

Notice of Availability
Final Environmental Assessment and
Finding of No Significant Impact / Finding of No Practicable Alternative
for the Closure of Plum Island Animal Disease Center
United States Department of Homeland Security
Plum Island, New York

Description: Interested parties are hereby notified that the United States (US) Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has prepared a Final Environmental Assessment (EA), Final Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and Final Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) for the Proposed Action described below.

Statutory Authority: This notice is being issued to all interested parties in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the White House Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1508), DHS Management Directive 023-01, rev. 01, and DHS Instruction 023-01-002-01 rev. 01. This posting also serves as a notice in accordance with Section 2(a)(2) of Executive Order 11988, *Floodplain Management*.

Proposed Action: DHS proposes to conduct activities required to close the Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC; Proposed Action) on Plum Island, located 1.5 miles northeast of Orient Point, New York. DHS also owns and maintains the Orient Point facility on Long Island which supports operations on Plum Island. DHS has identified tasks that must be completed to facilitate the Proposed Action, including facilities decontamination and sampling efficacy validation; waste management delineation and remediation activities; subsurface oil delineation and remediation activities; asset preservation and preparation for long-term storage (i.e., asset lay-up); and asset disposition and permit transfer. No facility construction or demolition is included in the Proposed Action. Actions occurring after the completion of closure activities (e.g., future disposal of the Plum Island asset) are not a part of the Proposed Action.

The mission of PIADC is to defend the US against accidental or intentional introduction of transboundary animal diseases, also known as foreign animal diseases, that threaten US livestock, industries, food security, and the economy. Due to the growing need for veterinary countermeasures to protect the US's agricultural sector and the limitations posed by the aging PIADC facility, DHS is constructing the National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) in Manhattan, Kansas, which is expected to be completed in 2022. Once NBAF is operational, DHS's mission at PIADC will be transferred to NBAF; construction of the NBAF and transfer of the PIADC mission were previously analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement and ROD published in 2008 and 2009, respectively. Following the mission transfer, DHS will no longer have a mission need for Plum Island. Therefore, DHS proposes to close PIADC to prepare for the Congressionally mandated conveyance of the Plum Island asset, which consists of all DHS property associated with Plum Island and Orient Point including land, structures, materials, and equipment.

The Final EA evaluates the potential environmental, cultural, socioeconomic, and physical impacts of the No Action Alternative and Preferred Alternative to implementing the Proposed Action. The evaluation performed within this Final EA concludes there would be no significant adverse impact to the environment or quality of life as a result of implementing the Proposed Action, provided routine best management practices specified in the EA are implemented.

Tasks to facilitate the Proposed Action would occur within the Federal Emergency Management Agency 100-year floodplain, including lay-up of existing buildings and delineation and remediation of existing historically contaminated areas. However, there would be no interference with the long-term function of the 100-year floodplain or an increased potential for flooding either on-site or off-site. Proposed work is necessary at these existing previously disturbed areas; therefore, there is no practicable alternative to working in the floodplain.

Public Review: The Draft EA, Draft FONSI, and Draft FONPA were made available for a public review period from September 8, 2022, through October 9, 2022. Comments received on the Draft EA and Draft FONSI were considered and addressed in the Final EA and Final FONSI, as appropriate. No comments

were received on the Draft FONPA. A complete list of comments received, and DHS responses is included in Appendix C of the Final EA.

Availability: The Final EA and Final FONSI/FONPA can be accessed online at: <https://www.dhs.gov/national-environmental-policy-act>. Printed copies of the Final EA and FONSI/FONPA are available at the Floyd Memorial Library at 539 1st Street, Greenport, New York 11944 and the Southold Free Library at 53705 Main Road, Southold, New York 11971.