
7 would be able to establish or institute
8 zoning for the island prior to the sale?

9 I'm sure it wouldn't go into effect
10 because you folks still own it, but do
11 they have to wait until it's sold, or can
12 they go in and do zoning now?

13 Those are my questions. Thank you.

14 CINDY MINTER: Thank you. Very good
15 questions.

16 I believe the woman in the green
17 sweater --

18 MELLIE PLOSZEY: I'm Mellie Ploszey,
19 I live here in Old Saybrook.

CT-15

20 I have a couple questions. Having
21 been on the planning commission here in
22 town for a few years, as far as Bell Bay,
23 how much is usable, I heard you say
24 there's wetlands.

25 You are going to sell a piece of
26

1 property that's 840 acres, and I'm not
2 sure exactly what you have out there.

3 Another question that I have, has
4 anybody considered a windmill type of farm
5 to be added to this.

6 Nantucket, I know there's
7 regulations, people don't like it, but as
8 we are here tonight in this auditorium, we
9 have an oil slick that who knows where
10 it's going to go.

11 I really think that the federal
12 government should look at this as an
13 opportunity of maybe using it as a
14 windmill farm versus oil or oil
15 terminals.

16 I'm not sure what year, because it
17 was prior to us moving to Old Saybrook,
18 and I've been here now 30 plus years, that
19 at one point I heard that at the mouth of
20 the Connecticut River there was
21 consideration for oil terminals to be
22 done, but because of the sand bar it
23 wasn't feasible.

24 So when you say you are going to sell
25 a piece of property and you say you are
26

1 going to sell 840 acres, there's a very,
2 very big question mark as to who, why,
3 where, when, what's going to be
4 developed.

5 Thank you.

6 CINDY MINTER: Could you please
7 pronounce your last name slower for us.

8 MELLIE PLOSZEY: Ploszey.

9 CINDY MINTER: Ploszey. Thank you.

10 Any other additional comments
11 tonight?

12 Yes.

13 CHARLES HALBING: My name is Charles
14 Halbing. I live on Saybrook Point. I
15 have a quick question.

CT-16

16 Is there any mechanism here where
17 this property can be turned over to the
18 natural -- the national park system?

19 CINDY MINTER: We will address that
20 comment in the environmental
21 documentation.

22 CHARLES HALBING: I've had a tour of
23 the place and it's really ideal for a
24 national park.

25 Those buildings at Fort Terry could

26

1 be restored and used. That's it. Thank
2 you.

3 CINDY MINTER: Appreciate that
4 comment. Thank you very much.

5 Any other comments tonight?

6 Okay. We'll go back to Mr.
7 Johnson.

8 CURTIS JOHNSON: I'll keep this very
9 brief. I just want to acknowledge my
10 friend, Marguerite Purnell.

11 And I think what she suggested, which
12 is some kind of adaptive re-use that ends
13 up with the vast majority transferred over
14 to Fish and Wildlife is a very, very
15 good, solid thing to be teasing out.
16 Thank you.

17 CINDY MINTER: Do we have anyone else
18 that wishes to comment tonight?

19 Again, I remind you that written
20 comments will be received up until June
21 the 2nd. We'll also be having a second
22 public scoping meeting tomorrow night.

23 If you need information about that,
24 please let us know. Thank you very much
25 for attending. The information you

26

1 provided tonight was extremely
2 informative.

3

4 (THEREUPON, THE HEARING WAS CONCLUDED

5 AT 8:00 P.M.)

6

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that I am a Notary Public,
in and for the State of Connecticut, duly
commissioned and qualified to administer oaths.

I further certify that said meeting was taken
by me stenographically and reduced to typewriting
under my direction, and the foregoing is a true and
accurate transcript of the meeting.

I further certify that I am neither of
counsel nor attorney to any of the parties to said
cause, nor am I an employee of any party to said
cause, nor am I interested in the outcome of said
cause.

Witness my hand and seal as Notary Public
this _____ day of _____ , 2010.

Clifford Edwards

Notary Public

My commission expires: 9/30/2011

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NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
SCOPING MEETING

RE: SALE OF PLUM ISLAND

May 20, 2010
6:30 p.m.

720 Front Street
Greenport, New York

MINUTES OF HEARING

Lisa H. MacDonald, RPR
Court Reporter

1 Meeting - May 20, 2010

2 MS. MINTER: Good evening,
3 ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for
4 coming tonight. Just as a couple of
5 housekeeping items, if you have
6 brought a cell phone with you, if you
7 could please mute it or turn it off
8 as a courtesy to your neighbor, I
9 would appreciate it.

10 My name is Cindy Minter and
11 I'm with Mactec Engineering &
12 Consulting. We are a consulting firm
13 assisting the General Services
14 Administration on the preparation of
15 the Environmental Impact Statement
16 for the sale of Plum Island. I will
17 be the moderator for this evening's
18 event.

19 If you haven't had a chance
20 to sign in, I would ask you to please
21 do so. This helps us to stay in
22 contact with you for future
23 information regarding the preparation
24 of this environmental document.

25 This meeting is being held

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2 in accordance with the provisions for
3 the National Environmental Policy
4 Act. Notice of this scoping meeting
5 for the environmental documentation
6 for the sale of Plum Island has been
7 published in the Federal Register,
8 local newspapers, including the
9 Harbor News, Shoreline Times in
10 Connecticut, the Suffolk Times and
11 Newsday in New York, as well as on
12 the project website.

13 Tonight our focus is on
14 the -- is related to the sale of Plum
15 Island. Prior federal actions,
16 including those related to ongoing
17 cleanup or the change of use of
18 property by Department of Homeland
19 Security are not part of tonight's
20 focus.

21 I would like to recognize
22 the members of our team who are here
23 tonight. With GSA we have John
24 Dugan, John Kelly, Phil Youngberg,
25 Paula Santangelo and Gabrielle

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2 Siegel.

3 With the Department of
4 Homeland Security, we have Dana
5 Bouley and Kristine Garland.

6 And then with Mactec,
7 myself, Mark Stelmack and Josh
8 Jenkins.

9 We also have officials from
10 the Town of Southold and we also have
11 a representative from Tim Bishop's
12 office.

13 Do we have any other elected
14 officials who wish to be recognized
15 tonight?

16 MS. VITALE: My name is
17 Nicole Vitale. I'm representing
18 Assemblyman Marc Alessi.

19 MS. MINTER: Can you repeat
20 that?

21 MS. VITALE: I'm
22 representing Assemblyman Marc Alessi.

23 MS. MINTER: Thank you.

24 Your comments tonight are
25 being transcribed by our court

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2 reporter, Lisa, which is why I may
3 ask you to repeat something if I feel
4 it might not be clear for her.

5 I will also note that we
6 have several representatives of the
7 media in the room with us tonight, as
8 well.

9 Our format tonight will be a
10 30 minute presentation followed by at
11 that point we will open it up for
12 your comments to be recorded into the
13 document.

14 You may -- you may register
15 as a speaker at the time when you
16 signed in. If you've forgotten to do
17 that and you would like to speak, we
18 will try and do it in an order and
19 then we will take additional comments
20 from the floor.

21 Tonight we invite you to put
22 in your comments on the scope of the
23 environmental documentation. Your
24 comments will be used to assist GSA
25 in preparing the environmental

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2 document. Answers to many of your
3 questions and concerns will be
4 addressed at a later date as we
5 progress in that environmental
6 document. This is a scoping meeting
7 to get those issues out on the table.
8 We are really here tonight to listen
9 to you, although we will be providing
10 you with some background on the
11 project.

12 You may provide your
13 comments tonight verbally and in
14 writing. We'll take written
15 comments, as well. We have comment
16 cards available to you if you need
17 one.

18 For those of you that were
19 with us last evening, you do not need
20 to resubmit your comments. They will
21 be used as part of the EIS process,
22 as well as any comments that we get
23 tonight.

24 Printed material may be
25 submitted for the record, but does

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2 not need to be read into the record.

3 You're welcome to mail or e-mail your

4 comments to GSA after the meeting at

5 the e-mail address that's in the

6 Frequently Asked Questions and will

7 be up on a slide very shortly.

8 Scoping comments must be received by

9 June the 2nd.

10 With that, we are going to

11 begin our presentation tonight with

12 Mr. Dana Bouley. He's going to

13 provide you with recent history of

14 the Plum Island facilities.

15 MR. BOULEY: Good evening.

16 We thank you very much for having us

17 here.

18 Basically what I'd like to

19 do first is introduce myself again.

20 I'm Dana Bouley and I am the Chief

21 Administrative Officer for the

22 Department of Homeland Security and

23 the Director of Science and

24 Technology. Basically what I do is I

25 have general purview over the

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2 facilities for all of science and
3 technology and in particular Plum
4 Island.

5 So with that, what I'm going
6 to do again is give you a little
7 insight as to the history. We'll do
8 it as a chronological review and then
9 we'll talk a little about Plum Island
10 generally and so for those people
11 that have lived in town for longer
12 than I've been here, I'm sure that
13 you'll probably know this history far
14 better than me, so again I will go
15 through this and at that time I will
16 turn it over to our next speaker.

17 So a little about the
18 history, itself. Again, prior to --
19 prior to the government assuming
20 ownership, the land basically was
21 private ownership and it was
22 agriculture in nature. Around 1829
23 was our first venture, the
24 government's first venture and
25 purchase of give or take about three

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2 acres of land. That originally was
3 for the construction of a lighthouse
4 and that followed some 40 years
5 later, in 1869 and for those people
6 who aren't familiar with the
7 lighthouse, it's the large stone
8 structure, cast iron cupula, et
9 cetera and, again, it's a very
10 historic building well known to a lot
11 of the locals and for those people
12 who have the occasion to pass by.

13 1898 actually became the
14 point at which the U.S. Army assumed
15 ownership of the island and it began
16 a long development of the Fort Terry
17 structures. For those people who are
18 not acquainted with the Coastal
19 Defense System, Fort Terry, which was
20 part of that, this is an extensive
21 system extending from New England
22 cascading down into the Mid-Atlantic
23 and again it is very comprehensive in
24 nature of which it was established
25 primarily during the Spanish American

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2 War and it was also used during World
3 War II. So, again, overall it was
4 very significant in the part that it
5 played during both those particular
6 wars and overall in the Coastal
7 Defense System.

