

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 1 of 57

1 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
2
3 NATIONAL BIO AND AGRO-DEFENSE FACILITY
4 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
5 (NBAF DRAFT EIS)
6
7 PUBLIC MEETING
8
9 DATE: AUGUST 12, 2008
10 7:00 p.m.
11
12 GREENPORT SCHOOL
13 720 FRONT STREET
14 GREENPORT, NEW YORK 11944
15
16 Catherine Coghill, Moderator
17 PANEL MEMBERS:
18 Mr. James Johnson, U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security
19 Dr. Luis Rodriguez, U.S. Department of Agriculture
20 Mr. Chuck Pergler, Tetra Tech, Inc.
21
22 ATKINSON-BAKER, INC.
23 COURT REPORTERS
24 (800) 288-3376
25 www.depo.com
26 REPORTED BY: Sandra A. Deschaine,
27 Registered Professional Reporter
28
29 FILE NO.: A2054B6
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57



August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 2 of 57

1	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY		
2	NATIONAL BIO AND AGRO-DEFENSE FACILITY		
3	DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT		
4	(NBAF DRAFT EIS)		
5		PAGE	LINE
6	WELCOME		
7	James Johnson	3	1
8	Catherine Coghill (moderator)	4	17
9	PRESENTATION		
10	James Johnson	8	7
11	Luis Rodriguez	13	9
11	Chuck Pergler	16	9
12	QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION		
13	Elizabeth Holtzman	28	22
14	Debra O'Kane	30	1
15	FORMAL COMMENT SESSION		
16	Melanie Norden	36	24
		73	6
17	Jane Finalborgo	39	14
	David Nyce	42	8
18	Marie Domenici	43	2
	Elizabeth Holtzman	45	21
19	Marc Alessi	48	8
	Jenn Hartnagel	50	23
20	Sandra Sinclair	53	15
	Bob Ghosio	54	9
21	Gwynn Schroeder	56	10
	Edward Webb	58	21
22	Debra O'Kane	60	11
	Mark Haubner	63	13
23	Joan Fleck	66	6
	Jerry Callis	66	22
24	John Searing	68	7
	Frank Willis	70	13
25			

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 3 of 57

1 acceptable. So thank you again for coming.

2 THE MODERATOR: All right, Folks, that
3 concludes the presentation portion of the agenda,
4 which means we're now ready to begin the
5 question-and-answer period. Just a reminder, we're
6 asking that if you have a question, please be sure
7 that it's a clarifying question based on the
8 presentation that was given, so if there was
9 something that wasn't quite covered that you need a
10 little more information to put everything together,
11 that's what this period is for.

12 Having said that, we're asking that
13 each person who has a question come to the
14 microphone. If you'd like to leave us with your
15 name and organization or not, that's fine, and
16 please be sure to remember that it's one question.
17 And the gentlemen at the front will be sure to work
18 with you and answer your question. So at this
19 point in time, what I'd like to ask, if anyone does
20 have a question, to please come forward. We'll
21 make sure we go from there.

22 MS. HOLTZMAN: Thank you very much.
23 At the end of your comments you mentioned that you
24 estimated the economic costs of escape of
25 pathogens, and you focused on animals, you said it

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 4 of 57

1|19.0; 15.0

1 was 2.8 billion to animals, primarily from the loss
 2 of our exports. My question is, what is the cost
 3 expressed in the consequences of human life, if
 4 these pathogens, which now can affect humans,
 5 escape? What is the cost for human beings? My
 6 name is Elizabeth Holtzman.

7 MR. PERGLER: For the data that I put
 8 up on the board, the cost of 2.8 billion to 4.2
 9 billion is the result of the escape of a Foot and
 10 Mouth Disease virus and the economic consequences
 11 to the livestock industry. Foot and Mouth Disease
 12 does not affect human health. For Rift Valley
 13 Fever and Nipah, there is not as much data, both of
 14 which affect human health. There is data in our
 15 document, but it's not as robust as the case
 16 studies that we were able to use for FMD virus.
 17 One example that we do cite for Rift Valley Fever,
 18 Rift Valley Fever working group estimated a cost of
 19 \$50 billion. But again, you really have to read
 20 the study to fully understand that and the
 21 assumptions there. Again, we just didn't have as
 22 much data available to us in comparison to the Foot
 23 and Mouth Disease virus.

24 THE MODERATOR: Next question, please?
 25 Yes, Ma'am.

29

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 19.0

DHS notes the commenter's concern. The risks and associated potential effects to human health and safety were evaluated in Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 15.0

The risks and associated potential effects to human health and safety are evaluated in Section 3.14 of the Draft EIS. The risks were determined to be low for all site alternatives. Appendix D references a study performed by the Rift Valley Working Group that estimated that the economic cost of a terrorist act involving the purposeful infection of livestock with the RFV virus could ultimately reach \$50 billion. The study used a worst-case scenario to arrive at its estimate of economic losses to the US economy. However, the Appendix D also notes that if RFV were to establish itself in a broad area of the U.S. and RFV became endemic the cost to the U.S. economy could reach a level cited by the Rift Valley Fever working Group. It must be noted that the probability of a release from the NBAF and its ensuing establishment in the environment would be very low.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 5 of 57

1 MS. O'KANE: My name is Debbie O'Kane,
2 and I live in Orient Point. I would just like to
3 know why Rift Valley Fever has been chosen to be
4 studied on Plum Island when we have a -- it's being
5 studied now; is that correct? It's not part of
6 what you're researching at the Biosafety Level 3?
7 Okay. Why it would be proposed to be studied at
8 the Biosafety 4 level when we have such a huge
9 population of mosquitoes that we deal with on a
10 regular basis during our spring, summer, and fall
11 months, and we really have a hard time controlling
12 that population. And Rift Valley Fever is a vector
13 born illness if I'm not mistaken; is that correct?

14 MR. PERGLER: Before I get to your
15 question, I missed a very important point in my
16 last response. The three pathogens that we carried
17 out, they do not have human-to-human transmission,
18 so I just want to bring that out.

19 MS. HOLTZMAN: That wasn't my
20 question. My question had to deal with pathogens
21 that did affect humans, not ones that didn't. So
22 I'd like an answer to that.

23 MR. PERGLER: Actually, my answer
24 still stands, and that is, we don't have as much
25 information on what the actual cost would be. But

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 6 of 57

1 where we can disclose, we certainly did, so that
2 the reader can make a comment that you would like
3 to see more extensive analysis, or where you think
4 we can improve the document, so that's an extremely
5 valuable comment that you've got, and I hope you
6 give it formally as well.

7 DR. RODRIGUEZ: The questions about
8 the reason why the Rift Valley Fever would be
9 studied. I guess the -- there has been risk
10 analysis of Rift Valley Fever, and there is a high
11 risk that Rift Valley Fever might come into this
12 country in the same way that was not a virus, for
13 example, came from infected mosquitoes brought from
14 abroad, perhaps in airplanes. If that is the case,
15 unlike West Nile Virus, Rift Valley Fever affects
16 both livestock and it produces disease,
17 particularly in sheep and cattle, but is not so
18 serious disease. But they serve as amplifiers of
19 infection.

20 People get infected with Rift Valley
21 Fever; and, again, most of the infections are not
22 lethal, people don't die of it. But there is a
23 number, a subset that varies from outbreak to
24 outbreak, and most of these have been documented in
25 Africa, where a percent of the population will

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 7 of 57

1 develop disease, and a percent of those that
2 develop disease would die. So the reason that we
3 need to do studies on Rift Valley Fever is that
4 there is no test -- a license vaccine for Rift
5 Valley Fever to be used in this country, so we're
6 very vulnerable to the introduction of these
7 disease. We don't have means to control it. We
8 don't have a facility in this country where we can
9 test.

10 There are three or four candidate
11 vaccines today that have been developed by several
12 scientific groups around the world. However, none
13 of them have been tested for efficacy in cattle or
14 sheep, and there is no facility in this country
15 where that work can be done. So the goal of adding
16 Rift Valley Fever to a research program in NBAF is
17 that it will allow having a Biosafety Level 4
18 facility, it will now allow to test those vaccines
19 in order to have better preparedness to prevent the
20 natural introduction of Rift Valley Fever to this
21 country.

22 MS. O'KANE: But once again, doesn't
23 that pose a risk when we have such a high
24 population of mosquitoes here on the East End of
25 Long Island?

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 8 of 57

1 DR. RODRIGUEZ: The way that this
2 research is carried out, particularly when you deal
3 with infected mosquitoes, it is probably not going
4 to be the main focus of the research. The research
5 will probably be to vaccinate the animals, and then
6 you will take the virus, not mosquitoes, but just
7 small amounts of virus, and then inject the cows or
8 sheep to see the effectiveness of the vaccine. So
9 the likelihood of that release going, you know,
10 mosquitoes being released is not the main focus of
11 the research, as we foresee the NBAF facility
12 having.

13 Now, when insects are used in other
14 places to do research on any zoonotic agent, there
15 is extreme number of measures that are taken to
16 prevent the release of those insects. It's like an
17 onion, where you have layer over layer of safety
18 measures. For example, you have an accountability
19 requirement, where you have to count the number of
20 mosquitoes that you start working with, and you go
21 into a place, like a cage, that's all enclosed, and
22 before you leave that cage you have to account for
23 every mosquito that you were working with, and like
24 that. And then there is mosquito netting outside,
25 there's mosquito traps. This is work that is being

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 9 of 57

1 done, for example, at laboratories in Laramie,
2 Wyoming, or in Fort Collins, Colorado, where they
3 work with these agents. That's the way they handle
4 these, so there hasn't been, as far as I know, no
5 history of a release of mosquito born or vector
6 born disease from these laboratories, as far as I
7 can say.

8 MS. O'KANE: I've done a lot of
9 research over a number of years on this, and I
10 believe I read somewhere that Rift Valley Fever is
11 a disease that can be used in biological warfare.
12 Perhaps you can refute that, but I just wonder if
13 that's the reason why you will be studying it.

14 MR. JOHNSON: In terms of biowarfare,
15 was your question?

16 MS. O'KANE: Yes.

17 MR. JOHNSON: The new facility, NBAF
18 has no plans to do bioweapons research, biowarfare.
19 It's illegal, and there's treaties in the United
20 States. We adhere to those. We purely are doing
21 the research for foreign animal diseases, emerging
22 diseases that we don't know about, and we need to
23 be in a better position to respond to. As far as
24 warfare and everything, that is not the purpose of
25 this facility.

34

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 1.0

The purpose of the NBAF would be to develop tests to detect foreign animal and zoonotic diseases and develop vaccines (or other countermeasures such as antiviral therapies) to protect agriculture and food systems in the United States. The NBAF's mission is defensive and would not involve offensive bioweapons research or development. The international treaty, known as the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, to which the United States is a signatory, prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and acquisition of such weapons. DHS's mission is to study foreign animal and zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy. The purpose of the NBAF would be to develop tests to detect foreign animal and zoonotic diseases and develop vaccines (or other countermeasures such as antiviral therapies) to protect agriculture and food systems in the United States.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 10 of 57

1 MS. O'KANE: Not that you would be
2 developing but are you researching it because it
3 might be weaponized and used as a weapon?

4 DR. RODRIGUEZ: I don't have knowledge
5 of Rift Valley Fever specifically being identified
6 as a biowarfare agent, so I don't know. I don't
7 know if the rest of the panel has any information.

8 MS. O'KANE: Thank you.

9 THE MODERATOR: Next question, please.
10 Okay. We're going to now open up the floor to the
11 formal comment period. So a couple things I'd like
12 to reiterate. First of all, if you do not wish to
13 make a comment tonight, that's fine. All comments
14 received by the Department of Homeland Security,
15 whether they receive them in writing or this
16 evening at the meeting, or if you wish to go home
17 and compile a letter and submit it later, rather
18 than tonight, all those comments, Department of
19 Homeland Security looks at everything equally. So
20 whatever you feel comfortable with, and how you
21 would like to submit comments, please feel free to
22 do so. As long you do make sure, if you do submit
23 them in writing, that the comments are postmarked
24 by August 25th.

25 Also, as part of the formal comment

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 11 of 57

1 process this evening, just to make sure everyone
2 realizes how this will work. In that under the
3 National Environmental Policy Act, when we open the
4 floor to formal comments, if you pose a question in
5 your comment, we will not be responding to them
6 verbally tonight. And I don't want you to think
7 that that's a mode of disrespect by the gentlemen
8 at the front of the room. What we have to do is
9 take each comment that we receive and go back and
10 do a scientific analysis and breakdown and make
11 sure we address it technically in the final EIS.
12 So just to make sure everyone understands, if you
13 pose a question tonight, we're not answering them
14 or we're not being disrespectful, we're following
15 the requirements that are put forth in front of us.

16 At this point in time, I'd like to go
17 ahead and call the first person that signed up.
18 Please do remember, out of respect for everybody
19 here and at the other sites, you have three minutes
20 to speak, and I'll be up here at the front of the
21 room just making sure you're aware of how much time
22 is left on the clock. Our first speaker this
23 evening is Melanie Norden.

24 MS. NORDEN: My name is Melanie
25 Norden, and I reside in Greenport, New York, and

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 12 of 57

1 thank you for the opportunity of speaking on this
2 issue tonight. I prepared a host of comments which
3 far exceed three minutes, but I will divide them
4 into subject matter.

5 Many of us on the North Fork are very
6 concerned and have persistent and serious concerns
7 regarding safety and security at Plum Island;
8 concerns that are shared by the US Government
9 Accountability Office, which has twice, in recent
10 years, both in 2003 and 2007, reported on security
11 and safety issues there. Though the DHS has
12 indicated its intent to replace Plum Island with a
13 new modernized facility, that replacement may not
14 occur until several years hence, if at all.

15 In our view, the Island is today, and
16 will in the foreseeable future, vulnerable to
17 security breaches and pathogen theft, because
18 physical security arrangements are incomplete and
19 grossly limited. Moreover, we question whether the
20 Island's obsolete infrastructure is adequate to
21 support even a Biolevel Safety 3 Lab. Given the
22 Island's history of incidence, we also question
23 whether it will ever be able to adequately meet the
24 level of security and safety required of a Biolevel
25 Safety 4.

37

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern for security at the Plum Island NBAF. Regardless of location, the NBAF would have the levels of protection and control required by applicable DHS security directives. Security would be provided by a series of fencing, security cameras, and protocols. In addition, a dedicated security force would be present on-site. Additional security could be provided via cooperation with local law enforcement agencies. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (designated as For Official Use Only)(TRA) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The TRA is "For Official Use Only" and is not available for public review. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and would be used to recommend the most prudent measures to establish a reasonable level of risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety. Because of the importance of the NBAF mission and the associated work with potential high-biocontainment pathogens, critical information related to the potential for adverse consequences as a result of intentional acts has been incorporated into the NEPA process.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 13 of 57

1121.1
cont.

1 Let me summarize some of the our
2 safety and security concerns. The lack of a
3 full-time federal protective service presence on
4 the Island; the fact that there is not a no fly
5 zone over the Island; that there is limited
6 surveillance of the Island's periphery, the areas
7 outside of the biocontainment and administrative
8 buildings are surveilled by stationary closed
9 circuit television cameras, which are utterly
10 insufficient; that the island is easily accessible
11 to the general public; and that there were limited,
12 if any, no trespassing signs to advise the public
13 it is a Government facility, so boaters and
14 fishermen line its banks regularly; that Plum
15 Island's fire brigade has limited hours of
16 operation, and that local fire departments and
17 emergency personnel have not been adequately
18 trained in specific procedures regarding the
19 handling of hazardous pathogens and materials, and
20 are limited in their response capabilities if a
21 full-scale fire were to break out on Plum Island;
22 that background checks on students, foreign
23 researchers, cleaning and maintenance personnel who
24 have access to pathogens and work with or around
25 infected animals are not routinely undertaken, are

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 14 of 57

1|21.1
cont.

1 not done in all cases, and that those same
2 students, foreign researchers, and maintenance
3 personnel are not required to follow strict
4 decontamination procedures and are not fully
5 escorted at all times when and if they do so.

6 We also share the GAO concerns
7 regarding the lack of incidence response plan for
8 incidence exceeding Plum Island security
9 capabilities. Some of us are also concerned about
10 decontamination and remediation issues, but I'll
11 address those in my next comments. Thank you.

12 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Our next
13 speaker is Jane Finalborgo.

14 MS. FINALBORGO: Hi. I'm here tonight
15 to read a statement from Congressmen Tim Bishop,
16 and that statement is as follows:

17 "Thank you to the Department of
18 Homeland Security for holding this important public
19 meeting, as well as the other agencies for their
20 involvement. Thank you to the concerned members of
21 our community for coming out this evening. I
22 regret that a prior commitment prevents me from
23 attending tonight.

24 "I understand that by statute Plum
25 Island must be considered as the possible location

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 15 of 57

1 of the new National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility,
2 a Biosafety Level 4 facility to meet the needs of
3 Homeland Security Presidential Directive NAAN. I
4 want to reiterate my strong opposition, and the
5 opposition of almost every elected official on Long
6 Island, to placing a Biosafety Level 4 Facility on
7 Plum Island.

8 From the moment DHS became involved at
9 the Plum Island Animal Disease Facility, I have
10 received repeated assurances from the highest
11 levels of the Department that it would not be a
12 suitable location for BSL-4 research. I first
13 received this assurance in a meeting with Senator
14 Clinton and Secretary Ridge in June of 2003. At
15 the time, DHS put out a statement which read as
16 follows:"

17 "'The Island setting and
18 biocontainment facilities of Plum Island permit
19 safe and secure research. Plum Island's
20 biocontainment facilities operate at a Biosafety
21 Level 3. DHS has no plans in the near or long-term
22 for a Biosafety Level 4 facility.'"

23 "Subsequent to that meeting, Secretary
24 Chertoff echoed the view that Plum Island would not
25 be a location for BSL-4 research. Simply put, it

40

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.1

DHS notes the Congressman's opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 16 of 57

1|25.1
cont.

1 is our opinion that Plum Island's proximity to
 2 major Metropolitan areas on Long Island and
 3 Connecticut make it an unsuitable location for
 4 BSL-4 research, which investigates highly
 5 infectious diseases that affect both animals and
 6 humans.

2|5.1
cont.

7 "While we can all agree that Plum
 8 Island is not a suitable location for a BSL-4
 9 Facility, I do believe that it can still play a
 10 vital role in our Nation's bio and agro-defense, as
 11 it has for more than half a century as a Biosafety
 12 Level 3 Facility. I do not believe that the
 13 Federal Government would be wise to abandon its
 14 multi-million dollar investment in Plum Island,
 15 including \$60 million in infrastructure and
 16 security upgrades which are planned over the next
 17 few years.

18 "While I understand the need for the
 19 NBAF, I do not believe it would be prudent for our
 20 Nation to place all of its bio and agro-defense
 21 needs in one basket. Additionally, there is still
 22 an important role for an upgraded Plum Island to
 23 play, with its unique geographic assets and
 24 existing infrastructure. Our community has given
 25 so much over the past half century to securing this

41

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.1

DHS notes the Congressman's views and continued and ongoing support for PIADC's important mission, including support for continued research and ongoing investment in critical infrastructure upgrades at Plum Island. However, among other factors as described in Section 2.4.1 of the NBAF EIS, the current PIADC does not meet the purpose and need as described in Chapter 1 which includes provision of BSL-4 capability. Should a decision be made to construct NBAF and, if so, a site is selected, DHS would determine alternatives regarding the future of PIADC, encompassing its decommissioning, and Plum Island and would perform a separate NEPA analysis at that time.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 17 of 57

1 Nation. Asking us to house a BSL-4 is simply
2 asking too much. Again, thank you for coming
3 tonight, and I hope you will listen closely to the
4 voices of this community." Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 THE MODERATOR: Ed Romaine is our next
7 speaker. The next gentleman. He left.

8 MR. NYCE: It should be Ed Romaine,
9 but he left. My name is David Nyce. I'm the Mayor
10 in the Village of Greenport. I had not intended to
11 speak. Ed's assistant said that he had to leave,
12 asked me if I would stand in.

13 Basically, two comments. One, I'm an
14 advocate for Plum Island as a facility. I'm not an
15 advocate for it to be a Level 4. In the study you
16 state that the Island being an island is an asset
17 for containment of. I would argue that, should
18 something happen, the Island that we are on,
19 exacerbates any problem that may happen. We have
20 one means of egress and that is to the west. So
21 should something happen, it's accentuated here. So
22 while it may be easier contained on an island,
23 should something happen, it's also much more
24 contained on this Island. Thank you.

25 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Marie

42

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 25.1

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

1/25.1

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 18 of 57

1 Domenici.

2 MS. DOMENICI: Good evening. I just
3 first would like to express my disappointment that
4 there were at least five elected officials that
5 were here earlier this evening, but because they
6 had other events and things that they had to
7 attend, they're not standing here to tell you their
8 viewpoints on whether or not this should be an
9 upgrade or not. So I think in the future, when you
10 have elected officials who are participating, you
11 should really give them the time, because the're
12 spreading their time around to various events, and
13 what they have to say is equally important, is what
14 I have to say as a taxpayer.

15 My comments, some of them were already
16 commented on, but I will quickly go over what my
17 concerns are. The aerial view of Plum Island is
18 accessible on the Internet. And since Plum Island
19 is not a travel destination, I'm concerned as to
20 why visually it's accessible for the Internet. I
21 think this is something that Homeland Security
22 should really look into. And I heard some comments
23 earlier today from an elected official that was
24 very disturbing, you'll probably read about it the
25 paper tomorrow. It has to do with a terrorist in

43

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern for security at the Plum Island NBAF. Regardless of location, the NBAF would have the levels of protection and control required by applicable DHS security directives. Security would be provided by a series of fencing, security cameras, and protocols. In addition, a dedicated security force would be present on-site. Additional security could be provided via cooperation with local law enforcement agencies. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (designated as For Official Use Only)(TRA) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The TRA is "For Official Use Only" and is not available for public review. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and would be used to recommend the most prudent measures to establish a reasonable level of risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety. Because of the importance of the NBAF mission and the associated work with potential high-biocontainment pathogens, critical information related to the potential for adverse consequences as a result of intentional acts has been incorporated into the NEPA process.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 19 of 57

1|21.1
cont.

1 Plum Island, so I would ask you to look for that
2 tomorrow in the newspaper somewhere. There is a no
3 fly zone over Plum Island, and that is disturbing.
4 You know, as Joe Q citizen, when I speak to you and
5 I look at issues from the perimeter, and I see
6 these things as gaps, I mean, I'm not a rocket
7 scientist, but these are glaring gaps to people on
8 the outside looking in.

1|21.1
cont.

9 It's my understanding, and I've been
10 to the Island on August 1st, you should know,
11 there's only partial perimeter video monitoring
12 around the Island, and that's extremely disturbing
13 to me, because you do not have a perimeter
14 monitoring system, where boaters can come right up
15 to the Island, so you're not visually -- you know,
16 making this surveillance available by video camera.

17 Now, if I go into a 7-11, I'm on video
18 and you can see the size of the cup of coffee I
19 bought, how many sugars I put in it, and if I put
20 whole milk or half and half. So the fact that the
21 Island is video void on some of the Island is
22 really very, very disconcerting to me. When I was
23 entering the ferry the other day, I was stopped as
24 I was boarding the ferry, and I brought my purse as
25 a prop because I was asked to stop and have my bags

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 20 of 57

1 searched, and I will tell the search was like this
 2 (demonstrating). Okay. You can enter the boat.
 3 So that, you know, I don't say the gentleman wasn't
 4 doing his job. I'm saying the protocol is not
 5 working.

6 The other thing is the shoreline.

7 Again, I speak about that, you really need to
 8 have -- boaters can't be coming up to the shoreline
 9 and fishing. It doesn't seem like that's a secure
 10 thing to do. There is access, where if you bring
 11 your boat around, you can walk up on the beach.
 12 I'm concerned about the water waste that is dumped
 13 into the gut. Is anyone doing water testing there?

14 And you guys haven't done a remediation on an oil
 15 leak since 1998, there was 30,000 gallons. You
 16 remediated nine, and if you can't secure what you
 17 have now, the Biolevel 4 is not even an option.
 18 Thank you for our time.

19 (Applause.)

20 THE MODERATOR: Elizabeth Holtzman.

21 MS. HOLTZMAN: I'm a former member of
 22 the United States Congress, and I want to thank you
 23 for the opportunity to speak. I've been a resident
 24 of the North Fork for almost a half a century, I
 25 and my family. I want to say, first, that I don't

45

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 21.1

See response to Comment No. 1.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 12.1

DHS notes the commenter's water quality concerns. The NBAF EIS Section 3.3.2.1.4 describes current waste treatment on Plum Island. The existing wastewater treatment plant was built in 1995 with a major upgrade in 2004. The treatment plant is a 60,000 gallons per day state permitted tertiary treatment facility. EIS Section 3.7.2.1.2 describes Plum Islands current stormwater permit and Section 3.13 and 3.13.7 describes liquid and solid waste disposal methodologies; EIS Section 3.13.7.3. describes the insufficient capacity of the PIADC treatment plant for future NBAF needs and potential options to ensure capacity. NYSDEC issues and oversees environmental operational permits which include any required testing or monitoring reports.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 21 of 57

1 believe that risk has been properly assessed in
 126.0 2 this Environmental Impact Statement. I want to go
 3 at it in a number of ways.

4 First, let me say, the statement in
 5 the Executive Summary that says, "Normal operations
 6 pose no threat to the surrounding community" is
 7 absurd on its face. There's no way that -- let's
 8 assume for a moment that the operations are normal,
 9 but that assumes that all of the material, the
 126.0 10 construction, the pipes, the filters are perfect,
 cont. 11 otherwise the normal operation does pose a hazard.
 12 And if we're going to assume that the construction
 13 and the material is perfect, well, we're living in
 14 a fairyland.

15 I mean, all we have to do is look at
 16 what's happened in New York City just now where
 17 they discovered that the building department which
 18 is supposed to inspect concrete couldn't do that,
 19 and dozens and dozens of high-rise buildings will
 20 have to be reinspected because the concrete wasn't
 21 poured properly because there was fraud. And if
 22 you think the federal government is exempt from
 23 fraud, you might just want to look at some of the
 24 GAO studies. Just look at Iraq. I myself, when I
 25 was in Congress was involved in uncovering major

46

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 26.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the risk posed by NBAF under normal operations. Within the context of performing environmental impact analyses, the term normal operations simply refers to those that are "incident-free" in contrast to "abnormal" operating conditions where a structure, system, or component does not function as designed or intended, by whatever the cause or initiating event. Such operational or inherent design failures or other unplanned events result in accidents or abnormal operating conditions, the consequences of which have been evaluated in Section 3.14 of the NBAF EIS. Nevertheless, impacts would occur from construction and operation of NBAF under normal operations such that resources would be consumed, effluents would be routinely emitted to the air and water within specified permit limits, etc. and these effects are also assessed in resource-specific sections of the NBAF EIS.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 22 of 57

1 fraud in actually the Department of Agriculture
2 Finance Programs.

3 Let me say, too, that not only is that
4 statement absurd on its face and based on
5 assumptions that nobody could agree with, but the
6 idea that the risk is low to none, again, a quote,
7 except for fire from accident, is another
8 absurdity. Accident. Of course accident can
9 happen in the construction, but we don't want to
10 talk about fraud. Or there can be accidental
11 operation of all kinds of things. People might
12 slip through the security. There might be
13 negligent operation of the facility. All we have
14 to do is look at what happened a few months ago
15 when an Air Force plane carried nuclear weapons.
16 This was a whoops. Well, what about a whoops here.
17 A whoops here means that humans beings are going to
18 be affected.

19 No discussion of risks caused by
20 intentional acts. Think of what happened now with
21 anthrax. In light of that, can anyone here, can
22 anyone here, say that the risk is minimal,
23 negligible or whatever. You have people who are
24 crazy. I was a former prosecutor. You have people
25 who are crazy. You have people who are disgruntled

47

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the risk of a potential accident or terrorist event. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. As described in Chapter 3 and summarized in Section 2.5 of the NBAF EIS, the impacts of activities during normal operations at any of the six site alternatives would likely be minor. Sections 3.8.9, 3.10.9, and 3.14 (Health and Safety), and Appendices B, D, and E of the NBAF EIS, provide a detailed analysis of the consequences from a accidental or deliberate pathogen release. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF then site specific protocols would be developed, in coordination with local emergency response agencies that would consider the diversity and density of populations residing within the local area. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, addresses accident scenarios, including external events such as a terrorist attack. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (designated as For Official Use Only)(TRA) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The TRA is "For Official Use Only" and is not available for public review. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and are used to recommend the most prudent measures to establish a reasonable level of risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety. Because of the importance of the NBAF mission and the associated work with potential high-consequence biological pathogens, critical information related to the potential for adverse consequences as a result of intentional acts has been incorporated into the NEPA process. Security would be provided by a series of fencing, security cameras, and protocols. In addition, a dedicated security force would be present on-site. Additional security could be provided via cooperation with local law enforcement agencies.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 23 of 57

1 employees. You have people who are angry at their
2 family, their lovers, their whatever. This is too
3 great a danger to human life, and this EIS doesn't
4 deal with these issues.

5 (Applause)

6 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Mark
7 Alessi.

8 MR. ALESSI: Good evening. I'm Marc
9 Alessi. I represent the people of the first
10 district in the New York State Assembly, which goes
11 from Orient Point, Fishers Island, Plum Island,
12 Shelter Island to Brookhaven town. I have two
13 federal facilities in my district: Brookhaven
14 National Lab and Plum Island. And I think I would
15 like to contrast the two. And I think what we're
16 dealing with here is a community, as you're hearing
17 from the comments tonight, that is trying to build
18 its trust level with the facility, but the
19 communication and the dialogue between Plum Island
20 and this community seems to be a more recent
21 dialogue.

22 I attended one of the first community
23 forums that Plum Island held in quite a number of
24 years just last year. I'm new to the elected
25 office. I'm in office three years now. So I don't

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 24 of 57

1 have any resentment to the fact, but other
2 legislators and prior elected officials who wanted
3 to reach out and know more about the facility and
4 maybe told more about the facility and have a
5 better understanding, were rebuffed. And when that
6 happens and they're not able to communicate with
7 their constituents, that's a problem. So I applaud
8 the administration for their outreach now, but you
9 have to understand some of the trepidation. The
10 community is just building their trust level.

11 Brookhaven National Lab had the same
12 issues ten year ago. Not only were they not a good
13 neighbor at the time, they were an irresponsible
14 neighbor back then, and there was some problems in
15 terms of contamination of our groundwater. But
16 they were able to reach out to the community and
17 have an open dialogue and an honest dialogue, and
18 they went through a mediation process. And now I
19 think there's a certain trust level with the
20 community. Actually, I think they're celebrating.
21 It's more than ten years. It's twenty-five years
22 since they put together a citizen advisory panel
23 that continues that dialogue and that open
24 conversation about what's occurring at the lab. I
25 think that would be important here.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 25 of 57

1|25.1

1 But with this kind of history, we
2 understand the economic benefit that the facility
3 has provided to this community in Connecticut and
4 millions of dollars of salary, and we understand
5 that it has provided a great deal of beneficial
6 science, and I guess we're proud of that, as we're
7 learning about that. But as a Level Safety 3, you
8 are taking a look at disease that's passed animal
9 to animal. Level 4, you're looking at disease
10 that's passed animal, potentially, to humans. And
11 because we haven't had the ability as a community
12 to have that kind of dialogue, we're not sure if
13 we're completely comfortable with the current
14 protocols. So to ask us to sign on and be
15 supportive of something that's even more dangerous,
16 could be very problematic for us. So I think I
17 speak on behalf of the majority of my residents
18 when I say no to Level 4, and let's continue to the
19 dialogue on the current protocols.

20 (Applause.)

21 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Next name
22 is Jenn Hartnagel.

23 MS. HARTNAGEL: Good evening. My name
24 is Jenn Hartnagel. I'm here representing the group
25 for the East End. On behalf of my organization, I

50

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.1

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 26 of 57

1|25.1
cont.

1 wish to express our firm opposition to the
 2 construction of the National Agro and Bio-defense
 3 facility at Plum Island. Just for the record, the
 4 group for the East End is a professionally staffed
 5 conservation advocacy and education organization
 6 dedicated to the protection of Eastern Long
 7 Island's fragile and diverse environment.

8 To begin, the landscape that existed
 9 at the time Plum Island was opened in the early
 10 1950s has changed dramatically. The population of
 11 Suffolk County has grown 450 percent. Although you
 12 will have and will surely hear a number of
 13 well-reasoned comments regarding potential health
 14 and human safety risks, we would like to focus our
 15 comments on the potential environmental harm that
 16 could and may accrue with this potential upgrade.

