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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

7:00 p.m.

1197 SOUTH LUMPKIN STREET
ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602-3603

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.

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

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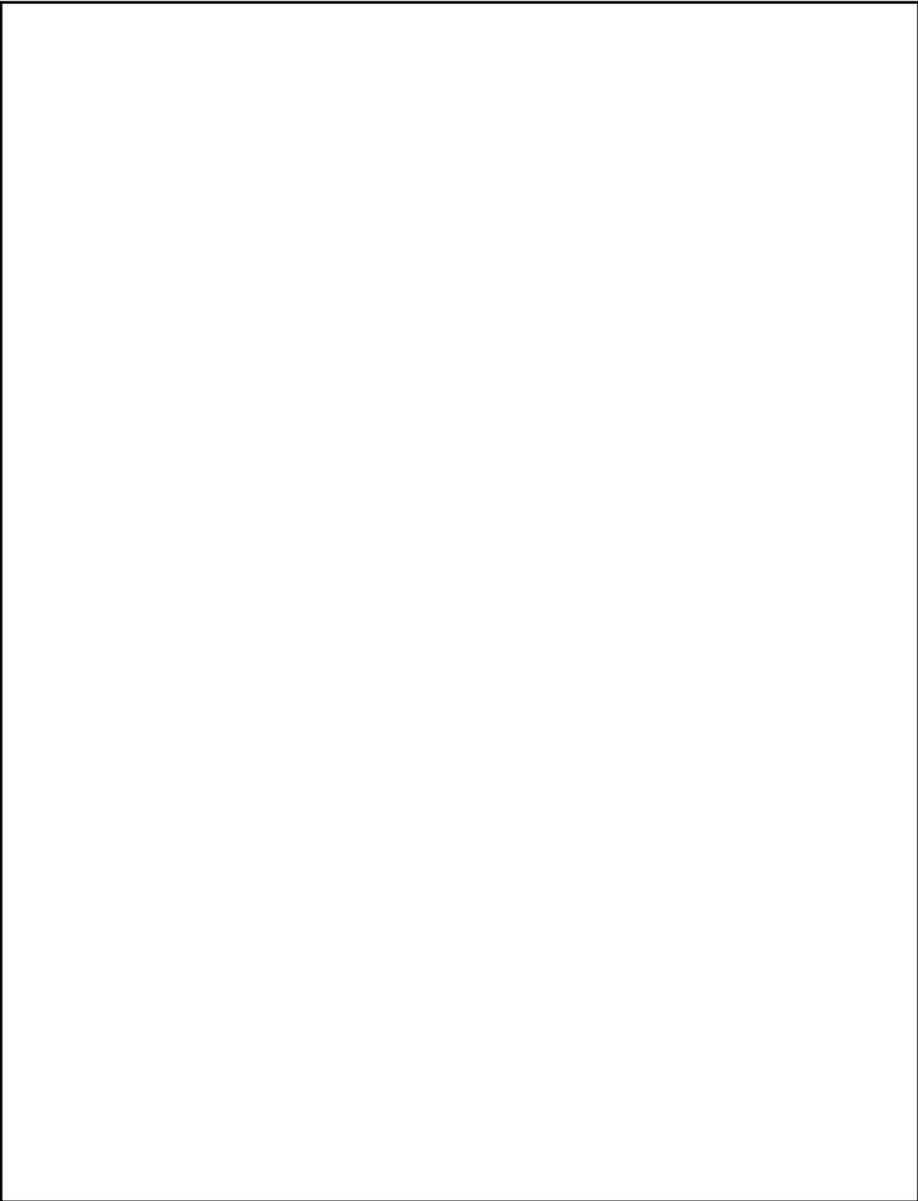


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1 JENNY CULLER: Hi. My name is Jenny
2 Culler. Is this -- okay. There we go.

3 Hi. My name is Jenny Culler. I have a
4 preliminary question that I think we all need
5 to know and then a real question.

6 First, are the questions right now going
7 to be part of the public comment record; or
8 are those only the formal comment questions
9 that will be part of the record considered by
10 DHS as they go to the final EIS?