8 2003 -- excuse me. In 1954,
9 the property was transferred to USDA
10 and at that time they began the
11 research portion of their overall
12 work. Research at this point was
13 dedicated specifically to foot and
14 mouth disease and that was the
15 primary element of their research
16 overall.

17 2003, just after the
18 inception of Department of Homeland
19 Defense, the island was assumed by
20 the Department of Homeland of which
21 they began work in cooperation with
22 USDA.

23 So, again, just a quick very
24 high level perspective and
25 chronological history of what was

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2 going on with the island give or take
3 about 181 years worth of ownership by
4 the government.

5 Talking a little
6 specifically about Plum Island, as
7 noted, USDA operates a portion of the
8 island through their agricultural
9 research group and the Animal and
10 Plant Health Inspection Service,
11 APHIS specifically and they do this
12 again in cooperation and under the
13 directorship of DHS.

14 Plum Island Animal Disease
15 Center consists of multiple
16 structures. For those people that
17 have had an opportunity to go out to
18 the island and investigate and,
19 again, off to my right you can see a
20 number of those structures and for
21 those people that had an opportunity
22 to mill around, again, take a look.
23 It's somewhat surprising, it's
24 somewhat surprising at the
25 development on the island in terms of

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2 maturity, in terms of diversity. We
3 have industrialized facilities out
4 there. We have the research
5 laboratory. We also have a harbor in
6 which people I'm sure are very
7 familiar with and then we have again
8 open land, but take into account that
9 over the period of 181 years, this
10 land has been also utilized in
11 various forms and so that which
12 remains pristine has possibly been
13 used for something during that
14 period, but overall, again, 840 acres
15 of land on the island.

16 So, again, it's something
17 that is of reasonable significance
18 and for the most part, again, it has
19 been dedicated during that 181
20 land -- 181 years for specific and
21 very particular purposes.

22 The last part of the
23 ownership for DHS right now is for
24 9.5 acres of land just located down
25 to the east of us of which now

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2 currently supports the harbor for the
3 transportation vehicles which bring
4 people back and forth not only from
5 Connecticut, but also from the island
6 and, again, supports some of our
7 other buildings. Again, primarily
8 these are service buildings.

9 So that in a nutshell gives
10 you some idea as to history, as well
11 as some of the structures of the
12 island.

13 John Kelly, who will be up
14 here next, again, will go into more
15 depth and give you a greater
16 understanding as to the facilities,
17 the infrastructure, et cetera and I
18 guess maybe perhaps to that point the
19 only thing I did miss is something
20 that's very, very important is that
21 the island stands pretty much on its
22 own relative to any type of required
23 infrastructure.

24 On the island there is a
25 water treatment. There's also wells

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2 primarily for those people that
3 recognize the water tower. There's
4 also a treatment plant out there.
5 There's multiple miles of roads, as
6 well as sewers, storm water and so,
7 again, just emphasizing the fact that
8 the island is reasonably well
9 developed and reasonably well
10 maintained at this point.

11 So without further ado, I'm
12 turning this over to Mr. Kelly who
13 will continue the information
14 session.

15 MR. KELLY: Thank you, Dana.

16 Good evening. My name is
17 John Kelly. I'm the Director of
18 GSA's Property Scoping Division. I
19 also thank you for coming tonight and
20 sharing your comments on the proposed
21 sale of Plum Island.

22 Tonight I'll be reviewing
23 the authority for the sale, GSA and
24 its role, ongoing due diligence
25 efforts, necessary environmental

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2 reviews and the marketing and sale of
3 the property.

4 In 2008, Congress enacted
5 Public Law 110-329 which mandated the
6 sale of Plum Island if the Animal
7 Disease Commission was relocated to
8 another site. The proceeds from the
9 sale will be used to offset the cost
10 of the move.

11 In 2009, the Department of
12 Homeland Security made the decision
13 to locate the new facility in
14 Manhattan, Kansas. The Plum Island
15 property will continue to support the
16 current operations until the new
17 National Bio and Agro Defense
18 facility, NBAF, is completed.
19 Currently the completion date is
20 projected for 2018. The decision to
21 locate NBAF in Kansas and not on Plum
22 Island set in motion this sale
23 process and brought about GSA's
24 involvement in the project, which is
25 why we are here this evening to talk

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2 about the sale of the Plum Island
3 property.

4 Mark, next slide, please.

5 For those of you not
6 familiar with GSA, it is the federal
7 government's real estate organization
8 and its property division handles
9 this division of unneeded federal
10 property government wide.

11 In addition to disposing of
12 unneeded property, GSA consults on
13 asset management issues. For over 60
14 years, GSA has successfully sold a
15 wide range of government properties
16 as developed in the expertise in this
17 field and a thorough understanding of
18 the activities and processes
19 necessary for such sales.

20 One of the most important
21 roles for GSA is to ensure the sales
22 program and process is equitable,
23 transparent and competitive. For
24 that end we engage in an open process
25 and are committed to sharing the

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2 results of our efforts throughout the
3 process.

4 Mark.

5 In regard to the sale of
6 Plum Island, federally GSA is charged
7 with facilitating the orderly
8 transition of this asset from federal
9 ownership by navigating through a
10 host of laws, regulations and
11 policies that safeguard the value of
12 the asset, protect resources, require
13 informed decision making and promote
14 transparency and collaboration.

15 GSA is the lead agency for
16 all activities necessary to bring
17 this asset to the marketplace,
18 including characterization of
19 environmental conditions, preparation
20 to distribute the terms of sale and
21 market materials and ultimately the
22 execution of conveyance documents.

23 Hopefully most of you had an
24 opportunity to review the slides here
25 this morning and this evening, the

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2 handouts, as well as the poster
3 boards and perhaps some of you have
4 had the opportunity to visit the
5 island.

6 In any event, I'm sure you'd
7 all agree this is a very complex
8 piece of real estate that will
9 generate some bit of interest for a
10 wide variety of people. It is
11 essential that we engage these
12 entities with information that is
13 comprehensive, accurate, timely and
14 responsive to their respective areas
15 of interest. We could not simply put
16 up a sale sign on the property and
17 wait for bids.

18 To go into market without
19 the full understanding of the asset
20 is in no one's best interest. It's
21 not how GSA approaches the sale of
22 federal property. To gather and
23 compile this required information,
24 GSA, in partnership with DHS, will be
25 engaging in several departmental

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2 processes. In particular, a due
3 diligence review, regulatory
4 compliance actions and marketing and
5 sale. I'll review each of these on
6 the following slides.

7 As Dana indicated, in
8 addition to the 848 acre island, the
9 9 and-a-half acrea Orient Point
10 support facility and the personal
11 properties, such as the ferries, will
12 be included in review as they, too,
13 will be included in the sale
14 offering.

15 Mark.

16 One of the first levels to
17 review is the basic due diligence,
18 understand the baseline condition of
19 the real property asset, its physical
20 condition, unique features,
21 capacities and strengths. This
22 review will identify areas that need
23 further or more targeted review. Not
24 only is this information fundamental
25 to developing a sound marketing

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2 strategy, it will be of critical
3 importance to any potential buyers to
4 understand what they're buying.

5 As Dana indicated, over the
6 years the island has supported a
7 broad range of uses including
8 agricultural, administrative,
9 research, housing and military
10 operations. These uses resulted in
11 significant development across the
12 island and today the island is
13 essentially self-sufficient. It has
14 established infrastructure, a diverse
15 mix of buildings, such as the
16 historic lighthouse, along with a
17 65,000 square foot administration
18 building and other improvements like
19 the two harbors and parking areas.

20 On the island there are four
21 miles of paved roads, eight miles of
22 gravel roads. Utilities include
23 undersea cables for power and
24 communication, a power plant with
25 backup generators and tank farm,

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2 freshwater wells, water distribution
3 system, as well as a waste water
4 treatment facility. All the
5 utilities are in good condition and
6 are currently supporting a range of
7 future uses.

8 In addition to the built
9 environment, there are areas of
10 wetlands, open space, water tracks,
11 over six miles of coastline that
12 offer sandy beaches along Gardiner's
13 Bay and a rocky shoreline along the
14 sound. The island has elevations at
15 sea level and 90 feet.

16 We reviewed the title,
17 certainly an interesting history and
18 to gather information on the use of
19 the various structures, utility
20 systems and personal property. Once
21 completed, much of this information
22 will be incorporated into the
23 regulatory review process and
24 ultimately into the marketing
25 strategy.

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2 Mark.

3 Since we are dealing with
4 federal government, it was a
5 well-established regulatory framework
6 designed to safeguard the human
7 environment, the natural, coastal and
8 historic resources when the property
9 is conveyed to federal ownership.
10 These laws and regulations not only
11 require significant resource issues,
12 they also require consultation with
13 several regulatory officials of the
14 federal, state, county and local
15 level.

16 One such law is the Natural
17 Environmental Policy Act, which is
18 the basis for tonight's scoping
19 meeting. Josh will be discussing
20 that in greater detail with you this
21 evening.

22 In conjunction with the NEPA
23 analysis, GSA, in partnership with
24 DHS, will be engaging in several
25 other regulatory compliance efforts

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2 to protect historic resources, assess
3 wetlands, consider effects on the
4 coastal zone, determine the presence
5 of threatened or endangered species
6 and assure the property is conveyed
7 in the manner that's protecting the
8 human health and the environment and
9 if necessary take appropriate actions
10 to remediate hazardous materials and
11 substances.

12 Each of these mandated
13 reviews has its own tailored process
14 and compliance criteria that must be
15 adhered to before GSA can convey
16 title. Once sufficient information
17 is collected from the environment and
18 due diligence reviews, we will
19 commence the formal marketing
20 process.

21 Mark.

22 The knowledge gained from
23 the comprehensive due diligence and
24 environmental reviews will allow GSA
25 to develop a suitable and targeted

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2 marketing strategy that fully
3 discloses the property's physical
4 condition, its challenges and
5 opportunities.

6 Additionally, any
7 restrictions or mitigation commitment
8 resulting from the preceding reviews
9 may impact the future use of the
10 property will be included in the
11 terms of sale and made part of the
12 marketing and outreach efforts.