2|12.1

17 To begin with, water consumption and
 18 quality. The upgrade would require the consumption
 19 of more than 36 million gallons of water per year.
 20 The present water assumption is 17 million gallons
 21 per year. If the availability of water was not an
 22 issue, perhaps the doubling in the amount of water
 23 that will be needed will not present a potential
 24 problem; but, as a matter of fact, the twelve
 25 freshwater supply wells that draw from Plum Island

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 25.1

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 12.1

DHS notes the commentor's aquifer capacity concerns. The NBAF EIS Section 3.3.2.1.1 describes the PIADC potable water system's well fields, NYSDEC inspection and licensing, and a study recommended water budget of 150,000 gallons per day. The 2006 annual water report documented PIADC's average well production was 47,704 gallons per day. EIS Section 3.3.6.3.1 describes PIADC's well field capacity as insufficient to meet peak daily potable water consumption of both PIADC and NBAF and potential options to meet the peak demands.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 27 of 57

2|12.1
cont.

1 are already limited in their capacity by the New
 2 York State Department of Environmental Conservation
 3 to help manage the known risk of saltwater
 4 intrusion. The installation of the proposed
 5 facility would trigger an EAP review to insure that
 6 groundwater is not endangered. We do not believe
 7 that DEIS has fully investigated the long-term
 8 implications of sustained water consumption on Plum
 9 Islands limited freshwater aquifers.

3|9.1

10 To move on to air quality. The DEIS
 11 points out that the facility will likely produce
 12 something on the order of another 140 tons of
 13 combined air pollutants each year and every year
 14 for the life of the facility. Our region is
 15 already a nonattainment area. And we do not feel
 16 that this is a prudent proposal. We do not believe
 17 that the DEIS adequately reflected the scope of the
 18 potential air quality impacts as they relate to the
 19 specific policy objectives of our region.

4|18.1

20 To move on to wastewater. The DEIS
 21 points out that the facility would likely produce
 22 as much as 50,000 to 125,000 gallons per day of
 23 treated sewage that will have to empty out into the
 24 sound or a sewage treatment facility will need to
 25 be constructed. To move on to energy. We are

52

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 9.1

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding air quality in the Plum Island region. Section 3.4.2.1.2 of the NBAF EIS describes Suffolk County as in non-attainment for O3 and PM2.5 based on ambient air monitoring stations sited in densely populated areas to the west of Plum Island. Section 3.4.1 describes the methodology used in assessing potential air quality consequences. Air emission concentrations were estimated using SCREEN3, a U.S. EPA dispersion modeling program. Conservative assumptions were used to ensure the probable maximum effects were evaluated. Once the final design is determined, a more refined air emissions model would be used during the permitting process. The final design would ensure that the NBAF %does not significantly affect% the region's ability to meet air quality standards

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 18.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern. Section 3.13.2.2 of the NBAF EIS, DHS finds that the estimated daily average volume of wastewater that could generated at the proposed Plum Island Site is 72,300 gallons. Before being discharged to the Long Island Sound, this wastewater would have to meet New York State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit limits. As discussed in Section 3.13.7.3 of the NBAF EIS, construction of the NBAF at the Plum Island Site could require constructing and permitting a new wastewater treatment plant, or modifying and expanding the existing plant because it cannot handle projected peak loads. Modification or expansion of the existing plant would result in a regulatory review of the adequacy of these SPDES permit limits.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 28 of 57

1|25.1
cont.

1|25.1

1 concerned that there is a defined need for a
2 significant increase in energy.
3 To move on to my conclusion. There
4 are three specific reasons we feel that this
5 facility should not be upgraded: The increased
6 human settlement. We are concerned with the
7 potential long-term environmental impacts. And
8 finally, we are concerned that this DEIS has taken
9 only a very general look at the Plum Island site
10 and has not fully integrated the potential impacts
11 associated with the construction operation for the
12 next fifty years. Thank you.
13 THE MODERATOR: Sandra Sinclair is our
14 next speaker.
15 MS. SINCLAIR: Good evening. I'm here
16 just as an individual and a taxpayer. I think that
17 many important scientific points have been made
18 against putting a Level 4 Facility at Plum Island.
19 I'm going to just say some things that I think are
20 common sense. We live in a time of rising seas.
21 There is absolutely no question that in the next
22 years to come the seas around us are going to rise.
23 The second is that I'm not old enough to remember
24 the hurricane of 1937. I don't know if anybody
25 else here is of that age, but it tore Fire Island

53

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.1

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 29 of 57

1 completely in half. Now, we haven't had a really
2 major hurricane here in a very, very long while,
3 but we are due. I think this is a foolish
4 proposal. I think that your work is important; the
5 work that you're doing is important. I think it
6 needs to be done, but it certainly does not need to
7 be done here.

8 THE MODERATOR: Bob Ghosio.

9 MR. GHOSIO: My name is Bob Ghosio,
10 Junior. I am a Southold town trustee. The reason
11 I'm coming up is basically because as a Southold
12 town trustee, our job as elected officials in our
13 town is to insure that our wetlands are protected,
14 that our beaches are protected, and that we
15 administrate most anything that happens on publicly
16 owned and town-owned waterways.

17 We have 162 or 165 miles of shoreline
18 here in our town, and I would have to say that as a
19 former researcher myself, I do appreciate the work
20 that we do here at Plum Island. I understand the
21 importance of doing that kind of research. But
22 also, I'm hearing from my constituency that there
23 are grave concerns about the potential for
24 releases; and more specifically, in my particular
25 case, because we have tides coming through the gut

54

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement about the importance of the research that would be conducted at the NBAF and her opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 30 of 57

1 that come into our town, we are concerned about the
2 affluent releases from Plum Island.

3 The only thing I would strongly,
4 strongly advocate, is in the process of this study,
5 that we insure that we have studied how we're going
6 to clean the affluent from the sewage or from any
7 other wastewater releases that there are. We want
8 to insure that the safety of our fisheries are
9 maintained here in our town. The fisheries here
10 are one of the most important industries that we
11 have. It bolsters our economy. It's very
12 important.

13 So I'm asking that you take the time
14 and make the effort to insure that we have a plan
15 for mitigation in case of release into the
16 waterways, and to do anything that we can to keep
17 any affluent to come from this, the facility now or
18 even if it goes up to a Biolevel 4, that it be
19 cleaned, and we maintain the health of our
20 fisheries here in Southold. Thank you.

21 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Julia
22 Erlic. I'll make sure I'm pronouncing it right.
23 It's Julia, last name is spelled E-R-L-I-C. Is
24 Julia still here? In the event that she stepped
25 out or would like to come back, I'll just keep an

55

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 13.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding wastewater treatment and potential adverse effects on fisheries in the vicinity of the Plum Island Site. The NBAF EIS Section 3.3.2.1.4 describes PIADC's tertiary wastewater treatment facility and current capacity of 60,000 gallons per day. EIS Section 3.13.1 describes methodologies used to assess NBAF's solid and liquid waste management options. EIS Section 3.3.6.3.4 describes the wastewater treatment needs of the proposed NBAF as 50,000 to 125,000 gallons per day, which would exceed current capacity during peak periods. EIS Section 3.3.6.3.4 also describes options for meeting the wastewater treatment needs of the proposed NBAF on Plum Island. EIS Section 3.7.2.1.1 describes the current TMDL for nitrogen loading in Long Island Sound. The proposed NBAF would include a new wastewater treatment facility that would meet capacity requirements and provide for compliance with TDMLs. Furthermore, Section 3.15 of the NBAF EIS describes mitigation measures to prevent aquatic resource impacts associated with erosion and sedimentation during the construction process and stormwater runoff from the completed facility. Mitigation would include best management practices, a stormwater pollution prevention control plan, and low impact development (LID) design techniques. The inclusion of a modern wastewater treatment facility, combined with other mitigation measures described above, would prevent significant adverse impacts on fisheries and other aquatic organisms.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 31 of 57

1 eye on that; we'll give her an opportunity to speak
2 if she comes back in the room. Scott Russell.
3 Okay. Gwynn Schroeder.

4 THE FLOOR: Can I speak?

5 THE MODERATOR: I'm sorry, Sir, we're
6 following the list. Have you signed in to speak?

7 THE FLOOR: No.

8 THE MODERATOR: Why don't you step
9 over here, and we'll get you signed in.

10 MS. SCHROEDER: Hi. My name is Gwynn
11 Schroeder, and I'm a resident of Cutchogue. I'm
12 very concerned about workers' safety. My husband
13 is a union guy. And I wanted to specifically talk
14 about the Millstone Nuclear Reactors that are just
15 eight miles away from Plum Island. And I confirmed
16 today with NRC, Region I, that you are, in fact, in
17 the emergency planning zone. And generally, for
18 nuclear reactors, there's two ways you can go with
19 emergency planning: You can either evacuate or
20 shelter. And what I'd like you to address, I
21 haven't seen Millstone addressed in the DEIS at all
22 whatsoever. So first, I would like you to address
23 the fact that Millstone is situated where it is.
24 The Island is in the EPZ, and if you're going to
25 shelter workers or if you're going to evacuate

56

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 26.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement; however, it is not within the scope of the NBAF EIS, which evaluates the environmental impact of the no action alternative and the alternatives for constructing and operating the NBAF. However, a separate Threat and Risk Assessment (designated as For Official Use Only)(TRA) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and are used to recommend the most prudent measures to establish a reasonable level of risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 32 of 57

1 them.

2 The other issue is do you have
3 potassium iodide on the Island, so if there is a
4 radiological release from Millstone, if there is an
5 accident, that they have access to that, and there
6 are policies and procedures in place to make sure
7 it's distributed to the workers. If the policy, if
8 your plan is to evacuate, how are you going to
9 secure the Island and more specifically the
10 pathogens? And I think the fact that there's a
11 nuclear power plant just eight miles off the coast
12 of Plum Island, might be a big red flag and say,
13 Well, folks, this isn't the best place to do this.
14 And I, like a lot of other people, I'm not crazy
15 that they're doing Biolevel Safety 3 work there,
16 but we can live with it, as long as you address the
17 GAO issues that have been brought up by others.

18 And I would just like to say, some
19 people had mentioned the anthrax release, and there
20 was an article in the New York Times, I guess a
21 couple of days ago, and sort of in support of the
22 no action at this time, I'm quoting Keith Rhoades,
23 who was an investigator with the GAO. And this was
24 from his testimony at a congressional hearing in
25 October.

57

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes the information provided by the commentor.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 19.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern. A site-specific emergency response plan would be developed and coordinated with the local emergency management plan regarding evacuations and other emergency response measures for all potential emergency events including accidents at the NBAF. The type of, duration, and geographical extent of quarantine would be determined by the appropriate authorities depending on the pathogen released and contamination level.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 25.1

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 33 of 57

2|21.1
cont.

1 "Nationwide, an estimated 14,000
2 people work at about 400 laboratories and have
3 permission to work with so-called select agents
4 which could be used in a bioterror attack." And he
5 goes on to say, "With so many people involved there
6 is insufficient federal oversight of biodefense
7 facilities to make sure the laboratories follow
8 security rules and report accidents that might
9 threaten lab workers or lead to a release that
10 might endanger the public."

11 So I think there was also an article
12 yesterday in the Washington Post, and it talks
13 about how the Mississippi site was put on the short
14 list, even though it ranked fourteen out of
15 seventeen of the considered sites. So we're going
16 to have a new administration one way or the other,
17 and I think you should put off making a decision
18 until that time. Thanks so much.

19 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Edward
20 Webb is our next speaker.

21 MR. WEBB: My name is Edward Webb.
22 I'm the president of the Oyster Pond School Board
23 of Education. We are the School District that is
24 closest to Plum Island. Fishers Island might argue
25 that with me, but I still think we're a little bit

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 34 of 57

1 closer. Some of us in this room may remember the
2 Ivory Soap commercial years ago. It went something
3 like this. Ivory Soap is 99 and 44 one hundredths
4 percent pure. I've always wondered about the .66
5 percent that is perhaps unpure.

6 From a safety and health standpoint, I
7 guess my concern is that if there is any risk at
8 all, and nobody has said that we are a hundred
9 percent risk free, why would we want to expose 110
10 kids in our school district, K through 6, to any
11 risk that we have control over? Some risks in life
12 we don't have control over. Other risks we do
13 have. This is a risk that apparently we have some
14 control over. So that's my question. Why would we
15 want to put kids at risk?

16 Another thought is that I'm told that
17 pathogens are transported by land to the facility,
18 so that means that they go right by our school. I
19 don't know if it's daily, or weekly, or monthly,
20 but they are transported right past our school.

21 And finally, I just want to comment
22 that I did visit Plum Island recently. Dr. Barrett
23 and his colleagues gave us a very Nyce tour of the
24 Island, treated us to a Nyce luncheon and showed us
25 the facilities. I must say that I was very

59

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 19.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern. A site-specific emergency response plan would be developed and coordinated with the local emergency management plan regarding evacuations and other emergency response measures for all potential emergency events including accidents at the NBAF. The type of, duration, and geographical extent of quarantine would be determined by the appropriate authorities depending on the pathogen released and contamination level.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 35 of 57

1 impressed with the quality of the operations and
2 the security that was explained to us. Certainly a
3 lot of the pluster back in the 1950s when I was a
4 kid. We used to sneak on to the east side of Plum
5 Island in our barber boats and test the security to
6 find out how long it would take them to discover us
7 and kick us off the Island. So that's my comment.
8 Thank you very much.

9 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Sir. Debra
10 O'Kane Is our next speaker.

11 MS. O'KANE: Good evening. My name is
12 Debbie O'Kane. I live in Orient Point. I think I
13 can speak from experience on the issue of a
14 proposed upgrade to a Biosafety Level 4 Facility at
15 Plum Island. As the former executive director of
16 the North Fork Environmental Council, I have served
17 on three different Plum Island committees on the
18 federal, county, and local levels. There is no
19 disputing the fact that the type of work being done
20 presently on Plum Island, such as the development
21 of cutting edge diagnostic tools and the creation
22 of vaccines for diseases such as Foot and Mouth is
23 essential to national security.

24 But one of the four criteria for
25 choosing a site for a Biosafety Level 4 Facility is

60

Comment No: 2

Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's support for the research conducted by DHS. DHS's mission is to study foreign animal and zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 36 of 57

1 community acceptance. Our elected officials from
2 all of our federal representatives to state
3 assembly man Mark Alessi, who just spoke a little
4 while ago, to Southold town supervisor, Scott
5 Russell, all of them have stated their opposition
6 and with good reason.

7 The issue of an upgrade to a Biosafety
8 Level 4 Facility at Plum Island has been on the
9 table a number of times over the years. Actually,
10 since 1999, when we first learned of a proposed
11 upgrade from an article that appeared in the New
12 York Times. Since then the community at large has
3|25.1 13 been in strong opposition to an increased intensity
14 of use at the Plum Island facility. Fear and
15 mistrust has been a part of the East End for many
16 years, and a history of accidents, unsafe
17 practices, and lack of conforming to federal and
18 state mandated regulations didn't do much to allay
19 the community's fears.

4|27.0 20 Over the years the U.S.D.A. at Plum
21 Island was charged with violating both the Federal
22 Clean Water Act and the Federal Hazardous Waste
23 Law. The facility was charged with exceeding water
24 discharge permit limits, operating without an
25 effective discharge permit for a year, storing

61

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 25.1
DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the Plum Island Site Alternative.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 27.0
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 37 of 57

4|27.0
cont.

1 approximately 5000 pounds of hazardous chemicals
2 without obtaining a proper storage permit, along
3 with serious OSHA violations. In 1998, the New
4 York State Attorney General's office filed a suit
5 against Plum Island for violating the terms of its
6 wastewater permit over a period of three years.

7 In 2000 the U.S.D.A. was operating
8 three incinerators without the required state
9 permits, and New York State DEC cited Plum Island
10 for incinerating regulated medical waste in units
11 that were not permitted for this type of waste
12 management. The DEC documented oil spills that
13 contaminated both soil and groundwater. I believe
14 the clean up this particular oil spill is still
15 ongoing. Plum Island's track record on the
16 environmental issues isn't great, and today's basic
17 safety and security questions remain.

18 We have been told that an evacuation
19 plan isn't necessary for the North and South Forks,
20 but the community at large believe that one is
21 needed. The issue of an evacuation plan has been
22 raised at numerous meetings over the years. Does
23 the CDC in Atlanta have an integrated emergency
24 management plan for evacuating the surrounding
25 area? Also, I'd just like to mention the no fly

62

Comment No: 5Issue Code: 19.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern. A site-specific emergency response plan would be developed and coordinated with the local emergency management plan regarding evacuations and other emergency response measures for all potential emergency events including accidents at the NBAF. The type of, duration, and geographical extent of quarantine would be determined by the appropriate authorities depending on the pathogen released and contamination level. No fly zones would be considered along with other security measures for the proposed NBAF regardless of the site selected.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 38 of 57

1 zone. The community has asked for that a number of
2 times too and that still hasn't been addressed.

3 Given the amount of community concern
4 and opposition to Biosafety Level 4 Facility, I
5 would like to propose that Homeland Security take
6 another look and support and maintain the Level 3
615.0 7 Facility on Plum Island, with its primary purpose
8 of studying Foot and Mouth Disease, and siting the
9 Biolevel Level 4 Facility in a more suitable
10 location. Thank you.

11 (Applause)

12 THE MODERATOR: Mark Haubner.

13 MR. HAUBNER: Mark Haubner. Thank you
14 for your time, consideration. I'm from Akwa right
15 in the path of any kind of evacuation. The issue
16 tonight I would like to address is the background
1121.1 17 checks on all personnel entering the biocontainment
18 areas. In 2003, the GAO conducted an investigation
19 on the operations of BEATIC and found numerous
20 safety concerns. This resulted in twenty-four
21 recommendations by the GAO. And almost five years
22 later, according to the follow-up report dated in
23 December of last year, six of those recommendations
24 have still not been implemented.

25 First and most alarming, it is still

63

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes commentor's concern that NBAF employment practices include proper pre-employment screening and ongoing employee training. As set out in Section 3.14.3.4 of the NBAF EIS, employees and contractors will be screened prior to employment or engagement and monitored while working, among other security measures. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. With regard to employee training, Section 2.2.2.1 discusses the requirement that all laboratory staff would receive pre-operational training, as well as ongoing training, in the handling of hazardous infectious agents, understanding biocontainment functions of standard and special practices for each biosafety level, and understanding biocontainment equipment and laboratory characteristics.

Comment No: 6 Issue Code: 5.0

DHS notes the commentor's suggestion.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 39 of 57

1 unclear whether background checks are being
2 conducted on contractors and visitors entering the
3 biocontainment areas. It's particularly alarming
4 because of the recent news of Dr. Bruce Evans, a
5 biodefense researcher himself was responsible for
6 the anthrax attacks in 2001. According to the GAO
7 report, the U.S.D.A. had no procedure, referring
8 back to 2003, for insuring that contractors and
9 visitors entering the biocontainment areas did not
10 have criminal backgrounds.

11 GAO recommended background checks for
12 all individuals using a system such as the one used
13 by the National Crime Information Center. The
14 report states that the DHS was developing a
15 memorandum of agreement with the FPS, which is the
16 Federal Protective Service, but had not been
17 finalized due to budget concerns. Has the
18 memorandum of agreement been executed and are
19 background checks being conducted?

20 The report goes on to state that the
21 DHS has not fully implemented our recommendation
22 that the Department insure that individuals
23 involved in laboratory activities in the
24 biocontainment area, including students and
25 regardless of citizenship, be approved in

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 40 of 57

1 accordance with the law. Furthermore, background
2 checks are not being conducted on students, and
3 this is a deliberate decision made by the U.S.D.A.
4 I'm going to skip over a couple of things that they
5 do require students to do.

6 But any remaining risk, quote, is
7 acceptable according to the U.S.D.A., compared to
8 the benefits of educating these individuals. The
9 GAO report concludes that we continue to find it
10 troubling that students are not subject to any type
11 of background check before handling animals
12 infected with diseases that have been determined to
13 pose a severe threat to animal health and the
14 economy. I agree strongly with the GAO conclusion,
15 that anyone interested in doing harm and who had
16 access to the biocontainment areas could walk away
17 with valuable information, including lab layout
18 procedures, et cetera. I do not feel that all of
19 these issues have been thoroughly addressed at this
20 time.

21 I'm prompted to ask what, number one,
22 sorry, who is creating the acceptable risks status
23 of any given security plan, which is finally
24 implemented? And number two, what, if any,
25 directives or legal consequences are in place to

1|21.1
cont.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 41 of 57

1 guarantee compliance with the GAO security
 1|21.1 2 recommendations, whether or not the facility goes
 cont. 3 to BSL-4? Thank you.

4 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Joan
 5 Fleck. Take your time.

6 MS. FLECK: Excuse me. I'm a slow
 7 walker. I am old enough to have lived through the
 8 hurricane of '37, '38, whatever. I saw a
 9 thirty-eight foot cruiser in the crotch of a tree
 10 on Merrick Road. I saw Great South Bay pushed out
 11 dry at Patchogue 2 1/2 miles away. I know the
 12 force of a Category 3. I am fearful that we are in
 13 for another Category 3 in the near future.

14 My question is, what is the maximum
 15 number of cattle that you house on the Island? And
 16 1|21.1 in the event of one of these flooding, furious
 17 hurricanes, and they have to be done away with, how
 18 long does it take to totally incinerate every
 19 animal that is housed there?

20 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ma'am.
 21 Mr. Callis, you're next.

22 MR. CALLIS: My name is Jerry Callis.
 23 I live on the North Fork, and I moved here as the
 24 first U.S. Department of Agriculture employee to
 25 work at Plum Island in 1953. I worked for U.S.D.A.

66

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes the commenter's concern regarding potential hurricane impacts to the NBAF and commenter's assumption that all NBAF lab animals will need to be destroyed with carcass sterilization in the event of a hurricane. Sections 3.4, 3.6, and 3.14.3.2 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, address NBAF design criteria and accident scenarios associated with weather-related events such as tornadoes, hurricanes, and flooding. DHS notes the commenter's concern regarding potential tornado impacts to the NBAF. The NBAF would be designed and built to withstand the normal meteorological conditions that are present within the geographic area of the selected site (hurricanes, tornados, etc.). Given the nature of the facility, more stringent building codes are applied to the NBAF than are used for homes and most businesses, regardless of which NBAF site is chosen. The building would be built to withstand wind pressures up to 170% of the winds which are expected to occur locally within a period of 50 years. This means the building's structural system could resist a wind speed that is expected to occur, on the average, only once in a 500 year period. In the unlikely event that a 500-year wind storm strikes the facility, the interior BSL-3Ag and BSL-4 spaces would be expected to withstand a 200 mph wind load (commonly determined to be an F3 tornado). If the NBAF took a direct hit from an F3 tornado, the exterior walls and roofing of the building would likely fail first. This breach in the exterior skin would cause a dramatic increase in internal pressures leading to further failure of the building's interior and exterior walls. However, the loss of these architectural wall components should actually decrease the overall wind loading applied to the building, and diminish the possibility of damage to the building's primary structural system. Since the walls of the BSL-3Ag and BSL-4 spaces would be reinforced cast-in-place concrete, those inner walls would be expected to withstand the tornado. DHS will take the precautionary approach and evaluate every potential storm to determine if experiments need to be terminated and animals destroyed. Based on 70% utilization of the design maximum, NBAF could house approximately 200-300 animals at any given time, including cattle, swine, and sheep. Because the method of carcass disposal has not yet been determined, the effects of alkaline hydrolysis, rendering, and incineration were included in the NBAF EIS (see Section 3.13 for a description of the methods). Incineration has the potential to affect air quality, so the evaluation in Section 3.4 (Air Quality) assumed only incineration would be used to assess the greatest adverse effect. Alkaline hydrolysis would have the greatest effect on sanitary sewage capacity, as discussed in Section 3.3, so the sanitary sewage effects were determined using this method

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 42 of 57

1 for almost forty years, most of that was on Plum
2 Island. Prior to coming to Plum Island, I worked
3 in Holland at their Foot and Mouth Disease
4 Laboratory in Amsterdam, and I got to know the
5 virus well. It is one of the most elusive viruses
6 known to man. At this moment, it exists in every
7 country in South America, except Uruguay and Chili.
8 They keep talking about eradicating IT but nothing
9 happens.

10 The U.S. knows Foot and Mouth Disease
11 very well, because we had it seven times in our
12 country. The last time was 1927. The disease
11.0 13 occurred in Mexico in 1946. They weren't doing
14 very much about it, so the U.S.D.A. was asked to
15 join them in eradicating it. It took seven years
16 and 52 million U.S. dollars, 1950 dollars, and a
17 like amount of Mexican pesos. The last time it has
18 occurred in this continent was in Canada, in 1953.
19 A very serious outbreak, which cost them not to be
20 able to export any livestock products for twelve
21 months. The same thing would happen in any country
22 where this disease occurs.

23 I think Plum Island has served as a
24.0 24 good site for this facility, and I simply cannot
25 conceive of such a facility being moved to either

67

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 1.0
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.0
DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the five mainland site alternatives. The conclusions expressed in Section 3.14 show that even though the Plum Island Site Alternative has a lower potential impact in case of a release, the probability of a release is low at all sites.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 43 of 57

2|5.0
cont.

1 North Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Kansas, or
2 Texas to work on such elusive, infectious, and
3 deadly viruses, and Foot and Mouth Disease virus.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause)

6 THE MODERATOR: John Searing.

7 MR. SEARING: My name is John Searing,

8 Deputy Commissioner of Suffolk County Fire Rescue
9 and Emergency Services here on behalf of County
10 Executive Steve Levy and Commissioner Williams.

1|19.1

11 Thank you for the opportunity to speak regarding
12 emergency preparedness. Suffolk County fire rescue
13 and emergency services is charged, as part of our
14 mission, with the emergency preparedness and to

1|19.1
cont.

15 insure the health and safety of the public during
16 any emergency. As such, we've developed a
17 comprehensive emergency management plan based on an
18 all-hazards approach. The all-hazards approach is
19 chosen to insure that the spectrum of potential
20 emergencies is selected and analyzed. As a matter
21 of this policy, Suffolk County FRES works and plans
22 together with each of the ten towns and the
23 multitude of villages and other agencies to insure
24 a successful end result, to the extent possible in
25 any emergency.

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 19.1

DHS notes the information provided by the commentor.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 44 of 57

1 Among the considerations and tools
2 that are utilized in the evacuation of people, such
3 as in a hurricane, which is the County's determined
4 worse case scenario, Suffolk's emergency evacuation
5 plan relies on coordination with the towns and
6 local agencies, as well as the cooperation of the
7 people. This plan includes self-evacuation by
8 citizens and includes other elements such as bus
9 transportation, both public and private, and the
10 use of the Long Island Railroad. Again, these are
11 some of the tools, and Suffolk County FRES supports
12 and coordinates with Southold town to effect any
13 evacuation.

1/19.1
cont.

14 Evacuation from and on Long Island is
15 difficult. This is especially true on the North
16 Fork due to limited access, only two east-west
17 roads and ferry. We will continue to work with the
18 town and other agencies for all-hazards planning
19 regardless of the outcome of this process. County
20 Executive Levy and Commissioner Williams remain
21 committed and stand ready to continue planning with
22 Southold and the community to insure health and
23 safety of the citizens of the community.

1/19.1
cont.

24 THE MODERATOR: At this point I'd like
25 to check and see if Julia Erlic has showed up. And

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 45 of 57

1 the other person we need to check with is Scott
2 Russell, if he's here.

3 THE FLOOR: Mr. Russell is at the city
4 town hall meeting.

5 THE MODERATOR: All right. Where we
6 are in the process is we have a accommodated
7 everybody who has signed up to speak thus far.
8 What we would like to do is open up the floor, in
9 the event that there's anyone here who did not get
10 a chance to speak, who would like to at this point
11 in time. I'm sorry, Sir, did you want to speak?
12 Absolutely. Come to the microphone.

13 MR. WILLIS: Good evening, Frank
14 Willis. I live in Mattituck. I have several
15 questions on the operation of the facility as it is
16 now, which presumable will affect, if indeed it
17 goes to Level 4. The incinerator, I understand,
18 operates at 1800 Fahrenheit, presumably, unless
19 I've been told differently, discharges directly
20 into the air through two stacks that were visible
21 on the photographs during the exhibition shown at
22 Southold Township. I was wondering is there any
23 venturer scrubbers or back houses in between to
24 prevent the emission of solids?

25 In fact, the next question is, What

70

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 9.1

DHS also notes the commentor's question regarding public access to air quality and wastewater monitoring data. Consideration of provisions for public access to environmental monitoring data is not within the scope of the NBAF EIS. As stated throughout the NBAF EIS, waste treatment and other processes of concern have not been finalized and, as such, conservative assumptions were used to ensure the probable maximum effects were evaluated for each affected resource area. Further discussion of wastewater and air pollution control and associated monitoring technologies would be highly speculative and will not be known until the NBAF design is finalized. Ultimately, monitoring requirements would be at least partially dependent on the environmental permitting and associated reporting requirements imposed by federal, state, and local agencies. Of course, all environmental monitoring data would be subject to public review in accordance with the public record access provisions administered by the appropriate regulatory agencies

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 46 of 57

2|18.1 1 happens to the solids, the ashes of the animals
 2 that are cremated? Where do they go? How often is
 3 the affluent from the chimneys tested to make sure
 4 that there are no solids going out? Or what are
 5 the other gases? While we're on discharge, what
 6 happens to the fluids that come from the animals?
 7 Is that mixed in with the human waste? And where
 8 does the discharge from the sewage treatment plant
 9 go? Does it go into the ground, or does it get
 10 discharged into the ocean? And also, how often is
 11 it tested, if ever?

12 Next question comes on security. I
 13 understand there are some video cameras on the
 14 shore. To the extent of what the percentage is was
 3|21.1 15 not revealed during the public hearing or
 16 presentation last week. But I was wondering, are
 17 there any motion detectors in place to check
 18 arrival of unwanted people on the facility?

19 And the last question is, on the side,
 20 the facility has been in business for over fifty
 21 years. Have the results ever been published in
 4|2.1 22 public magazines or technical journals; and if not,
 23 why not? Because we're interested in what goes on
 24 there, but by and large there is no communication
 25 to the citizens who live here, so, presumably, if

71

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 18.1

The commentor's questions regarding the disposition of liquids and solids resulting from NBAF operations are addressed in Section 3.13.2.2 of the NBAF. As shown on Table 3.13.2.2-2, liquid effluents from carcass disposal would become part of the sanitary sewer discharge. As shown on Table 3.13.2.2-4, the technologies being considered for carcass disposal that create a liquid waste stream (alkaline hydrolysis and rendering) create a sterile (in the case of alkaline hydrolysis) or non-infectious (in the case of rendering) liquid residual. As shown on Table 3.13.2.2-3, the solid residuals resulting from carcass disposal would be characterized (using sampling and analysis) and sent to a solid or hazardous waste management facility, as appropriate, depending on analytical test results. If incineration is used as a carcass disposal method, emissions would be monitored in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements and permits. NBAF wastewater discharges would be pretreated as appropriate and monitored in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and permits.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern for security. Security would be provided by a series of fencing, security cameras, and protocols. In addition, a dedicated security force would be present on-site. Additional security could be provided via cooperation with local law enforcement agencies. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (TRA) (designated as For Official Use Only) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and are used to recommend the most prudent measures to establish a reasonable level of risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety. The TRA and security actions that would be implemented, based on TRA recommendations, are designated as For Official Use Only and not available to the public for security reasons.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's concerns. Currently, the PIADC facility publishes research in publicly available research journals; NBAF would publish its research in publicly available research journals as well.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 47 of 57

1 that exist under the present situation, it will get
2 worse on number four. Thank you.

3 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Sir. Is
4 there anyone else here who would like to speak who
5 has not had a chance to do so, so far? We're going
6 to take a fifteen-minute break, and in the event
7 that folks who are getting off work or have other
8 commitments show up late, we want to make sure we
9 accommodate them. So we'll reconvene in fifteen
10 minutes. Thank you.

11 (Recess taken at 8:52 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.)

12 THE MODERATOR: All right, Folks, it's
13 nine o'clock. We're going to check in with
14 everybody to see if at this point in time in the
15 evening there's anyone else that has shown up that
16 would like to speak. We didn't have anyone sign up
17 at the front of the room, so if there is somebody
18 here who would like to speak, please come forward
19 to the microphone.

20 (No response.)

21 THE MODERATOR: Okay. What I'd like
22 to do is turn the meeting over to Jamie.

23 MR. JOHNSON: We are going to close
24 the meeting, and remind you that we do want your
25 comments, my team. Do you have a comment?

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 48 of 57

1 MS. NORDEN: Excuse me, I have
2 additional comments.

3 MR. JOHNSON: Do you have a comment?

4 MS. NORDEN: Yes.

5 MR. JOHNSON: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

6 MS. NORDEN: There may also be other
7 speakers that have additional comments.

8 In 2006, Congress appropriated money
9 for site selection and other activities of the
10 NBAF, as we've discussed. DHS developed the site
11 selection because Congress did not designate a
12 specific site upon which to construct the NBAF.
13 DHS implemented a vigorous process for first,
14 second, and third round evaluation, with committees
15 comprised of federal employees who evaluated the
16 strengths, weaknesses, and deficiencies, possible
17 sites against the original four criteria,
18 insufficient community support being one of them.