11 MS. COGHILL: The questions that you're
12 posing right now are part of the record that
13 the court reporter is recording every piece
14 of this meeting. The -- if you have a
15 comment during the public comment period and
16 you have a question in your comment, under
17 the National Environmental Policy Act we
18 won't be answering that because we have to go
19 back and do further scientific analysis to
20 produce the answer.

21 So right now we're asking if you have a
22 question, make sure it's focused on the
23 presentation for clarification purposes.

24 JENNY CULLER: But the questions we ask
25 now will not be considered in the comments

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 4.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern. DHS is committed to providing public access to pertinent information and has conducted a robust public participation program subsequent to the completion of the competitive site selection process, which is described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. To date, DHS has provided two opportunities for the public to provide comment and input to the environmental impact analyses presented in the NBAF EIS. An initial scoping comment period of 60 days followed the issuance of a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS. Once a draft of the EIS was published, another notice was issued that provided 60 days for comment. The 60 day period for public review and comment on the NBAF Draft EIS, extended from June 27 through August 25, 2008. DHS accepted comments submitted by various means: mail, toll-free telephone and fax lines, NBAF Web page, and public meetings. DHS gave equal consideration to all comments, regardless of how or where they were received. All comments received during the public comment periods have been considered in this NBAF EIS.

1|4.2

cont.| 1|4.2

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cont.|1|4.2 | Page 39

1 that DHS will then review?

2 MR. JOHNSON: All of them will be

3 reported, and then we will go back and --

4 JENNY CULLER: I understand.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah.

cont.|1|4.2 | 6 JENNY CULLER: And they'll be listed and

7 then answered?

8 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah.

2|19.0 | 9 JENNY CULLER: Okay. My question is:

10 Can you please describe how the zoonotic

11 diseases that will be studied at the NBAF

12 manifest themselves in an infected human?

13 DR. KAPPES: We will not do research on

14 how they affect humans. That's a

15 responsibility of CDC. So we will only do

16 work on animals.

cont.|2|19.0 | 17 JENNY CULLER: But the question was how

18 do they affect humans.

19 DR. KAPPES: How do they affect -- some

20 of the pathogens have the capability of

21 affecting animals and pathogens. Matter of

22 fact, this is information out of the CDC.

23 I believe that the last couple of years

24 about 70 percent of those diseases that --

25 human diseases, 70 percent of those also

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 19.0

Information on the human symptoms of zoonotic pathogen exposure to humans for Rift Valley Fever Virus, Nipah Virus, Hendra Virus, and Japanese Encephalitis Virus is provided in Section 3.14.1 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS.

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1 caused disease in animals. So there's a lot
2 of overlap between the diseases.

cont.|2| 19.0

3 JENNY CULLER: I was asking for a
4 description of the physical manifestation of
5 the diseases.

6 DR. KAPPES: Well, you'd have to ask
7 specifically on the pathogen, because there's
8 a lot of -- the symptoms vary depending on
9 the pathogen.

cont.|2| 19.0

10 JENNY CULLER: Nipah.

11 DR. KAPPES: I'd like to turn that over
12 to my USDA counterpart, Beth Lopner (phonetic
13 spelling).

14 BETH LOPNER: I'm Beth Lopner with USDA.

15 With regard to Nipah Virus, it could be
16 flu-like symptoms that would then have a
17 neurologic component as far as an
18 encephalitis. Rift Valley Fever would be
19 similar with flu-like symptoms and could have
20 an encephalitis aspect, as well as some
21 ocular effects.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. COGHILL: Sir, your question?

cont.|2| 19.0

24 DANIEL COTTAR: What are the other four
25 things you decided not to mention in your

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cont.|2|19.0

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1 presentation, the other four viruses or
2 diseases? So far I've got Foot and Mouth,
3 Rift Valley, Nipah -- actually I've only got
4 those three.

