

East End Supervisors and Mayors Association
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April 26, 2017

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

On behalf of the members of the East End Supervisors and Mayors Association, I am writing to urge you to use New York's powers to protect Plum Island, in the Town of Southold, New York, from an unfettered sale by the United States General Services Administration and Department of Homeland Security. We ask you to consider using the State's significant authority under the coastal consistency provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Act and the State's Coastal Management Program to make it clear to the Federal Government that sale of the island to a private entity would adversely affect our coastal resources and would be inconsistent with several of New York's coastal policies.

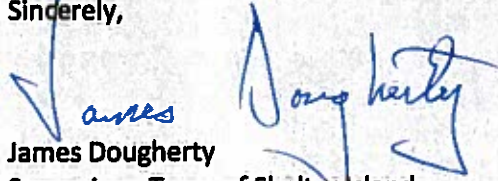
As you know, the Plum Island Animal Disease Center is scheduled to move its operations to the new National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility in Manhattan, Kansas, when the new facility is ready, sometime between 2020 and 2022. We believe that when the PIADC activities cease, the existing laboratory and supporting infrastructure contained on 20% of Plum Island's land area would be well suited for another type of research serving the public interest and that the remainder of the island, zoned by the Town of Southold as a Conservation District, would be ideally suited as a wildlife refuge, potentially under the auspices of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or through a public/private partnership.

Your addition of Plum Island to the 2016 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan, emphasizes the importance of the island's rich resources to the State. The Plan's listing, to acquire 600 to 700 acres for "wildlife habitat, shoreline preservation and protection of significant cultural resources," should the federal government fail to transfer the land to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, enjoys tremendous public support.

We also want to keep jobs on Plum Island. We wish to see future proposals for the island's use comport with the Town of Southold's 2013 Plum Island zoning districts, which were prudently prepared for the long-term protection and support of all the best that Plum Island has to offer – high-value wildlife habitat and ecosystem services, coupled with a campus that would be perfect for attracting good jobs.

We strenuously urge you to alert the Federal Government that New York wishes to see permanent protection of Plum Island's rich resources, held in the public domain, and that the State supports new uses for the research facilities and preservation of 80% of the Island as a National Wildlife Refuge or its equivalent.

Sincerely,



James Dougherty
Supervisor, Town of Shelter Island
Chairman, East End Supervisors and Mayors Association