19 Federal teams then conducted site
20 visits. Although no part of the competitive site
21 selection process, Plum Island, quote, meets the
22 NEPA definition of reasonable alternatives,
23 unquote, from the EIS. My question is whom? Plum
24 Island was never part of the site selection process
25 but was tacked on later, meaning that the site

73

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 3.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 4.1

DHS held a competitive process to select potential sites for the proposed NBAF as described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. A team of federal employees representing multi-department component offices and multi-governmental agencies (i.e., DHS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Department of Health and Human Services) reviewed the submissions based primarily on environmental suitability and proximity to research capabilities, proximity to workforce, acquisition/construction/operations, and community acceptance. Ultimately, DHS identified five site alternatives that surpassed others in meeting the evaluation criteria and DHS preferences, and determined that they, in addition to the Plum Island Site, would be evaluated in the EIS as alternatives for the proposed NBAF. The Plum Island Site was included because DHS determined that since it already owned Plum Island and satisfied the selection criteria, it represented a reasonable alternative that must be evaluated in the NBAF EIS.

1j3.0

24.1

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 49 of 57

2Cont.4.1

1 selection committee never discussed Plum Island as
2 a potential BSL-4 site. Did congressional pressure
3 or other political pressures play a role in Plum
4 Island being added to the list? If not, why was
5 it?

6 The National Environmental Policy Act
7 has many requirements and does indicate that
8 reasonable alternatives need to be investigated,
9 but there are somewhere around 277 other BSL-3 Labs
10 and twelve or more BSL-4 Labs that might have been
11 considered as potential add-on sites. Why was Plum
12 Island the only one added to the list?

2cont.4.1

13 As residents of the North Fork, we
14 strongly request that the original site election
15 committee be reconvened and a thorough analysis
16 done by that committee, not just by the DHS, of the
17 suitability of Plum Island for an upgrade to
18 Biosafety Level 4. We would like such a committee
19 to undertake the same due diligence it exercised in
20 examining the final proposed five sites, otherwise
21 we as residents of New York State have not been
22 treated fairly and equally by the federal
23 government with respect to the process. In short,

1Cont.3.0

24 we request that Plum Island be vetted in exactly
25 the same way, by the same people that the others

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 50 of 57

1 sites were. That's one point. I have other
2 comments to make.

3 THE MODERATOR: You have fifty-six
4 seconds.

5 MS. NORDEN: Why don't I sit down, and
6 then let somebody else come, and then I'll come
7 back again.

8 THE MODERATOR: Is there anyone else
9 who would like to speak? All right. Go ahead and
10 finish.

11 MS. NORDEN: Some of us on the North
12 Fork are also concerned about decontamination and
13 remediation regarding past incidences at Plum
14 Island, and are afraid that going forward the same
15 lack of attention to critical issues may occur.

16 According to the Island's operation manager, though
17 Lab 257 was closed nearly eight years ago. To
18 date, it has only received surface contamination.
19 Why, that only 9000 of the of 30,000 gallons of oil
20 spilled several years ago have been remediated;
21 that there are drainage pipes knocked double wall
22 on the Island that are fifty-four years old and
23 that monitoring and preventative maintenance of the
24 pipe work is inadequate.

25 The 2007 incident at Pirbright in

75

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 19.1

DHS notes the commentors concern. The NBAF would be designed, constructed and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 18.1

Product recovery from an underground pipe leak from a No.2 fuel oil UST in 1995 is continuing. As discussed in Section 3.12.6.1 of the NBAF EIS, 9,228 gallons of fuel oil were recovered as of June 2008. The Environmental Site Assessment performed for the Plum Island Site concluded that this spill did not pose a threat to the environmental integrity of the site.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 51 of 57

1 England, for example, demonstrated that beyond
 2 initial design and construction, ongoing
 3 maintenance plays a critical role in insuring that
 4 high containment labs operate safely and securely.
 5 Since cracked and leaky pipes at Pirbright were
 6 indicative of poor maintenance practice. It is
 7 believed that this in turn resulted in FMD virus
 8 contamination when soil water or other material
 9 were contaminated by effluent from the treatment
 10 tank and then deposited on the adjacent road.
 11 Could an incident like that which happened at
 12 Pirbright happen on Plum Island, with any virus or
 5|17.1 13 pathogen, including FMD? Are measures currently
 14 taken to disinfect visiting vehicles?
 15 Some of us are also concerned about
 16 the historic landfills dating back to the 1950,
 17 which exist on Plum Island, where, according to the
 18 EIS, medical, industrial, laboratory, and hazardous
 4Cont.18.1 19 wastes, pesticides, among who knows what else, are
 20 buried. These landfills are decades old. When, if
 21 ever, will these new landfills be remediated or
 22 will new construction simply be built on top of
 23 them? Since some construction is taking place at
 24 Plum Island at present, and significant
 3Cont.19.1 25 construction would take place if Plum Island were

76

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 17.1
 DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the handling and transport of packages containing pathogens. The general regulations governing the required NBAF handling and transport of packages containing pathogens, and a discussion of the low risk associated with the shipment of infectious materials is provided in Section 3.11.9 of the NBAF EIS. Section 2.2.2.3 provides detailed information on the safe handling and transport of packages containing pathogens. Additionally, an analysis of accidental releases during transportation is provided in the NBAF EIS under Section 3.14, Health and Safety. Information regarding the existing road conditions and potential effects to traffic and transportation from the Plum Island Site is provided in Section 3.11.6 of the NBAF EIS. An emergency response plan that would include area evacuation plans would be developed if one of the action alternatives is selected and prior to commencement of NBAF operations.

DHS also notes the commentor's concern that site specific safety and security plans are not included in the NBAF EIS. DHS prepared the NBAF EIS in accordance with the provisions of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and CEQ's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500 et seq.). The analysis conducted in the NBAF EIS was based on conceptual design plans posted on the DHS website. More detailed design plans would be developed as the project moves into the final design phase. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF then site specific safety and security protocols and plans would be developed that would address the procedures for decontamination of vehicles operating within the NBAF. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 52 of 57

	1	to be chosen as the NBAF site, has DHS done a
	2	formalized assessment of construction worker risks?
	3	We also query how the emissions and byproducts
	4	generated from carcass sterilization and
	5	incineration are managed today, and would be in the
7 9.1	6	future with respect to the waste stream. Moreover,
	7	what agency monitors whether the treated sanitary
	8	waste discharged today on Plum Island, to say
	9	nothing of future from an NBAF, meets all discharge
	10	requirements, since most, if not all of the
	11	discharge is currently from a single outflow into
	12	Plum Gut.
4Cont. 18.1	13	Were Plum Island chosen as the final
	14	site, operation of the NBAF would result in the
	15	generation of wastewater, waste solids, medical
	16	hazardous and industrial solid waste. All of which
	17	would be dumped into Long Island Sound. One of the
	18	criteria explored by the site election committee
	19	and documented in the EIS, which again, Plum Island
5Cont. 17.1	20	was not a site, which the committee evaluated, was
	21	the ability of affected communities to evacuate in
	22	case of an emergency. In a recent article in the
	23	local newspaper, the Suffolk Times, Mr. Vecchio of
8 19.0	24	the DHS indicated that the likelihood of having to
	25	evacuate is practically nonexistent. Though the

77

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 18.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern about animal carcass disposal. Section 3.13 of the NBAF EIS explains that a number of different technologies including incineration, alkaline hydrolysis, and rendering are being considered for disposal of euthanized animal carcasses. The sanitary waste from the NBAF at the Plum Island Site must meet limits that would be set in its State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is responsible for moitoring compliance with all SPDES permits.

Comment No: 7 Issue Code: 9.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern about animal carcass disposal. Section 3.13 of the NBAF EIS explains that a number of different technologies including incineration, alkaline hydrolysis, and rendering are being considered for disposal of euthanized animal carcasses. The sanitary waste from the NBAF at the Plum Island Site must meet limits that would be set in its State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is responsible for moitoring compliance with all SPDES permits.

Comment No: 8 Issue Code: 19.1

DHS notes the commentors concern. The NBAF would be designed, constructed and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment.

Comment No: 8 Issue Code: 19.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 53 of 57

9|15.1

1 DHS states the risk of accidental release of a
 2 pathogen is extremely low, the economic effect on
 3 this area, which relies on the agricultural and
 4 tourism industry, to say nothing of the densely
 5 populated northeast Boston-New York corridor, would
 6 be devastated -- I'm going to continue because no
 7 one else wants to speak.

8 THE MODERATOR: Excuse me.

9 MS. NORDEN: I think that's
 10 appropriate because it was not publicized that
 11 there was a three-minute limitation on remarks.

12 THE MODERATOR: Let me just check,
 13 because there were two people that we want to make
 14 sure if they're here, they can have a chance to
 15 speak. And that was Scott Russell and the other
 16 person was Julie Erlic. Okay. Is there anyone who
 17 would like to speak, who did not have an
 18 opportunity this evening, who would like that
 19 opportunity now. Okay. Just as a reminder, we are
 20 moving forward, but please remember we ask
 21 everybody at each site to work with our guidelines
 22 to be fair to everybody. So go ahead and go ahead
 23 and finish, if you're almost done.

24 MS. NORDEN: Okay. Siting the NBAF on
 25 Plum Island would mean the study of specimen

Comment No: 9

Issue Code: 15.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern for the effects to human health and safety. As described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS, DHS's site selection criteria included, but were not limited to, such factors as proximity to research capabilities and workforce. As such, some but not all of the sites selected for analysis as reasonable alternatives in the NBAF EIS are located in suburban or semi-urban areas. Nevertheless, it has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas. An example is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, where such facilities employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low, but DHS acknowledges that the possible effects would be significant for all sites. The potential effects to livestock-related industries is discussed in Section 3.10.9 and Appendix D of the NBAF EIS. The primary economic effect of an accidental release would be the banning of U.S. livestock products regardless of the location of the accidental release, which could reach as high as \$4.2 billion until the U.S. was declared foreign animal disease free. Other economic impacts were considered negligible in comparison to the foreign trade ban impacts.

DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and emergency response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF.

Comment No: 10

Issue Code: 21.1

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

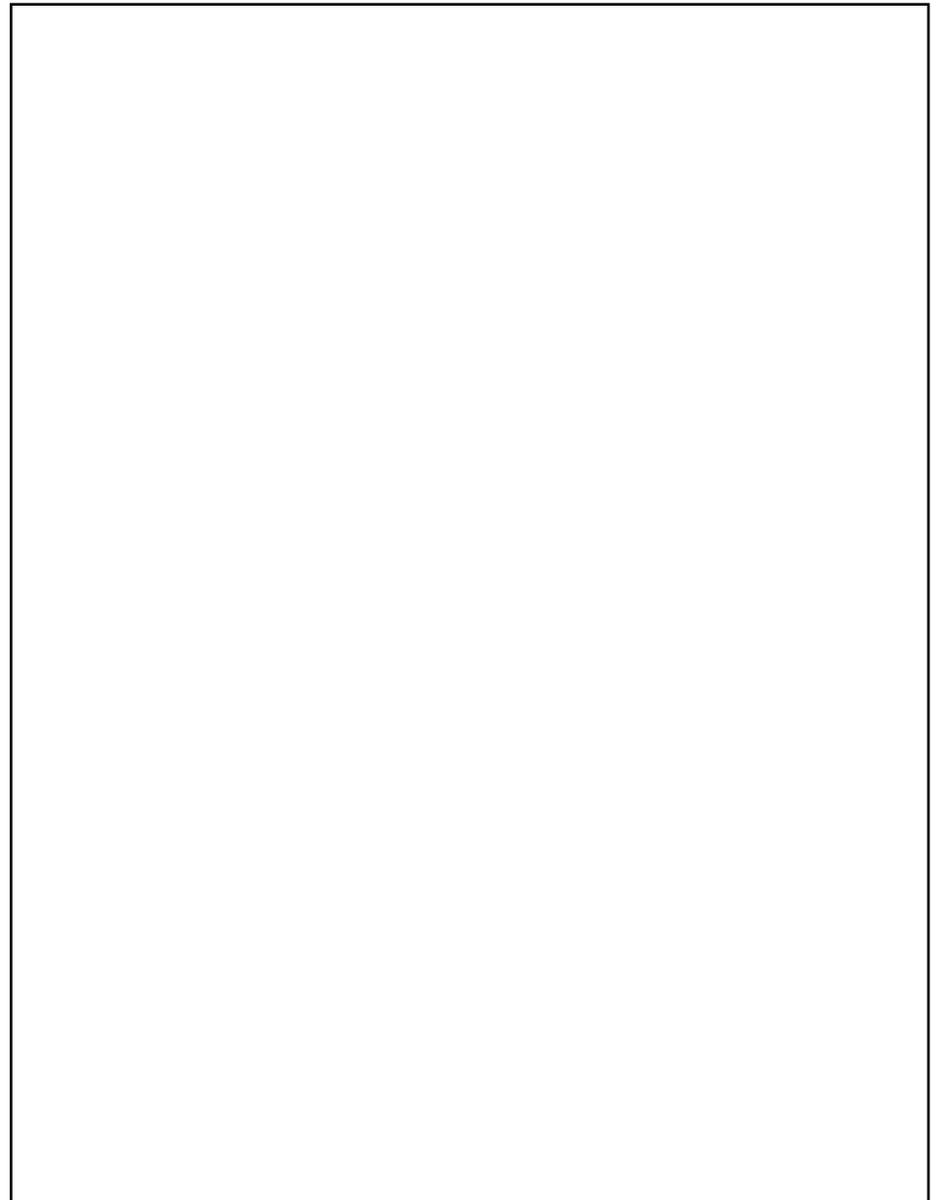
10|21.1

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 54 of 57

1 storage of zoonotic agents and viruses that can
2 affect humans, as well as animals, and for which
3 there are no known treatments or vaccines. It is
4 also planned that the NBAF would have an insectary
5 and a release of a pathogen at a loss of
6 biocontainment of a vector is an credible scenario,
7 Mr. Rodriguez, despite the fact that you in many
8 ways pooh-poohed that question earlier on. Many
9 experts are very concerned about the insectary, and
10Cont|21.1 10 also, about the necessary and aerial applications
11 of insecticides in any community that might be
12 repeatedly required. For some reason you did not
13 mention the insectary in your remarks. So why did
14 Mr. Vecchio of the DHS not apply the same
15 evaluation criteria that the site election
16 committee did with respect to areas of evacuation
2Cont|4.1 17 possibilities? And why did he have the arrogance
18 and high handedness to suggest that any evacuation
19 plan for an area is whatever evacuation plans are
20 already in place? We don't modify, said
21 Mr. Vecchio, in areas of evacuation plan, we don't
22 know the details. In other words, we make the mess
23 but you clean it up, and better yet, you pay for
24 it.
25 We have on the North Fork, by the way,

79



August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 55 of 57

1 no integrated emergency management plan
2 particularly with respect to pathogen or virus
3 release, despite what you might have heard earlier
4 this evening. And even our account executive,
5 Steve Levy, has on more than one occasion, despite
6 the fact he may not have said that tonight, in the
7 press, indicated the impossibility of evacuating
8 our area. So many of us would like to know, since
9 evacuation was considered by the original site
10 selection committee as one of the criteria, why
11 Mr. Vecchio has indicated that it has nothing to do
12 with DHS and evacuation is on our own backs
13 locally.

9|15.1.

14 We also question whether, in fact, the
15 insurance industry, and this is a very germane
16 question as a result of Katrina, would cover our
17 property if there were damage to our wells, to our
18 houses, to our homes, to our pets, to our welfare,
19 to our gardens, to our land. And then there are
20 the everyday questions. The Department of Homeland
21 Security indicates that construction workers can
22 park at the Orient Park Ferry terminal.

5Cont.|17.1

23 The orient Point Ferry terminal spills
24 over all summer long with cars parked all the way
25 along Route 48, right in front of the Plum Island

80

Comment No: 5

Issue Code: 17.1

DHS acknowledges commentor's identification of new information regarding the parking restrictions at the Orient Point Ferry Terminal during the construction phase of the NBAF operation at the Plum Island Site Alternative. DHS will document, review and incorporate all appropriate new and/or revised information for the NBAF final design.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 56 of 57

5Cont|17.1

1 facility. There is absolutely no way that the
2 ferry terminal can in any way subsume any
3 additional parking. So that is just poor
4 management and really lack of awareness of what
5 some of the problems are around here.

6 In any case, many us believe that Plum
7 Island is an obsolete facility that needs DHS
8 attention immediately and continuously to make sure
9 that it's even meeting today's biolevel safety
10 standards. We would be horrified to find that an
11 upgrade were to occur without the oversight that we
12 think our government owes us as local residents.
13 So we doubt whether at present our local community
14 would benefit from the construction of the NBAF.

11|1.0

15 Residents of Connecticut, New Jersey,
16 and elsewhere might get construction jobs, but we
17 question whether it should be built anytime at
18 present. We'd like to call on our elected
19 officials to ask for a moratorium on the building
20 of the NBAF anywhere in the United States, until
21 more information is known and examined. Thank you.

22 (Applause)

23 THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

24 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. I want to
25 point out that my team will be here till ten

81

Comment No: 11Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 12, 2008, Greenport, NY, Greenport Evening

Page 57 of 57

1 o'clock, some team members, in case people do come
2 in, and they want to leave comments, and we will be
3 here until ten. So thank everyone, again, for
4 coming. Thank you for your comments. Again, if
5 you think of a comment later, you can submit it by
6 August 25th, so it can to be addressed and
7 responded to in the final EIS. Again, here are
8 various mechanisms that you can submit comments,
9 try to make it a easy as possible for folks. I
10 want to thank everybody for their participation.
11 Thank you for coming, for your continued interest
12 in the NBAF program, and with that I will
13 officially adjourn the meeting. Thank you.

14 (Applause).

15 (Hearing concluded at 9:12 p.m.)

16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 1 of 123

Page 1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

NATIONAL BIO AND AGRO-DEFENSE FACILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(NBAF DRAFT EIS)

PUBLIC MEETING

DATE: AUGUST 14, 2008

1:30 p.m.

1197 SOUTH LUMPKIN STREET
ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602-3603

****Please see the last three pages of this
file for the speaker list.****

Catherine Coghill, Moderator

PANEL MEMBERS:
Mr. James Johnson, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Dr. Steve Kappes, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Mr. Chuck Pergler, Tetra Tech, Inc.

* LANKFORD & ASSOCIATES, INC. *
* Certified Court Reporters *
* 1055 Prince Avenue *
* Athens, Georgia 30606 *
* 706.549.0770 / 800.221.8533 (USA) *
* *



August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 2 of 123

Page 37

1 make sure that question is focused on the
 2 presentation so the other folks can make
 3 questions, and then we'll open up the floor
 4 to formal public comments.

5 MATT DEGENNARO: Thank you.

6 MS. COGHILL: Go ahead.

7 MATT DEGENNARO: Yeah. I have an actual
 8 question about the DEIS.

9 In the executive summary table for health
 10 and safety for potential adverse effects, all
 11 the sites are listed as health and safety
 12 negligible, South Milledge Avenue site,
 13 negligible. Then on pages later in the body
 14 of the executive summary under health and
 15 safety it says for all sites except Plum
 16 Island the overall risk rank was moderate due
 17 to the potential easy spread of disease
 18 through livestock or wildlife
 19 (unintelligible) was low or none due to low
 20 likelihood of disease getting off an island.

21 Which is correct, the negligible or the
 22 moderate?

23 MR. PERGLER: Under normal operations
 24 there is no adverse effect on human health
 25 and safety through livestock or wildlife.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 26.0

DHS notes the commentors identification of an incorrect characterization of the overall Health and Safety risk as "negligible" for the South Milledge Avenue Site as listed in the Executive Summary; Table ES-3 of the NBAF EIS. The corrected characterization of the overall Health and Safety risk for the five identified sites as "moderate" will be included in the NBAF Final EIS.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentors statement. The "negligible" effect for Health and Safety is for normal operations (incident-free conditions and those abnormal conditions that frequency estimation techniques indicate occur with a frequency greater than 0.1 events per year) and is correct. The moderate risk factor was applied to sites in the risk assessment included in section 3.14 of the NBAF-EIS. The application of the risk rank is applied to the potential for an accident to occur and the magnitude of the consequences of an accident.

1| 19.2, 26.0

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 3 of 123

Page 38

1 This facility is a high-consequence,
2 low-probability operational scenario. The
3 table that you referred to, we've had several
4 comments on it. And we're going to go back
5 and review the presentation, because it's
6 created some confusion.

7 MATT DEGENNARO: Right.

8 Well, my problem is, you know, you said
9 you had 50 scientists, engineers and support
10 staff. And it's correct that in the final
11 EIS the game is over then. Then the decision
12 is made 30 days afterwards.

13 So a lot of people just read this
14 executive summary, they see minor, moderate,
15 negligible and they're like oh, that's really
16 cool. But they are -- and you do agree that
17 they are inconsistent from negligible being
18 health and safety and then on Page ES 910
19 moderate?

20 I'm just trying to figure out, as a
21 community person, you know, is it moderate,
22 is it negligible. You just said the best
23 place -- the safest place is on Plum Island,
24 but we've all learned it's not really about
25 safety.

2|5.2

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 5.2

DHS held a competitive process to select potential sites for the proposed NBAF as described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. A team of federal employees representing multi-department component offices and multi-governmental agencies (i.e., DHS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Department of Health and Human Services) reviewed the submissions based primarily on environmental suitability and proximity to research capabilities, proximity to workforce, acquisition/construction/operations, and community acceptance. Ultimately, DHS identified five site alternatives that surpassed others in meeting the evaluation criteria and DHS preferences, and determined that they, in addition to the Plum Island Site, would be evaluated in the EIS as alternatives for the proposed NBAF.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 4 of 123

Page 39

1 MR. PERGLER: Yeah. And your point is
2 well taken.

3 Again, we're going to go back and look at
4 the table. I do understand that many people
5 read the executive summary and don't
6 necessarily delve into the other --

7 MATT DEGENNARO: Right.

8 Why was it moderate on the health and
9 safety. Why did you pick negligible is if it
10 says moderate two pages later?

11 MR. PERGLER: Yeah. I do understand the
12 conflict.

13 Again, it's negligible, because we don't
14 expect a pathogen to be released from the
15 facility. The facility will be designed
16 again, rigorous -- to rigorous standards.
17 The operational conditions which it --
18 business will be conducted, again, is highly
19 disciplined. So --

20 MATT DEGENNARO: So it is negligible?
21 It's not -- the risk rate is not moderate?

22 MR. PERGLER: I don't care for subjective
23 terms. And that's why I'm agreeing that the
24 table -- we need to review and perhaps give
25 you the data as opposed to subjective

cont.| 1| 19.2

cont.| 1| 19.2

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 5 of 123

3|4.2
cont.|1|26.0

Page 40

1 opinion.

2 MATT DEGENNARO: Okay. I just have one
3 more thing.

4 When you, I guess, agree and maybe fix
5 the executive table in the final EIS, will
6 the decision period be extended so the
7 community can review the -- a different
8 executive table or we just -- that's the
9 decision is made in the final EIS?

10 MR. JOHNSON: When we issue the final EIS
11 we will put it out for public to review, and
12 we have to wait a minimum of 30 days to
13 render or decision. So if people want to
14 give us comments in that 30-day period they
15 can. But we are not required to respond to
16 those comments.

17 So you will have a chance to see the
18 final EIS when it comes out.

19 MATT DEGENNARO: Okay.

20 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. And so if you want to
21 give us questions and comments, but we are --
22 at this point have no plan to respond to
23 them. So certainly we want to make sure that
24 people have a chance. That's why the NEPA
25 law requires that 30-day period.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 26.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement. The "negligible" effect for Health and Safety is for normal operations (incident-free conditions and those abnormal conditions that frequency estimation techniques indicate occur with a frequency greater than 0.1 events per year) and is correct. The moderate risk factor was applied to sites in the risk assessment included in Section 3.14 of the NBAF EIS. The application of the risk rank is applied to the potential for an accident to occur and the magnitude of the consequences of an accident. Council on Environmental Quality regulation 40 CFR 1506.10(c) requires that a minimum of 45 days be allowed for public comment on the NBAF Draft EIS. A period of 60 days was provided for public review and comment on the NBAF Draft EIS, which spanned from June 27 through August 25, 2008.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 4.2

DHS notes the commentor's request for an additional public comment period following the publication of the Final EIS. Upon publication of the Final EIS, DHS must wait a minimum of 30 days to render a decision. The public is able to provide comments on the Final EIS during that 30 day period following publication, however, DHS has no requirement or plans to respond to any public comment received during that period.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 6 of 123

Page 41

1 MATT DEGENNARO: Thank you.

2 MR. PERGLER: I'd like to emphasize one
3 other thing, too.

4 The data within the body of the EIS is
5 accurate. It presents the data so that DHS
6 and USDA and the public, when they read
7 that --

8 MATT DEGENNARO: Oh, okay.

9 MR. PERGLER: -- will get a very precise
10 picture.

cont. | 1 | 26.0

11 MATT DEGENNARO: So the body is correct,
12 the executive summary table is incorrect?

13 MR. PERGLER: The table has problems with
14 presentation.

15 Again, it is easy -- it is difficult to
16 digest a document that thick (indicating), to
17 put it in an executive summary that way.

18 MATT DEGENNARO: Right. That's why I was
19 asking, you know, if you put moderate one
20 place and then negligible another place --

21 MR. PERGLER: Yeah.

22 MATT DEGENNARO: -- I would figure you
23 would put moderate there.

24 MR. PERGLER: Yeah. I hope you do
25 understand.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 7 of 123

Page 42

1 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

2 Next question.

3 KATHY PRESCOTT: My name is Kathy

4 Prescott. I'm going to follow up with what

5 Matt said.

6 Hello.

7 See, the problem we're having is that the

8 DEIS is a thousand-something pages. Of

9 course, most people are going to read the

10 executive summary. Just like our newspaper

11 the day after it was released has an

12 above-the-fold headline that says Risk From

13 Bio Lab Nil Feds Claim.

14 I don't believe that's an accurate

15 description of what's in the text of the

16 DEIS. And that's the problem that we're

17 talking about with the executive summary.

18 Not only health and safety are inconsistent

19 with what's in the text, you even had a

20 poster up there with infrastructure as

21 moderate.

22 Water in the table says the effects in

23 Athens are minor; waste treatment, minor.

24 Visual in the table, you have moderate. In

25 the text you have high. Air quality, you

Comment No: 4

Issue Code: 9.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding air pollution. The potential effects of NBAF construction and operations on air quality are discussed in Section 3.4 of the NBAF EIS. Section 3.4.1 describes the methodology used in assessing potential air quality consequences at each site. Site specific effects at the South Milledge Avenue Site are discussed in Section 3.4.3. Section 3.4.3.1.2 summarizes the 2006 Ambient Air Surveillance Report produced by the Ambient Monitoring Program of Georgia's Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division. Air emissions were estimated using SCREEN3, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency dispersion modeling program. Should a decision be made to build the NBAF and following site selection and final design, a more refined air emissions model would be used during the permitting process. The final design would ensure that the NBAF does not significantly affect the region's ability to meet air quality standards.

cont.| 1|26.0

4|92

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 8 of 123

cont. | 4 | 9.2

Page 43

1 have minor in the text. You don't even
2 address the specific concerns of Athens' air
3 quality problems.

4 I guess really my question is -- and you
5 said up there that this is under normal
6 operations. And if you look closely at the
7 subtitle of the executive summary table, it
8 says potential adverse effects for normal
9 operations.

5 | 23.2

10 Well, my question is: What are normal
11 operations? Does that imply that abnormal
12 operations are when there's a breach of
13 pathogen or infected vector; or could
14 abnormal operations be a high influx of
15 tissue samples with one of those emerging
16 diseases that we know nothing about like it's
17 killing a lot of people in, say, Africa, for
18 example, in a lot of animals and you don't
19 know what it is? Are those abnormal
20 circumstances?

21 You use the word normal operations
22 through the entire DEIS. And I'd like for
23 everybody to have a definition of what normal
24 operations means. Maybe that would explain
25 some of the inconsistencies in the executive

Comment No: 5Issue Code: 23.0

Normal operations are normal (incident-free) conditions and those abnormal conditions that frequency estimation techniques indicate occur with a frequency greater than 0.1 events per year. Accident refer to an unplanned event or sequence of events that results in undesirable consequences.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 9 of 123

Page 44

1 summary.

2 MR. PERGLER: Yeah. Normal operations
3 basically means the facility remains intact,
4 operates the way it should, as do the workers
5 in their following all procedures. If that
6 occurs there is no risk, minimal risk.

7 KATHY PRESCOTT: Yeah. So if nothing
8 happens, nothing happens. So why is that a
9 valid --

10 MR. PERGLER: It gives you a --

11 KATHY PRESCOTT: -- questioning of a
12 table that most people, I would say even most
13 of our decision makers, have read? You know,
14 what kind of evaluation is that, well, if
15 nothing happens nothing happens?

16 MR. PERGLER: No. It can be looked at as
17 the base line condition, if you will, so that
18 you can a judge -- so that when something does
19 go wrong you can judge what -- what happens.

20 We do -- in this document we give you a
21 good comparison between normal operations and
22 then as we would define a off-normal event,
23 what is the consequence of that.

24 Accidents will happen in this facility.
25 But by history, by facility of design and by

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 10 of 123

Page 45

1 procedure that -- that accident will not
2 release -- release a pathogen outside the
3 facility. But then we take it a step further
4 using conservative analysis of playing the
5 what-if game.

6 Again, I stated we've looked at a small
7 aircraft crash into the facility, what's the
8 consequence of that.

9 So we're trying to give you the full
10 range here so that not only does DHS read
11 that and determine is the risk worth the
12 benefit. We also give that to you, the
13 audience, so that you can provide those same
14 comments back to DHS for their
15 consideration.

16 KATHY PRESCOTT: But you didn't give it
17 to us in the executive summary, is my point.
18 And that is what most people have gone by.
19 That's why they wrote this story in the paper
20 and headlined it like they did.

21 People look at the headline in the paper
22 and say no problem, I no longer need to pay
23 attention. And I'm just saying that this is
24 horribly misleading. And I --

25 (Applause.)

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 4.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern.

1|4.2

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 11 of 123

Page 46

1 MS. COGHILL: Beth Vesserby (phonetic
2 spelling).

3 Go ahead.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He was here before
5 me.

6 MS. COGHILL: Okay, sir.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, first I want
8 to say I've seen Jamie Johnson so often in
9 the past few months I feel like we're
10 friends. He's been much more responsive than
11 our own mayor and city council has been with
12 regard to questions and concerns.

13 (Applause.)

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But Mr. Johnson,
15 you were quoted in -- I believe it was the
16 New York newspaper on July 31st saying that
17 in the site selection process for NBAF safety
18 was the first and foremost consideration.

19 I agree with that. The problem is we've
20 been following this let's-make-a-deal circus
21 that has been going on for a couple of years
22 with the various consortia around the
23 country, particularly our consortia here in
24 Athens; and safety has never been mentioned.

25 When the -- when the question of safety

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's views. DHS's alternative site selection process is described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. Decisions on whether to construct and operate the NBAF and, if so, where will be based on the analyses presented in the NBAF EIS and other factors such as cost, engineering and technical feasibility, strategic considerations, policy considerations, and public input. DHS notes the commentor's concern about the risk to health and safety from the NBAF operation. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated on the U.S. mainland. The NBAF would provide state-of-the-art biocontainment features and operating procedures to minimize the potential for laboratory-acquired infections and accidental releases. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. DHS notes the commentor's questions regarding the site selection process. DHS held a competitive process to select potential sites for the proposed NBAF as described in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. A team of Federal employees representing multi-department component offices and multi-governmental agencies (DHS, U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA], and Department of Health and Human Services [HHS]) reviewed the submissions based primarily on environmental suitability and proximity to research capabilities, proximity to workforce, acquisition/construction/operations, and community acceptance. Ultimately, DHS identified five site alternatives that surpassed others in meeting the evaluation criteria and DHS preferences, and determined that they, in addition to the Plum Island Site, would be evaluated in the EIS as alternatives for the proposed NBAF. DHS prepared the NBAF EIS in accordance with the provisions of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and CEQ's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500 et seq.). The primary objective of the EIS is to evaluate the environmental impacts of a range of reasonable alternatives for locating, constructing and operating the NBAF and the No Action Alternative. As summarized in Section 3.1 of the NBAF EIS, DHS analyzed each environmental resource area in a consistent manner across all the alternatives to allow for a fair comparison among the alternatives.

Comment No: 2

Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's questions regarding the criteria for final site selection. Several factors will affect the decision on whether or not the NBAF is built, and, if so, where. The EIS itself will not be the sole deciding factor. The decision will be made based on the following factors: 1) analyses from the EIS and support documents; 2) the four evaluation criteria discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1; 3) applicable Federal, state, and local laws and regulatory requirements; 4) consultation requirements among the Federal, state, and local agencies, as well as federally recognized American Indian Nations; 5) policy considerations; and 6) public comment. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (designated as For Official Use Only) was conducted to determine the level and type of threat for each site, and Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS evaluated the potential consequences from terrorist actions and other accident scenarios.