5 So what are the others? Can you like
6 list them real quick.

7 MR. JOHNSON: There are eight research
8 diseases, Chuck. Foot and Mouth Disease
9 and --

10 MR. PERGLER: Okay. Of the eight five
11 were not carried through for detailed
12 analysis. It would be African Swine Fever,
13 Classical Swine Fever, Japanese Encephalitis,
14 Contagious Bovine. What do you say --

15 DR. KAPPES: Hendra.

16 MR. PERGLER: And Hendra and Nipah
17 virus.

18 DANIEL COTTAR: Okay. So that's --

19 MR. PERGLER: I'm sorry. We are studying
20 the Nipah.

21 DANIEL COTTAR: Could you say those again
22 slowly, please.

23 DR. KAPPES: Hendra.

24 DANIEL COTTAR: Okay. I've got that.

25 MR. PERGLER: Japanese Encephalitis,

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1 Classical Swine Fever, African Swine Fever
2 and Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia.

3 DANIEL COTTAR: Okay. African.

4 Also, are you going -- are you getting a
5 lot of opposition at the other sites more or
6 less than here? Could you comment on that.

7 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I sure can.

8 We are -- part of what we're doing is to
9 get input on the EIS. Certainly, you know,
10 all comments are welcome from people,
11 especially with a view on the facility. You
12 know, we're in the process of assessing all
13 of that input, if you will.

14 I will say that Georgia has been very
15 vocal both ways, more than some of the other
16 sites.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. JOHNSON: But, again, that's just one
19 of the things that we consider in the overall
20 decision.

21 DANIEL COTTAR: Is Georgia more vocal
22 than the other places?

23 MR. JOHNSON: It's --

24 DANIEL COTTAR: Because if that's the
25 case, perhaps those would be better places.

1|5.2

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 5.2

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

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cont. | 1|5.2

1 In fact, Crawford, Georgia, would be a good
2 place. Crawford, Georgia.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

5 Yes, ma'am.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I believe I'm
1|23.0 7 correct. You said that the National
8 Veterinary Stockpile will transfer from Plum
9 Island to NBAF? It's currently housed at
10 Plum Island and it will transfer to the
11 replacement facility, correct?

12 MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

2|19.2 13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It says on that
14 website the National Veterinary Stockpile has
15 two primary goals. By 2011 it will acquire
16 countermeasures against the first ten of the
17 seventeen worst disease threats, including
18 highly pathogenic avian, Foot and Mouth
19 Disease, Rift Valley Fever, Exotic Newcastle,
20 Classical Swine Fever. By 2016 it will
21 acquire countermeasures against all seventeen
22 diseases. These diseases are also identified
23 as the agricultural bio -- and the bio --
24 Agricultural Bioterrorism Act of 2002.
25 You keep listing these eight diseases.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 23.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF, the National Veterinary Stockpile currently housed at PIADC on Plum Island, NY may be transferred to the replacement NBAF site.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern that all possible pathogens to be studied at the NBAF are not listed in the NBAF EIS. The pathogens to be studied at the NBAF as provided in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1 of the NBAF EIS include Foot and Mouth Disease virus, Classical Swine Fever virus, Vesicular Stomatitis virus, Rift Valley Fever virus, Nipah virus, Hendra virus, and African Swine Fever virus. Should the NBAF be directed to study any pathogens not included in the list of pathogens included in the NBAF EIS, DHS and USDA would conduct an evaluate of the new pathogen(s) to determine if the potential challenges and consequences were bounded by the current study. If not, a new risk assessment would be prepared and a separate NEPA evaluation may be required.

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cont.|2|19.2

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1 And I know the feasibility study also adds
2 highly pathogenic avian influenza and
3 Newcastle Disease. And I guess my question
4 is: If you're only evaluating three diseases
5 in the DEIS and I read that Plum Island has
6 as many as 40 diseases that will transfer,
7 I don't understand how this effectively
8 bounds the hazards, accidents and
9 consequences from Nipah. And I'd like for
10 you to explain how three diseases can take
11 care of all these other unknown diseases that
12 surely will be under one roof at NBAF.

13 MR. PERGLER: We carried out the three
14 pathogens for detailed analysis. That's not
15 to say we ignored the other five.

16 We went through a very rigorous process
17 at the beginning of this analysis where we
18 actually had the multidisciplinary team, key
19 members of it, come to actually our offices
20 in Santa Fe and spent three days there
21 hashing out how best to perform the analysis.