13 As I mentioned earlier,
14 GSA's responsibility is to compile
15 all relevant property and
16 environmental information in a manner
17 that revokes responsive to all
18 potential inquiries, whether it be to
19 address regulatory concerns, receive
20 environment risks, utility
21 capacities, title questions or
22 similar concerns.

23 The more informative we
24 have, the more successful we will be
25 in reducing perceived market risks

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2 and ultimately promoting maximum
3 competition to achieve the greatest
4 return for these assets.

5 We'll be contracting with an
6 experienced national real estate firm
7 to compliment our own marketing
8 efforts and to assist in the
9 development and execution of the
10 marketing strategy. Once the
11 marketing gets underway, GSA will
12 utilize several outreach methods to
13 ensure the property information is
14 readily available, including
15 publication of marketing documents,
16 establishing a marketing outreach
17 office at the Orient Point facility
18 and regular updates to the dedicated
19 Plum Island website.

20 In addition to finding
21 information, the GSA will be
22 available to answer questions about
23 the property and sale process.

24 We'll be working with DHS
25 over the next several weeks to

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2 develop a sale schedule. Once
3 finalized, we'll make that
4 information available.

5 Mark.

6 Unlike federal property --
7 excuse me. Unlike privately owned
8 property, federal property is not
9 subject to taxation or zoning. So
10 while the island property has been
11 actively used by the government for
12 over 100 years for a variety of
13 purposes, it's never been zoned or
14 had a zoning designation. This
15 certainly limits GSA's ability to
16 answer questions about allowable uses
17 once the property leaves federal
18 ownership.

19 This for use issue is
20 further highlighted by the fact that
21 we are selling such a complex, unique
22 piece of real estate. Essentially a
23 self-sufficient island of
24 considerable size and established
25 infrastructure, a variety of terrain,

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2 an array of historic and modern
3 improvements. There's a pretty
4 substantial utility system. I think
5 it's safe to assume there's not a
6 comparable property anywhere in the
7 region.

8 Once the property does leave
9 federal ownership, much like other
10 privately owned property, it is
11 subject to all applicable
12 environmental and land use
13 regulations. Given this aspect of
14 federal property, the perspective
15 bidders will be strongly advised to
16 undertake their own due diligence,
17 including engaging planning officials
18 to determine if their future vision
19 for the property is consistent and
20 compatible with any proposed zoning
21 or other reuse considerations prior
22 to bidding on the property.

23 GSA has no authority to
24 regulate future land uses. The
25 state, county or local governments

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2 will all have rules in guiding the
3 future reuse of this property.

4 GSA recognizes this
5 important role and is committed to
6 collaborate with the state, county
7 and town throughout the sale process.
8 We are committed to sharing all
9 relevant information and support all
10 levels of government in preparing for
11 the sale of property in its
12 transition from federal ownership.

13 It is our expectation that
14 the information we produce in our due
15 diligence, regulatory compliance and
16 marketing efforts will be of great
17 value to these officials as they
18 prepare for a new relationship with
19 this property.

20 While we cannot guarantee
21 the outcome of any competitive
22 process, we can guarantee a process
23 that promotes transparency and
24 collaboration.

25 Thank you again for your

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2 interest and time this evening. Josh
3 will now be talking about the
4 process.

5 MR. JENKINS: Thanks, John.

6 Again, my name is Josh
7 Jenkins. I'm with Mactec Engineering
8 & Consulting. Mactec is working with
9 GSA on this project to support the
10 EIS process and I serve as Mactec's
11 lead coordinator for this project.

12 I want to talk again, as
13 John said, a little bit about the EIS
14 process. Why is an EIS being
15 prepared? Well, an EIS was selected
16 for this project because it provides
17 the highest level of analysis with
18 the greatest opportunity for input by
19 interested parties before decisions
20 and commitments are made. It will
21 examine impacts from the sale of Plum
22 Island to both the natural and human
23 environment. It will also be
24 prepared in draft form, circulated
25 for public comment, then issued as

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2 final. The EIS will include
3 responses to agency and public
4 comments that are received during the
5 scoping process, as well as during
6 those reviewed during the draft EIS.
7 At the completion of the final EIS,
8 GSA will issue a record of decision,
9 ROD. The ROD will document GSA's
10 final action decision.

11 Now, under NEPA, the purpose
12 of this EIS is to examine the effects
13 associated with the anticipated sale
14 of Plum Island and support facility
15 at Orient Point.

16 Next slide.

17 NEPA was passed in 1969 and
18 serves as a national charter for the
19 protection of the environment. It
20 provides the framework for evaluating
21 the consequences of major federal
22 actions that may affect the
23 environment.

24 The EIS process for the sale
25 of Plum Island includes a public

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2 scoping period, which includes
3 yesterday's meeting in Connecticut
4 and this public meeting tonight, as
5 well as early coordination with
6 federal, state and local agencies.
7 Our next step is to develop the draft
8 EIS, which will incorporate
9 scientific and technical data about
10 Plum Island, as well as the comments
11 received during the scoping period.
12 The draft EIS will then be made
13 available for review to interested
14 parties and the comments received
15 will be addressed in the final EIS.
16 GSA will then make a formal record of
17 decision.

18 Next slide.

19 NEPA encourages federal
20 agencies to explore alternatives
21 where possible with the objective of
22 eliminating or lessening
23 environmental impacts. It also
24 provides for the analysis of the no
25 action alternative, which essentially

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2 provides a baseline of potential
3 impacts of the status quo versus any
4 changes. The no action alternative
5 serves as a baseline for comparison
6 to the alternatives. In this case,
7 the no action alternative cannot be
8 selected because it does not meet the
9 project purpose and need of selling
10 the property as mandated by Act of
11 Congress.

12 The action alternative for
13 this project is the sale of Plum
14 Island by GSA. As noted, DHS will
15 continue operations at the existing
16 facilities until the new inbound
17 facility in Kansas is operational.
18 The action alternative will further
19 be refined into a series of
20 reasonably foreseeable land use
21 options. In response to the lack of
22 certainty concerning future reuse of
23 property, the EIS will identify
24 reasonable land use options that
25 could result upon the sale of the

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2 property.

3 Next slide.

4 The three proposed land use
5 options for action alternative
6 include adaptive reuse, which would
7 use the existing facilities and
8 infrastructure on the island for
9 commercial and other uses.

10 A second option would be to
11 evaluate land use and zoning based
12 upon other comparable and neighboring
13 islands emphasizing low density
14 development.

15 And then a third option
16 would be to evaluate land use and
17 zoning based on a higher density
18 development.

19 These options are only draft
20 at this point and we expect to revise
21 and refine them as the scoping
22 process progresses. Other options
23 for the action alternative may be
24 evaluated as a result of the scoping
25 process and we invite you to give us

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2 your input; however, GSA has no
3 authority to determine future land
4 uses so at this time we do not know
5 who will be purchasing the property,
6 as John said, or what their intended
7 land uses would be. When the
8 property leaves federal ownership,
9 any future reuse would be the subject
10 to all local, state and federal
11 permitting, environmental and land
12 use approvals and regulations.

13 Next slide.

14 The EIS will identify
15 potential impacts on resources listed
16 in the slide that could occur as a
17 result of the sale. For potentially
18 significant impacts, the EIS may
19 determine mitigation measures to
20 reduce these impacts where feasible.
21 If other significant resources are
22 identified as part of this scoping
23 process or during the scoping
24 process, they would be considered as
25 well. Again, your comments on this

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2 particular item are invited.

3 Next slide.

4 The natural environment is
5 one of the larger resources and the
6 following slides will show a brief
7 summary of some of the resources that
8 the EIS will consider. For the
9 natural environment, the EIS will
10 evaluate the existing biological
11 resources on the island, which
12 consist of a diverse coastal
13 ecosystem. GSA will consider
14 protected plants and animals,
15 wildlife and wildlife habitat and the
16 coastal and marine resources that may
17 occur on or in the vicinity of the
18 island. GSA has initiated
19 coordination with the U.S. Fish &
20 Wildlife Service, the National Marine
21 Fishery Service and the State of New
22 York.

23 GSA will also consider
24 potential impacts to geology and
25 soils on the island, as well as steep

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2 slopes and bluffs that may restrict
3 development in certain areas.

4 Plum Island also has an
5 aquifer beneath it that is currently
6 used as the source of water for the
7 island.

8 Next slide.

9 Additional environmental
10 resources will be addressed to
11 include air quality, noise and water
12 resources. These resources could be
13 affected by future uses of the
14 island. The EIS will identify
15 current conditions and develop
16 possible scenarios for future reuse
17 and determine how these future
18 scenarios may affect the national
19 environment.

20 Next slide.

21 As part of the NEPA process,
22 GSA must determine if the proposed
23 action would affect any resources
24 listed on or eligible for the
25 National Register of Historic Places.

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2 These resources include the Plum
3 Island Lighthouse, structures and
4 batteries related to Fort Terry, as
5 well as other potential --
6 potentially historic structures and
7 prehistoric archaeological sites.

8 Again, as with the natural
9 resources, GSA has initiated
10 coordination with the State of New
11 York regarding potential historic and
12 archaeological resources.

13 Next slide.

14 There are a number of
15 ongoing or completed hazardous waste
16 cleanups located on Plum Island. The
17 status of these sites, as well as any
18 resultant reuse restrictions will be
19 noted in the EIS.

20 Also, the existing
21 infrastructure and future
22 infrastructure upgrades or additions
23 will be considered. The island has
24 existing utilities as previously
25 mentioned, including water, waste

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2 water, fuel oil, electrical and
3 communication services. Island roads
4 and the ferry services will be a part
5 of the discussion. Future reuse
6 could require upgrades of these
7 services or development of additional
8 services.

9 Potential zoning for Plum
10 Island will be evaluated by working
11 with the Town of Southold to
12 determine potential land uses and
13 zoning.

14 Next slide.

15 The EIS will evaluate
16 socioeconomic factors, such as
17 impacts to the local economy, medical
18 services, schools and housing demand.
19 Also, the EIS will discuss potential
20 impacts of the action alternative to
21 low income and minority populations.
22 Additionally, traffic and
23 transportation demands, including
24 change in traffic or commuting
25 patterns or modes will be evaluated.