1|19.2

2|2.0

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 12 of 123

cont.|2|2.0

cont.|1|19.2

Page 47

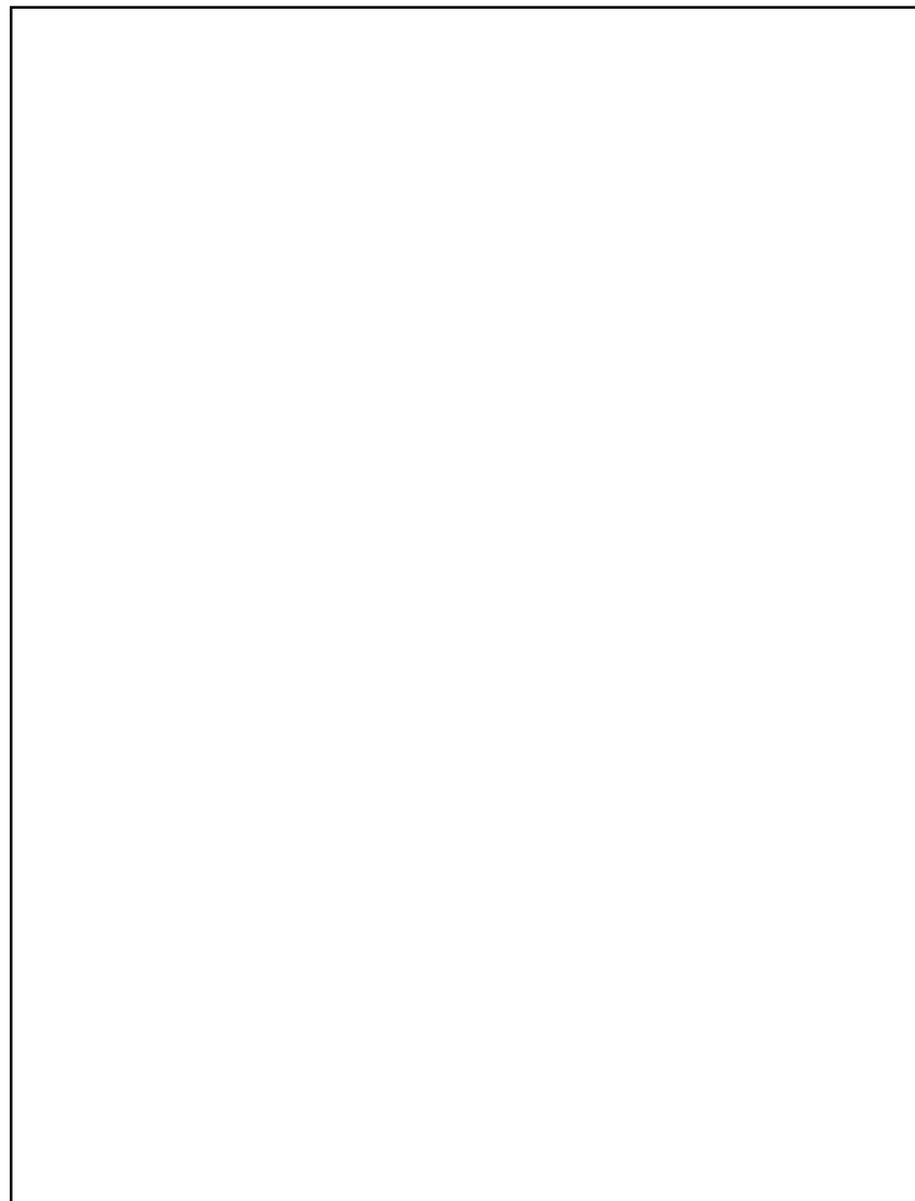
1 has come up, it's always been oh, trust us,
2 trust technology. Now, the respected
3 government accountability office has said
4 technology cannot cure all problems,
5 particularly human-caused problems.

6 So my question is: Now that you've
7 narrowed it down to five locations, none of
8 which were qualified on the basis of safety,
9 how can safety become a validly applied
10 criteria when there's no way to know that
11 these are the five safest locations in the
12 United States?

13 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. A really good
14 question.

15 When the -- we got questioned before the
16 EIS how would we make an informed decision
17 with respect to risk assessment. Well, it's
18 come out; the draft EIS has come out. The
19 people can see the results, as Chuck
20 presented.

21 So what we're seeing here now is --
22 really it's low risk, high consequence is the
23 variable that we're focused on. And you're
24 right, there are discriminators in the five
25 mainland sites.



August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 13 of 123

Page 48

1 If you look at economic impacts for Foot
2 and Mouth Disease, you see a 2.8 to 4.2
3 billion range. The 2.8 is Plum Island; 4.2
4 is Kansas.

5 So Plum Island, obviously, has the lower
6 consequence, because they do -- there is a
7 buffer of water there at that site. We take
8 credit for it as an extra layer of
9 protection.

10 But you're looking at 2.8, 4.2 billion.
11 But that's still a significant impact, the
12 range in and of itself.

13 So that factor, to answer your question,
14 it is one of the -- has to be one of the
15 leading considerations in making the
16 decision. So we would take that information
17 and, you know, present that to the decision
18 maker, along with these other factors I've
19 presented. So it clearly has to be, you
20 know, considered and will be considered as we
21 go forward.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just a quick
23 follow-up.

24 What other factors would preempt safety?

25 MR. JOHNSON: What?

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 14 of 123

Page 49

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What other factors
2 would preempt safety?

3 MR. JOHNSON: Oh, what other factors
4 we would consider.

5 We would carry the four additional
6 criteria forward, the proximity to research,
7 the work force and the apprehensive
8 construction and community acceptance. Those
9 will carry forward.

10 In addition to the EIS and risk
11 assessment that I just talked about you
12 addressed, we also look at factors such as
13 the cost to construct and operate. So the
14 decision maker, when they make the decision,
15 has to be aware of all of the factors, too.

16 We're not making a blind decision. Site
17 characterization and security and -- and
18 community acceptance.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thanks.

20 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

21 This will be our last question for this
22 period. Then we'll open up the floor for
23 formal comments.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hello. My
25 question is concerning the -- the -- my

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 15 of 123

Page 50

1 mind's gone blank.

2 My question is about the Foot and Mouth
3 Disease study, which is, obviously, the
4 centerpiece of what you'll be doing here.

5 And according to a 1947 law passed by
6 Congress, the study of Foot and Mouth Disease
7 on the mainland is illegal, which is why it
8 has been conducted at Plum Island. And so in
9 order for Foot and Mouth to be studied
10 anywhere at these sites, these mainland
11 sites, Congress will have to overturn the
12 law.

13 A GAO report that was issued recently
14 said they saw no justification for bringing
15 the study of Foot and Mouth to the mainland.
16 I know that it's being held up in Congress at
17 the moment. I have heard no decision. And I
18 wondered if you could tell me what the status
19 of that request is.

20 MR. JOHNSON: Sure.

21 The Congress actually passed the Farm
22 Bill -- I believe it's in the mid May time
23 frame -- where they put in the Farm Bill as
24 law that a sector of agriculture shall
25 designate -- you know, the Department of

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 3.0

DHS notes the commentor's question. Chapter 1 of the NBAF EIS describes the purpose and need for DHS's proposed action to site, construct, and operate the NBAF. The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill), which was approved by both houses of Congress in May 2008, includes a provision directing the Secretary of Agriculture to issue a permit to the Secretary of Homeland Security for FMD live virus research at the Plum Island replacement facility (i.e., NBAF).

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 16 of 123

Page 51

1 Homeland Security Foot and Mouth could
2 announce that work be done at any successor
3 facility to Plum Island independent of site.

4 So that law that you mentioned has been
5 repealed, and this law is now in place and
6 going forward. So it was addressed in the
7 Congress.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So, in other
9 words, there are no further obstacles to
10 studying Foot and Mouth on the mainland?

11 MR. JOHNSON: From a legislative
12 standpoint, that issue has been taken care
13 of, correct.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

15 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

16 All right, folks, we're going to open up
17 the meeting to the formal public comment
18 period.

19 Just like to remind everybody we have a
20 very full list here. We want to make sure
21 everybody gets a chance to speak. And I just
22 want to run down the parameters real quick so
23 we're all working together and making sure
24 everyone is being heard.

25 Each speaker will have three minutes. In

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 17 of 123

Page 52

1 the event that you have gone over your time,
2 please do quietly sit down, go back to your
3 seat and submit the rest of your comments
4 that you did not get to address to us in
5 writing. They will all be treated the same
6 and treated equally.

7 Also, I want to clarify that under the
8 National Environmental Policy Act for this
9 portion of the meeting if you do pose a
10 question to the panel, the panel, at this
11 point in time, will not be responding
12 verbally because what we have to do, under
13 the National Environmental Policy Act, is
14 take each one of your questions and go back
15 and address them with the scientific process
16 to make sure we get the right response.

17 So please don't think that we're being
18 disrespectful if you pose a question in your
19 comments. We legally have to make sure all
20 of them are addressed in what's called the
21 Comment Response Document.

22 Also, in the event of time -- we're
23 making sure we don't miss anyone -- I'll call
24 a few folks' names off the list. So if you
25 are at the back of the room, if you'd quietly

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 18 of 123

Page 53

1 move forward so when the person in front of
2 you is finished then you can step up to the
3 microphone, that would be great. We'd
4 appreciate it.

5 All right. Our first speaker this
6 afternoon is Andy Herod.

7 ANDY HEROD: Good afternoon. I thank you
8 for coming to Athens.

9 My name is Andy Herod. I am an elected
10 member of the Athens-Clarke County
11 government; and I would just like, first of
12 all, to welcome you here to Athens. I think
13 we have a wonderful city here, and I hope
14 you're enjoying your two or three days here.

15 When I first heard about this project I
16 was perhaps fairly suspicious. This is,
17 after all -- has been associated with the
18 Bush Administration. And I'm certainly no
19 fan of the Bush Administration.

20 But I took it upon myself to read more
21 about this project, to talk to some of the
22 scientists that have been involved at Plum
23 Island. I have been interested -- or it has
24 been interesting to me to see that the
25 scientists say that the security of Plum

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 19 of 123

Page 54

1 Island has actually improved since DHS took
2 over the facility.

3 And I've also taught the -- a BSL-3 ag
4 lab here in Athens and seen the procedures
5 and how they handle research firsthand. And
6 I would just like to say that certainly on
7 behalf of myself that I am quite comfortable
8 with NBAF coming here to Athens, and I hope
9 you will choose us.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. COGHILL: The next speaker is Richard
14 Theurer, followed by J. Scott Angle and then
15 Pat Wilson.

16 Mr. Theurer, you're next.

17 (No response.)

18 MS. COGHILL: In the event that I'm not
19 pronouncing the name -- oh, sorry.

20 J. SCOTT ANGLE: No. That's not me.

21 MS. COGHILL: Okay. The last name is
22 spelled T-h-e-u-r-e-r.

23 Okay. We'll go back and make sure that
24 we accommodate Richard when he shows up.

25 The next person is J. Scott Angle,

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

1|24.2

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 20 of 123

Page 55

1 A-n-g-l-e.

2 J. SCOTT ANGLE: Good afternoon, and
3 welcome to Athens.

4 My name is Scott Angle, and I'm the dean
5 of the College of Agricultural and
6 Environmental Sciences here at the University
7 of Georgia. I'm not here to represent my
8 colleagues nor the university, but rather I
9 speak only for myself.

10 My academic career's partially focused on
11 risk assessment. So I have a relatively
12 unique perspective on these issues.

13 All activity of our daily lives involve
14 risk. All activities also have potential
15 reward, as you well know. Risk assessment
16 weighs the risk of an activity against reward
17 we hope to gain.

18 In my opinion, the potential benefits of
19 NBAF to agriculture far outweigh any
20 potential risk. Having worked with hazardous
21 materials and organisms for decades, I'm
22 confident that modern containment
23 technologies provide the level of safety
24 needed for the work to be conducted at this
25 facility.

1|24.2

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 21 of 123

cont|1|24.2

Page 56

1 I also have an advisory council made up
2 of many of the most prominent supporters of
3 agriculture in food industry in Georgia.
4 Earlier this year they drafted a letter and
5 voted to have this letter sent directly to
6 David Lee in support of the facility coming
7 to Athens. I'd like to read this letter to
8 you.

9 On behalf of the University of Georgia
10 College of Agriculture and Environmental
11 Sciences Advisory Council, I wish to convey
12 the council members' support for locating
13 NBAF at the University of Georgia in Athens,
14 Georgia. Thirty members of the advisory
15 council well represent many communities,
16 occupations and interest groups in Georgia.
17 They work closely with the college and the
18 university staff in reviewing ongoing
19 programs and identifying and planning
20 high-priority future programs.

21 The chief mission of volunteer members is
22 to ensure that the college programs are
23 responsive to the needs of Georgia residents
24 and that the college performs its role most
25 effectively in dispersing knowledge in new

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 22 of 123

Page 57

1 technologies about agriculture, food and the
2 environment. Our members have great respect
3 for the college of -- for the University of
4 Georgia and encourage its continued pursuit
5 of NBAF, the facility that will certainly
6 enhance Georgia's leadership role in areas
7 crucial to the U.S. food chain and human
8 welfare.

9 The diversity of Georgia citizens listed
10 in the text directory applaud the efforts of
11 the university to bring this facility to our
12 state, and they are most willing to help in
13 any way possible.

14 Sincerely, Louie Blake, executive
15 secretary.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

18 Our next speaker's Pat Wilson. Janildo
19 Reis and Dorinda Dullmeyer, if you'd please
20 make your way to the front of the room,
21 please.

22 PAT WILSON: Good afternoon, everybody.
23 I'm Pat Wilson. I'm the director of
24 government affairs for Governor Sonny Purdue.

25 I wanted to welcome you guys here to

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 23 of 123

Page 58

1 Athens. As a UGA grad and a resident of
2 nearby Athens, I really appreciate you guys
3 coming in.

4 I also wanted to thank you for this
5 process. I think the selection process --
6 both sides of the aisle I think would say it
7 has been very open and transparent, and we
8 appreciate you coming and listening to the
9 concerns of the community.

1|24.2

10 The reason the Governor asked me to come
11 today is to give his full support of the --
12 of this process of the selection and of,
13 hopefully, bringing NBAF to Athens. We have
14 been lucky that we've seen, over the last
15 three years, a great coordination between
16 federal, state and local officials in
17 Georgia. And this includes the Georgia
18 Congressional delegation, the Governor's
19 office, the private sector, the Georgia
20 Department of Economic Development, all of
21 our research institutions, which include
22 Georgia, of course. But we also have Georgia
23 Tech and Emory, Clark Atlanta University and
24 the Georgia Research Alliance.

25 And the reason that we think that we have

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 24 of 123

Page 59

1 such a good synergy here is that we recognize
2 that this is a unique opportunity for not
3 only the state but for the federal
4 government.

2|8.2

5 In Athens, in this site in Georgia, you
6 have these facilities that are already here,
7 the USDA labs. You have proximity to CDC,
8 which has operated for years without
9 incident. You have Hartsfield International
10 Airport very close, which gives us

11 connections to pretty much anywhere around
12 the world. You have all of our research
13 institutions willing to work together, which
14 is a fantastic work force draw for Athens.

15 It gives us the ability to support and
16 staff a facility. And I think that what this
17 has done is given us the opportunity to
18 really help the federal government in
19 something that is of national security
20 interest.

21 To that extent the Governor wanted me to
22 let you know that we are willing to address
23 and look forward to addressing any -- any
24 interest -- or any issues that are in the EIS
25 report. You have our full willingness to

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 8.2

DHS notes the information provided by the commentor.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 25 of 123

Page 60

1 address those in the future.

2 So thank you very much for coming. We
3 appreciate it. And I look forward to working
4 with you in the selection process.

5 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, Mr. Wilson. Our
6 next speaker is Janildo Reis.

7 (Applause.)

8 JANILDO REIS: Good afternoon, everyone.
9 My name is Janildo Reis. I'm a graduate
10 student and doing my Ph.D. in veterinary
11 pathology here at the University of Georgia.

12 And I came to U.S. in 2006 thanks for
13 excellent program between Brazil and USA
14 through a full grad scholarship. And I'm
15 doing my Ph.D. research with VSV, which is
16 Vesicular Stomatitis Virus. And this disease
17 cause -- affect livestock animals involved in
18 the clinical studies of Foot and Mouth
19 Disease.

20 And I'm doing my research at the Plum
21 Island, and I'm going back and forth like two
22 times a year there. And I think I'm here, I
23 can give you my thoughts here and share my
24 thoughts with you guys here.

25 So I think if NBAF were here at Athens,

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 26 of 123

Page 61

1 which is a college town, the University of

2 Georgia would benefit greatly with this

3 opportunity to -- because it would create

4 academic and research opportunities to

5 collaborate -- of collaboration between these

6 two institution. And in Plum Island only one

7 or maybe between few graduate students there.

8 So I think if the NBAF were in Athens UGA

9 would benefit of that and also graduate

10 students like me would be working there. So

11 instead of just one or two graduate students

12 being at NBAF, if NBAF were here in Athens

13 maybe hundreds of graduate students could be

14 working there.

15 So if NBAF were here so we could have

16 more academic and research opportunities. So

17 it would be great for Athens and for UGA.

18 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. COGHILL: Our next speaker will be

21 Dorinda Dallmeyer. And Maria Kuhn, Sue

22 Wilde, Kathy Prescott and Egbert Mundt, if

23 you could slowly make your way to the front

24 of the room.

25 Go ahead.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. The number of short-term and permanent jobs are discussed in Section 3.10. It is expected that approximately 2,700 direct temporary jobs would result from construction of the NBAF, with many of the jobs being filled locally. Approximately 483 permanent jobs, including the initial 326 direct jobs, would result from operation of the NBAF.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 27 of 123

Page 62

1|13.2

1 DORINDA DALLMEYER: I own a farm which
 2 supports livestock as well as a wide array of
 3 wildlife. And I want to bring to your
 4 attention a failure of the draft
 5 Environmental Impact Statement to address
 6 impacts on wildlife, specifically whitetail
 7 deer, anything other than the most cursory
 8 fashion. While my focus this afternoon is on
 9 the south Milledge site, the same is true for
 10 the other mainland candidate sites.

2|15.2

11 In Section 3103113 the draft EIS relies
 12 on 2001 U.S. Census data indicating that
 13 expenditures related to recreational hunting
 14 activities in the state of Georgia total 504
 15 million dollars. However, there's more
 16 recent data available from the U.S. Fish and
 17 Wildlife Service which shows that nearly 350
 18 Georgia residents hunt deer and Georgia ranks
 19 number one in the country for out-of-state
 20 hunters who come here, 136,000 annually.

21 Hunting currently provides 15,000 jobs
 22 for Georgians, nearly 15,000, which is 45
 23 times the number of jobs that the proposed
 24 NBAF accounts for 430 million dollars in
 25 annual wages. Hunting also provides yearly

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding potential effects on wildlife in the vicinity of the South Milledge Avenue Site. Section 3.8.9 provides a detailed analysis of the potential impacts of an accidental release on wildlife, including white-tailed deer. The NBAF EIS states that white-tailed deer are abundant and widespread in the vicinity of the proposed NBAF site. Although the NBAF EIS acknowledges the potential for significant impacts on white-tailed deer and other wildlife in the event of an accidental release, the risk of such a release is extremely low (see Section 3.14). It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas and in areas with abundant wildlife. State-of-the-art biocontainment facilities such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF. Furthermore, the purpose of NBAF is to combat diseases that could have significant effects on wildlife. Research at the NBAF would include the development of vaccines for wildlife that could prevent adverse impacts from a foreign introduction.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's reference to more recent statistics and has updated Section 3.10 of the NBAF FEIS sections appropriately.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 28 of 123

cont|2|15.2

Page 63

1 revenues of a hundred million dollars in
 2 federal taxes and 93 million in state and
 3 local taxes with the broader ripple effect on
 4 Georgia's economy estimated to be 1.4 billion
 5 dollars. These figures dwarf the 32 million
 6 dollar annual total for income and taxes the
 7 draft EIS projects for the Athens site.

8 Data for Kansas, Texas, North Carolina
 9 and Mississippi also reflect that the value
 10 of the hunting economy of each state far
 11 outstrips the putative economic benefits that
 12 will come from the proposed facility. These
 13 economic data are relevant in evaluating the
 14 potential impact of an accidental or
 15 deliberate release of pathogens from the
 16 proposed South Milledge Avenue site.

3|13.2

17 The draft EIS correctly notes that the
 18 proposed site is located adjacent to
 19 bottomland hardwood forests along the Middle
 20 Oconee River which serve not only as their
 21 habitat but also as a corridor for dispersal.

22 According to UGA professor Carl Miller, a
 23 noted authority on whitetail deer, large home
 24 ranges are reported for deer and bottomland
 25 hardwood habitats such as those found along

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding potential effects on wildlife in the vicinity of the South Milledge Avenue Site. Section 3.8.9 provides a detailed analysis of the potential impacts of an accidental release on wildlife, including white-tailed deer. The EIS states that white-tailed deer are abundant and widespread in the vicinity of the South Milledge Avenue Site. Although the NBAF EIS acknowledges the potential for significant impacts on white-tailed deer and other wildlife in the event of an accidental release, the risk of such a release is extremely low (see Section 3.14). It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas and in areas with abundant wildlife. State-of-the-art biocontainment facilities such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF. Furthermore, the purpose of NBAF is to combat diseases that could have significant effects on wildlife. Research at the NBAF would include the development of vaccines for wildlife that could prevent adverse impacts from a foreign introduction.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 29 of 123

cont.] 1| 13.2.

Page 64

1 the middle Oconee. Thus we have the
 2 potential for a great deal of movement of
 3 whitetail deer all along the Middle Oconee
 4 Corridor and into other forage areas such as
 5 livestock pastures. Indeed, Dr. Miller notes
 6 that yearly males disperse as much as two to
 7 six miles from their maternal home range.

8 Although the draft EIS maps the density
 9 of livestock found in the vicinity of each
 10 candidate site, it fails to include any data
 11 on population density and dispersal
 12 characteristics for deer, which are
 13 susceptible to Foot and Mouth Disease and
 14 Rift Valley Fever as domestic livestock.

3| 19.2
 15 Of course, the facility will have a
 16 perimeter fence designed to keep deer out.
 17 But no fence can keep viruses in, especially
 18 FMD virus, which is easily spread by aerosol
 19 transmission. Nor can a fence contain insect
 20 vectors such as mosquitoes infected with
 21 other pathogens transmissible to deer such as
 22 Rift Valley Fever.

4| 5.2
 23 If this facility is built, it has no
 24 business being placed on the mainland.
 25 Thank you.

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding an accidental release of a vector, such as a mosquito, from the NBAF. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, investigates the chances of a variety of accidents that could occur with the proposed NBAF and consequences of potential accidents. Accidents could occur in the form of procedural violations (operational accidents), natural phenomena accidents, external events, and intentional acts each of which has the potential to release a vector. Although some accidents are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release of a vector are low. An analysis of potential consequences of a pathogen (e.g. Rift Valley fever virus) becoming established in native mosquito populations was evaluated in Section 3.8.9 and Section 3.10.9 as well as in Section 3.14 (health and Safety) of the NBAF EIS. DHS would have site-specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF. The RVF response plan would also include a mosquito control action plan. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

Comment No: 4Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the five mainland site alternatives.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 30 of 123

Page 65

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. COGHILL: Maria Kuhn is our next
3 speaker.

4 MARIA KUHN: Good afternoon. My name is
5 Maria Kuhn. I am a citizen of Oconee County.
6 I'm the director of biosafety here at the
7 University of Georgia.

8 And as President Bush has often brought
9 up in these meetings, I would like to go
10 ahead and declare that I am a liberal. And I
11 do also support NBAF. I support NBAF
12 wherever it is built, and I personally hope
13 to see it in Athens.

14 I support NBAF because I do support the
15 quality of life that we all have here in the
16 United States. NBAF and our safe food supply
17 are directly connected. And NBAF will also
18 provide technologies and knowledge that will
19 improve the quality of life for those less
20 fortunate than us on a global level.

21 In my work I am able to support safe and
22 secure research that involves humans, animal
23 and plant pathogens. I am blessed to be in a
24 unique position where every day I work with
25 brilliant and inquisitive individuals who

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 5.0

DHS notes the commentator's support for the research to be conducted at the NBAF.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentator's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentator's support for the proposed research that would be conducted within the NBAF. DHS's mission is to study foreign animal and zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy. The purpose of the NBAF would be to develop tests to detect foreign animal and zoonotic diseases and develop vaccines (or other countermeasures such as antiviral therapies) to protect agriculture and food systems in the United States.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 31 of 123

Page 66

1 nobly dedicate their professions to
2 supporting and providing research that
3 involves the topics that I've mentioned.
4 These intelligent individuals that I call the
5 biosafety team are not just the scientists
6 but they are also the technicians, the
7 maintenance personnel, the police,
8 veterinarians, animal care, custodians and
9 engineers.

10 Regardless of scientific disciplines, the
11 general focus of science should be well
12 understood that it is not unique. Whether
13 you're a behavioral, biomedical or
14 agricultural scientist, your focus is simply
15 for the advancement, improvement and
16 understanding of what is true and so.
17 Therefore, I would like this community to
18 understand and know that the researchers and
19 veterinarians at NBAF have the same focus.
20 Theirs is one of advancement in foreign
21 animal diseases that are continuing and
22 knocking on our doors every day.

23 Rift Valley Fever has left Africa and
24 migrated to the Middle East. And I would
25 like for you all to know there's concerns

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 32 of 123

Page 67

1 would be the next stop would be Europe or
2 possibly here in the western hemisphere, and
3 we have to be prepared.

4 Einstein said a perfect means -- a
5 perfection of means and a confusion at the
6 aims seems to be our main problem. And the
7 negative expressions that I see currently out
8 there for NBAF, the terms bioterror lab, I
9 believe are currently of confusion and they
10 are a definitive confusion of aims for the
11 research to be done at NBAF.

12 Are there risks? Yes. Are people
13 perfect? No. But in my work I know that we
14 strive for the highest level of controls that
15 reduce those risks and address the concerns
16 for human error.

17 So for people that may be on the fence,
18 please do not let the terms being used scare
19 you or concern you, because the aims of NBAF
20 are the same as those of all scientific
21 research: to understand, to advance and to
22 improve.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 33 of 123

Page 68

1 MS. COGHILL: Sue Wilde.

2 SUE WILDE: I would like to express my
3 opposition to the construction in Athens of
4 the NBAF on the proposed site at South
5 Milledge and Whitehall Road.

6 As your Draft Environmental Impact
7 Statement acknowledges, the site lies between
8 the Whitehall Forest and the botanical garden
9 squarely in the middle of an Audubon
10 Society-designated important bird area, or
11 IBA.

12 The EIS claims that construction of the
13 facility on that site would have no direct
14 effect on the State botanical garden
15 Whitehall Forest IBA because, quote, the
16 forest of repairing corridor which connects
17 Whitehall with the botanical garden would be
18 preserved, end quote. However, this
19 assessment fails to take into account the
20 degradation of grassland bird habitat.

21 Grassland birds rely on open fields for
22 nesting and other habitat functions. In
23 Georgia these birds include indigo bunting
24 common yellow-throat, eastern meadowlark,
25 grasshopper sparrow, song sparrow, eastern

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commenter's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commenter's concern regarding the proximity of the South Milledge Avenue Site to the State Botanical Garden and the Important Bird Area (IBA) and potential effects on grassland birds. As indicated in Sections 3.8.3.2 and 3.8.3.3 of the NBAF EIS, construction and normal operations of the NBAF would have no direct impact on the State Botanical Garden. DHS acknowledges the importance of native grasslands and early successional habitats to wildlife; however, as indicated in Section 3.8.3.2.5, the NBAF would affect primarily pasture areas that consist of actively grazed, cultivated, forage grasses. These areas have limited wildlife habitat value due to their disturbed condition, lack of native vegetation, and lack of wildlife food and cover. Due to their actively grazed condition and lack of cover, the forage grass areas contain little or no suitable nesting habitat for grassland bird species.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 34 of 123

cont. | 2 | 13.2

Page 69

1 bluebird and northern bobwhite, to name a
 2 few. Studies show that grassland bird
 3 species in the eastern U.S. are declining
 4 faster than any other group of North American
 5 breeding birds due to habitat destruction.

6 According to the EIS, quote, construction
 7 activities for NBAF would disturb
 8 approximately 30 acres plus additional
 9 acreage for temporary construction areas, end
 10 quote. The EIS also states that there will
 11 be, quote, site grading, stripping of grass,
 12 removal of trees and other vegetation, end
 13 quote, and that the construction period will
 14 last four years.

15 This kind of long-term construction and
 16 degradation of the pasture land that
 17 currently exists between Whitehall Forest and
 18 the state botanical garden is not appropriate
 19 in an important bird area.

3 | 7.2

20 In addition, the EIS states that, quote,
 21 the main facility, all support buildings and
 22 the parking lot will be well lit and that
 23 lighting is also proposed at regular
 24 intervals along the security fence, end
 25 quote.

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 7.2

DHS notes the commentors concern regarding nighttime lighting impacts on birds. As described in Chapter 3, Section 3.8.3.3.4 of the FEIS nighttime lighting has the potential to impact wildlife through astronomical and ecological light pollution. The NBAF would employ the minimum intensity of lighting that is necessary to provide adequate security.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 35 of 123

Page 70

cont.| 3| 7.2

1 At the last scoping meeting I spoke about
2 migrating birds' tendency to make their
3 migratory flights at night frequently
4 navigating by the stars. It has long been
5 known that lighted buildings cause trouble
6 for night-flying birds. They become confused
7 by the light, which they are reluctant to fly
8 out of, and will fly in circles until they
9 drop from exhaustion or collide with the
10 building. The EIS did not address the
11 nightlight hazard to birds.

cont.| 1| 25.2

12 To me it is obvious that construction of
13 the NBAF on the open land acreage in the
14 middle of a designated important bird area
15 would be highly detrimental to the bird life
16 there, and I urge you to reject the Athens
17 site for the construction of the NBAF.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. COGHILL: Kathy Prescott is our next
21 speaker.

22 If I have could have Egbert Mundt, Mike
23 Giles, Mike Lacy and Mike Wanner please come
24 to the front of the room.

25 Go ahead.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 36 of 123

Page 71

1 KATHY PRESCOTT: Since you value
2 redundancy so much, I will repeat my comments
3 from the Washington, D.C., meeting.

4 I'd like to tell you about a really big
5 seller in Athens right now: rain barrels.
6 We are in a one-hundred-year drought and
7 people are collecting rainwater off their
8 roofs to water their plants.

9 Unfortunately, in my case that doesn't
10 help our pond that continues to drop 6 inches
11 a day. Our neighbor's well has run dry. Yet
12 the DEIS executive summary table, no problem,
13 effects on water in Athens will be minor.

14 Another popular item in town is the
15 mosquito pellet. They are for the rain
16 barrels to kill the mosquito larvae. We have
17 so many mosquitoes in Athens that the fire
18 stations give these pellets away for free.

19 We have PSAs describing how best to avoid
20 breeding mosquitoes around our homes; yet now
21 we discover in the DEIS that NBAF will have
22 an insectary to breed mosquitoes by the
23 thousands to serve as vectors for diseases,
24 some of which are fatal to humans. But the
25 DEIS says no problem.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's drought concerns and DHS acknowledges current regional drought conditions. As described in Section 3.7.3.3.1 of the NBAF EIS, the South Milledge Avenue Site alternative would use approximately 118,000 gallons per day of potable water, an amount that is approximately 0.76% of Athens' current annual average of 15.5 million gallons per day usage. The NBAF annual potable water usage is expected to be approximately equivalent to the amount consumed by 228 residential homes. The South Milledge Avenue Site alternative would have access to 3 surface water resources: the North Oconee River, the Middle Oconee River, and the Jackson County Bear Creek Reservoir. The access to 3 surface water resources will help ensure the availability of water in the event that any one of those sources becomes inadequate.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding safe facility operations. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. An analysis of potential consequences of a pathogen (e.g., Rift Valley fever virus [RVF]) becoming established in native mosquito populations, particularly in warm, humid climates, was evaluated in Sections 3.8.9, 3.10.9, and 3.14 of the NBAF EIS. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures (SOP) and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the NBAF. RVF and foot and mouth disease SOPs and response plans would likely include strategies that are similar. However, the RVF response plan would also include a mosquito control action plan. The potential consequences of pesticide use would be evaluated during the preparation of a site-specific response plan.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 37 of 123

Page 72

2|19.2 cont. 1 Well, it is more of a problem in areas
2 that have mosquitos since a breach could
3 cause a disease, particularly Rift Valley
4 Fever, to become established in the
5 environment. But we're told the health and
6 safety effects of NBAF on Athens are
7 negligible or moderate, depending where you
8 look.

3|9.2 9 We also learn in the DEIS that
10 incineration is a possible means of carcass
11 disposal. It would be, quote, a major title
12 five air emission source, unquote, yet no
13 mention of specific Athens air quality
14 problems, only references to, quote, State
15 compliance continues to be a challenge,
16 unquote. But in the DEIS air quality effects
17 in Athens are minor.