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2 Waste management issues would be
3 addressed, including potential
4 changes or upgrades to the existing
5 waste water treatment facility on the
6 island.

7 Next slide.

8 Here is a summary of the
9 proposed NEPA EIS scheduled for this
10 project. The notice of intent to
11 prepare the EIS was published in the
12 Federal Register on March 18th of
13 this year. That served as the
14 official kickoff to this process. We
15 are now in the scoping phase of the
16 project where we are asking you to
17 provide comments on the project. We
18 ask that you get us any comments by
19 June 2, 2010 so that we are able to
20 incorporate substantive comments into
21 the draft EIS.

22 After the scoping process is
23 completed, the team will prepare the
24 draft EIS during the summer. The
25 draft EIS should be available during

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2 late summer of this year. Once the
3 draft EIS is complete, it will be
4 made available for public comments
5 for a period of 45 days.

6 Also during this time
7 period, GSA will conduct another
8 public meeting so that you again will
9 have an opportunity to speak out and
10 issue your comments on the draft EIS.
11 After the public comment period is
12 complete, we will respond to all
13 substantive comments that are
14 received and then prepare the final
15 EIS, which should be completed in the
16 fall. Once the final EIS is
17 completed, GSA will prepare the
18 record of decision to document that
19 decision.

20 MS. MINTER: Thank you,
21 Josh.

22 As a clarifying statement,
23 the no action alternative does serve
24 as a baseline of comparison for the
25 alternatives, but in this case the no

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2 action alternative cannot be selected
3 because it does not meet the project
4 purpose and need of selling the
5 property as mandated by an Act of
6 Congress.

7 With that, we are going to
8 start the public comment process.
9 Thank you for being patient with us
10 for this presentation. As a
11 reminder, you will have an
12 opportunity to submit your comments
13 verbally tonight. You may also
14 submit them in writing. You may mail
15 your comments to Phil Youngberg at
16 GSA. Again, we need to have your
17 comments by June the 2nd.

18 We are going to open the
19 floor for public comments. I
20 actually have two chairs next to a
21 microphone. I'm going to call two
22 speakers at a time so you can make
23 your way. You can have one speaker
24 lined up after another.

25 Because we got such a good

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2 turnout tonight, we are actually
3 going to limit the initial round of
4 comments to five minutes, but you can
5 come back as many times as you'd like
6 once we've had everybody through that
7 initial round.

8 With that, I'm going to
9 start with our first speaker,
10 Ms. Jane Finalborgo and following
11 Jane is Mr. Scott Russell.

12 We actually have a
13 microphone back there. Thank you.

14 MS. FINALBORGO: Can you
15 hear me? Is that okay?

NY-3

16 Okay. My name is Jane
17 Finalborgo. I'm here tonight
18 representing Congressman Tim Bishop.
19 I have a statement that he has given
20 me to read to you.

21 I would like to thank the
22 General Services Administration and
23 Department of Homeland Security for
24 holding tonight's scoping meeting and
25 Greenport High School for serving as

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2 host.

3 I also thank everyone from
4 this community who has come tonight
5 to share their thoughts on the future
6 of Plum Island. I apologize that
7 because of votes tonight in
8 Washington, D.C. I cannot be there in
9 person.

10 The process involved with
11 the sale of Plum Island and the
12 construction of the National Bio and
13 Agro Defense facility known as NBAF
14 in Manhattan, Kansas could be given
15 as Exhibit A in why so many people
16 are skeptical about government.

17 Given our nation's mounting
18 budget deficits and the need to
19 balance our spending priorities, many
20 have questioned the wisdom of
21 spending over 650,000,000 of taxpayer
22 dollars to create a massive new
23 research facility that will duplicate
24 many of the functions currently
25 served by Plum Island and other

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2 existing facilities.

3 I believe that there are
4 more cost effective solutions than
5 the NBAF to meet the nation's agro
6 defense research needs, including
7 continuing efforts to modernize
8 existing facilities around the
9 country.

10 Under the previous
11 administration, the Department of
12 Homeland Security assured members of
13 Congress that the sale of Plum Island
14 would come close to covering the
15 costs of closure, transfer and
16 construction of NBAF; however, the
17 evidence suggests that is just flat
18 wrong.

19 As a point of reference or a
20 reasonable expectation of what Plum
21 Island might sell for, Robin's
22 Island, a 435 acre island, also
23 within the jurisdiction of Southold
24 Town, sold for \$11,000,000 in 1993
25 and had no cleanup or decommissioning

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2 requirements.

3 Given property value
4 increases over the past 17 years,
5 recent estimates place the current
6 value of Plum Island's 840 acres in
7 the range of 50 to 80,000,000. This
8 is assuming there's an interested
9 buyer who wants to lay out tens of
10 millions to buy an island with zoning
11 which will likely be drastically
12 altered by the Town of Southold and
13 the prospect of not being able to
14 construct anything or realize any
15 return on the investment for at least
16 a decade.

17 And, by the way, that is
18 before we even scratch the surface of
19 decommissing the animal disease
20 center and cleaning up whatever mess
21 the federal government has made at
22 this toxic and hazardous site.

23 In short, a 50 to
24 \$80,000,000 sale does not pay for a
25 \$650,000,000 project, not on Long

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2 Island, not in Kansas, not even in
3 Washington.

4 Tonight I believe you will
5 hear a lot of good ideas in the
6 community about Plum Island's future.
7 If sale of the island were to go
8 through, I agree with those who say
9 the island would be an ideal location
10 for a national refuge. Ironically
11 its isolation and unique federal
12 presence has reserved much of Plum
13 Island. This national refuge goal
14 would not be at odds with the limited
15 presence on the existing development
16 site -- on the existing developed
17 site, such as an alternative energy
18 research facility.

19 I will leave it to others to
20 spell out alternatives more clearly
21 because my single minded immediate
22 focus is to do the same thing and
23 keep the current research facility on
24 the island and block the unnecessary
25 NBAF. Without any funding in place

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2 to build NBAF, the Department of
3 Homeland Security has never
4 adequately answered the questions
5 raised by a 2009 government
6 accountability office report, which
7 concluded that a foot and mouth
8 disease outbreak on Plum Island would
9 have a \$31,000,000 economic impact,
10 while the same event would have a
11 \$1,000,000,000 impact if it happened
12 in Kansas.

13 Here is a direct quote from
14 that report. Quote, Given the
15 significant limitations in DHS's
16 analysis that we found, the
17 conclusion that FMD work can be
18 conducted as safely on the main land
19 as on Plum Island is not supported,
20 closed quote.

21 Before we cross the point of
22 no return, I want everyone to open
23 their eyes and look at what we are
24 doing here. We have not begun
25 decommissioning Plum Island. We have

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2 not laid a single brick or
3 appropriated a single dollar to
4 construct NBAF. Rather than pour
5 hundreds of millions of taxpayer
6 dollars down a sinkhole in Kansas and
7 open the pandora's box of
8 decommissioning Plum Island, we should
9 abandon NBAF and make use of existing
10 facilities that continue to serve
11 this nation well.

12 Again, thank you for holding
13 this hearing tonight and listening to
14 the voices of our community.

15 MS. MINTER: Thank you.

16 We have Mr. Scott Russell,
17 followed by David Nyce.

18 MR. RUSSELL: I want to
19 first thank GSA. We've actually been
20 working quite well with you over the
21 past several months developing the
22 sense of inventory in the sense of
23 what you have in possession of that
24 island.

25 I want to echo the sediments

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2 of Congressman Bishop. I think that
3 Plum Island's an excellent global
4 facility that continues to serve that
5 purpose so well.

6 I would like to see what I
7 would call a best case scenario and
8 that would be Plum Island staying in
9 operational for all lifetimes as a
10 bio-free facility.

11 I think the best thing to do
12 to discuss tonight is probably what
13 would be a best case and find out
14 what would be a worst case scenario.
15 I think two of the options that were
16 outlined on the slides suggested a
17 low density or high density
18 development. I would suggest both
19 are probably what you would call a
20 worst case scenario. I don't believe
21 Southold Town, frankly we don't need
22 new high-end housing and we probably
23 don't need a development that just
24 simply doesn't have infrastructure to
25 support it with the two lane highway

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2 going all the way out there.

3 What I do think the island
4 would lend itself to is perhaps if
5 the Plum Island facility is to be
6 closed for certain, perhaps leaving
7 that 80 acre portion in a research
8 facility mode, perhaps as an
9 alternative renewal energy research
10 innervation site or something that
11 can make use of the substantial
12 investment that was made in that
13 research facility and that
14 self-sustaining research facility.

15 The rest of the island could
16 stay quite as it is de facto right
17 now, which would be a nature
18 conservatory.

19 I think that this town needs
20 gainful employment. I think the Plum
21 Island has been an excellent neighbor
22 for 50 years and frankly we have been
23 an excellent host for 50 years. I'm
24 actually proud to have Plum Island as
25 part of Southold Town. It's a

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2 research facility, like I said. Like
3 I said, I'd like to see it stay the
4 way it is.

5 Thank you very much.

6 MS. MINTER: We have
7 Mr. Nyce followed by Bob Deluca.

8 MR. NYCE: It's a short
9 cord.

10 MS. MINTER: If I could ask
11 you to also state where you are from,
12 at least the state, it helps us.

13 MR. NYCE: Dave Nyce from
14 the State of New York. I didn't sign
15 up to speak tonight. I don't want to
16 duplicate what both the congressman
17 and the supervisor said. I agree
18 wholeheartedly with their sentiments.

19 I feel that I'd like to
20 reserve most of my comments for what
21 comes out of the scoping with the
22 draft EIS.

23 The facility has been a
24 wonderful neighbor, a major employer
25 to the area and an asset to the

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2 community. I don't want to see it
3 disappear.

4 That being said, that's
5 certainly not what we are here for
6 this evening.

7 The scoping, I'd like to
8 reserve my comment for the written
9 and on the draft. Thank you.

10 MS. MINTER: I appreciate
11 that.

12 We have Melanie Novden,
13 followed by Adrienne Esposito.

14 MS. NOV DEN: I will waive.

15 Mr. DELUCA: Good evening.

NY-6

16 My name is Bob DeLuca. I am a
17 resident of East Marion and I reside
18 about seven miles from Orient Point.
19 I'm also president of a group for the
20 east end and I'm a member of the Plum
21 Island Community Forum where I've
22 been involved in the island's safety
23 and security assessments over the
24 last several years, as well as the
25 review of the NBAF EIS.