4|26.0 18 At the DHS town hall meeting in February
19 Plum Island's Dr. Barry Beck (phonetic
20 spelling) happily volunteered that only FMD
21 was transported through aerosol. He forgot
22 to mention the three zoonotic diseases listed
23 in the DEIS that can be spread through
24 aerosol and can be deadly to humans.
25 He also reminded us that, quote, we

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 9.2

DHS notes the commentor's observations regarding the assessment of Athens area air quality and potential impacts from NBAF operations. Section 3.4.1 of the NBAF EIS describes the methodology used in assessing potential air quality consequences. Section 3.4.3.3.2 describes an emission inventory relative to the South Milledge Avenue Site based on the current state of NBAF design, and Section 3.4.3.1.2 summarizes the 2006 Ambient Air Surveillance Report produced by the Ambient Monitoring Program of Georgia's Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division. Should a decision be made to build NBAF and following site selection and final design, a complete emission inventory would be developed and refined modeling performed as necessary in accordance with state-specific air quality permitting requirements and specifically to show compliance with the NAAQS and the Georgia SIP, if applicable.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 26.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement. Dr. Barrett is the Director of the Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC) is correct in stating that only one of the diseases at PIADC, foot and mouth disease (FMD) can be transmitted through aerosol means. At the NBAF, FMD virus along with three other pathogens, Hendra virus, Nipah virus, and Rift Valley fever virus can be transmitted through aerosol means.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 38 of 123

4|26.0
cont.

5|25.2

Page 73

1 weren't running big animals, we weren't
2 fattening them up for livestock, implying to
3 me that the animals at NBAF will be small.
4 Sorry. DEIS lists -- the DEIS lists
5 1430-pound cattle, 1400-pound bison, also
6 elk, horses and deer.
7 What else is out of whack with the DEIS?
8 A lot. But I only have three minutes. The
9 citizens of Athens have been mislead all
10 along. The use of your very -- to use your
11 very over used term we will leverage all the
12 ill will created caused by DHS's, quote,
13 highly competitive acquisition strategy,
14 unquote, that has already disrupted our
15 community and we will use all legal means to
16 keep NBAF away from Athens.
17 (Applause.)
18 MS. COGHILL: All right. Egbert Mundt is
19 our next speaker.
20 EGBERT MUNDT: My name is Egbert Mundt.
21 I am originally from Germany.
22 I came over in 2006 here to take a shift
23 for (unintelligible) a scholarship for
24 (unintelligible) medicine. And before I came
25 over was working 17 years in NBAF Germany.

Comment No: 5

Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 39 of 123

Page 74

1 And I have a little bit experience with that.
2 And besides the last 12 years I worked in
3 Germany I was a biosafety officer in NBAF
4 Germany. And I can tell you you can do it in
5 a safe way.

1|5.1

6 And one point I'd like to raise it's
7 mentioned several times here that this island
8 that is -- putting NBAF institution on
9 island. I mean, the original concept is --
10 island concept is based on the known existing
11 technology in 1910 because the first
12 biological institute was built in Germany on
13 an island in the Riems because the technology
14 was not available to that time. And I think
15 we are some steps ahead.

16 That means you should not rely on last
17 century technology because we have now better
18 technology to keep the germs inside and do
19 not pollute the air. I mean, that's
20 ridiculous what I hear, your air pollution,
21 et cetera.

22 And what I also like to point out is that
23 the Riems since 1973 is not an island anymore
24 because they made -- built a dam to the
25 mainland. And it didn't change anything

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 5.1

DHS notes the commenter's statement regarding past reasoning for putting a facility like the NBAF on an island.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 40 of 123

Page 75

1 because they were -- even by building this
2 dam there was no incidents in Germany.

3 And in addition I was, from 2005 to 2006,
4 to the same building in new NBAF Germany. I
5 was on the planning team and there learned a
6 new definition of the term rebalancing of
7 safety. Because when you build such a
8 building you have to be safe, you have to
9 be -- this building has to be operated like
10 an island.

2|8.0

11 That means you have -- even if all power
12 sources are cut off, this building has to be
13 operated. And I learned it is possible. And
14 as I learned in this discussion before this
15 meeting is over possible for NBAF is in the
16 planning phase for NBAF. And I like to say I
17 support NBAF for two main -- mainly two
18 reasons.

3|24.2

19 First, I like to cooperate with those
20 guys from NBAF because I'm very interested in
21 biological or viral diseases in animals
22 (unintelligible), including hybrid animal
23 influenza virus. And, second, I like to have
24 the knowledge and the diagnostic tools to
25 diagnose Foot and Mouth, African Swine Fever,

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 8.0
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 24.2
DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 41 of 123

cont. | 3 | 24.2

Page 76

1 Classical Swine Fever, et cetera. And this
2 is only possible, only possible, when you
3 know the disease, when you develop your own,
4 your own, diagnostic techniques and when you
5 have trained people.

6 Please let the NBAF in Athens. Thank you.

7 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. COGHILL: Mike Giles.

10 MIKE GILES: Good afternoon. My name is
11 Mike Giles. I'm with the Georgia Poultry
12 Federation, a trade association that
13 represents poultry growers, companies and
14 allied industries in Georgia, the nation's
15 leading poultry-producing state.

16 The Georgia Poultry Federation supports
17 locating an NBAF facility in Athens. We
18 believe that the many resources present in
19 Athens and Georgia as a whole, University of
20 Georgia, ongoing USDA and ARS research
21 programs, the Centers for Disease Control, a
22 supportive agricultural community and others
23 would create a thriving environment for the
24 NBAF facility and its program.

25 The Georgia Poultry Federation is

1 | 24.2

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 42 of 123

Page 77

1 involved in the formation of a group of
2 agricultural associations which also supports
3 Athens as the best site for NBAF. This
4 organization, named Georgia Ag Associations
5 for NBAF, includes the Georgia Agro-Business
6 Council, the Georgia Association of County
7 Agents, the Georgia Cattlemen's Association,
8 the Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, Georgia
9 Food Industry Association, the Georgia Fruit
10 and Vegetable Growers Association, Georgia
11 Milk Producers, Georgia Pulp Producers
12 Association, Georgia Poultry Federation,
13 Georgia Retail Association, Georgia
14 Veterinary Medical Association and the UGA
15 College of Agriculture and Environmental
16 Sciences Alumni Association.

17 These organizations represent the broad
18 scope of Georgia agriculture, the state's
19 leading industry, which contributes nearly 60
20 billion dollars to the state's economy. Food
21 processing alone, which depends on the farm
22 level production, is the largest segment of
23 manufacturing in the state accounting for 34
24 billion dollars in economic impact,
25 approximately 200,000 jobs and earnings of

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 43 of 123

Page 78

1 7.6 billion for those in the Georgia food
2 industry.

3 Georgia agriculture is committed to
4 producing a safe and secure food supply. Our
5 producers have been on the leading edge of
6 innovative programs to protect our food
7 supply infrastructure and to raise the
8 awareness of how important it is to be
9 constantly vigil about this vital task.

2|1.0

10 Georgia Poultry Industry has invested
11 tremendous resources and preparation for its
12 response to animal diseases such as avian
13 influenza, which fortunately we have never
14 had to employ. There is a tremendous
15 opportunity for NBAF to leverage this
16 outstanding track record of commitment to
17 securing of safe food supply in our state
18 through partnerships with Georgia
19 agricultural associations and producers.

cont.| 1|24.2

20 We believe that the Draft Environmental
21 Impact Statement demonstrates that the NBAF
22 facility could be built and operated safely
23 in Athens. The real risk to American
24 agriculture and the consumers of agricultural
25 products would be for the federal government

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 1.0
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 44 of 123

Page 79

1 to not proceed with this vitally important
2 NBAF project.

3 We believe that Athens is the best
4 location in the nation for NBAF. And the
5 Georgia Poultry Federation and others in
6 Georgia agriculture will do all that we can
7 to ensure that the NBAF facility and programs
8 in Georgia will be highly successful.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. COGHILL: Mike Lacy is our next
13 speaker.

14 If Mike Wanner, Kevin Hitchcock and Flora
15 Tydings would come to the front of the room.

16 Go ahead, sir.

17 MIKE LACY: Thank you. I'm Mike Lacy, a
18 resident of Clarke County. I've lived in
19 Athens 23 years, longer than I've lived
20 anywhere else. Athens is my home.

21 As a resident of Athens-Clarke County, I
22 am excited about the positive economic
23 benefit that NBAF would bring to our
24 community, economic development our community
25 needs. I appreciate our community leaders,

1|15.2

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. The economic effects of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site are included in Section 3.10.3 of the NBAF EIS. Labor income during construction is projected at approximately \$150 million while operation of the NBAF would generate approximately \$28 million in wages annually.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 45 of 123

Page 80

cont. | 1 | 15.2

1 their work in attempting to bring this entity
2 to our area.

3 I'm also a faculty member here at the
4 University of Georgia with the Department of
5 Poultry Science. As a scientist I'm
6 convinced that this facility is safe.

2 | 8.2

7 The important work that this lab will do
8 will contribute to the ongoing efforts at UGA
9 to protect livestock and people. The synergy
10 that NBAF and UGA, CDC, other universities
11 and organizations would have can't be
12 overestimated. I think that the discoveries
13 that would come from that synergy would be
14 hard to duplicate anywhere else.

3 | 24.2

15 NBAF will contribute to the economic
16 development in the Athens area. I think NBAF
17 will make a contribution to humans and
18 animals worldwide to the health and welfare
19 of both. And it would be a great honor, in
20 my opinion, if Athens had a part in that
21 noble cause.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. COGHILL: Mike Wanner.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 8.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 46 of 123

114.2

Page 81

1 MIKE WANNER: Good afternoon. I'm Mike
2 Wanner. I'm CEO of two biotech companies
3 here in Athens, Georgia, Abeome and Oncose.
4 And I'd like to make sure for the
5 committees and the evaluation of NBAF being
6 located here in Athens and also for the
7 Athens community that, first of all, there
8 has been a tremendous amount of review of the
9 document that was prepared. In working with
10 a number of scientists here in the community
11 we were very pleased with the fairness of the
12 EIS and appreciate the fact that you went to
13 the extent that you did and the transparency
14 of the information that was provided.
15 I also want to make sure that you're
16 aware and the community is aware that our
17 local leaders have been concerned and active
18 in understanding that document and have come
19 to us and have received and asked for support
20 and understanding of the document and
21 concerns they have. So they are interested
22 and very concerned and continue to support
23 the location of NBAF here in Athens-Clarke
24 County. So thank you for doing that.
25 We also want to make sure you're aware of

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 4.2
DHS nites the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 24.2
DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 47 of 123

cont.|2|24.2

Page 82

1 our steadfast support of the concept of NBAF
2 and for the need to be proactive in studying
3 diseases that are not common here in the U.S.
4 and to make sure that we're pro-active in
5 having vaccines and diagnostics developed to
6 be on the cutting edge of that so that we can
7 prevent large mishaps in the future. So we
8 welcome the opportunity for NBAF to be here
9 in Athens and to collaborate with you in the
10 work that you can do here for the U.S. in the
11 future.

3|8.2

12 As you well know, the University of
13 Georgia has a very substantial scientific and
14 biotech group, as well as training going on
15 here in Athens with Athens Technology. You
16 may not be aware there's also a very
17 substantial biotech community, private
18 companies here located in Athens. There are
19 16 of them that are incubated at the
20 University of Georgia, a number of those that
21 are independent outside and in the community
22 that are active in studying vaccine
23 development and other areas of biotechnology.

24 It's also home to the world's largest
25 animal health company, Merial, for which I

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 8.2
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 48 of 123

Page 83

cont|3| 8.2 1 worked for 12 years and which can actively
2 collaborate with the NBAF facility, as well.
3 We have the talent here in Athens to work
4 with you and collaborate. We have the talent
5 to help supply the staff that can help you to
6 be successful in your mission.

4|15.2 7 In addition, we have very high quality of
8 life here in Athens. And if the people
9 aren't already located here in Athens, it's
10 not too hard to get people to move to Athens,
11 Georgia. It's a great place to be.

cont|3| 8.2 12 Finally, you may not know that there also
13 is direct -- has been direct collaboration
14 with Plum Island and with this activity in
15 the past in my experience with
16 (unintelligible) based here in Athens. We
17 supply the bulk rabies vaccine for the Plum
18 Island facility. We were trained to be at
19 the ready in case of an outbreak of rabies in
20 the United States, and we were very proud of
21 our ability and impact that we could have in
22 that situation.

23 We also were the developers and launchers
24 of a wildlife rabies vaccine that has been
25 deployed in the states and has eradicated

Comment No: 4

Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement. Adverse effects to quality of life resources would not be expected with any of the site alternatives and are discussed in Section 3.10.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 49 of 123

Page 84

1 rabies in those regions where it was used.
2 And we have the ability and the activity that
cont. | 2 | 24.2 3 we can support your presence here, and we
4 hope that you'll select Athens as your site.
5 So thank you for coming.
6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
7 (Applause.)
8 MS. COGHILL: Flora Tydings is our next
9 speaker.
10 If Richard Hargrove, Carol Goerig, Grady
11 Thrasher and Zhen Fu could come to the front
12 of the room, please.
13 FLORA TYDINGS: Good afternoon. I'm
14 Flora Tydings, and I'm president of Athens
15 Technical College and currently serving as
16 the chair of the Athens-Clarke County
17 Economic Development Foundation. So I'm
18 actually speaking to you today wearing two
19 hats.
20 I'd like to address the positive aspects
21 of bringing NBAF to Athens, Georgia. As your
22 research has already shown, Athens is an
23 outstanding small city with the
24 university-based population and a highly
25 educated and skilled work force. Your

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 50 of 123

Page 85

cont| 1| 24.2

1 location in Athens would be extremely
 2 successful as it joins our vast array of
 3 university research facilities and existing
 4 international life science companies.
 5 Athens Technical College has been
 6 providing skilled research lab professionals
 7 in this community for over 50 years, and we
 8 are eager to support any other training needs
 9 that this facility would have. And while I
 10 am not a scientist, I have to ask the very
 11 pertinent questions of those existing life
 12 science professionals within our community
 13 and outside our community.

2| 5.2

14 They've been very candid with me. And I
 15 believe that the risk here in locating this
 16 facility would be very negligible regarding
 17 the positive impact of the other issues and
 18 acceptable. The environmental impacts would
 19 be minimal.

3| 1.0

20 The benefits of NBAF to agricultural,
 21 wildlife, public health and safety are
 22 globally significant. The development of the
 23 new vaccines, diagnostic procedures and the
 24 rapid response to foreign animal disease will
 25 protect animal health in our hemisphere. And

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement and support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's support for the proposed research that would be conducted within the NBAF.

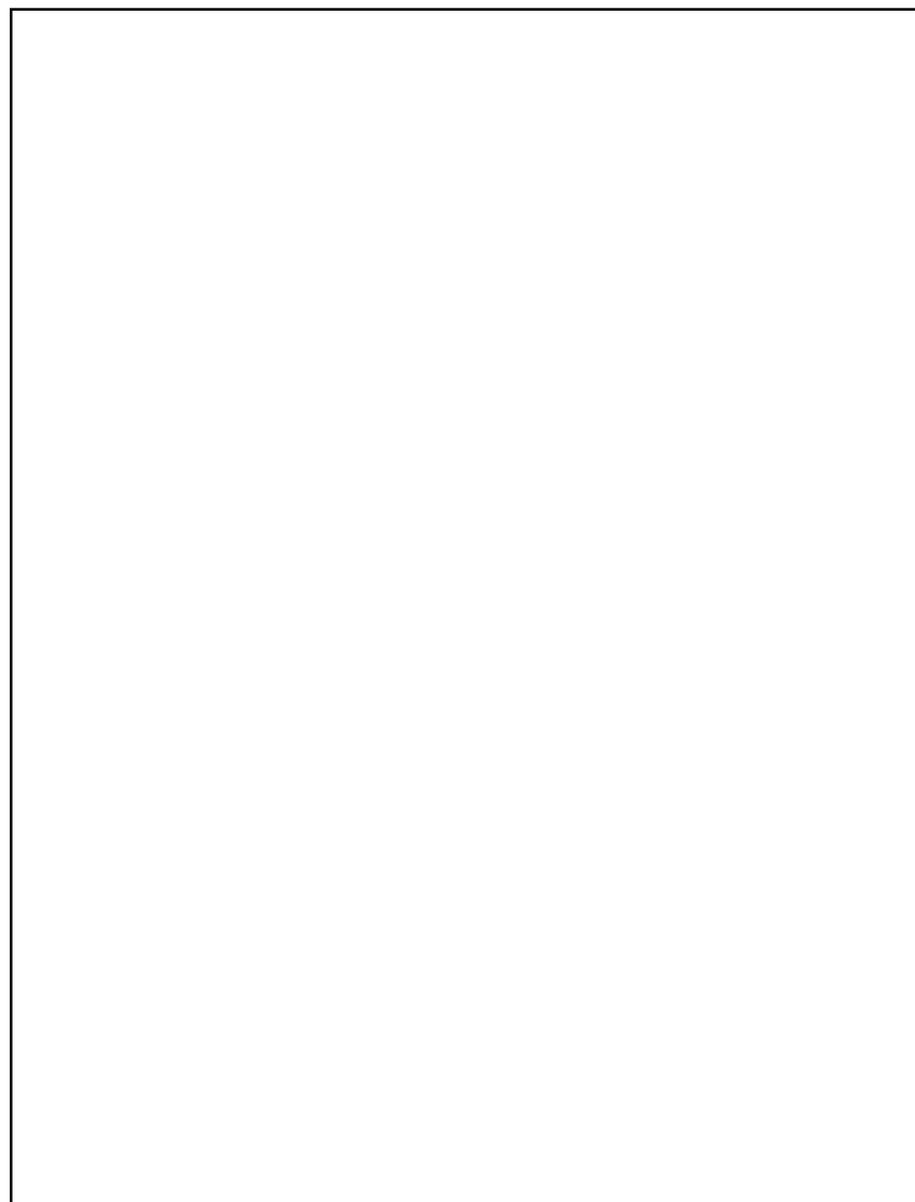
August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 51 of 123

Page 86

cont.|3|1.0 | 1 whether or not that research is done here,
2 that research must be done.

cont.|1|24.2 | 3 In conclusion, I strongly believe NBAF as
4 an integral part of our research community
5 will be very successful in the Athens-Clarke
6 County area and will complement our existing
7 scientific community. NBAF will not stress
8 our infrastructure, nor will it block the
9 attraction of other successful companies.
10 The potential benefits are enormous. The
11 construction cost, the permanent jobs, the
12 annual and state sales tax combine to make
13 this facility a significant economic driver
14 for our area. Yet the greatest value to this
15 community is the addition of a major facility
16 to our existing health science cluster of
17 companies which will assist us in attracting
18 other biotechnology industry to Athens.
19 Your continued positive consideration is
20 greatly appreciated. Thank you.
21 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
22 (Applause.)
23 MS. COGHILL: Kevin Hitchcock.
24 KEVIN HITCHCOCK: I've worked with the
25 University of Georgia in their biosafety



August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 52 of 123

Page 87

1 department on their engineering controls for
 2 a safe environment inside their labs. And I
 3 believe that their stringent guidelines have
 4 helped us become a better company because of
 5 what they do to keep everyone safe in their
 6 laboratory.

1|24.2 7 I do also believe that this facility
 8 should be located in Athens because of its
 9 close proximity with the CDC. If we look at
 10 their safety record, I think it would only
 11 help this facility make sure that it
 12 maintains a safe environment.

13 I also believe if we look at the risk
 14 factors that it would suggest that if we
 15 wanted no occurrence of safety accidents it
 16 would suggest that we shouldn't allow a
 17 majority of the research that already happens
 18 at the University of Georgia.

2|23.0 19 There is risk in every industry in the
 20 environment that we work in. And I believe
 21 this facility would be operated in a safe
 22 manner. Thank you.

23 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. COGHILL: Richard Hargrove.

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 23.0

DHS notes commentor's statement. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated with a minimal degree of risk, regardless of the site chosen. The NBAF would provide state-of-the-art biocontainment features and operating procedures to minimize the potential for laboratory-acquired infections and accidental releases. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 53 of 123

Page 88

1 RICHARD HARGROVE: Good afternoon. My
2 name is Richard Hargrove. I live in
3 Watkinsville, and I am retired.

4 A year ago my wife and I left the coastal
5 part of Texas for the wonders of Athens,
6 considered to be one of the -- one of the
7 very top places for retirement. We were
8 particularly interested in escaping
9 hurricanes. Just lucky, I guess.

10 One of the main obstacles between us --
11 that is, DHS and the homeowners, my special
12 interest -- is that we have a lack of trust.
13 Safety seems to get short shrift among the
14 criteria.

15 Observations of government operations
16 such as FEMA, CDC, Fort Detrick and DHS have
17 not favored our trust. Your possible desire
18 to locate here despite your own acknowledged
19 possible harm to animals and humans doesn't
20 raise our level of trust.

21 While meetings here attended by the DHS
22 are commendable, you have depended too long
23 on uninformed mayors and commissioners as to
24 this community's support of your proposal.
25 They don't know what citizens think here

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's lack of confidence in the DHS and concerns regarding safe facility operations. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated with a minimal degree of risk, regardless of the site chosen. The risks and associated potential effects to human health and safety were evaluated in Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS. The risks were determined to be low for all site alternatives. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF, then site-specific protocols and emergency response plans would be developed, in coordination with local emergency response agencies that would consider the diversity and density of human, livestock, and wildlife populations residing within the area.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the impact of a pathogen release on the local population, livestock industry, businesses and infrastructure. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, investigates the chances of a variety of accidents that could occur with the proposed NBAF and consequences of potential accidents. The chances of an accidental release are low. Although some accidents are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release based on human error are low in large part due to the design and implementation of biocontainment safeguards in conjunction with rigorous personnel training. For example, as described in Section 2.2.2.1 of the NBAF EIS, all laboratory staff would receive thorough pre-operational training, as well as ongoing training, in the handling of hazardous infectious agents, understanding biocontainment functions of standard and special practices for each biosafety level, and understanding biocontainment equipment and laboratory characteristics. Appendix B to the EIS describes biocontainment lapses and laboratory acquired infections. Laboratory-acquired infections have not been shown to be a threat to the community at large. As set out in Section 3.14.3.4 of the NBAF EIS, employees and contractors will be screened prior to employment or engagement and monitored while working, among other security measures. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF, site specific protocols would then be developed in coordination with local emergency response agencies and would consider the diversity and density of populations, including institutionalized populations, residing within the local area. The need for an evacuation under an accident conditions is considered to be a very low probability event. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and emergency

response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF.

Comment No: 3

Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern. Chapter 1, Section 1.1 of the NBAF EIS identifies DHS's mission as the study of foreign animal and zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy. The goal or benefit of NBAF is to prevent these animal diseases from spreading in the United States through research into the transmission of these animal diseases and the development of diagnostic tests, vaccines, and antiviral therapies. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated with a minimal degree of risk, regardless of the site chosen.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 54 of 123

Page 89

1 because they haven't sought our opinions and
 2 they have refused the plea for referendum.
 3 Do you trust promised support from officials
 4 for your infrastructure needs when Athens
 5 commissioners are not sure they can pay the
 6 light bill?

cont.] 2| 19.2

7 As a retired academic I'm saddened to see
 8 our great University of Georgia place
 9 institutional interest above those of the
 10 safety of the community. Potential
 11 pestilence and unprecedented cost should not
 12 be risks imposed upon those who have
 13 supported the university with their hearts
 14 and tax money.

15 Exaggerations and false information have
 16 come at every turn. Why would you trust a
 17 university that wants to give you 67 good
 18 acres and the finest land in Athens, over 20
 19 million dollars in its money and then
 20 announce cutbacks in jobs and slim, if any,
 21 pay raises? Why haven't you dealt with
 22 nearby Oconee County about roads and
 23 incinerator risks, which, by the way, is 83
 24 million dollars in debt without your help.

4| 8.2

25 We think that your boss has it right.

Comment No: 4Issue Code: 8.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern about the traffic congestion in the area of the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative and the future impact of the NBAF operation on the area's transportation infrastructure. A discussion of the planned improvements to the area's primary transportation corridors of South Milledge Avenue and Whitehall Road to alleviate current and future traffic congestion resulting from the NBAF operation at the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative is located in Section 3.11.3.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. All planned improvements are per the recommendations of the Department of Transportation and the Public Works Department.

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding air pollution due to incineration. The potential effects of NBAF construction and operations on air quality are discussed in Section 3.4 of the NBAF EIS. Section 3.4.1 describes the methodology used in assessing potential air quality consequences at each site. Site specific effects at the South Milledge Avenue Site are discussed in Section 3.4.3. Section 3.4.3.1.2 summarizes the 2006 Ambient Air Surveillance Report produced by the Ambient Monitoring Program of Georgia's Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division. Air emissions were estimated using SCREEN3, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency dispersion modeling program. Should a decision be made to build the NBAF and following site selection and final design, a more refined air emissions model would be used during the permitting process. The final design would ensure that the NBAF does not significantly affect the region's ability to meet air quality standards.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 55 of 123

5|5.5

Page 90

1 We'll be glad to see you in Mississippi.

2 (Applause.)

3 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

4 Carol Goerig.

5 CAROL GOERIG: I'm Carol Goerig. And I

6 have a lot of concerns about BSL

7 proliferation. It seems to be continuing

8 apace almost without us knowing where the

9 next one will be.

10 My current concern -- and I've been
11 reading about a sister facility called NBACC,
12 which is N-B-A-C-C. This is the National
13 Bio-Defense Analysis and Countermeasures
14 Center. This is a DHS lab currently being
15 built at Fort Detrick, Maryland.

16 In spite of substantial local protests,
17 ground for this 160,000-square-foot facility
18 was broken nearly two years ago. But there's
19 little information to be found on progress
20 since then even on the NBACC website.

21 A document describing a December 2004
22 site visit states that, quote, our goal is to
23 have a completed, fully functional project by
24 June 2008. That's now.

25 The NBACC mission found on its website,

Comment No: 5Issue Code: 5.5

DHS notes the commentator's support for the Flora Industrial Park Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 56 of 123

Page 91

1 quote, is to protect human health and
2 agriculture against biological terrorism by
3 improving understanding of potential
4 bioterrorism threats, end quote. The
5 facility will have BSL-2, -3 and -4 lab space
6 and will be the nation's premiere research
7 facility, in their words, for biological
8 threat, characterization and bio-forensic
9 research.

10 My questions are -- and I know that I
11 don't -- I won't get answers today, but I'm
12 going to continue looking, including on the
13 NBACC website and anywhere else I can. I
14 will continue to try to find answers to these
15 concerns, which I think are relevant to us in
16 Athens as we contemplate the future and the
17 building of NBAF.

18 Is the NBACC project completed and fully
19 functional as their mission said as of this
20 date? If not, how far behind schedule is it?

21 Has the full 128 million dollars
22 requested by DHS and actually appropriated by
23 Congress been received as of this date? If
24 not, how much has been received?

25 Has the project stayed within its

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 57 of 123

Page 92

1 projected cost of 128 million dollars? If
 2 not, what is the current projected cost?

1|1.0 3 Does not the mission of NBACC duplicate
 4 to a large extent the mission of the CDC and
 5 of the proposed NBAF making either NBACC or
 6 NBAF unnecessary?

7 Thank you.

8 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. COGHILL: Grady Thrasher.

1|25.2 11 GRADY THRASHER: My name is Grady
 12 Thrasher. I'm a very strong opponent of
 13 NBAF.

14 I've listened to the people from the
 15 university and from financially-interested
 16 parties make their statements. And, you
 17 know, I'm not against NBAF or the research
 18 that's being done. What they haven't been
 2|13.2 19 able to argue convincingly is why NBAF should
 20 be placed on 67 unique and distinctive acres
 21 adjacent to our botanical garden.

22 The whole thing is about nature out
 23 there. And this property was thrown up
 24 because it was convenient to throw it up.

25 And I think the University of Georgia has

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's question regarding the National Bio-Defense Analysis and Countermeasures Center (NBACC) at Fort Detrick, MD. The purpose and need for the proposed action is discussed in Chapter 1 of the NBAF EIS. DHS's Proposed Action to site, construct, and operate the NBAF would allow researchers to study foreign animal and zoonotic diseases (transmitted from animals to humans) in the U.S. The NBAF would enable DHS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to fulfill their respective missions of detecting, preventing, protecting against, and responding to an accidental or intentional release of a foreign animal disease within the United States. The mission of NBACC is to provide an integrated and responsive biosecurity enterprise for homeland security, law enforcement, medical, and veterinary communities. Specifically, NBACC's goals are to (a) understand classical, engineered, and emerging biological terrorism threats; (b) develop deployable technologies and systems in partnership with operational end-users that protect the people, agriculture, and economy of the United States against biological terrorism; and (c) provide the scientific basis and operational capability to prevent technology surprise, rapidly detect events, respond effectively, and attribute use.

To put it simply, NBAF would conduct research to develop vaccines and diagnostic tools to identify and prevent the spread of foreign animal diseases, and the NBACC would develop technologies and operations to implement protective measures.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the proximity of the South Milledge Avenue Site to the State Botanical Garden. As indicated in Sections 3.8.3.2 and 3.8.3.3 of the NBAF EIS, construction and normal operations of the NBAF would have no direct impact on the State Botanical Garden. The NBAF would affect primarily pasture areas that have low wildlife habitat value due to their disturbed condition, lack of native vegetation, and lack of wildlife food and cover. The forested portion of the NBAF site along the Oconee River is a high-value riparian wildlife corridor that connects the State Botanical Garden with Whitehall Forest. However, impacts to the forested riparian area would be minor (0.2 acre), and these impacts would occur within the existing pasture fence-line in areas that have been disturbed by grazing. Construction would occur primarily on disturbed pasture areas, and the high value forested riparian corridor would be retained. Therefore, the NBAF have minimal effects on wildlife and ecology of the State Botanical Garden.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 58 of 123

Page 93

1 violated its trust to the community. We're a
2 company town, but what's good for the
3 university is not always good for the
4 community. So I'm going to give my comments
5 based on what we could be bringing to that
6 site next to our botanical garden.

3| 1.0

7 As has been asked before by disinterested
8 news reporters from cities around our country
9 whose governing bodies are not engaged in the
10 current frenzied efforts by five states to
11 induce the Department of Homeland security to
12 place the would-be world's largest and
13 potentially deadliest bioterror pathogen
14 research facility in the middle of one of
15 their communities, why would they is the
16 question.

cont.| 2| 13.2

17 Why would any responsible state or city
18 official welcome such an environmentally
19 degrading, invasive and catastrophically
20 risky facility as NBAF into any community?
21 More on point, why would our mayor and some,
22 if not all, of our Athens-Clarke County
23 commissioners roll out the welcome mat for
24 ensured environmental destruction adjacent to
25 a state botanical garden? And this was done

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 1.0
DHS notes the commentors statement.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 59 of 123

	Page 94
cont 2 13.2	1 before any credible information was even
	2 available about NBAF.
4 19.2	3 More astounding, why would our mayor and
	4 many commissioners remain proudly steadfast
	5 in their folly even after being exposed to
	6 real and astonishing information regarding
	7 the risk to our community's public health,
	8 safety and economy information first provided
	9 from the respected Government Accountability
	10 Office in May and now in DHS's own draft
	11 Environmental Impact Statement?
5 6.2, 13.2, 5.2, 15.2, 16.2	12 Why would any responsible University of
	13 Georgia administrator offer 67 unique and
	14 distinctive acres of irreplaceable land next
	15 to our botanical garden and give other
	16 incentives to DHS to entice it to propose its
	17 proposed NBAF there with full knowledge of
	18 the certainty of the environmental
	19 degradation and ecological disaster that
	20 irreversibly will befall and forever sully
	21 the unique and distinctive character of that
	22 swath of landscape on South Milledge Avenue
	23 that has been a public visual and
	24 recreational asset of our community for
	25 generations?

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the NBAF. The purpose and need for the proposed action is discussed in Chapter 1 of the NBAF EIS. DHS can not guarantee that the NBAF would never experience an accident. However, as discussed in Section 2.2.1.1, modern biosafety design substantially diminishes the chances of a release as the primary design goal is to provide an adequate level of redundant safety and biocontainment that would be integrated into every component of the building. A discussion of human health and safety is included in Section 3.14.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 13.2

See response to Comment No. 2.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 16.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement regarding site selection. DHS held a competitive process to select potential sites for the proposed NBAF as described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. A team of Federal employees representing multi-department component offices and multi-governmental agencies (DHS, U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA], and Department of Health and Human Services [HHS]) reviewed the submissions based primarily on environmental suitability and proximity to research capabilities, proximity to workforce, acquisition/construction/operations, and community acceptance. Ultimately, DHS identified five site alternatives that surpassed others in meeting the evaluation criteria and DHS preferences, and determined that they, in addition to the Plum Island Site, would be evaluated in the EIS as alternatives for the proposed NBAF.