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2 For the record, Group for
3 the East End --

4 THE COURT REPORTER: Wait,
5 sir, you have to slow down. Slow
6 down.

7 MR. DELUCA: I'm sorry. I
8 forgot. I get six minutes.

9 MS. MINTER: Thank you, but
10 we do have a court reporter here
11 tonight. We need to slow down.

12 MR. DELUCA: Sure.

13 So we are a conservation
14 advocacy and education organization.
15 We have offices in Southold and
16 Southampton Town and for 38 years
17 we've been representing the
18 environment community planning
19 interest of over 2,000 households,
20 individuals and businesses and we are
21 deeply concerned about the future use
22 of Plum Island.

23 Because of this concern, our
24 organization has joined alongside
25 over two dozen other conservation

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2 organizations, scientists and local
3 officials, the former coalition to
4 promote the preservation of Plum
5 Island as the Plum Island National
6 Wildlife Refuge, at least those
7 portions which are not completely
8 developed now. Even if the lab
9 stays, it will be our view that a
10 long-term conservation plan should be
11 established and that a majority of
12 the island should be afforded the
13 benefits of permanent conservation.

14 As you're aware, despite the
15 island's current institutional use,
16 most of the site remains undeveloped
17 and has become a haven for rare,
18 threatened and endangered species
19 that have found refuge along the
20 island's carefully guarded shoreline.

21 From seal and colonial
22 waterbird colonies to nesting osprey
23 and rare plants, Plum Island is a
24 significant and fragile natural
25 resource whose environmental assets

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2 must be carefully examined as part of
3 any DEIS prepared for this property.

4 To this end, we are
5 particularly concerned about the
6 accuracy of any natural resources
7 inventory done on the site and we
8 recommend that GSA contact the New
9 York State Natural Heritage Program
10 and the Nature Conservancy, as well
11 as other qualified regional
12 naturalists to assure that the
13 baseline species inventory is
14 accurate and complete. Once
15 completed, we strongly advise the GSA
16 to include a well-developed needs
17 assessment that will address the
18 responsible management of all rare,
19 threatened and endangered species
20 after the sale of the island to any
21 private party.

22 Beyond its natural value, a
23 significant portion of the site is
24 characterized by the historic
25 structures of Fort Terry and the

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2 widely recognized Plum Island
3 lighthouse. As part of the DEIS,
4 these structure must be carefully
5 inventoried and evaluated by
6 qualified historians. Likewise, the
7 DEIS should explore how these
8 structures could be preserved and how
9 such preservation may impact the
10 island's price and whether there will
11 be any specific preservation
12 requirements of any new private
13 owner. From our standpoint,
14 consideration of the future
15 protection, restoration of these
16 facilities is extremely important to
17 any responsible assessment of the
18 project alternatives.

19 In addition, the DEIS must
20 contain a detailed assessment for all
21 aspects of decommissioning the
22 existing lab and its attendant
23 infrastructure. We are particularly
24 interested in the decommissing plans
25 and costs for fuel and hazardous

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2 waste materials facilities, on site
3 incinerators, lab facilities, any
4 former waste disposal areas, animal
5 rooms and vehicle maintenance
6 facilities, et cetera. We are also
7 interested in understanding the
8 protocol for dealing with the
9 island's docking facility, any fuel
10 or hazardous materials storage tanks
11 that may be found on that property,
12 as well.

13 We'd like the DEIS to
14 examine the future disposition of the
15 site's sewage treatment plant and
16 water supply system, which could
17 provide sufficient water and waste
18 disposal capacity to induce
19 intensified development. We are
20 particularly concerned about this
21 issue as the island currently does
22 not have local zoning that otherwise
23 define building limitations.

24 Beyond these specific areas
25 of assessment, we believe the two

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2 most overarching areas of analysis
3 involve, one, an assessment of how
4 the overall cost of decommissioning will
5 impact the value of any sale as this
6 lies at the heart of this entire
7 proposal.

8 As Congressman Bishop
9 mentioned before, the idea that this
10 island will somehow pay for a 6 or
11 \$7,000,000 facility, that doesn't
12 seem very realistic and that really
13 has to be valued.

14 The second issue is a
15 detailed assessment of conservation
16 alternatives. From our standpoint,
17 all decommissioning costs associated
18 with shutting down Plum Island are
19 going to be exceptionally high and
20 significant to reduce the overall
21 funds derived from a potential sale.
22 We also believe that any funds that
23 may be derived from the sale will
24 make little impact on the overall
25 cost of the \$600,000,000 NBAF

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2 facility.

3 As such, the DEIS should
4 examine an alternative of maintaining
5 Plum Island as a DSL-3 lab while
6 developing a conservation strategy
7 that would allow for undeveloped
8 portions to be maintained as a
9 national wildlife refuge.

10 And similarly, we would ask
11 that you examine an alternative that
12 involves the closure of the lab and
13 its replacement with a future
14 institutional research or academic
15 facility that would not involve any
16 development beyond that which is
17 currently present, coupled with a
18 long-term conservation plan for the
19 remainder of the island.

20 This scenario will save
21 significantly on decommissioning costs,
22 save jobs, provide a potential site
23 for appropriate research endeavors
24 while providing a long-term value of
25 a new regional wildlife refuge at the

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2 confluence of two federally
3 designated national estuaries between
4 the Long Island Sound and Peconic
5 Bay.

6 In closing, we can't help
7 but question the logic of setting
8 about the sale of Plum Island before
9 any funds have been allocated for the
10 construction of the NBAF in Kansas,
11 but if this process is going to move
12 forward, we appreciate the
13 opportunity to convey our positions
14 for private sale and our
15 recommendation that any future use of
16 Plum Island, private or public,
17 incorporate a major permanent
18 conservation plan, including a
19 federal refuge designation for the
20 island or its presently undeveloped
21 areas.

22 I want to thank you for your
23 time and attention and for letting me
24 slow down long enough to get through
25 this and we remain available of

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2 course to any questions you may have
3 and we have written comments that we
4 will submit, as well.

5 Thank you very much.

6 MS. MINTER: Adrienne,
7 followed by Carolyn Spilman.

8 MS. ESPOSITO: Good evening.

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9 My name is Adrienne Esposito. I'm
10 the executive director of Citizens
11 Campaign for the Environment.
12 Citizens Campaign for the Environment
13 is a by state environmental
14 organization throughout New York and
15 Connecticut.

16 We also have a couple of
17 decades of experience working at
18 national facilities to help with the
19 characterization and remediation
20 plant. Those facilities include one
21 right here in Suffolk County, the
22 Brookhaven National Laboratory and
23 another island in the middle of Long
24 Island Sound, which is David's Island
25 currently owned by New Rochelle to

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2 the western part of Long Island
3 Sound.

4 So it's in that vain and
5 that experience that we offer the
6 following comments for the scoping
7 document.

8 The first is that we'd like
9 to say the government facilities
10 operate, quote, in secrecy. The
11 accountability usually becomes an
12 endangered species and the old adage
13 of it becomes real that seek
14 contamination and you will find it.
15 We unfortunately believe that based
16 on past experiences that there's
17 probably more contamination at this
18 facility than is currently believed
19 or currently realized.

20 If the property was used for
21 the last 100 years, as was described,
22 it was used prior to existing laws
23 and then used outside the view of
24 enforcement for existing laws. So we
25 are calling for a complete renewed

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2 investigation and assessment of
3 ground water and soil throughout the
4 island because no option is an
5 acceptable option until cleanup and
6 remediation is complete and
7 comprehensive at that island. It
8 deserves no less and the future use
9 deserves no less.

10 So we offer the following
11 comments. One is that, for instance,
12 we want to find the soil
13 patronization so we can find what had
14 been done in the past with the
15 incinerator ash. For instance, on
16 David's Island it was found
17 unbeknownst to anybody who currently
18 has governance over the island that
19 the previous incinerator ash was used
20 to bury -- was buried all over the
21 island. It was used to fill up pits
22 throughout the island and that
23 consequently led to a high degree of
24 heavy metal contamination, including
25 lead into the soils and also leaching

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2 into the ground water. We can learn
3 from those lessons and apply them
4 here.

5 The second thing is even
6 though the sewer treatment facility
7 has been recently upgraded, we also
8 need to do another characterization
9 of some of the remnants of that
10 facility. For instance, the same
11 thing happened at Brookhaven National
12 Laboratory. The facilities upgraded
13 to a tertiary treatment plant, which
14 is terrific; however, remnants of
15 that, which are the sand filter beds,
16 are now found to be contributing
17 mercury to the effluent coming from
18 that plant, so we need to look again
19 with a keener eye and a better eye.

20 Saying, as was said earlier,
21 that the island is self-sufficient
22 really implies that there's a clean
23 plentiful amount of ground water and
24 drinking water for all future uses.
25 Well, lets ensure that that's true

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2 because there cannot be a use without
3 clean plentiful drinking water.

4 In addition, the buildings,
5 as we all know, need to go under
6 inspection and to see if there's
7 asbestos. Once again, on David's
8 Island, they didn't expect so many of
9 the buildings to have asbestos in
10 them and that added considerably to
11 the remediation and the demolition
12 costs.

13 The last thing I just want
14 to say is that I would like to call
15 on our federal agencies to establish
16 a citizen advisory committee
17 particularly for this new endeavor as
18 are used for federal facilities
19 throughout the nation. You can use
20 the model again right here that's
21 used right here in Suffolk County
22 with the Brookhaven National
23 Laboratory.

24 As was stated, if you want
25 to have collaboration and

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2 transparency in this process, well,
3 we want the same thing and the way to
4 do that is to develop stakeholders of
5 diverse -- to develop diversity in
6 your stakeholder committee that
7 allows for the great communication in
8 transparency and we find at federal
9 facilities that those stakeholders
10 are then educated and can offer a
11 meaningful significant input in not
12 only the remediation plan, but also
13 for future use of the island, so we
14 think that would be good for you. We
15 know it would be good for Suffolk
16 County.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MS. MINTER: Thank you. We
19 have Carolyn Spilman, followed by Bob
20 Ghosio, Jr.

21 MS. SPILMAN: Good evening.
22 I am Carolyn Spilman. I'm the Long
23 Land Bird Conservation Coordinator
24 for Audubon New York, the state
25 program of the National Audubon

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2 Society representing 27 local
3 chapters of nearly 50,000 members in
4 New York State.

5 And I want to first thank
6 you for the opportunity to offer the
7 following comments on behalf of
8 Audubon New York regarding the scope
9 of the environment impact statement
10 on the sale of Plum Island.

11 The mission of Audubon New
12 York is to conserve and restore
13 national ecosystems, focusing on
14 birds, wildlife and their habitats
15 for the benefit of humanity and the
16 earth's biological diversity. To
17 guide our conservation efforts in
18 achieving this mission, Audubon New
19 York has identified 136 important
20 bird areas throughout the state that
21 provide critical habitat for birds
22 based on a set of standardized site
23 criteria. In addition to identifying
24 these important bird areas, Audubon
25 New York is also engaged in large

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2 scale ecosystem restoration campaigns
3 and has been a leading force working
4 to secure desperately needed federal
5 funds to restore the water quality
6 and protect the important habitats of
7 Long Island Sound.

8 With its mixture of rocky
9 shoreline, sand beaches, wetlands and
10 various upland shrub, grassland and
11 forest habitats, Plum Island stands
12 out as a critically important
13 migratory bird stopover site on Long
14 Island Sound. In 1997, Plum Island
15 was recognized as part of the Orient
16 Point to Plum Island important bird
17 areas because it supports a great
18 diversity of at risk species,
19 including large concentrations of
20 waterbirds.

21 In 2005, to further the
22 protection of this important bird
23 area, Audubon New York convened a
24 group of partners to identify the
25 greatest threats and conservation

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2 needs for this area. The result of
3 that effort was the development of a
4 conservation action plan for the
5 important bird areas that was
6 finalized in 2009 and is available on
7 our website. The plan emphasizes the
8 need to protect the critical natural
9 resources of Plum Island and one of
10 the priority strategies identified in
11 the plan is to increase our
12 understanding of bird usage on Plum
13 Island. Over the last three years, a
14 total of 9 bird surveys were
15 conducted during the breeding, winter
16 and migration seasons. Over 100 bird
17 species have been documented breeding
18 or foraging on Plum Island and
19 adjacent coastal waters through these
20 surveys, including birds-of-prey,
21 shorebirds, wading birds, waterfowl
22 and songbird species. However, we
23 know that these limited surveys are
24 only providing us with a snapshot of
25 the ecological worth of Plum Island

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2 and it is likely that far more
3 species depend on it than we are
4 aware.

5 In 2009, we had 7 active
6 osprey nests noted on the island on
7 the island. Also and the island also
8 supported an active Bank Swallow
9 colony, a bird species on the decline
10 in New York. Piping Plovers, a
11 federally threatened species, utilize
12 the other shoreline habitat for
13 breeding and foraging. Several dozen
14 Roseate Terns, a federally endangered
15 species, and several hundred Common
16 Terns, a New York State threatened
17 species, also use the island. The
18 waters surrounding Plum Island are
19 rich in nutrients and are vital
20 feeding and courting grounds for
21 birds such as terns and waterfowl.
22 Plum Island likely provides critical
23 stopover habitat for many fall
24 migrant songbird and shorebird
25 species, but this needs better

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2 documentation. Finally, Common
3 Elders, known to breed from nearby
4 Fisher's Island, may also breed on
5 Plum Island. If so, this would be
6 only the second location in the state
7 where this sea duck breeds. All this
8 highlights the biologic importance of
9 this island and the need to ensure
10 these unique natural assets are
11 protected long term.

12 Protecting this area long
13 term not only makes good
14 environmental sense, but represents
15 good fiscal policy, as well. Bird
16 watching is the fastest growing
17 outdoor recreation in New York and
18 across the nation and in 2006, 3.8
19 million bird watchers in New York
20 contributed \$1.6 million to the state
21 economy. Ensuring the long-term
22 protection of this critical area that
23 supports such a great diversity of
24 bird species will help communities
25 surrounding Plum Island to continue

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2 to capitalize on this ecotourism
3 revenue.

4 As the GSA prepares the EIS
5 for the sale of Plum Island, we
6 recommend a thorough and
7 comprehensive biological inventory of
8 the island be performed to further
9 document and expose significant
10 species or natural communities. This
11 information should be used to guide
12 the protection of critical areas if
13 and when the ownership of the island
14 changes. While there are numerous
15 options and strategies available to
16 safeguard the island's resources,
17 Audubon New York strongly supports
18 all or a significant majority of the
19 island be protected possibly as a
20 national wildlife refuge.

21 We'll be providing formal
22 written comments further detailing
23 the ecological importance of this
24 site and we appreciate the
25 opportunity to provide these comments

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2 tonight.

3 MS. MINTER: Thank you very
4 much.

5 Ms. Spilman, if we could get
6 a copy of your notes, that will be
7 helpful for our court reporter.

8 MR. GHOSIO: Good evening.
9 My name is Bob Ghosio, Jr. I'm a
10 Southold Town Trustee.

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11 I'm here tonight on behalf
12 of the Town Trustees because our
13 primary role as elected officials in
14 the Town of Southold is to administer
15 and protect the town patent lands and
16 the wetlands. We are also given the
17 task of administrating New York State
18 coastal erosion zones in our town.

19 Last night at our public
20 meeting we did vote to pass a
21 resolution and the Board has asked me
22 to come down tonight and read that
23 into the record.

24 Whereas the Southold Town
25 Trustees were pivotal in the ascent

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2 of democracy in this region when a
3 patent was negotiated in 1676 giving
4 all right, title and interest to the
5 lands of Southold, including the said
6 Island Plum.

7 Whereas the Southold Town
8 Trustees, one of the oldest,
9 independent and continuously
10 functioning bodies politic, elected
11 by the people, were separated from
12 the Town Board under the New York
13 State laws of 1893 to continue the
14 people's trust in lands, waters and
15 natural resources.

16 Whereas not specifically
17 adopting a resolution as a
18 cooperating agency in the instant EIS
19 process, but nonetheless known for
20 closeness to the people of the Town
21 and for respect and rectitude in
22 their dealings with all agencies.

23 And whereas the Southold
24 Town Trustees are the proud
25 conservators of the remaining

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2 undivided lands of the Corchaug with
3 whom all our ancestor's deeds were
4 peaceful and honorable and shall
5 always remain.

6 Whereas the people of the
7 United States have invested
8 themselves greatly in the said Island
9 Plum with activities proper and
10 necessary to advance the safety and
11 security of the homeland, the food
12 supply, the health and well-being of
13 both man and animals while advancing
14 the sciences that benefit us all.

15 Whereas the Southold Town
16 Trustees are mindful that such proper
17 activities may have unintended
18 consequences to the environment and
19 may have included activities that
20 unintentionally altered the undivided
21 lands of the people of Southold that
22 may have coexisted contiguous to the
23 property of the people of the United
24 States for all these years.

25 We therefore call upon the

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2 GSA, USDA, DHS, all contractors and
3 cooperating agencies to include in
4 the EIS the following: Number one, A
5 thorough review of the historical
6 land ownership and land use practices
7 on Plum Island detailing in
8 particular all activities that may
9 have taken place over time and
10 identifying all operations which have
11 had the effect to cut, fill, dredge,
12 devegetate, depopulate areas now or
13 formerly known as, but not limited
14 to, tidal marshes, formerly connected
15 wetlands, coastal fresh marshes,
16 creeks, streams, bays, ponds, lakes,
17 tidal shoals and mud flats.

18 Number two, A detailed
19 review of property records and deeds
20 searching for any records of sales,
21 leases, transfers or quick claim
22 deeds by the Board of Southold
23 Trustees to any entity and specific
24 detailed information whereof no such
25 information is found to exist.

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2 From a range of
3 alternatives, number three this is,
4 from a range of alternatives,
5 including the no action alternative,
6 discuss remediation and restoration
7 of affected wetland areas generally
8 described in number one above,
9 including the Southold Town Trustees
10 in discussions of remediation of
11 aforesaid wetland areas insofar as
12 possible, especially for lands,
13 underwater lands or formerly
14 underwater lands for which the people
15 of Southold may have a property
16 interest, if no deed or quick claim
17 deed was ever executed by the
18 trustees transferring ownership to
19 prior owners.

20 Number four, and this is the
21 final point, the Town Trustees put a
22 premium on remediation efforts with
23 due appreciation for ownership and
24 title, which will recreate functional
25 wetland systems with natural outlets

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2 to the sea where the people may
3 pursue fish, fowl, shellfish and all
4 manner of sport and recreation as has
5 been the custom in this place.

6 We'd like to enter that
7 resolution into the record and
8 appreciate your having come tonight
9 to give us this presentation. Thank
10 you.

11 MS. MINTER: Thank you very
12 much. Randall followed by Peter
13 Young.

14 MR. YOUNG: Thank you for
15 the opportunity to speak. I'm going
16 to read through my letter, which was
17 e-mailed to John Dugan who's here and
18 I think care of John to Phil
19 Youngberg. I'll read it into the
20 record.

21 Dear Mr. Youngberg and
22 members of your staff. I work for
23 the Nature Conservancy on Long
24 Island. The Nature Conservancy is an
25 international conservation

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2 organization with over one million
3 members working to protect
4 ecologically important lands and
5 waters for nature and people. We
6 work in all 50 states and more than
7 30 countries protecting habitats from
8 grasslands to coral reefs from Alaska
9 to Zambia.

10 This letter is written and
11 read to provide comments on the
12 proposed sale of the publicly owned
13 840 acre Plum Island and the 9
14 and-a-half acre Orient Point, New
15 York facility currently held by the
16 U.S. Homeland Security Administration
17 on behalf of the people of the United
18 States.

19 We understand that comments
20 from these public meetings will also
21 be used to determine the scope of an
22 environment impact statement to be
23 prepared by GSA on this proposed sale
24 in accordance with the National
25 Environmental Policy Act.

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2 Let me begin by quoting the
3 regulations promulgated by the
4 federal Council on Environmental
5 Quality, the agency charged with
6 implementing NEPA.