A change in land use would occur; however, current zoning regulations allow for this type of development. The South Milledge Avenue Site is currently zoned as "Governmental", and construction and operation of the NBAF is consistent with this designation. However, the Clarke County Comprehensive Plan designates the South Milledge Avenue Site as "rural", so an amendment to the comprehensive plan may be required. This information has been added to the NBAF EIS in Section 3.2.3. DHS and USDA ensure that the NBAF operation at the South Milledge Avenue Site will comply with all applicable local, state, and Federal regulations and policies. The visual effects of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site are also described in Section 3.2.3 of the NBAF EIS. DHS recognizes that the NBAF would be a distinctive visible feature and would alter the viewshed of the area.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement. The South Milledge Avenue Site was proposed by the local consortium in response to the request for expressions of interest and was considered along with the rest of the responses. DHS's alternative site selection process is described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 6.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement. As described in Section 3.2.3, a change in land use and loss of open space would occur; however, current zoning regulations allow for this type of development. The South Milledge Avenue Site is currently zoned as "Governmental", and construction and operation of the NBAF is consistent with this designation. However, the Clarke County Comprehensive Plan designates the South Milledge Avenue Site as "rural", so an amendment to the comprehensive plan may be required. This information has been added to the NBAF EIS in Section 3.2.3. DHS and USDA ensure that the NBAF operation at the South Milledge Avenue Site will comply with all applicable local, state, and Federal regulations and policies. The visual effects of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site are also described in Section 3.2.3 of the NBAF EIS. DHS recognizes that the NBAF would be a distinctive visible feature and would alter the viewshed of the area.

Comment No: 5

Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement regarding site selection. DHS held a competitive process to select potential sites for the proposed NBAF as described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. A team of Federal employees representing multi-department component offices and multi-governmental agencies (DHS, U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA], and Department of Health and Human Services [HHS]) reviewed the submissions based primarily on environmental suitability and proximity to research capabilities, proximity to workforce, acquisition/construction/operations, and community acceptance. Ultimately, DHS identified five site alternatives that surpassed others in meeting the evaluation criteria and DHS preferences, and determined that they, in addition to the Plum Island Site, would be evaluated in the EIS as alternatives for the proposed NBAF.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 60 of 123

cont. | 5 | 5.2

Page 95

1 Why would any responsible government
2 agency, one dedicated to protecting
3 communities, promote this sort of thing on
4 this particular site?

5 My question to them is: Do you have no
6 shame.

7 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. COGHILL: Zhen Fu.

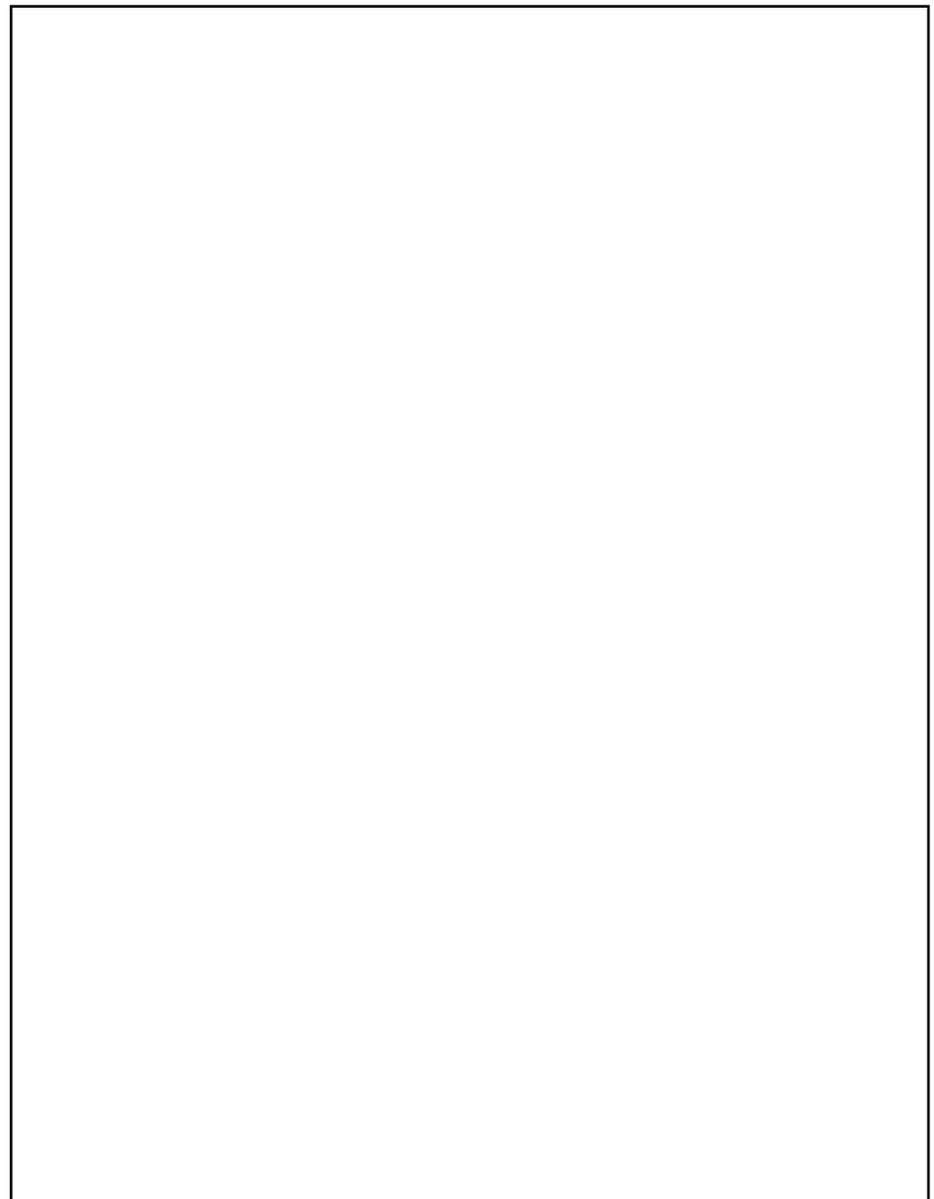
10 Richard Cooke, Rebecca Cooke, Steve
11 Valeika and Steve Stice, if you could come
12 forward to the front of the room.

13 Go ahead.

14 ZHEN FU: My name is Zhen Fu. I'm a
15 resident of Oconee County. I also work at
16 the University of Georgia.

17 My interest in research is rabies, one of
18 the really horrific disease for humans. I
19 have been working for more than 20 years and
20 have been very safely carried out all
21 experiment.

22 My another interest is really for exotic
23 disease research. During the past 21 or so
24 years I have visited almost all the high
25 containment facilities around the world, Plum



August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 61 of 123

Page 96

1 Island, (unintelligible), Winnipeg and, of
2 course, Fort Detrick CDC.

3 I have witnessed how they conduct
4 research in those facilities. Is it to my
5 knowledge that science can be done safely in
6 this environment.

7 And the possibly is not incidental,
8 accounting I am the chair of the biosafety
9 committee in this university. We do review
10 protocols, recent protocols, very
11 meticulously. We do attend to very details
12 how the containment, how the safety for the
13 person who performs the studies and else the
14 safety for the people around.

1|242

15 So, therefore, I fully support the
16 location of NBAF to Athens. I think that the
17 impact to environment will be minimal.

18 If other procedures with -- you know,
19 with the modern technology and with the
20 protocols in place, it should be very safe.

21 And so, therefore, the impact of the
22 environment is minimum. But, however, the
23 impact to the science, to the life for the
24 health of humans and animals will be
25 tremendous.

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentator's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 62 of 123

cont. | 1|24.2

Page 97

1 So, therefore, again I am fully support
 2 the location of NBAF to Athens. Thank you.
 3 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
 4 (Applause.)
 5 MS. COGHILL: Richard Cooke.
 6 RICHARD COOKE: My name is Dr. Richard
 7 Cooke. I'm a resident of Watkinsville.
 8 I moved here because of the quality of
 9 life. I also am a recipient of some very bad
 10 things that were allowed to happen or were
 11 caused to happen at Plum Island. But that is
 12 neither here nor there. I'm concerned about
 13 the human error potential.
 14 A wise man once told me that if you
 15 wanted to find out reasons for things, follow
 16 the green. Almost 50 percent of the people
 17 that have spoken here have talked about money
 18 and prestige. Neither of those are good
 19 enough examples or good enough reasons to
 20 locate a facility that will impact our entire
 21 community detrimentally.
 22 You say how do I know it will be
 23 detrimental. Well, I know some people that
 24 live just less than half a mile away that
 25 already their property values are starting to

1|15.2

2|21.2

3|5.2

cont. | 15.2

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern. Adverse effects to quality of life resources would not be expected with any of the site alternatives and are discussed in Section 3.10.

The effects of the proposed NBAF on housing is discussed in Section 3.10. It is possible that with the relocation of highly skilled workers to the immediate area, property values would increase in demand, and there is no empirical evidence that a facility such as the NBAF would reduce property values in the study area. Therefore, the overall effect of the NBAF on housing market conditions would be negligible.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the potential consequences from a NBAF accident or pathogen release as the result of human error. As described in Section 2.2.2.1 of the NBAF EIS, all laboratory staff would receive thorough pre-operational training, as well as ongoing training, in the handling of hazardous infectious agents, understanding biocontainment functions of standard and special practices for each biosafety level, and understanding biocontainment equipment and laboratory characteristics. Training and inherent biocontainment safeguards reduce the likelihood of a release. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, investigates the chances of a variety of accidents that could occur with the proposed NBAF and consequences of potential accidents, including external events such as a terrorist attack. Accidents could occur in the form of procedural violations (operational accidents), natural phenomena accidents, external events, and intentional acts. Although some accidents are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release are low. The specific objective of the hazard identification, accident analysis, and risk assessment is to identify the likelihood and consequences from accidents or intentional subversive acts. In addition to identifying the potential for or likelihood of the scenarios leading to adverse consequences, this analysis provides support for the identification of specific engineering and administrative controls to either prevent a pathogen release or mitigate the consequences of such a release. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. As set out in Section 3.14.3.4 of the NBAF EIS, employees and contractors will be screened prior to employment or engagement and monitored while working, among other security measures. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 63 of 123

Page 98

cont. | 1 | 15.2

1 be impacted. I know that if this comes to
 2 this area I probably will move because I do
 3 not want to be near something that has the
 4 potential risk.

5 So what I'm saying is very simply this:
 6 I want to thank Dr. Lopner (phonetic
 7 spelling) for spending some time with me.
 8 She's a very congenial and very persuasive
 9 young lady.

10 Although I must admit all of these people
 11 to whom I have talked or with whom I have
 12 talked have been on the bias sides of the
 4 | 2.0 | 13 government. And, frankly, I don't trust the
 14 government.

15 I don't trust the government in what they
 16 allowed to happen at Plum Island. I don't
 17 trust the statements of all of you people,
 18 although you're biased and have to make those
 19 statements. You can't help it. You're
 20 getting paid to make those statements. I'm
 21 not getting paid to make this statement.

5 | 1.0 | 22 But I will tell you this: I support the
 23 good goals of all that you're purporting to
 6 | 25.2 | 24 do. I don't support them here.
 25 Once again, I will tell you this:

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's lack of trust in the federal government. It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas. State-of-the-art biocontainment facilities such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 6 Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 64 of 123

7|19.2

Page 99

1 Accidents will happen. And we know that.
2 But I am not willing to take the life of
3 myself, my children and my grandchildren on
4 the role of dice whether they're not loaded
5 or loaded in the bias for the government and
6 the people who are concerned with prestige.

7 I work for a university that has a big
8 bio lab. Who cares. I'm going to make more
9 money because they're bringing more money to
10 this area. A long time ago my father, who
11 was a well-known and respected banker, told
12 me son, greed is never a good reason.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. COGHILL: Rebecca Cooke.

15 REBECCA COOKE: I'm the other half. I'm
16 Dr. Rebecca Cooke. And I'm not going to give
17 you dissertation, nor am I going to be
18 objective. I'm going to be subjective,
19 because that's where most of us live. Even
20 college professors become subjective when it
21 comes to their homes and their health and
22 their finances.

23 We moved here because our doctor said you
24 need to get out of this area, you need to go
25 to higher elevation, clean air and be sure

Comment No: 7Issue Code: 19.2

DHS acknowledges commentor's statement that safety at the NBAF is not guaranteed. DHS also notes that the risk of an accidental release of a pathogen from the NBAF is extremely low. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, investigates the chances of a variety of accidents that could occur with the proposed NBAF and consequences of potential accidents. Accidents could occur in the form of procedural violations (operational accidents), natural phenomena accidents, external events, and intentional acts. Although some accidents are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release based on human error are low in large part due to the design and implementation of biocontainment safeguards in conjunction with rigorous personnel training. The specific objective of the hazard identification, accident analysis, and risk assessment is to identify the likelihood and consequences from accidents or intentional subversive acts. In addition to identifying the potential for or likelihood of the scenarios leading to adverse consequences, this analysis provides support for the identification of specific engineering and administrative controls to either prevent a pathogen release or mitigate the consequences of such a release. For example, as described in Section 2.2.2.1 of the NBAF EIS, all laboratory staff would receive thorough pre-operational training, as well as ongoing training, in the handling of hazardous infectious agents, understanding biocontainment functions of standard and special practices for each biosafety level, and understanding biocontainment equipment and laboratory characteristics. Training and inherent biocontainment safeguards reduce the likelihood of a release. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. Oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 65 of 123

Page 100

1 you're near family who can help you.

2 I've been declared terminal twice. From
3 a disease that we claimed was a result of
4 Plum Island human error. And it -- that's
5 debatable.

6 But just pretend I have Rift Valley
7 Fever. That goes for humans. And this is
8 what it does to your life: Because it's a
9 disease that has no known cure, your Medicare
10 will not pay for it. And the insurance
11 companies go along with Medicare. So you pay
12 for it out-of-pocket.

13 2006 we paid over \$21,000 out-of-pocket
14 for experimental treatment, because there's
15 no known cure. Oh, I did try the known cure.
16 After four months I was told I was terminal.
17 They made me worse instead of better.

18 So I had to find alternatives. And so
19 did my husband. Now our whole family has
20 Lyme, because it's contagious. And who knows
21 about Rift Valley Fever. Maybe that's
22 contagious too in a family.

23 You're talking about economic boom for
24 the community. When a good portion of the
25 community gets these diseases because of

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the potential consequences from a NBAF accident or pathogen release as the result of human error. As described in Section 2.2.2.1 of the NBAF EIS, all laboratory staff would receive thorough pre-operational training, as well as ongoing training, in the handling of hazardous infectious agents, understanding biocontainment functions of standard and special practices for each biosafety level, and understanding biocontainment equipment and laboratory characteristics. Training and inherent biocontainment safeguards reduce the likelihood of a release. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, investigates the chances of a variety of accidents that could occur with the proposed NBAF and consequences of potential accidents, including external events such as a terrorist attack. Accidents could occur in the form of procedural violations (operational accidents), natural phenomena accidents, external events, and intentional acts. Although some accidents are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release are low. The specific objective of the hazard identification, accident analysis, and risk assessment is to identify the likelihood and consequences from accidents or intentional subversive acts. In addition to identifying the potential for or likelihood of the scenarios leading to adverse consequences, this analysis provides support for the identification of specific engineering and administrative controls to either prevent a pathogen release or mitigate the consequences of such a release. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. As set out in Section 3.14.3.4 of the NBAF EIS, employees and contractors will be screened prior to employment or engagement and monitored while working, among other security measures. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

1|19.2

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 66 of 123

cont. | 1 | 19.2

Page 101

1 human error, then you're not going to have an
 2 economic boom. They're going to be out money
 3 for all these experimental treatments. And I
 4 urge you if you have any subjective views in
 5 life, there's more to this laboratory than
 6 economy.

2 | 21.2

7 And then experimentation. There are
 8 people, human people, involved in here. And
 9 when you can find me a lab technician or a
 10 laboratory that hasn't had one human error,
 11 I'd like to know what it is.

12 Because I've spoken to lab technicians,
 13 I've spoken to scientists. And they've told
 14 me no matter how hard they work there is
 15 human error. And I've read about a few of
 16 them, but now I'm hearing about them. And
 17 you are going to have human error here.

18 And what if one mosquito gets out? I
 19 don't want to be around to be bitten again.
 20 I won't make it another round. In fact,
 21 I think bringing the lab here is like writing
 22 my funeral notice.

23 Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. COGHILL: Steve Valeika.

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding an accidental release of a vector from the NBAF. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, investigates the chances of a variety of accidents that could occur with the proposed NBAF and consequences of potential accidents. Accidents could occur in the form of procedural violations (operational accidents), natural phenomena accidents, external events, and intentional acts each of which has the potential to release a vector. Although some accidents are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release of a vector are low. An analysis of potential consequences of a pathogen (e.g. Rift Valley fever virus) becoming established in native mosquito populations was evaluated in Section 3.8.9 and Section 3.10.9 as well as in Section 3.14 (health and Safety) of the NBAF EIS. DHS would have site-specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF. The RVF response plan would also include a mosquito control action plan. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 67 of 123

Page 102

1 (No response.)

2 MS. COGHILL: Okay. We'll go back.

3 Steve Stice is our next speaker.

4 If Chris King, Walt Cook and Brian

5 Brodrick could come to the front of the room,

6 please.

7 STEVE STICE: I'm Steve Stice. I'm a

8 university professor here in the animal and

9 science department.

1|24.2

10 I'm a full supporter of NBAF. I also was

11 recorded -- recruited here from Massachusetts

12 ten years ago because I think that the

13 University of Georgia and I know today is

14 forward thinking and they're here to make a

15 difference. And they've been able to recruit

16 top-notch individuals from around the world

17 that can add to this facility in the way of

18 collaborations in the future.

19 So in my belief as -- I believe also

2|8.2

20 there's economic development as far as every

21 dollar that's spent here there's numerous

22 dollars that go back to the community. But

23 foremost I think we have the faculty and the

24 resources here that will improve and make a

25 one plus one equal three to the government.

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2

Issue Code: 8.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 68 of 123

Page 103

1 Thank you.

2 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

3 Chris King.

4 (Applause.)

5 CHRIS KING: My name is Chris King. I'm

6 a veterinarian and a board certified

7 specialist in laboratory animal medicine.

8 I work for the vice-president for

9 research, and I've been involved with our

10 NBAF bid since its inception. In my work

11 I've visited in benchmark containment

12 facilities in the U.S., Canada and Europe.

13 I've been involved in the design/construction

14 of containment research facilities.

15 I am currently involved in biosafety

16 training, occupational health and emergency

17 response preparation for high-level

18 containment. And I work hand-in-hand with

19 the scientists and staff doing this important

20 research.

21 There are nearly 1500 diseases recognized

22 in humans, and about 60 percent are due to

23 pathogens that can move across species lines.

24 In the last 30 years 75 percent of new

25 emerging human infectious diseases have been

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 69 of 123

1|1.0

Page 104

1 zoonotic. This list includes Lyme Disease,
2 West Nile Virus, Nipah Virus, Hendra Virus,
3 SARS and avian influenza, to name a few.
4 None of these diseases has emerged
5 because of acts of bioterrorism. This is not
6 about bioterrorism. This is about a changing
7 world of global travel, global trade and
8 environmental change. This is about public
9 health, biomedical research and the global
10 food system.
11 NBAF is about understanding how to deal
12 with some of the worst things mother nature
13 can throw at us. NBAF is about collaborative
14 efforts of multiple disciplines working
15 nationally, locally and globally to obtain
16 optimal health for people and animals in our
17 environment.
18 Our community has well-founded concerns
19 about having this type of research and these
20 diseases in our back yards. Most, however,
21 understand the reality that our back yards
22 now stretch to every corner of the globe. In
23 fact, many of these diseases are knocking on
24 our front door every time an international
25 flight arrives at Hartsfield or a container

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement. DHS's mission is to study foreign animal and zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy. The purpose of the NBAF would be to develop tests to detect foreign animal and zoonotic diseases and develop vaccines (or other countermeasures such as antiviral therapies) to protect agriculture and food systems in the United States.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 70 of 123

Page 105

1 ship docks in Savannah.

cont| 1|1.0 2 NBAF is about being prepared for this
3 eventuality. Many of our community believe
4 in the NBAF mission, but some prefer that it
5 remains at Plum Island or some other remote
6 location.

2|5.2 7 Fifty years ago when Plum Island was
8 established, locating remote location made
9 sense. However, contemporary technology and
10 containment practices allow high-level
11 containment facilities to safely coexist in
12 urban and rural locations throughout the
13 world. Locating NBAF in a remote location
14 only will impede science.

15 Successful science is a human endeavor
16 that still requires face to face and hands-on
17 interactions. Most importantly, successful
18 science requires broad collaborations.

3|8.2 19 Attracting top-notch scientists and
20 collaborators to NBAF is critical to its
21 mission. And being part of a vibrant
22 community with a great quality of life is as
23 important to these people as it is to any of
24 us here.

4|15.2 25 I have lived in Athens for 15 years.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement. As described in Section 2.3.1, DHS's site selection process incorporated site selection criteria that included, but were not limited to, such factors as proximity to research capabilities and workforce. As such, some but not all of the sites selected for analysis as reasonable alternatives in the NBAF EIS are located in suburban or sem-urban areas. It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas. An example is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, where such facilities employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 8.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 71 of 123

Page 106

1 This is my home. My house is located within
 2 the six-kilometer (unintelligible) plume
 3 drawn around the NBAF site.

cont.| 4| 15.2

4 Like everyone in this room, I love this
 5 city and the quality of life it affords, the
 6 culture, the arts and music scenes, the
 7 restaurants and bars, our downtown and the
 8 university. Like many in this room, I've
 9 been alarmed at the big box development and
 10 sprawl that's characterized our recent
 11 growth.

12 We must have a strong economy, but we
 13 have got to grow smartly. There is nothing
 14 smarter than taking advantage of our
 15 intellectual capital.

5| 24.2

16 NBAF is right for Athens. Athens is
 17 right for NBAF.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

20 Walt Cook.

21 WALT COOK: My name is Walt Cook.

1| 12.2

22 I'm not opposed to this lab. But I am
 23 opposed to the use of water, the tremendous
 24 use of water, that they propose to use.

25 I asked about that. I asked why certain

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's water usage concerns and DHS acknowledges regional drought conditions. As described in Section 3.7.3.3.1 of the NBAF EIS, the South Milledge Avenue Site alternative would use approximately 118,000 gallons per day of potable water approximately 0.76% of Athens 15.5 million gallons per day usage. The NBAF annual potable water usage is comparable to 228 residential homes' annual potable water usage.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 72 of 123

2|23.0

Page 107

1 sites of the five or six sites they've got
2 had use more water than others. They said
3 because it's hotter there and they have to
4 cool the lab. That makes sense.

5 But then why can't they recycle the
6 water? I asked why can't they just condense
7 the water and recycle it, put it back in
8 again. Well, it will cost too much. Or --
9 or the -- either cost too much or the -- the
10 technology wasn't there to do that.

cont| 1| 12.2

11 Well, for technology all they've got to
12 do is ask somebody in North Georgia who has
13 ever run a still and they can tell you how to
14 condense the water.

15 And far as costing too much, I think that
16 should be -- we're in our third drought in
17 the last twenty years here in this town, and
18 we had another one before that. A
19 hundred-year drought -- we've had three
20 hundred-year droughts in twenty years.

21 It's serious. I think that the people
22 that are designing this lab should try
23 everything they can do to get that water
24 usage down and recycle that water.

25 Thank you.

Comment No: 2

Issue Code: 23.0

DHS notes and shares the commentor's concerns for sustainable facility design. The NBAF would be designed and constructed to emphasize state-of-the-art strategies for sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, material selection and indoor environmental quality. In addition, Secion 3.15 of the NBAF EIS discusses proposed mitigation measures for the design, construction, and operation of the NBAF including measures consistent with the low-impact design (LID) approach.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 73 of 123

Page 108

1 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

2 Brian Brodrick.

3 (Applause.)

4 BRIAN BRODRICK: My name is Brian
5 Brodrick. I'm a city councilman in
6 Watkinsville, Georgia. I also work, manage a
7 small business in town with seven employees.

8 In the spirit of full disclosure, my
9 company has worked a little bit for some
10 state agencies and the university. We've not
11 worked on NBAF. I don't expect our company
12 to benefit financially directly from this at
13 all.

1|15.2

14 Many people here are afraid of NBAF. I'm
15 not afraid of NBAF. I'm more afraid of our
16 community putting its own self interest in
17 front of those who need jobs and those who
18 can't come here and speak either tonight or
19 today, those who are working two jobs to make
20 \$40,000 a year instead of having one job at
21 NBAF or somewhere else with --

22 MATT DEGENNARO: Sixty-nine jobs will
23 be -- I'm sorry.

24 MS. COGHILL: Excuse me, sir.

25 BRIAN BRODRICK: That says it all. The

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. DHS notes the commentor's statement regarding employment. The number of the potential short-term and permanent jobs are discussed in Section 3.10.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 74 of 123

Page 109

1 -- but --

2 MATT DEGENNARO: Sixty-nine local jobs.

3 BRIAN BRODRICK: Yeah. Sixty-five local
4 jobs. Let's say sixty jobs.

5 Sixty jobs can change somebody's life.

6 Sixty jobs at \$43,000 a year can change a
7 family. Sixty jobs at \$60,000 is a lot more
8 than we're getting any other way --

9 MATT DEGENNARO: That 60,000 --

10 MS. COGHILL: Excuse me. The gentleman
11 is trying to speak. Respect has to be shown.
12 He showed respect to you.

13 MATT DEGENNARO: I apologize.

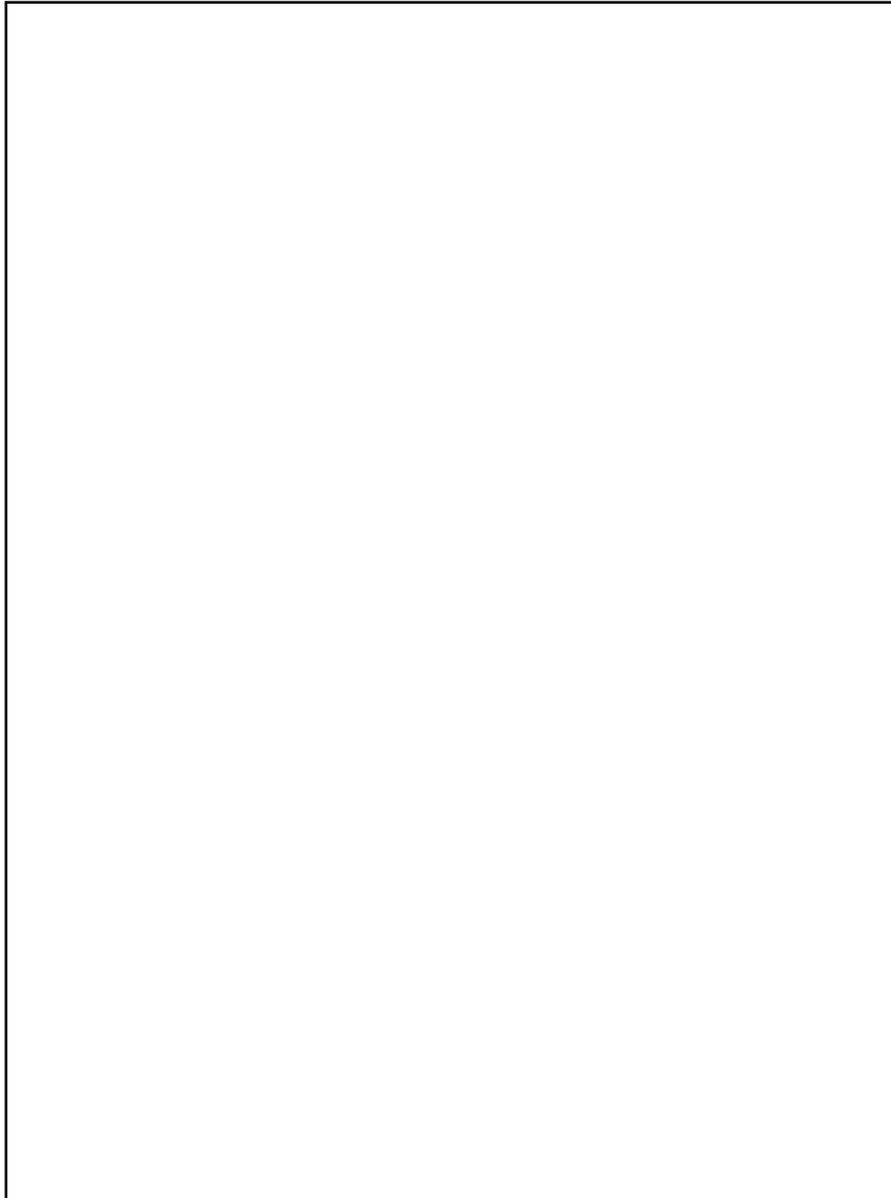
14 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

15 BRIAN BRODRICK: Anyway, the jobs that
16 people make so little of I think mean so much
17 to this community. That's the kind of green
18 that counts. That's the kind of green that
19 we should respect.20 We should also respect the green of the
21 botanical gardens and other places. I've
22 spent a lot of time there. I'm passionate
23 about the botanical gardens. I live right
24 down the road. Most of the time I'd rather
25 be wearing shorts and working out in my yard.Comment No: 2Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the proximity of the South Milledge Avenue Site to the State Botanical Garden. As indicated in Sections 3.8.3.2 and 3.8.3.3 of the NBAF EIS, construction and normal operations of the NBAF would have no direct impact on the State Botanical Garden. The NBAF would affect primarily pasture areas that have low wildlife habitat value due to their disturbed condition, lack of native vegetation, and lack of wildlife food and cover. The forested portion of the NBAF site along the Oconee River is a high value riparian wildlife corridor that connects the State Botanical Garden with Whitehall Forest. However, impacts to the forested riparian area would be minor (0.2 acre), and these impacts would occur within the existing pasture fence-line in areas that have been disturbed by grazing. The high value forested riparian corridor would be preserved; and therefore, the proposed NBAF would not have significant direct impacts on wildlife.

Section 3.5.5.3 addresses operational noise impacts associated with the proposed NBAF. Minor noise impacts would result from an increase in traffic and operation of the facility's filtration, heating, and cooling systems. Section 3.5.5.3 describes noise-attenuating design features that would minimize noise emissions. In the event of a power outage, operation of back-up generators could have a short-term impact on wildlife by discouraging utilization of immediately adjacent habitats. Routine operations at the NBAF would not be likely to have significant noise impacts on wildlife. Security requirements at the proposed NBAF would require continuous outdoor nighttime lighting. Nighttime lighting has the potential to impact wildlife through astronomical and ecological light pollution. Unshielded lighting can shine upward and interfere with bird migration, disorienting birds and causing them to collide with structures. Birds are attracted to lights and may collide with lighted structures. Most concerns involve lighting associated with high-rise buildings and tele-communication towers; however, even residential lighting can affect some birds. The USFWS advocates the use of shielded lighting to minimize adverse impacts on migratory birds. Shielded fixtures direct light downwards and can be used to keep light within the boundaries of the site. The NBAF would employ the minimum intensity of lighting that is necessary to provide adequate security. Mitigation measures, such as those described above, will be considered in the final design of the NBAF. Lighting would have the potential for adverse impacts (i.e., repulsion and interference with foraging behavior) on resident wildlife immediately adjacent to the NBAF. However, the use of shielded lighting would minimize the potential for impacts in adjacent habitats. Compared to high-rise buildings and tele-communication towers, the height of the facility would be low (maximum of 90 feet). Given the relatively low profile of the building and the use of mitigation measures, significant lighting impacts on migratory birds would not be likely to occur.

The potential impacts of an accidental release on wildlife are addressed in Section 3.8.9. Although the NBAF EIS acknowledges the potential for significant wildlife impacts in the event of an accidental release, the risk of such a release is extremely low (see Section 3.14). It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas and in areas with abundant wildlife. State-of-the-art biocontainment facilities such as the Centers for Disease Control and



Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF. Furthermore, the purpose of NBAF is to combat diseases that could have significant effects on wildlife. Research at the NBAF would include the development of vaccines for wildlife that could prevent adverse impacts from a foreign introduction.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 75 of 123

3|242

Page 110

1 But I think the benefits of this facility
2 far outweigh the threats. I speak for
3 myself. I don't speak for the city. I don't
4 pretend to. But I think that it's important.
5 And I would say bring NBAF to Athens.
6 The resources here are tremendous. The
7 university's invested a tremendous amount in
8 this project, in this kind of research. It
9 can be done safely. Bring it to Athens.
10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
11 (Applause.)
12 MS. COGHILL: Daniel Mead. Mr. Mead.
13 Following Mr. Mead will be Trisha
14 Chastain, Daniel King and Beverly King. If
15 y'all could come to the front of the room,
16 that would be great.
17 Thank you.
18 DANIEL MEAD: Good afternoon. My name's
19 Daniel Mead. I'm a scientist at UGA, a
20 resident of Georgia and a member of this
1|242 21 community. And I fully support NBAF.
22 And I don't have a prepared statement.
23 Dr. Chris King stole the one I was working
24 on.
25 It was a good speech, Chris.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 24.2
DHS notes the commentor's support for the NBAF.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 24.2
DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 76 of 123

Page 111

1 For those people out there that are kind
 2 of sitting on the fence waiting to see which
 3 side they're going to fall on, I share your
 4 concerns. You have the right to be
 5 concerned.