7 Quote, "Ultimately, of
8 course, it is not better documents
9 but better decisions that count.
10 NEPA's purpose is not to generate
11 paperwork, even excellent paperwork,
12 but to foster excellent action. The
13 NEPA process is intended to help
14 public officials make decisions that
15 are based on understanding of
16 environmental consequences and take
17 actions that protect, restore and
18 enhance the environment."

19 With that in mind and
20 knowing that the duty of GSA is to
21 consider alternatives, including the
22 no action alternative, in order to
23 arrive at the preferred alternative
24 that can be recommended to the
25 federal government in this case, the

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2 following are my comments on the
3 proposed sale.

4 The published notice is
5 confusing. Is this meeting to
6 discuss the proposed sale of an 843
7 acre island which has been publicly
8 owned in its entirety for more than
9 100 years? Or is it as the notice
10 suggests a meeting to discuss a
11 process which accepts that a decision
12 to sell the island has already been
13 made and we are here to try to figure
14 out how to sell it with as little
15 environmental social and economic
16 harm as possible?

17 What if the preferred
18 alternative here is for the people of
19 the United States to hang on to their
20 island and not sell it, at all? What
21 if the preferred alternative is to
22 amend or rescind Section 540 of the
23 Consolidated Security Disaster
24 Assistance and Continuing
25 Appropriations Act of 2009 and United

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2 States Public Law 110-329, to allow
3 most of Plum Island to become part of
4 the larger Long Island National
5 Wildlife Refuge system while allowing
6 the lab there to continue providing
7 invaluable services to the country?

8 We ask that the alternatives
9 to be considered include the
10 alternative that the island not be
11 sold, at all.

12 If you draw the boundaries
13 of the watersheds of the Peconic
14 estuary and the Long Island Sound
15 estuary over to Plum Island, each
16 estuary lays claim to roughly half of
17 the island. The southern portion is
18 in the Peconics and the northern
19 portion is in the Long Island Sound
20 estuary. Why would the federal
21 government that created the national
22 estuary program to protect and
23 enhance estuaries of national
24 significance and which subsequently
25 included both the Peconic estuary and

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2 Long Island Sound estuary among its
3 ranks want to sell a largely
4 undeveloped island nearly three miles
5 long, one mile wide with over seven
6 miles of national shoreline and
7 critical habitat for native plants
8 and animals to the highest private
9 bidder?

10 Why would the federal
11 government that created the Coastal
12 and Estuarine Land Conservation Land
13 Program and has invested millions of
14 federal dollars in acquiring critical
15 lands around Long Island Sound and
16 the Peconic estuary want to sell this
17 843 acre island which offers an
18 extraordinary scenic, ecological,
19 historic, probably prehistoric and
20 recreational opportunities to the
21 people of the United States? If we
22 didn't already own it, wouldn't we
23 likely be trying to acquire this
24 island to protect it?

25 And why would the same

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2 federal government that is spending
3 billions of taxpayer dollars to
4 stimulate the American economy want
5 to sell this island that at present
6 employs some 350 people at a national
7 laboratory that can compatibly with
8 the island and the estuary
9 environment?

10 We are told that it is to
11 bring money into the federal treasury
12 to help offset the cost of a new mega
13 facility to be built in Kansas.

14 Most of us are aware that
15 the federal government is deeply in
16 debt, that the country and world have
17 been in recession and tough times and
18 there's a serious discussion about
19 what the nation's needs are for
20 animal disease research and how and
21 where it should be best done.

22 But how much will be made on
23 the sale of Plum Island after the
24 contamination on the island from past
25 federal military and animal disease

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2 activity is cleaned up, after all of
3 the federal infrastructure there is
4 demolished and removed? The extent,
5 timing and cost of such a cleanup
6 needs to be part of this
7 environmental impact statement.

8 It is understandable that
9 the sale of Plum Island might seem
10 like a good way for the federal
11 government to slim down, try to make
12 some money and help pay for a new lab
13 elsewhere, but only to those who are
14 not familiar with the long and hard
15 fight this area has reached to
16 protect its water and fisheries, its
17 open space, its history and
18 prehistory, its character and the way
19 of life and tourism and economy.

20 Only to those who are not aware of
21 the national estuary and coastal and
22 estuarine land conservation programs,
23 both federal programs that this
24 region has welcomed.

25 If Plum Island had no public

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2 value, it should be sold, but it does
3 have great public value and it should
4 not be sold.

5 As far as the work to assess
6 the environmental impacts of the
7 sale, the Nature Conservancy will
8 stick to its area of expertise, which
9 is environmental science and leave it
10 to others to comment more completely
11 on economic, historic, prehistoric,
12 scenic, recreational, toxic and
13 hazardous waste cleanup and social
14 impacts.

15 From an environmental impact
16 perspective, we believe the following
17 issues need to be thoroughly
18 explored.

19 One, A thorough and current
20 biological inventory of the flora and
21 fauna on the island should be done to
22 provide baseline data against which
23 impacts can be measured. Attached
24 please find a proposal for the New
25 York Natural Heritage Program to

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2 provide such an inventory. The
3 environmental will take four seasons
4 incidentally. It would have to stand
5 all four seasons. We support the use
6 of this well respected impartial
7 state agency for this work. After
8 such an inventory is done, then the
9 impacts to the existing species can
10 be evaluated.

11 A study of the island's
12 aquifer and its capacity. What is
13 the status of the current water
14 supply system? If more intensive
15 uses were brought to the island, what
16 are the potential impacts to the
17 system, the island's aquifer and
18 water quality in the two national
19 estuaries in which the island is
20 situated? What are the impacts on
21 fisheries?

22 Three, A study of the
23 island's sewage treatment system,
24 which currently has outfall into Long
25 Island Sound. What are the current

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2 impacts to the Long Island Sound
3 estuary? What would bringing more
4 intensive uses to the island mean as
5 far as sewage treatment and
6 discharge? What are the likely
7 impacts of this change?

8 A study of how hazardous and
9 toxic wastes are handled currently.
10 How would these facilities be phased
11 out and closed? How would toxic and
12 hazardous waste such as gasoline,
13 fuel oil, pesticides and herbicides
14 be handled if more intensive uses
15 were brought to the island?

16 What would the impact on
17 vegetative cover and water quality be
18 if more intensive uses were brought
19 to the island, land clearing,
20 landscaping, roads and impermeable
21 surfaces?

22 Thank you for the
23 opportunity to be heard and I'm
24 speaking with the belief that we can
25 together make an excellent decision

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2 here. Thank you.

3 MS. MINTER: Ladies and
4 gentlemen, if I could please ask you
5 to turn in your speaking notes for
6 our court reporter. We are getting a
7 bit of an echo in this auditorium.
8 It's very helpful to her if you have
9 your written comments and I do
10 appreciate the fact that you are so
11 very well prepared tonight.

12 Following Mr. Young, we have
13 Robin Imandt.

14 MR. YOUNG: Good evening.
15 Thank you. My name is Peter Young.
16 I'm vice president of Eastend
17 Lighthouses, Inc. We are a 501C3 all
18 volunteer not-for-profit
19 organization. Our mission is the
20 acquisition, preservation and
21 maintenance of the historic
22 lighthouses, most of which are
23 offshore in the Town of Southold.

24 Plum Island, as you've quite
25 properly identified, located on Plum

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2 Island is Plum Island Lighthouse.

3 I just want and I'm going to
4 take a particular slice of this
5 cultural environmental issue as
6 you've already identified in the EIS
7 and I just want to make sure you are
8 apprised of the fact there are two
9 resolutions passed by the Town of
10 Southold. The first one is
11 resolution number 628 of 2002. I'm
12 not going to read the whole
13 resolution, but I'll just sum it up
14 is that the -- it calls for the
15 relighting of the historic
16 lighthouse.

17 Right now there's a
18 stanchion out there and what we've
19 been asking for over these eight
20 years now is for that light to be
21 replaced and placed in the historic
22 lighthouse.

23 The second resolution is
24 number 2007-408 and that basically
25 very simply is a request by the town

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2 board to the federal government to
3 transfer five acres surrounding the
4 historic lighthouse to the town and,
5 again, I can't speak for the town,
6 but they may want to have an assignee
7 for that to manage and to take care
8 of.

9 But basically the resolution
10 requests the federal government to
11 transfer and I think that that
12 sequestration of that five acre piece
13 is something you need to do early on
14 in the planning as you go to
15 marketing of this property, assuming
16 you go to marketing of the property.

17 The last item I have is that
18 the -- under Title 36, the lighthouse
19 will qualify for registration under
20 the National Historic Registry and we
21 are concerned because we know that
22 the nomination has been prepared.
23 I've been in touch with the state
24 historic preservation office and that
25 went back to Homeland Security and

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2 nothing seems to happen on this. I
3 think it's imperative that you
4 consummate this nomination process
5 prior to any kind of conveyance.

6 So I think those three
7 issues, you need to be cognizant of
8 the two resolutions and the fact that
9 this is nominated, but not yet
10 entered by the National Historic
11 Registry and that's it right now.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. MINTER: Thank you very
14 much.

15 Following Robin, we have
16 Anne Murray.

17 MS. IMAUDT: Good evening.

NY-12

18 My name is Robin Imaudt and I'm here
19 as a representative of the East
20 Marion Community Association, also
21 called EMCA. We are a grassroots
22 civil -- civic organization on the
23 east end of the North Fork devoted to
24 protecting the beauty, environment
25 and rural quality of life in our

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2 community. We have 550 members which
3 represent more than half of the
4 people who live in our hamlet.

5 Our organization reaches
6 positions on issues after providing
7 opportunities for our neighbors to
8 learn the facts, discuss the issues
9 with neighbors and then arrive at a
10 community consensus.

11 We began our educational
12 process in regard to the future of
13 Plum Island last Saturday at a
14 meeting devoted to that topic. Those
15 in attendance were asked this
16 question, it's 2025. What would you
17 like to see on Plum Island? Some of
18 the responses were as follows:
19 Wildlife preserve and existing
20 research lab; marine ecology park and
21 research center for several nonprofit
22 research organizations such as
23 Cornell extension; a preserve that
24 provides access to study, hiking,
25 picnicking and possibly mooring a

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2 boat for days only; a national park,
3 maybe like Channel Islands in Boston;
4 national wildlife preserve; status
5 quo; no casino; marine wildlife
6 education center; eco camp, learning
7 center for children and young adults;
8 federal or a state preservation to
9 keep it forever as a national
10 primitive area; any institution
11 except a casino that would provide
12 plenty of jobs; wildlife preserve and
13 park; a preserve for plants and
14 animals native to the area with
15 provision for visiting and observing;
16 green energy company that provides
17 training and high quality jobs;
18 solar, wind or tide energy company;
19 eco-tourism site for camping,
20 studying of the environment,
21 research; historic environmental
22 national monuments and lastly a
23 facility that would replenish fish to
24 the area.

25 MS. MINTER: Thank you.

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2 Following Ms. Murray we have
3 Freddie Wachsberger.

4 MS. MURRAY: Hi. I'm also
5 with the East Marion Community
6 Association and following our meeting
7 this Saturday, we came up with a
8 number of questions that we wanted to
9 address in the -- by the GSA.

NY-13

10 Our members want to know if
11 there will be a full traffic study of
12 the impact of the change of -- any
13 change usage of Plum Island with
14 development on the North Fork roads
15 of Southold Town.

16 We would like you to provide
17 an estimate of the cost of any
18 environmental cleanup to all the
19 facilities currently on Plum Island.

20 We'd like you to list the
21 foreign and domestic diseases that
22 have been studied on Plum Island.

23 We'd like you to identify
24 specifically what does need to be
25 cleaned up on Plum Island.

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2 We'd like to know if there
3 are any threatened or endangered
4 species on the island and specify and
5 detail the impacts and developments
6 on those species.

7 We'd like you to conduct a
8 full study of the historic, cultural
9 and archeological significance of the
10 island.

11 We'd like you to study the
12 impact of more frequent ferries to
13 Plum Island on the schedules and
14 routes and safety of the passengers
15 on the Cross Sound Ferry.

16 We'd like you to detail the
17 overall impact of more ferries that
18 would go to Plum Island and the
19 effect on the marine environment and
20 water quality in Southold Town and
21 around Plum Island.

22 We'd like you to detail the
23 impact of the more intensive uses
24 planned for Plum Island should it be
25 developed, on the fragile

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2 environment, the birds, other
3 animals, such as seals, tiger mules.

4 And finally we'd like to
5 know what the quality of the aquifer
6 is on Plum Island and what effects
7 low or high density developments
8 would have on that aquifer.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. MINTER: Thank you very
11 much.

12 MS. WACHSBERGER: Can you
13 hear me? I have just two brief
14 comments.

15 I'm Freddie Wachsberger.
16 I'm President of Southold Citizens
17 for Safe Roads.

18 I'd like to echo of course
19 things that other people have said.
20 This is an island with resources,
21 historical and environmental. In
22 fact, if the government didn't own
23 one thing it would want to buy, so
24 the rush to sell it seems bizarre.

25 But addressing the traffic,

NY-14

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2 one has to consider Orient and East
3 Marion with the single road that runs
4 through these two communities, the
5 historic road which was formed
6 basically in the 17th Century, Kings
7 Highway, which is already overrun by
8 traffic from the Cross Sound Ferry
9 and I'm very concerned about the
10 separability of the parking facility
11 from the island use if they were to
12 be sold separately because we have
13 been working very hard to keep Cross
14 Sound Ferry from extending its
15 parking so that they can multiply
16 their ferries which run to the casino
17 in Connecticut because the only
18 control we have against the increase
19 of traffic is the constraint of
20 parking and to add an additional
21 parking lot to increase that traffic
22 would be an extremely serious
23 development for both our communities.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. MINTER: Thank you very

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2 much.

3 Mr. John Turner, followed by
4 Mr. John Turner.

5 MR. TURNER: Good evening.

NY-15

6 My name is John Turner and I'm a
7 spokesperson, one of several
8 spokespersons for the Preserve Plum
9 Island Coalition, which is a fairly
10 recently formed group of
11 environmental conservation civic
12 organizations, also some science
13 based organizations, as well as some
14 individuals that have rallied around
15 the preservation of Plum Island.

16 And while I understand it's
17 a bit outside the scope of tonight's
18 focus, I do want to express the
19 coalition's strong opposition to the
20 proposed sale of the island. I
21 realize it's mandated by an Act of
22 Congress to do due diligence to do
23 the work you need to do, but we
24 strongly oppose that action and we
25 are working with Congressman Bishop's

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2 office, as well as Senator Schumer
3 and Gillibrand's office to try to
4 move to have language introduced in
5 congress to reverse their proposal.

6 But understanding again
7 that's not the purpose of tonight, I
8 just felt it wise to put that on the
9 record.

10 I will submit for the record
11 an 18 page case statement that the
12 coalition has prepared which lays out
13 the -- again, we believe a fairly
14 cogent and a strong argument for why
15 the island should be preserved as a
16 public asset.

17 I won't speak long because I
18 think so many other people have
19 spoken so eloquently about the values
20 of the island, but I do want to
21 stress the point that the island from
22 our experience, both reading the
23 literature, as well as having the
24 opportunity to visit the island on
25 several occasions, is an island that

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2 has remarkable ecological and
3 environmental value and again truly
4 merits being given some permanent
5 protection.

6 The federal government in
7 other cases throughout the
8 northeastern United States where it
9 has decided to surplus property, you
10 folks know this working with GSA,
11 often has turned to other sister
12 agencies for consideration of using
13 that property in some other way.
14 That has happened at property on
15 Block Island and it became Block
16 Island National Wildlife Refuge.
17 It's happened up at Sachuest Point in
18 Rhode Island, the Sachuest Point
19 National Wildlife Refuge.

20 There's other cases, Nomans
21 Island National Wildlife Refuge off
22 of Martha's Vineyard and we think,
23 again, that the island really would
24 be most suited for a dedication as a
25 public park in the form of a national

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2 wildlife refuge moving forward.

3 We do certainly recognize
4 the critical asset of the laboratory
5 that is there and support the
6 continued operations of that
7 laboratory. We do not believe it's
8 mutually exclusive to the goals of
9 preserving 80 to 90 percent of the
10 island for conservation purposes
11 while still accommodating the
12 operations of the lab if that's the
13 direction that we go in, if not and
14 there was some other practical use of
15 the building, we think that's
16 particularly appropriate.

17 So what we'd like to say is
18 as one of alternatives that a low
19 intensity adaptive reuse alternative
20 to discuss again use of those
21 buildings for some other purpose if
22 it's again determined that the
23 facility will no longer be there for
24 animal use control research, but that
25 there be a conservation outcome for

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2 the 90 percent of the property that
3 is either undeveloped or lightly
4 developed because, again, of the
5 critical resources that do occur on
6 the island.

7 We will be providing much
8 more detail about our comments to
9 you. I know we've got a June 2
10 deadline to do that and we will be
11 providing, as I say, written comments
12 for the hearing record and again
13 appreciate to have an opportunity to
14 just provide some brief remarks about
15 the EIS as you go forward and we look
16 forward to participating in the
17 process from hereon out.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. MINTER: I do appreciate
20 that.

21 Melanie, you waived your
22 comments earlier. Do you have any
23 comments now?

24 I'd like to open up the
25 floor for any additional comments if

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2 there's anyone else who has not
3 registered to speak and would like to
4 make a comment?

5 Is there anyone that has
6 spoken that would like to come and
7 put any additional items on the
8 record? Thank you.

9 MS. ESPOSITO: I just want
10 to add --

11 MS. MINTER: If you could
12 state your name again, please.

13 MS. ESPOSITO: Adrienne
14 Esposito. Executive Director,
15 Citizen's Campaign for the
16 Environment.

NY-7 cont.

17 I want to add one more thing
18 following up on Randy from the nature
19 conservancies comment and that is
20 that I think in the scoping document
21 it would be a very good thing to
22 assess the applicability of selling
23 the island to existing federal laws
24 about Long Island Sound.

25 So, for instance, we have

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2 the Long Island Sound Restoration Act
3 that was passed back in the '90s.
4 That's an act that allows up to
5 \$40,000,000 per year to be allocated
6 for the preservation and restoration
7 of the Long Island Sound as national
8 significance.

9 We also have the Long Island
10 Sound Stewardship Act. That's a
11 federal legislation that allows up to
12 \$25,000,000 per year to be allocated
13 for the purchase of sensitive lands
14 around the Long Island Sound, as well
15 as to increase public access to the
16 sound.

17 So how does the sale of this
18 island conflict or adhere to existing
19 federal programs for the preservation
20 and restoration of the Long Island
21 Sound? We can't have one level of
22 federal government working in
23 conflict with another level of the
24 federal government.

25 So we would like as part of

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2 the analysis and assessment of
3 federal laws and how this act
4 complies or does not comply with
5 existing federal regulations.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. MINTER: Thank you.

8 MR. RUSSELL: Scott Russell
9 again from Southold Town. I just
10 want this --

11 MS. MINTER: If you can slow
12 down a little bit on the talk for our
13 court reporter. Thank you.

14 MR. RUSSELL: I'm told that
15 all the time.

16 I just want the community to
17 know that this is a public process
18 that is sponsored by GSA. Southold
19 Town has the zoning authority for
20 that to happen. We'll certainly be
21 developing many opportunities for the
22 public to come and address us in the
23 future to raise these concerns
24 regarding the ability to even access
25 that island and those end uses that

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2 really can't be contemplated until
3 the town's on board as the zoning
4 agent, so we will over the next few
5 weeks be having this discussion.

6 Thanks.

7 MS. MINTER: Thank you,
8 Mr. Russell.

9 Do we have any further
10 comments this evening that you would
11 like to add to the record?

12 Thank you very much for
13 attending tonight. Again, I remind
14 you written comments need to be in by
15 June the 2nd.

16
17 (Time noted: 8:00 p.m.)
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1 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

2

3 I, LISA H. MACDONALD, a Registered

4 Professional Reporter and a Notary

5 Public, do hereby certify that the

6 foregoing is a true and accurate

7 transcription of my stenographic notes.

8 I further certify that I am not

9 employed by nor related to any party to

10 this action.

11

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15 LISA H. MACDONALD, RPR

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