6 But as somebody who's worked in these
 7 environments for fifteen years -- and I've
 8 been at Plum Island, I've been doing
 9 collaborative research there for eight years.
 10 I took Mr. Deneldo (phonetic spelling), who
 11 was up there earlier, I escorted him through
 12 the lab when he went up there last year.

13 It's a safe place to be. Can't say
 14 enough about it. The modern technology makes
 15 these labs safe on the island, on the
 16 mainland, it doesn't matter.

17 If I didn't know what I do today, I would
 18 share those concerns. But I really think
 19 they can do a great job with this.

20 And I've heard talk about insects and
 21 insectaries and oh, my god, if one gets out
 22 we're all dead. In the feasibility study I
 23 believe they mention that the insectary that
 24 is proposed for NBAF will not be in the high
 25 containment areas. So that --

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 19.1
 DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 23.0
 DHS notes the commentor's support.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 19.0
 DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 21.2
 DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the NBAF. The purpose and need for the proposed action is discussed in Chapter 1 of the NBAF EIS. DHS can not guarantee that the NBAF would never experience an accident. However, as discussed in Section 2.2.1.1, modern biosafety design substantially diminishes the chances of a release as the primary design goal is to provide an adequate level of redundant safety and biocontainment that would be integrated into every component of the building. A discussion of human health and safety is included in Section 3.14.

2| 19.1, 19.0,
 23.0

3| 21.2,
 cont.| 2| 23.0

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 77 of 123

Page 112

1 MATT DEGENNARO: It will.

2 DANIEL MEAD: I'm sorry?

3 MATT DEGENNARO: It will.

4 DANIEL MEAD: It will?

5 MATT DEGENNARO: Yes.

6 MS. COGHILL: Sir --

7 MATT DEGENNARO: I apologize.

8 MS. COGHILL: -- if you -- thank you, ma'am.

9 Sir, go ahead and finish what you were
10 saying.

11 DANIEL MEAD: No. I worked with insects
12 at Plum island.

13 MATT DEGENNARO: It will, though.

14 DANIEL MEAD: Regardless, I worked with
15 insects at Plum Island. I've been doing it
16 for eight years and do it safely.

17 My guess is that if NBAF were to be built
18 anywhere that the people there will realize
19 that it's cheaper to import insects from
20 people at universities or anywhere who have
21 the colonies instead of trying to raise them
22 themselves. I don't know that for a fact,
23 but I fully suspect they'll find that.

24 But, in short, I fully support this
25 facility. And I hate to say this, but I

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 78 of 123

Page 113

1 really -- doesn't matter to me if it comes to
2 Athens or not. I have nothing to gain as a
3 scientist at Georgia. I have nothing to
4 gain. The same benefits to this community
5 all share the same negative effects. If
6 there are any, I will share.

7 But as a scientist I have nothing to
8 gain. I'm already collaborating with
9 scientists on Plum Island. I assume that
10 that collaboration -- if there is still a
11 common interest when NBAF is built in six,
12 seven years, I assume that that collaboration
13 will carry to wherever NBAF is built. So I
14 have nothing to gain.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. COGHILL: Trisha -- excuse me.

19 Trisha Chastain is our next speaker.

20 TRISHA CHASTAIN: Good afternoon. My
21 name is Trisha Chastain. I'm with the office
22 of U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson. I'm also a
23 UGA graduate.

24 And thank y'all for being here today at
25 this -- in this great city and great

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 79 of 123

Page 114

1 university. I have a statement I'm going to
2 read on behalf of Senator Isakson, as well as
3 Senator Chambliss.

4 We commend the Department of Homeland
5 Security for continuing its public outreach
6 to the NBAF finalists. These forums provide
7 an opportunity for the community to publicly
8 participate in the process and ensure that
9 our views and opinions are heard.

10 Senators Isakson and Chambliss believe
11 this project is critical to our national
12 security efforts and our ability as a nation
13 to detect and deter incidents of
14 agro-terrorism.

15 The state of Georgia already plays a
16 critical role in the infectious research
17 arena at the Centers for Disease Control in
18 Atlanta and the field of animal disease
19 research right here in Athens. Given our
20 experience in these areas of critical
21 importance, Georgia is honored to be a
22 finalist for the NBAF site; and we are
23 confident that DHS will find the city of
24 Athens to be a gracious host and an effective
25 partner.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 4.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the Senators' support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 80 of 123

Page 115

1 In addition, Athens is an attractive
 2 location that will secure the necessary
 3 private industry support and scientific
 4 expertise to fulfill the mission of NBAF.
 5 The State of Georgia and the City of Athens
 6 stand ready to serve side by side with our
 7 partners at the Department of Homeland
 8 Security.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. COGHILL: Daniel King.

13 DANIEL KING: I am Daniel King, and I'm
 14 here in support of the establishment of the
 15 NBAF animal disease research facility at the
 16 proposed Athens, Georgia, location.

17 My own experience with facilities like
 18 NBAF and the basis for my support of NBAF was
 19 (unintelligible) of veterinarian and research
 20 scientist with almost 30 years experience
 21 with foreign animal disease research at the
 22 USDA's Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory
 23 here in Athens. My responsibilities at
 24 Southeast Poultry prior to my recent
 25 retirement included providing biosecurity

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 3

Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes Senators' support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 81 of 123

Page 116

1 assessments and recommendations on the
 2 conduct of Exotic Newcastle Disease and
 3 highly pathogenic avian influenza research.

2|5.2

4 The acceptability for me of a mainland
 5 location of NBAF is based on the success of
 6 containment of exotic disease agents in
 7 similar facilities that utilize the currently
 8 recognized standards for special laboratory
 9 and animal handling practices, safety
 10 equipment and facility design and
 11 construction.

3|23.0

12 Several countries, including Canada, have
 13 adopted these current standards in
 14 constructing and operating facilities on
 15 their mainland and have successfully and
 16 safely conducted research with the same
 17 foreign animal disease agents to be studied
 18 in the NBAF facility. These new methods as
 19 utilized in Canada have replaced the old
 20 method of isolation provided by physical
 21 location that was, I believe, the primary
 22 basis for siting the Plum Island Animal
 23 Disease Center on an island over 50 years
 24 ago.

25 At Southeast Poultry Research Lab during

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. As described in Section 2.3.1, DHS's site selection process incorporated site selection criteria that included, but were not limited to, such factors as proximity to research capabilities and workforce. As such, some but not all of the sites selected for analysis as reasonable alternatives in the NBAF EIS are located in suburban or sem-urban areas. It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas. An example is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, where such facilities employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 23.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 82 of 123

Page 117

1 the past 30 years we have conducted Exotic
2 Newcastle Disease and highly pathogenic avian
3 influenza disease research in buildings
4 located as close as one hundred yards to the
5 buildings in which we -- where are
6 disease-free chickens without any occurrence
7 of animal disease transmission to the
8 susceptible flocks.

4|21.2

9 The history of outbreaks of foreign
10 animal disease provides evidence that the
11 risk of introduction of foreign animal
12 disease agents into our domestic and wild
13 species is more likely from sources other
14 than research laboratories like NBAF. A
15 recent example is the cause of the exotic
16 Newcastle Disease outbreak in California
17 during 2002/2003. There is evidence that the
18 cause of that outbreak was virus-infected
19 fighting chickens smuggled into the U.S. from
20 Mexico and the transmission of that virus
21 infection to back yard and commercial
22 poultry.

23 Therefore, my conclusion from this
24 background, my assessment of the proposal is
25 to provide full support for NBAF.

Comment No: 4Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the information provided by commentor.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 83 of 123

Page 118

1 Thank you.

2 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. COGHILL: Beverly King.

1| 24.2 5 BEVERLY KING: I support building NBAF in
6 Athens.

2| 5.2 7 Over the years this lab will have a
8 strong, positive influence for science in
9 Athens-Clarke County and Georgia. I support
10 the lab here because the poultry producers in
11 Georgia and the cattle producers in Georgia
12 plus all the other agricultural associations
13 support the lab. These groups are not afraid
14 of viruses escaping from the lab, and they
15 want the protection from outbreaks which this
16 lab can help.

3| 15.2 17 We have had a long history in our country
18 of safe, affordable food supplies. Animals
19 are vital to our nation's economy both in the
20 U.S. and for exports. Animals are worth not
21 millions but billions and billions of
22 dollars.

cont.| 1| 24.2 23 I support it because the scientists are
24 supporting it. These scientists work with
25 pathogens in these labs every single day, and

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentator's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentator's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentator's concern. The NBAF would assist in ensuring a safe, affordable food supply. The NBAF will allow a fully coordinated approach to research, diagnostics, vaccine and antiviral development, and responses to outbreaks in agricultural animals including cattle, swine, and sheep. The purpose and need for the proposed action is discussed in Chapter 1 of the EIS.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 84 of 123

Page 119

cont.| 1| 24.2
1 they feel safe. In these public meetings we
2 have learned much about the lab safety
3 procedures with which scientists comply from
4 both speakers and the presentations.
5 I support this lab because no animals
6 have died in the United States from any virus
7 escaping from these labs. No animals have
8 died. No chickens have died in Georgia.

4| 21.2
9 Labs do not cause animal diseases.
10 People traveling all over the world and goods
11 and shipments of goods coming into the U.S.
12 from all over the world are the causes of the
13 outbreaks that we have.

cont.| 1| 24.2
14 I support bringing a lab to Athens
15 because there is a community of other labs,
16 vaccine companies, scientists, the animal
17 health research center, grad students at UGA
18 here, CDC in Atlanta and other scientific
19 endeavors in Georgia.

5| 8.2
cont.| 3| 15.2
20 One of our goals in Athens is to develop
21 Athens Technical College. NBAF will hire
22 technicians. Thus Athens can admit more
23 students to their program.
24 Our students in public schools are
25 scoring very low in science. We need to

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 21.2
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 8.2
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 85 of 123

Page 120

1 change our students' and our adults' lack of
2 scientific knowledge in order to meet the
3 challenges we are meeting today, not only of
4 animal health but with human health and
5 technology.

cont. | 1 | 24.2

6 Last, I support building NBAF here
7 because it is far less expensive than
8 building a new facility on Plum Island. NBAF
9 will be built. I see no reasons to add
10 millions of dollars more in building costs to
11 me and other taxpayers when we are already
12 facing huge deficits from the Iraq war and
13 are attempting to solve our health, Medicare
14 and Social Security problems.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. COGHILL: Our next speaker is Red
19 Petrovs, followed by Carol Henderson, Tom
20 McNeely, Jean Smith and David Wenner.

21 RED PETROVS: Good afternoon. My name is
22 Red Petrovs. And I was the vice-chair for
23 Partners for a Prosperous Athens and
24 Anti-Poverty Poverty Reduction Industries
25 here in Athens. We started over two and a

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 86 of 123

Page 121

1 half years ago.

2 I am currently the implementation chair
3 for the One Athens which is the follow-up
4 successor organization of PPA of the
5 implementation team to get those initiatives
6 accomplished.

1|24.2

7 And I'm here basically to reiterate the
8 point that we made some time ago that
9 partners for prosperous Athens leadership
10 certainly is in favor of NBAF. We would like
11 to see it here in Athens. And we'd like to
12 reinforce why we feel that way.

2|15.2

13 First of all, it's a good economic
14 development project for Athens. And someone
15 talked about dollars and greenbacks and those
16 kinds of things. And I'm here to tell you
17 that the green I'm talking about has nothing
18 to do with greed. This has to do with the
19 fact that we have a 31 percent poverty rate
20 in Athens.

21 There are jobs. Yes, there may be 69
22 jobs at first that accrue to having NBAF
23 here. But that's 69 more jobs than we have
24 right now.

25 And oh, by the way, these jobs pay

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 87 of 123

cont. | 2 | 15.2

Page 122

1 very well. A quick analysis on the jobs that
2 are on Page 80 and 81 on the site cost
3 analysis section of the EIS, the average wage
4 of all the jobs was \$82,000, total payroll
5 26.9 million dollars.

6 Of course, some of that will be coming
7 from Plum Island and other locations. But
8 the range of the most common jobs was from
9 \$43,000 -- this is wages and benefits
10 combined -- up to \$91,000. There was one job
11 only at 43,000, seven at 53,000, one at
12 64,000, 26 at \$77,000 and 36 at \$91,000.

13 Those are the kind of jobs that if our
14 Athenians are not trained to do today, they
15 certainly can be trained to do in short order
16 by the things we're doing in the education
17 side between the Clarke County School
18 District and Athens Tech and/or further
19 education through the University of Georgia.

20 So those jobs plus the other jobs that we
21 might be able to train Athenians for in the
22 future certainly will accrue as a benefit to
23 us as a result of NBAF locating here.

24 There are also another 157 projected
25 local indirect jobs that will result.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 88 of 123

cont.|2| 15.2

Page 123

1 Remember, people that come to Athens, they
2 build houses, they get haircuts, they get
3 cars, they get cars fixed, they use our
4 facilities. Everyone of those financial
5 transactions results in another opportunity
6 when accumulated together for other jobs to
7 accrue to this location.

8 A lot of people said well, these aren't
9 jobs Athenians can hold. I disagree.
10 I think if they are not now qualified they
11 can certainly be trained over a period of
12 time.

13 Number two, NBAF has a potential of
14 becoming a magnet for other high-tech life
15 science development and would also send a
16 message to life science companies elsewhere
17 that we are serious and our state government
18 is serious about economic development and our
19 local government is serious about economic
20 development.

3| 19.2

21 Are there risks? Of course there are.
22 People have talked about them before. The
23 issue is not are there risks; can risks be
24 mitigated.

25 And, unlike some other folks in this

Comment No: 3

Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's views on risk. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of the NBAF, would enable the NBAF to be safely operated with a minimal degree of risk, regardless of the site chosen.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 89 of 123

Page 124

cont.|3| 19.2

1 room, I do trust prominent scientists and the
 2 government, quite frankly, to do a good job
 3 of doing a risk assessment and keeping us all
 4 safe. And I think that the benefits far
 5 outweigh the risks.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. COGHILL: Carol Henderson.

10 CAROL HENDERSON: Good afternoon. My
 11 name is Carol Henderson, and I'm here from
 12 the Georgia Department of Economic
 13 Development.

14 We are the sales and marketing arm for
 15 the State. And our goal is to
 16 increase/create jobs, increase investment for
 17 all Georgians in order to improve the quality
 18 of life in Georgia.

19 Having said that, I'd like to welcome the
 20 DHS team here to Georgia. And we are more
 21 than delighted to have NBAF as a final
 22 candidate for Georgia.

23 On behalf of Governor Sonny Purdue and
 24 Commissioner Ken Stewart with the Georgia
 25 Department of Economic Development, we are

1|5.2

2|24.2

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 90 of 123

cont. | 2 | 24.2

1 here to publicly express the State's support
2 and commitment to locate the NBAF facility in
3 Athens, Georgia. We are delighted that
4 Athens is a final candidate and pledge the
5 necessary funding and support that we need in
6 order to bring the facility here.

3 | 15.2

7 Governor Purdue recently identified
8 bioscience as a strategic industry for
9 Georgia. He understands that bioscience is a
10 growing industry that provides high-quality
11 jobs that are vitally important to Georgia's
12 future economy.

13 Georgia's future economy is based on
14 highly -- high-quality, educated jobs.
15 Healthcare and bio sciences are the jobs of
16 the future. The NBAF perfectly fits into the
17 State's bioscience strategy and assets we
18 currently have in place.

19 NBAF will bring, over time, a total of
20 250 to 350 quality jobs to Athens, many of
21 which are doctoral level. These jobs are
22 going to be brought to a community and region
23 where jobs are very much needed.

24 NBAF is the type of economic development
25 project we strive for here in Georgia, a

Page 125

Comment No: 3

Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commenter's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. The economic effects of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site are included in Section 3.10.3 of the NBAF EIS.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 91 of 123

Page 126

cont| 3| 15.2 | 1 high-paying sustainable facility that makes
2 important contributions to society.

cont| 2| 24.2 | 3 Again, the State pledges its full support
4 and hope you will locate NBAF in Athens.
5 Thank you.
6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
7 (Applause.)
8 MS. COGHILL: Tom McNeely.
9 TOM McNEELY: My name is Tom McNeely. I
10 am retired, and I have lived in Athens for
11 about six years.
12 I have no complaints with the lab. For
13 approximately 36 years my wife and children
14 lived within 10 miles of CDC. My wife and
15 children attended classes at Emory. The CDC
16 is located within a mile of Emory and Emory
17 Hospital and also Emory's retirement village
18 Wesley Woods.
19 I have never heard of any danger from
20 CDC. And whatever problems they've had have
21 been some administrative problems.

1|24.2 | 22 Therefore, I have no objection to the lab
23 being sited here.
24 Thank you.
25 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 92 of 123

Page 127

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. COGHILL: Jean Smith is our next
3 speaker.

4 JEAN SMITH: I retired in 2002 as a
5 research microbiologist with more than 30
6 years experience at the Centers for Disease
7 Control. During my career I worked in two
8 different high containment laboratories. The
9 second and newer building was better designed
10 than the first. But both were flawed,
11 sometimes dangerously so.

12 This is not meant to be a criticism of
13 the building's designers nor of those who
14 maintained the facilities but is simply a
15 comment on the reality of bio containment.
16 There will never be a completely safe
17 biocontainment building.

18 The design blueprints for a lab building
19 are completed years, sometimes a decade or
20 more before the building is actually opened.
21 In the interim research methods in the
22 laboratory required for their safe
23 performance can change dramatically. For
24 evidence of this think of the difficulties
25 both University of Georgia and CDC have had

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 93 of 123

Page 128

1 in opening their new laboratories.

2 Infectious disease research is a

3 dangerous, serious business. The

4 construction of yet another biocontainment

5 lab should be undertaken only if there is a

6 clear need for more lab space and there are

7 sufficient funds to build the best possible

8 facility and to maintain the new facility.

9 It should also be possible to clearly lay

10 out the needs and benefits of the research to

11 be funded by this new facility to the

12 community at large so that the community at

13 large, while perhaps not welcoming it with

14 open arms, at least will accept the presence

15 of the lab in the neighborhood as a necessary

16 evil. Construction of yet another

17 biocontainment lab should not be touted as

18 economic fuel for a community.

19 I find this approach offensive and fault

20 both of the Department of Homeland Security

21 and their advisory committees and our

22 community leaders that this has become an

23 important selling point for NBAF in Athens.

24 That some communities, North Carolina in

25 particular, New York most tellingly, are

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern. As described in Chapter 1, the purpose and need for the proposed action encompasses the need for integrated, BSL-4 laboratories in the United States necessary to conduct research and develop countermeasures for zoonotic and foreign animal diseases. Regarding funding, DHS spends funds in accordance with congressional intent. Determining funding priorities is not within the scope of the NBAF EIS.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 94 of 123

cont|1|1.0

Page 129

1 opposed to NBAF construction tells me that
2 this committee has been unable to accumulate
3 sufficient evidence to effectively argue the
4 scientific merits of a new biocontainment
5 lab.

6 Is it possible that this new lab is
7 unnecessary and is being built simply because
8 there is funds to do so? I'd like to quote
9 an (unintelligible) piece from the New York
10 Times written by Alyssa (phonetic spelling)
11 Harris, a senior research scholar at the
12 Center for International Security Studies.

13 Since 2001 research on bio-weapons agents
14 at the NIH has increased from 53 million to
15 more than 1.6 billion and the Department of
16 Defense has more than doubled its investment
17 in bio-defense to more than one billion. We
18 will soon have more than ten times as much
19 lab space as we had in 2001 and 13 new
20 regional labs for working on modern and high
21 risk agents. Thousands of scientists are
22 being trained to work on bio-weapons, many
23 for the first time. More than 14,000
24 scientists have been approved to work with
25 the so-called select agents like anthrax that

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 95 of 123

Page 130

cont.| 1| 1.0
1 pose little threat to public health unless
2 they're used as bio-weapons.

2| 5.0
3 I'd like to end by saying that to defend
4 against bio-weapons we need not more but
5 better research centers. Thank you.
6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
7 (Applause.)
8 MS. COGHILL: David Wenner.

1| 11.2
9 DAVID WENNER: My name is David Wenner,
10 and I'm a geologist. And I'm -- I want to
11 comment about the EIS report through
12 (unintelligible) to geology primarily. And
13 I think this lends itself to the actual site
14 selection.

2| 13.2
15 And I don't think -- my view is it is not
16 a very good site. And one of the things
17 we've heard this aspect about the deer and
18 the location between the two wildlife areas
19 and that sort of thing and the proximity of
20 the botanical gardens. But there's another
21 aspect that's really not mentioned or just
22 only briefly mentioned in the EIS report.

cont.| 1| 11.2
23 And that's the geology. And what you
24 have in that area, I'm almost certain because
25 of my experience at working at the botanical

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 11.2

DHS prepared the NBAF EIS in accordance with the provisions of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and CEQ's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500 et seq.). The primary objective of the EIS is to evaluate the environmental impacts of the no action and site alternatives for locating, constructing and operating the NBAF. As summarized in Section 3.1 of the NBAF EIS, DHS analyzed each environmental resource area in a consistent manner across all the alternatives to allow for a fair comparison among the alternatives. The decision on whether to build the NBAF will be made based on the following factors: 1) analyses from the EIS and support documents; 2) the four evaluation criteria discussed in section 2.3.1; 3) applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulatory requirements; 4) consultation requirements among the federal, state, and local agencies, as well as federally recognized American Indian Nations; 5) policy considerations; and 6) public comment.

DHS notes the commentator's geologic construction concerns. Section 3.6.3 of the NBAF EIS discusses the geologic and soil conditions at the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. Sections 3.6.3.2 and 3.6.3.3 discuss the potential construction and operational consequences. Once a site is selected a detailed geotechnical report would be prepared and results included in construction technique development.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.0

DHS notes the commentator's statement. As stated in Chapter 1 of the NBAF EIS, there are no existing BSL-4 facilities in the U.S. capable of conducting large animal research as is proposed for the NBAF. The PIADC does not have BSL-4 laboratory or animal space, and the existing PIADC facilities are inadequate to support a BSL-4 laboratory. Upgrading the existing facilities to allow PIADC to meet the current mission would be more costly than building the NBAF on Plum Island or at any other site alternative, as discussed in Section 2.4.1 of the NBAF EIS.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commentator's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 96 of 123

Page 131

cont. | 1 | 11.2

1 gardens in geology, is that bedrock is just
 2 below the surface in many areas. You've got
 3 a very shallow -- you've got a lot of bedrock
 4 below, very closely below.

3 | 23.0

5 Now, I don't know if this structure is
 6 going to be below ground or if so how much
 7 below ground; but whatever construction you
 8 do, it seems to me there's going to be a lot
 9 of impact. There's going to have to be a lot
 10 of blasting the bedrock to put an excavation
 11 in, especially if you're going underground.
 12 And that's going to be a very disruptive
 13 thing on the environment.

14 And, frankly, none of that was really
 15 addressed in the EIS report. And, in my
 16 opinion, that should be addressed. So I'll
 17 provide written comments about some
 18 information I have related to that site
 19 nearby in a written form. So I just want to
 20 make that comment.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. COGHILL: Corrie Brown is our next
 25 speaker, who will be followed by Lisa

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 23.0

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the effects of excavation including blasting. The NBAF EIS Section 3.6 describes the soil and geological conditions and potential construction consequences. A detailed geotechnical report will be prepared for the selected site and will be used in the NBAF's final design specifications including subsurface rock strata and construction implications. Once a site is selected, a detailed geotechnical report will be prepared and results included in construction management efforts. If blasting is required, steps will be taken to minimize the blast number(s), intensity, and duration. A blasting plan would be developed implementing blasting measures such as minimizing explosive weights, stemming depths and material, and delay configurations all to mitigate potential noise levels.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 97 of 123

Page 132

1 Majersky, Shelia Allen and Tas Smith.

2 CORRIE BROWN: Thank you. I just have a
3 few comments here.

4 Corey Brown. I am a veterinarian. I'm a
5 professor in the College of Veterinarian
6 Medicine. I also serve as a consultant both
7 nationally and internationally on issues
8 involving transboundary diseases, trade
9 regulations -- I've worked in over 50
10 countries -- outbreak control, economic
11 considerations involved with these outbreaks
12 and also economic growth in developing
13 countries through enhancing agriculture and
14 decreasing animal disease.

1|21.2

15 Global traffic of agricultural goods
16 currently stands at about 4 trillion dollars
17 per year and continues to grow at 10 percent
18 per year. One of these diseases will come
19 here. It's not a question of if but when.

2|5.0

20 I applaud the Department of Homeland
21 Security's plan to move Plum Island off the
22 mainland and to join the rest of the world in
23 having a laboratory of this type that is not
24 surrounded by a moat and where you can work
25 according to a schedule that is not rigidly

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 21.2

DHS note's the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 5.0

DHS notes the commentor's support for the five mainland site alternatives. DHS held a competitive process to select potential sites for the proposed NBAF as described in DEIS Section 2.3.1. A multi-disciplinary team of engineers, scientists, lawyers, academics and communicators from the departments of Homeland Security, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Defense reviewed the submissions based primarily on environmental suitability and proximity to research capabilities, proximity to workforce, acquisition/construction/operations, and community acceptance. Ultimately, DHS identified five site alternatives that surpassed others in meeting the evaluation criteria and DHS preferences, and determined that they, in addition to the Plum Island Site, would be evaluated in the EIS as alternatives for the proposed NBAF. It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas. An example is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, where such facilities employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 98 of 123

cont.| 2| 5.0

Page 133

1 dictated by a marine crew.

2 Is Athens the right place? I trust that
3 you will gather all of the information and
4 make the right decisions.

5 Although I'm involved in this area, like
6 Danny Mead before me, wherever Plum Island
7 goes I will probably continue to collaborate
8 there.

9 And I have no vested interest in having
10 it in Athens. I hope that it will go to the
11 best possible place.

cont.| 2| 5.0

12 Now, given my background, I was
13 particularly interested in 3.14. We all know
14 that risk is never absolutely zero. So I
15 know you did the worst case scenario about a
16 potential outbreak at one of the sites.

3| 21.2

17 Now, I think there's something a little
18 bit misleading in this 3.14 because you talk
19 about a Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, the
20 economic impact ranging from 2.8 to 4.2
21 billion dollars with the Athens site being at
22 3.5 billion, which is a little bit high in
23 that scale.

4| 15.2

24 Now, you talked earlier about how all the
25 big impacts are due to trade. When you have

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes commentor's concern. The potential economic effects resulting from an accidental release of FMD is discussed in Appendix D and Section 3.10.9 of the NBAF DEIS. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low, but DHS acknowledges that the possible effects would be significant for all sites. The primary economic effect of an accidental release would be the banning of U.S. livestock products regardless of the location of the accidental release, which could reach as high as \$4.2 billion until the U.S. was declared foreign animal disease free. In comparison to \$4.2 billion from the Kansas FMD modeling scenario, the estimated total economic costs for the South Milledge Avenue Site is the second lowest out of all site alternatives, with the Plum Island Site Alternative being the lowest, and is estimated at \$3.35 billion. Approximately \$154 million is attributed to industry disruption losses and \$94 million is attributed to government costs incurred during containment activities. The cattle and pork industries in Georgia and in the counties adjacent to the proposed South Milledge Avenue Site in particular are relatively small. In 2008, animal production activity in the six-county region generated \$559 million in industry output. The majority was from poultry and egg production (\$512 million), which is not expected to be at risk from the accidental release of pathogens from the facility.

Comment No: 4Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern. The potential economic effects including those from an accidental release are discussed in Section 3.10.9 and Appendix D. The primary economic effect of an accidental release would be the banning of U.S. livestock products regardless of the location of the accidental release, which could reach as high as \$4.2 billion until the U.S. was declared foreign animal disease free.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 99 of 123

cont.| 4| 15.2

Page 134

1 a disease the trade impacts are always ten
2 times higher than the actual cleanup and
3 containment costs.

4 So, in fact, no matter where the outbreak
5 happens, whether it's in Kansas or
6 Mississippi or North Carolina, the impact to
7 the Georgia producers is going to be the
8 same. Similarly, an outbreak around a
9 Georgia facility would affect the Kansas
10 farmers. It's a national issue rather than
11 being so related to the specific site.

12 The other issue that I thought could be
13 addressed in that has to do with if we have
14 an outbreak the Secretary of Agriculture will
15 declare an emergency, and that will free up
16 funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation.
17 And this will take care of a lot of the
18 initial costs of containing the outbreak.

19 So, once again, it's not so much a local
20 cost as it is a national cost that will be
21 borne by taxpayers all over the country no
22 matter if they live in the community where
23 the NBAF is or not.

24 Thank you very much.

25 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 100 of 123

Page 135

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. COGHILL: Lisa Majersky.

3 HERE.

4 LISA MAJERSKY: Yes. As far as the local
5 benefit, so many people have been going on
6 about, well, wherever the lab is if they make
7 discoveries it's going to be a benefit for
8 everyone. So having it here in Georgia is
9 not going to necessarily benefit Georgia.

10 So the other thing is just the
11 proliferation of all these high-level labs is
12 making it sort of like there's a chain of
13 convenience stores all over the country. The
14 more labs there are, the more access there is
15 to these pathogens.

16 And as they said, there used to be, you
17 know, much fewer of them. And since 2001
18 when they started giving all this money out
19 to build more labs now there is more and more
20 labs with pathogens around them.

21 This latest Al Qaeda Mata Hari they were
22 talking about, Aafia Siddique, they said she
23 was -- actually had plans to go to Plum
24 Island and try and attack them, allegedly get
25 in there. Now, she probably could not have

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement. The economic effects of construction of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative are included in Section 3.10.2 of the NBAF EIS.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the risk of a potential accident or terrorist event. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. As described in Chapter 3 and summarized in Section 2.5 of the NBAF EIS, the impacts of activities during normal operations at any of the six site alternatives would likely be minor. Sections 3.8.9, 3.10.9, and 3.14 (Health and Safety), and Appendices B, D, and E of the NBAF EIS, provide a detailed analysis of the consequences from a accidental or deliberate pathogen release. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF then site specific protocols would be developed, in coordination with local emergency response agencies that would consider the diversity and density of populations residing within the local area. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, addresses accident scenarios, including external events such as a terrorist attack. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (TRA) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The TRA is "For Official Use Only" and is not available for public review. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and are used to recommend the most prudent measures to establish a reasonable level of risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety. Because of the importance of the NBAF mission and the associated work with potential %high-consequence biological pathogens%, critical information related to the potential for adverse consequences as a result of intentional acts has been incorporated into the NEPA process. Security would be provided by a series of fencing, security cameras, and protocols. In addition, a dedicated security force would be present on-site. Additional security could be provided via cooperation with local law enforcement agencies.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 101 of 123

Page 136

1 gone in there, but she was going to try to
2 get in Plum Island to get some pathogens. So
3 now there would be another place here.

4 So -- and as far as there being any
5 benefit to Georgia if there was some kind of
6 an outbreak and we had the lab right here to
7 find out what it was, science is too slow to
8 just find out, you know, like oh, there's a
9 new disease and just because we have the lab
10 right here they can find out right away what
11 it was because we're right close to the lab.
12 There would not be any benefit. Science is
13 too slow to find out, you know, oh, there's a
14 new disease and it's a good thing we have the
15 lab right here.

16 And the other thing is as far as being
17 concerned with having a safe food supply,
18 well, yes, we all want a safe food supply.
19 But we have really slacked off on all kinds
20 of food inspections all over the country.

21 We used to have much more often, you
22 know, frequent food inspections. We used to
23 have more food inspectors for all kinds of
24 food, not just livestock.

25 We're so concerned with livestock

Comment No: 4Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

4|25.2

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 102 of 123

Page 137

1 diseases, but they don't even have inspectors
2 in the meat plants the way they used to. You
3 know, they used to have them much more
4 frequently. And so like we're spending all
5 this money on disease detection and we don't
6 even have inspectors on the other end.

7 So I just think this whole thing is just
8 overblown, just trying to, you know, make all
9 these labs. And I'm against the whole thing.
10 And I don't want it here, and I want to live
11 here. And once they get it here it's going
12 to be forever. So I just don't want it here.

13 That's all.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. COGHILL: Thank you. Sheila Allen.

16 SHEILA ALLEN: Good afternoon. I'm
17 Shelia Allen. I'm the dean of the College of
18 Veterinarian Medicine here at the University
19 of Georgia.

20 And I've been a resident of Clarke County
21 for 27 years. Athens is my home.

22 I am a supporter of NBAF for many of the
23 reasons that have already been articulated by
24 my colleagues. I am a veterinarian. I am
25 deeply committed to the health and welfare of

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

4|25.2
cont.

1|24.2

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 103 of 123

Page 138

2|1.0

1 animals and the people who depend on them.
 2 The research that will be conducted by
 3 NBAF is vitally important to our country and
 4 to the world. The facilities of Plum Island,
 5 some of which are very good but most of which
 6 are outdated, must be replaced.

7 I agree with the previous speaker that we
 8 need not more labs but better labs. And
 9 I think that is the whole point here.

3|5.2

10 Today's technology, I think, allows the
 11 facility to be placed anywhere on the
 12 mainland safely. So why here? I think
 13 Athens is a great location because of the
 14 excellent transportation that's available,
 15 the expertise that's already in place in this
 16 community and the proximity to other experts
 17 at the CDC, which is also nearby.

18 As a veterinarian I have a deep ethical
 19 and moral commitment to protect animal
 20 resources and the health of our people. I
 21 want to see NBAF done and done well.

4|21.2

22 I don't have grave concerns about risk.
 23 We have multiple BSL-3 labs in our college,
 24 one of which is literally 30 feet from my
 25 office door. I walk by it easily twenty

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's support for the proposed research that would be conducted within the NBAF.

DHS notes the commentor's support for NBAF. The decision on whether or not the NBAF is built, and, if so, where will be made based on the following factors: 1) analyses from the EIS; 2) the four evaluation criteria discussed in Section 2.3.1; 3) applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulatory requirements; 4) consultation requirements among the federal, state, and local agencies, as well as federally recognized American Indian Nations; 5) policy considerations; and 6) public comment.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's lack of grave concerns regarding the proposed research that would be conducted within the NBAF.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 104 of 123

Page 139

1 times a day without any concerns. And that's
2 mainly for two reasons: I have faith in the
3 technology available to keep it contained,
4 and I have faith in the people who work in
5 the lab.

cont.| 2|1.0 6 My greatest concern is that if NBAF is
7 not built or if it's done in a place that
8 will limit its potential. We, in this
9 country, have the luxury of inexpensive,
10 high-quality animal products. That luxury is
11 not sustainable without constant vigilance
12 for infectious diseases, a rapid response to
13 infectious diseases if they're detected.

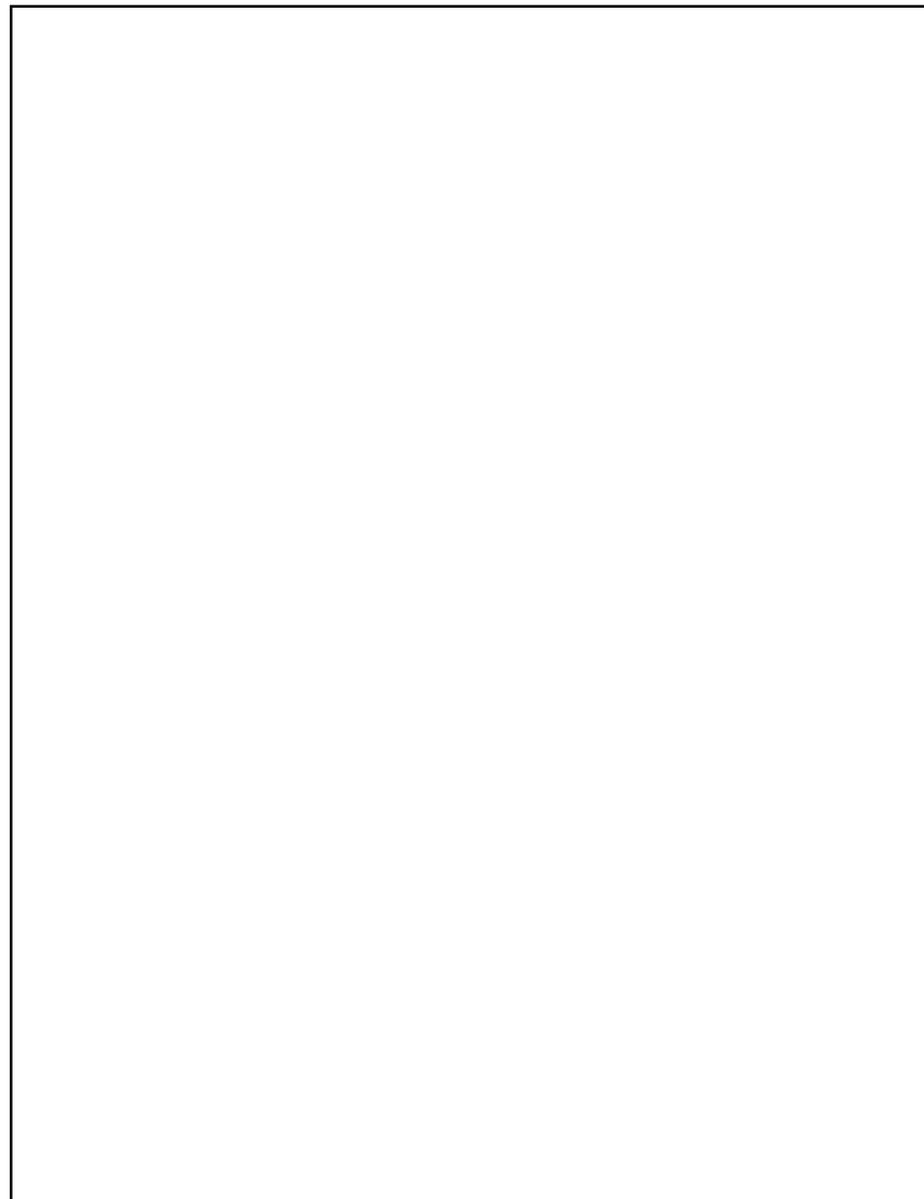
cont.| 3| 5.2 14 Of the locations proposed I think Athens
15 has the best opportunity to fulfill the
16 missions for all the reasons that Dr. King,
17 my colleague, explained earlier.

cont.| 1| 24.2 18 Athens is my home. I am confident that
19 if NBAF is built here it will be run well and
20 effectively for the wealth -- for the health
21 of our nation and for the animals that live
22 in it.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

25 (Applause.)



August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 105 of 123

Page 140

1 MS. COGHILL: Tas Smith.

2 TAS SMITH: Good afternoon. My name is
3 Tas Smith. I'm with the Georgia Farm Bureau
4 Federation in Macon, Georgia.

5 Georgia Farm Bureau is the largest
6 volunteer farm organization in this state
7 with over 400,000 farmer family members. Our
8 organization is proud to support the location
9 of the NBAF facility in Athens, Georgia.

10 We feel that if NBAF is located in Athens
11 with its close proximity to the University of
12 Georgia College of Agriculture and
13 Environmental Sciences, the University of
14 Georgia College of Veterinarian Medicine and
15 the Centers for Disease Control and
16 Prevention in Atlanta that it will allow the
17 NBAF facility to have access to premiere
18 researchers and scientists in this state. If
19 NBAF is located in Athens it will also allow
20 the NBAF facility to be able to attract large
21 sciences and researchers and the best in the
22 world because of this proximity to the
23 university.

24 Agriculture is the number one industry in
25 Georgia. Poultry is the number one --

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 8.2

DHS notes the information provided by the commentor.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement and information on animal diseases.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 106 of 123

Page 141

cont.| 3| 15.2

1 Georgia is the largest poultry state in the
2 United States with a 2007 farm gate value of
3 over 4.7 billion dollars.
4 For Georgia poultry growers avian
5 influenza is a major concern. Facilities
6 such as NBAF prevent this type of spread of
7 this type of disease. And if avian influenza
8 was to spread in Georgia and the United
9 States, it would be dramatic for Georgia
10 poultry industry.
11 Equine and cattle is also a viable step
12 toward agricultural level with over 850
13 million dollars in farm gate value.
cont.| 1| 24.2

14 Georgia Farm Bureau is proud to support
15 the location of this facility in Athens, and
16 we're -- thank you so much for allowing us to
17 be here today, and we're pleased to comment
18 on this issue.
19 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, Mr. Smith.
20 (Applause.)
21 MS. COGHILL: Laura Fleury.
22 LAURA FLEURY: Hello. My name is Laura
23 Fleury, and I am an undergrad student at the
24 University of Georgia.
1| 25.2

25 I speak today on behalf of over 200

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 107 of 123

Page 142

cont.| 1|25.2

1 students and residents of Athens from the

2 Facebook group No Bioterror Lab in Athens.

3 We have many questions and concerns about

4 NBAF, but most importantly we want NBAF and

5 the DHS to know that we do not want it here.

6 The University of Georgia has tried to

7 keep us in the dark about the issues. Look

8 around. There's not many students here.

9 It's because they have no clue. But those

10 that do know are opposed.

2|21.2

11 My question is this: What will happen to

12 us, the students, all 35,000 and more, in the

13 event of a bioterrorist attack or outbreak.

14 What happens if a scientist like Bruce Ivans

15 is hired there.

cont.| 1|25.2

16 We all know that Athens is the wrong

17 place for NBAF. Please keep it away from our

18 waters, schools, children, land and homes.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MS. COGHILL: Regina Smith.

23 REGINA SMITH: Good afternoon. My name

24 is Regina Smith. I'm an Athens citizen, and

25 I've been a citizen of this community since

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the risk of a potential accident or terrorist event. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. As described in Chapter 3 and summarized in Section 2.5 of the NBAF EIS, the impacts of activities during normal operations at any of the six site alternatives would likely be minor. Sections 3.8.9, 3.10.9, and 3.14 (Health and Safety), and Appendices B, D, and E provide a detailed analysis of the consequences from an accidental or deliberate pathogen release. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF then site specific protocols would be developed, in coordination with local emergency response agencies that would consider the diversity and density of populations residing within the local area. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF. Section 3.14 and Appendix E address accident scenarios, including external events such as a terrorist attack. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (designated as For Official Use Only)(TRA) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The TRA is "For Official Use Only" and is not available for public review. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and are used to recommend the most prudent measures to establish a reasonable level of risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety. Because of the importance of the NBAF mission and the associated work with potential high-consequence biological pathogens, critical information related to the potential for adverse consequences as a result of intentional acts has been incorporated into the NEPA process. Security would be provided by a series of fencing, security cameras, and protocols. In addition, a dedicated security force would be present on-site. Additional security could be provided via cooperation with local law enforcement agencies.

DHS also notes commentor's concern that NBAF employment practices include proper pre-employment screening and ongoing employee training. As set out in Section 3.14.3.4, employees and contractors will be screened prior to employment or engagement and monitored while working, among other security measures. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Section 2.2.2.6, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the APHIS Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. With regard to employee training, Section 2.2.2.1 discusses the requirement that all laboratory staff would receive pre-operational training, as well as ongoing training, in the handling of hazardous infectious agents, understanding biocontainment functions of standard and special practices for each biosafety level, and understanding biocontainment equipment and laboratory characteristics.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 108 of 123

Page 143

1 2001. I'm going to tell you about my
2 personal decision making regarding this
3 matter.

4 I am a UGA employee. I am the associate
5 vice-president for research here at the
6 university. And yes, David Lee is my boss.
7 But no, David Lee does not tell me how to
8 think, what to think or what to say.

9 Like Dr. Cooke, I am not being paid to
10 make any of these statements. And I have
11 friends and colleagues and neighbors on both
12 sides of this issue.

13 What I tried to do initially was to keep
14 an open mind. So I would say that I was very
15 noncommittal at the beginning. But I
16 listened to the rhetoric and the hyperbole
17 and the facts and the fiction, and I did what
18 any reasonable individual would do or should
19 do in such a case as a citizen of Athens. I
20 decided to educate and inform myself about
21 this issue.

22 So I read and I listened, and I learned
23 about Winnipeg. I understood what was going
24 on there. I looked at what was happening at
25 the CDC in Athens, and I read the EIS.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 109 of 123

Page 144

1 I weighed both the good and the bad, the
2 pros and the cons. And I realized that there
3 are always risks. Life does not come without
4 risks. Nothing is risk-free. And it is
5 folly to even try to eliminate all risks. If
6 we do that we freeze, we do nothing, we cease
7 to exist.

1|24.2

8 I'm comfortable with NBAF. I've made a
9 decision, after doing all of my homework. I
10 live a few miles from the site. I'm
11 comfortable with it. I think there are low
12 risks associated with it because the public
13 health benefits outweigh those risks.

14 The whole issue -- and I'm not concerned
15 about economics, jobs, individuals who may
16 have psychological problems and do something
17 bad. But the public health risks outweigh --
18 I mean the public health benefits outweigh
19 the risks and will contribute to making this
20 world for all of us a better place in which
21 to live.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. COGHILL: Our next speaker is April

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 110 of 123

Page 145

1 Ingle.

2 APRIL INGLE: Good afternoon. I'm April
3 Ingle, and I'm the executive director of the
4 Georgia River Network.

5 We're a statewide organization that looks
6 to protect and restore rivers all across the
7 state of Georgia. We're based here in
8 Athens, and I live here in Athens.

9 Georgia River Network represents over 600
10 Georgia citizens and over 30 river protection
11 organizations throughout the state of
12 Georgia, including the Upper Oconee Watershed
13 Network, which is our local watershed group
14 here in Athens.

15 But I'm not speaking on behalf of them
16 today. I am speaking on behalf of Georgia
17 River Network. And as a voice for issues
18 that transcend Georgia's watersheds I want to
19 comment on several issues that the draft EIS
20 does not adequately address or is
21 insufficient with regards to impacts to the
22 Oconee River and other aquatic resources.

23 First, due to the size of the facility,
24 it is likely that it will result in a large
25 amount of impervious area and, therefore, a

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns with erosion and surface water impacts. The NBAF EIS Section 3.6.3 describes the South Milledge Avenue Site alternative's soil and geological conditions and Section 3.6.3.2 describes site specific potential construction consequences. Chapter 3 Section 3.7.3 describes potential construction and operational consequences on water resources if the NBAF were sited at the South Milledge Avenue Site. Section 3.7.3.3.2 describes that with the enforcement of all regulations concerning runoff quantity and quality, and the installation of site features designed to address anticipated runoff problems, the NBAF storm water contribution is not anticipated to be substantial; however, the effluent volume and constituents would contribute to the general trend of increased storm water runoff in the region.

1|12.2

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 111 of 123

cont. | 1 | 12.2

Page 146

1 large amount of stormwater. At this time
2 there are no specific plans that guarantee
3 that stormwater impacts will be mitigated or
4 prevented with the installation and
5 maintenance of stormwater control practices
6 with the EIS stating only that they would be
7 considered or could be used but not that they
8 shall be used. The EIS cannot conclude that
9 there will be no direct impact without these
10 assurances.

11 During construction of the facility there
12 is great potential for erosion and
13 sedimentation of the river impacting habitat
14 and downstream communities, especially due to
15 the widespread erosion and sedimentation
16 problems that exist in Georgia based on
17 topography, lack of proper installation of
18 Best Management Practices and a lack of
19 funding to properly enforce erosion and
20 sedimentation laws.

21 At this time there are no specific
22 guarantees that erosion and sediment impacts
23 will be mitigated or prevented at the site;
24 and, therefore, the EIS cannot conclude that
25 there will be no direct impact without these

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 112 of 123

cont. | 1 | 12.2

Page 147

1 assurances.

2 The EIS concludes that there are

3 headwater streams located on the property and

4 at least some of them will be impacted.

5 Specifically, it states that the road and

6 fence construction would affect approximately

7 50 linear feet of stream on the site, as well

8 as a buffer zone and would require Section

9 404 permits from the Army Corps of Engineers,

10 Section 41 certification from the State and a

11 buffer variance from Clarke County.

12 I do believe that those -- that that

13 would qualify it as a direct impact and the

14 EIS is in error to conclude that operations

15 at the NBAF would have no direct impact on

16 wetlands or aquatic communities.

17 Further, it should be noted in the EIS

18 that a buffer variance will also have to be

19 obtained from the State for the 25-foot

20 buffer. Erosion and sedimentation are also

21 impacts on the Altamaha shiner, which is a

22 state-listed species. And we're also

23 concerned about the potential discharge of

24 pollutants from wastewater and believe that

25 the EIS should adequately address those

2 | 13.2

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding potential effects on aquatic species and water quality at the South Milledge Avenue Site. The mitigation measures presented in Section 3.15 of the NBAF EIS (BMPs and SWPPP) would minimize the potential for erosion and sedimentation impacts during the construction process. Low impact design (LID) features would be used to minimize the potential for adverse impacts associated with stormwater runoff from the completed facility. Preliminary LID measures that are being considered include pervious pavement in both parking lots and pedestrian walkways, capturing and using roof runoff for landscape watering, and grading parking lots to filter storm water through landscaped areas. As described in Section 3.3.3.1.4, sewage acceptance criteria and pretreatment requirements would apply to the wastewater discharged from the proposed NBAF. The Athens-Clarke County Sewer Use Ordinance of 2007 provides limits on specific pollutant discharges to the Middle Oconee Wastewater Treatment Facility. The NBAF would be designed and operated as necessary to comply with Athens-Clarke County Middle Oconee Wastewater Treatment Facility criteria and avoid the discharge of potentially harmful wastewater constituents. Implementation of approved erosion control measures, utilization of LID storm water pollution prevention measures, and compliance with wastewater treatment standards would prevent significant impacts on downstream aquatic resources such as the Middle Oconee River. Therefore, the Altamaha shiner is not likely to be adversely affected by the NBAF.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 113 of 123

Page 148

1 impacts on the river.

2 I want to finally say that there is going
3 to -- there is a potential for a high level
4 of consumption of natural resources at this
5 site and consumptive use of water from the
6 site and that should be reflected in the EIS,
7 as well.

8 That concludes my comments, and I thank
9 you for the opportunity to make them.

10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. COGHILL: There are two folks that
13 signed in earlier and they were not here when
14 their name was called. So I'd like to give
15 them an opportunity if they're still here to
16 come forward if they would like.

17 Richard Theurer. And the other gentleman
18 was Steve Valeika.

19 (No response.)

20 MS. COGHILL: It doesn't appear that
21 those two folks are still here.

22 What we'd like to do is the meeting is
23 advertised to go till 4:30. It is about ten
24 after 4:00 now. And I'd like to ask and open
25 up the floor in the event that there is

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 114 of 123

Page 149

1 someone here who did not sign in to speak or
 2 who would like to speak now that did not
 3 speak already.

4 If you'd like to, please come forward to
 5 a microphone. The same parameters will
 6 follow.

7 EDWARD LEVINE: Good afternoon. My name
 8 is Edward Levine. And thank you for the
 9 opportunity to speak.

10 I would like to read from the May 22nd,
 11 2008, report from the Government
 12 Accountability Office. The title of that
 13 report is DHS Lacks Evidence to Conclude that
 14 Foot and Mouth Disease Research Can be Done
 15 Safely on the U.S. Mainland.

16 I am against the NBAF here in Athens.
 17 I'm against it being built on the mainland.

18 GAO found that the Department of Homeland
 19 Security has neither conducted nor
 20 commissioned any study to determine whether
 21 work on Foot and Mouth Disease, FMD, can be
 22 done safely on the U.S. mainland. Instead of
 23 deciding what work with FMD can be done
 24 safely on the mainland, DHS relied on the
 25 2002 U.S. Department of Agriculture study

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the five mainland site alternatives and reference to the U.S. Government Accountability Office report (May 2008) as justification. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of the NBAF, would enable it to be safely operated on the mainland. The conclusions expressed in Section 3.14 of the NBAF EIS show that even though Plum Island has a lower potential impact in case of a release, the probability of a release is low at all sites. The lower potential effect is due both to the water barrier around the island and the lack of livestock and susceptible wildlife species.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the five mainland site alternatives, in particular, the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

1|2.0

2|25.2

cont.| 1|2.0

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 115 of 123

Page 150

cont| 1|2.0

1 that addressed a different question.

2 The study did not assess the past history

3 of releases of FMD virus or other dangerous

4 pathogens in the United States or elsewhere.

5 It did not address in detail the issues of

6 containment related to large animal work in

7 BSL-3 and facilities. It was inaccurate in

8 comparing other countries' FMD work and

9 experience with that of the United States.

10 Therefore the GAO believes DHS does not have

11 evidence to conclude that FMD work can be

12 done safely on the U.S. mainland.

3| 19.2

13 So my questions for the record -- and I

14 know I will not get an answer now -- is DHS

15 offering the EIS as evidence that FMD can be

16 done safely on the U.S. mainland? Does the

17 EIS address the history of accidents in or

18 releases from biocontainment facilities

19 generally, i.e. not in these kind of labs

20 that we're talking specifically in Athens?

21 Finally, I would also like to support the

22 comments earlier about the letter from Alyssa

4| 1.0

23 D. Harris that was in New York Times. I am

24 also very concerned about the increasing

25 number of labs, the access of researchers to

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's question and concern for locating NBAF on a mainland site. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated on the mainland.

DHS also notes the commentor's concern regarding the mission of the NBAF and the purpose of the NBAF EIS. Chapter 1, Section 1.1 of the NBAF EIS identifies DHS's mission which is to study foreign animal and zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy. The goal or benefit of NBAF is to prevent these animal diseases from spreading in the United States through research into the transmission of these animal diseases and the development of diagnostic tests, vaccines, and antiviral therapies. Because of the importance of the NBAF mission and the associated work with potential high-biocontainment pathogens, critical information related to the potential for adverse consequences as a result of intentional acts has been incorporated into the NEPA process. DHS prepared the NBAF EIS in accordance with the provisions of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and CEQ's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500 et seq.). The primary objective of the EIS is to evaluate the environmental impacts of a range of reasonable alternatives for locating, constructing and operating the NBAF. NEPA requires all reasonable alternatives to be considered and that includes consideration of mainland sites. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated with a minimal degree of risk, regardless of the site chosen.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding a malicious and criminal act perpetrated by a NBAF employee. As set out in Section 3.14.3.4 of the NBAF EIS, employees and contractors will be screened prior to employment or engagement and monitored while working, among other security measures. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS addresses accident scenarios, including internal and external events, such as, an "insider" criminal act and terrorist attack. A separate Threat and Risk Assessment (TRA) was developed outside of the EIS process in accordance with the requirements stipulated in federal regulations. The TRA is "For Official Use Only" and is not available for public review. The TRA is "For Official Use Only" and is not available for public review. The purpose of the TRA was to identify potential vulnerabilities and weaknesses associated with the NBAF and are used to recommend the most prudent measure to reduce risk for the security of operations of the NBAF and public safety.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 116 of 123

Page 151

cont. | 4 | 1.0

1 that information and the fact that Dr. Bruce
 2 Ivans, who was responsible now, according to
 3 our understanding from the U.S. Justice
 4 Department -- I'm concerned about the
 5 increasing number of individuals who have
 6 access to these dangerous pathogens. And I
 7 would argue that we may, in fact, be the
 8 cause of this problem.

9 Thank you for your time.

10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. COGHILL: Yes, ma'am.

13 LAURA HALL: My name is Laura Hall, and I
 14 live in Athens. I'm a registered landscape
 15 architect, and I've worked in environmental
 16 planning and small community design for the
 17 last 18 years. And so I wanted to comment on
 18 a couple of things.

1 | 5.2, 6.2

19 The first is just how inappropriate
 20 siting something this large of a building in
 21 our rural agricultural green space part of
 22 the county is. It's ridiculous.

cont. | 1 | 6.2

23 I'm sure that we would never allow any
 24 sort of store or development of this to go in
 25 that location. It's right next to the river,

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 6.2

DHS notes the commenter's concern regarding development of the South Milledge Avenue Site which is described in Section 3.2.3. A change in land use would occur; however, current zoning regulations allow for this type of development. The South Milledge Avenue Site is currently zoned as "Governmental", and construction and operation of the NBAF is consistent with this designation. However, the Clarke County Comprehensive Plan designates the South Milledge Avenue Site as "rural", so an amendment to the comprehensive plan may be required. This information has been added to the NBAF EIS in Section 3.2.3. DHS and USDA ensure that the NBAF operation at the South Milledge Avenue Site will comply with all applicable local, state, and Federal regulations and policies. The visual effects of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site are also described in Section 3.2.3 of the NBAF EIS. DHS recognizes that the NBAF would be a distinctive visible feature and would alter the viewshed of the area.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commenter's concern regarding the visual effects of the NBAF which are described in Section 3.2.3 of the NBAF EIS. DHS recognizes that the NBAF would be a distinctive visible feature and would alter the visual aesthetics of the area.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 117 of 123

cont. | 1 | 6.2

2 | 12.2

3 | 25.2

Page 152

1 and it's in our land use plan as low-density
 2 development. So that seems pretty crazy.
 3 But mostly to locate something with so
 4 many obvious potential issues seems really
 5 sad and irresponsible to chance locating
 6 something like this right next to our river
 7 which is where our drinking water comes from
 8 for this town and also next to a bunch of
 9 neighborhoods. There's two elementary
 10 schools down the road and around the corner.
 11 There's farm animals out there. And
 12 there's tons of kids in that area.
 13 And, you know, Athens is the smallest in
 14 area for the state of Georgia. So pretty
 15 much the whole county's very densely
 16 populated compared to a lot of places. And
 17 I think a lot of people, even if they're not
 18 here today to speak, will fight this with
 19 money and lawsuits if you guys decide to move
 20 forward with this project in this town.
 21 Thank you.
 22 (Applause.)
 23 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
 24 Is there anyone else who would like to
 25 speak who has not had an opportunity to do so

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's water quality and safety concerns. The NBAF EIS Section 3.7.3 describes the potential construction and operational consequences from the proposed NBAF South Milledge Avenue Site alternative. Section 3.13 describes the proposed NBAF's liquid and solid waste management options and Section 3.14 describes potential site specific accident analyses. To manage the risk of contamination as effectively as possible, and as stated in Section 2.2.2.5, the NBAF would develop a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures Plan (SPCC) that specifies operating procedures to prevent spills, control measures to contain spills, and countermeasures to contain, cleanup, and mitigate the effects of a spill reaching a water body. Additionally, as stated in Section 3.1 disposal of medical, hazardous, and industrial solid waste is governed by federal and state regulations promulgated under the RCRA. The NBAF will be required to comply with each and every applicable waste management regulation.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of the NBAF, would enable the NBAF to be safely operated in populated areas such as Athens. An example is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention located in downtown Atlanta.

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 118 of 123

Page 153

1 this afternoon?

2 (NO response.)

3 MS. COGHILL: Okay. What we'll do is
4 we'll take a five-minute break in the event
5 that somebody comes in before 4:30 and would
6 like to speak. And we'll reconvene in five
7 minutes.

8 Thank you.

9 (A brief recess was taken.)

10 MS. COGHILL: We're just going to see if
11 anyone has come in that would like to speak.

12 (No response.)

13 MS. COGHILL: I'd like to turn the
14 meeting over to Jamie.

15 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Catherine.

16 I want to make sure that everyone has had
17 the chance to make their comments. Some of
18 you may be coming back tonight. We have
19 another meeting. We open up at 6:00, and the
20 meeting starts at 7:00.

21 So I really do want to thank people for
22 their comments. I think it's fair to say
23 that at all the sites.

24 I think we've heard a lot of very
25 specific comments this afternoon on the draft

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 119 of 123

Page 154

1 EIS in the executive summary. And I really
2 appreciate that. I mean, these are the
3 things I am going to commit to fix and get
4 right in the final EIS.

5 So we do appreciate the very specific
6 comments and all comments, as well. So if
7 you do think of a comment later, you can
8 submit it to us by August 25th to be
9 addressed to responded in the final EIS. As
10 we said before, the comment period ends the
11 25th, and you have a number of ways to make
12 your comments.

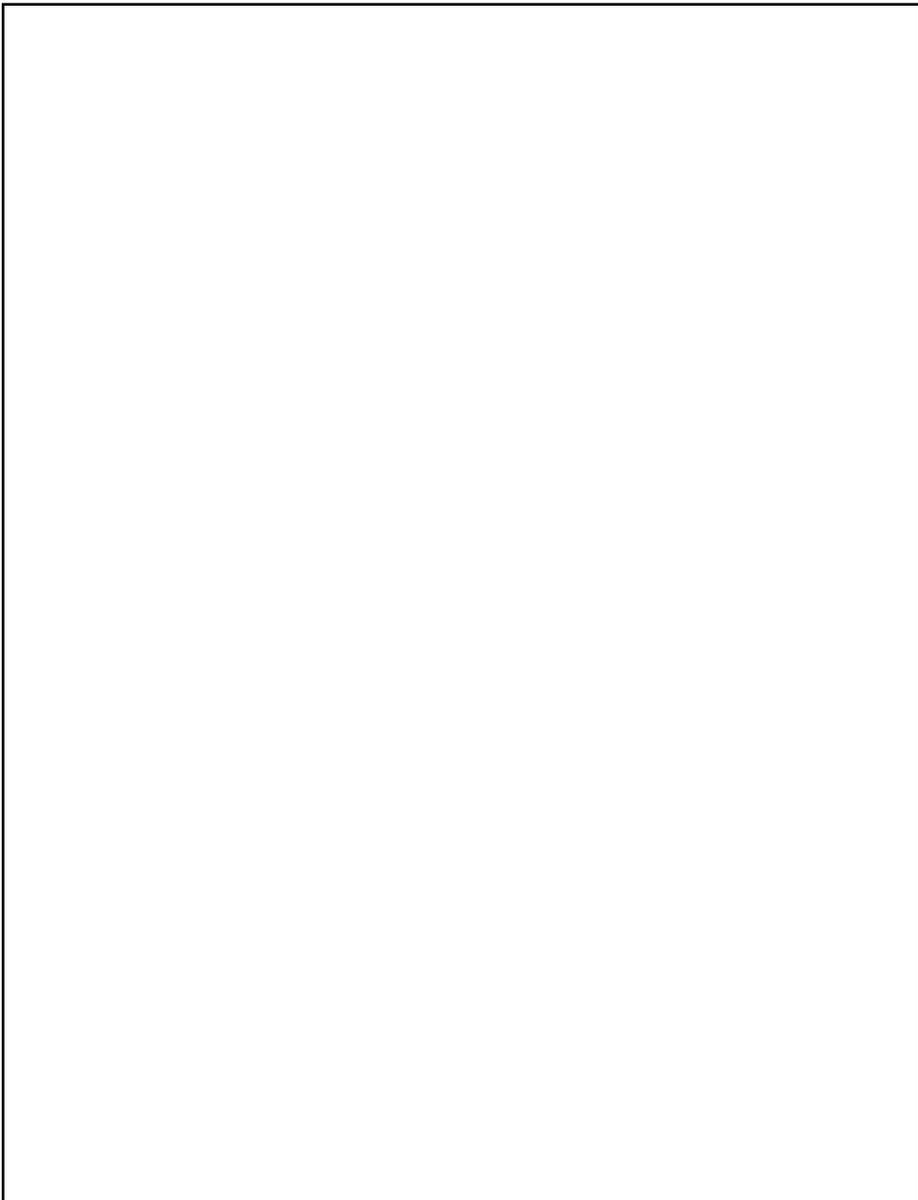
13 So with that we're going to go ahead and
14 adjourn the afternoon session. And we look
15 forward to seeing some of you back tonight.
16 So thank you again for coming.

17 (Meeting concluded at 4:26 p.m.)
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 121 of 123

Page 2		
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY NATIONAL BIO AND AGRO-DEFENSE FACILITY DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (NBAF DRAFT EIS)		
	PAGE	LINE
WELCOME		
James Johnson	5	1
Catherine Coghill (Moderator)	7	1
PRESENTATION		
James Johnson	10	21
Steve Kappes	16	10
Chuck Pergler	21	23
QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION		
Matt DeGennaro	37	7
Kathy Prescott	42	3
Unidentified Speaker	46	7
Unidentified Speaker	49	24
FORMAL COMMENT SESSION		
Andy Herod	53	7
J. Scott Angle	55	
Pat Wilson	56	22
2		



August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 122 of 123

		Page
		3
Janildo Reis	60	8
Dorinda Dallmeyer	62	1
Maria Kuhn	65	4
Sue Wilde	68	2
Kathy Prescott	71	1
Egbert Mundt	73	20
Mike Giles	76	10
Mike Lacy	79	17
Mike Wanner	81	1
Flora Tydings	84	13
Kevin Hitchcock	86	24
Richard Hargrove	88	1
Carol Goerig	90	5
Grady Thrasher	92	11
Zhen Fu	95	14
Richard Cooke	97	6
Rebecca Cooke	99	15
Steve Stice	102	7
Chris King	103	5
Walt Cook	106	21
Brian Brodrick	108	4
Daniel Mead	110	18
Tricia Chastain	113	20
Daniel King	115	13
Beverly King	118	5

August 14, 2008, Athens, GA, Athens Afternoon

Page 123 of 123

		Page 4
Red Petrovs	120	21
Carol Henderson	124	10
Tom McNeely	126	9
Jean Smith	127	
David Wenner	130	9
Corrie Brown	132	2
Lisa Majersky	135	4
Sheila Allen	137	16
Tas Smith	140	2
Laura Fleury	141	22
Regina Smith	142	23
April Ingle	145	2
Edward Levine	149	8
Laura Hall	151	13

4