22 There are considerations. You could have
23 done each and every one of them, but the time
24 and expense to do that would have been
25 enormous.

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1 We decided on the three pathogens because
2 in no case was one of the five -- in no case
3 does one of the five pathogens exceed the
4 consequence in any category of the three that
5 we selected. So when we carry out the three,
6 you're looking at the credible worst case
7 scenario that will not be exceeded by any
8 other organism.

9 And so that's what we used to determine
10 our bounding accidents case, if you will, and
11 the consequences thereof.

cont. | 2 | 19.2

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I guess my point
13 is that you're talking about eight diseases,
14 I'm talking about more than forty.

15 DR. KAPPES: Yes. The reason why we --
16 these eight are the diseases that we're
17 primarily going to be working with. For
18 research purposes those are the diseases that
19 we have prioritized -- we meaning USDA and
20 DHS. We've actually gone through having
21 several expert panels to prioritize what we
22 feel are the most dangerous pathogens for
23 agriculture.

24 The forty-plus pathogens, the remainder
25 of those are in stocks that USDA agents need

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1 for diagnostic purposes. If you're going to
2 rule out that one of these pathogens -- that
3 a tissue doesn't have one of these pathogens,
4 you need a positive control to make sure your
5 test is working.

6 So we'll only be doing very, very little
7 work on some of these other pathogens. And
8 the level of effort in that area doesn't
9 justify the same kind of analysis.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I guess my point
11 is: Are they going to be under the NBAF
12 roof? And that's always been my point, is
13 that there will be more pathogens than the
14 eight you list.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. COGHILL: As a point of process,
17 folks, we've got 10 minutes left in the
18 question and answers. So if you could just
19 be very clear with your questions so we could
20 accommodate the four folks that are left.

21 Thank you.

22 THOM JENKINS: Thom Jenkins, retired
23 DuPont.

24 I grew up in an industry that learned the
25 hard way that you don't put concentrated risk

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 19.2

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. By definition, BSL-4 facilities are specifically designed to safely handle exotic pathogens that pose a high risk of life threatening disease in animals and humans through the aerosol route and for which there is no known vaccine or therapy. It is because of the risks posed that NBAF in its current configuration is needed in order to provide a modern, integrated high-containment facility to safely and effectively address the accidental or intentional introduction into the U.S. of animal diseases of high consequence. A stand-alone BSL-4 lab would not enable DHS to fulfill its mission.

cont.|2| 19.2

1|19.2

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cont. | 1 | 19.2

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1 under the same roof. It seems to me that
2 with 10 percent of the facility devoted to
3 Level 4 that one of the first choices should
4 be to build a small 50,000-square-foot Level
5 4 facility, maybe large animal connected with
6 it and scatter the other risks at other
7 sites.

8 And that seems not to have been addressed
9 in Mr. Teague's (phonetic spelling)
10 standpoint. I'd like to know why.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. JOHNSON: We looked at that. And the
13 whole idea is this would be an integrated
14 facility, you know, not just from a foreign
15 animal but a zoonotic disease. And we looked
16 at a number of things separating the research
17 from diagnostic.

18 What is unique about what we're doing is
19 foreign animal diseases. Plum Island is the
20 only facility that does it. It does has
21 research and diagnostics. So we feel like
22 adding the BSL-4 as part of the integration
23 will allow the scientists to do the
24 crossovers and the collaborations in a single
25 existing facility.

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1 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

2 Yes, sir.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'd like to ask a
4 question about what I think is circular
5 reasoning in DEIS throughout as it's been
6 mentioned this evening. The conclusions
7 reached by the DEIS are based on normal
8 operations.

9 When you study the body of the DEIS, the
10 only way you can find what normal operations
11 means is by deducing that normal operations
12 are operations when nothing goes wrong. So,
13 therefore, when nothing goes wrong, nothing
14 goes wrong and you're able to conclude that
15 NBAF would have an insignificant impact on
16 health or safety.

17 I think that the DEIS should talk about
18 what are normal operations, what is the
19 likelihood that abnormal operations can occur
20 and is there a sliding scale of risk and
21 impact based on different scenarios of
22 abnormal operations.

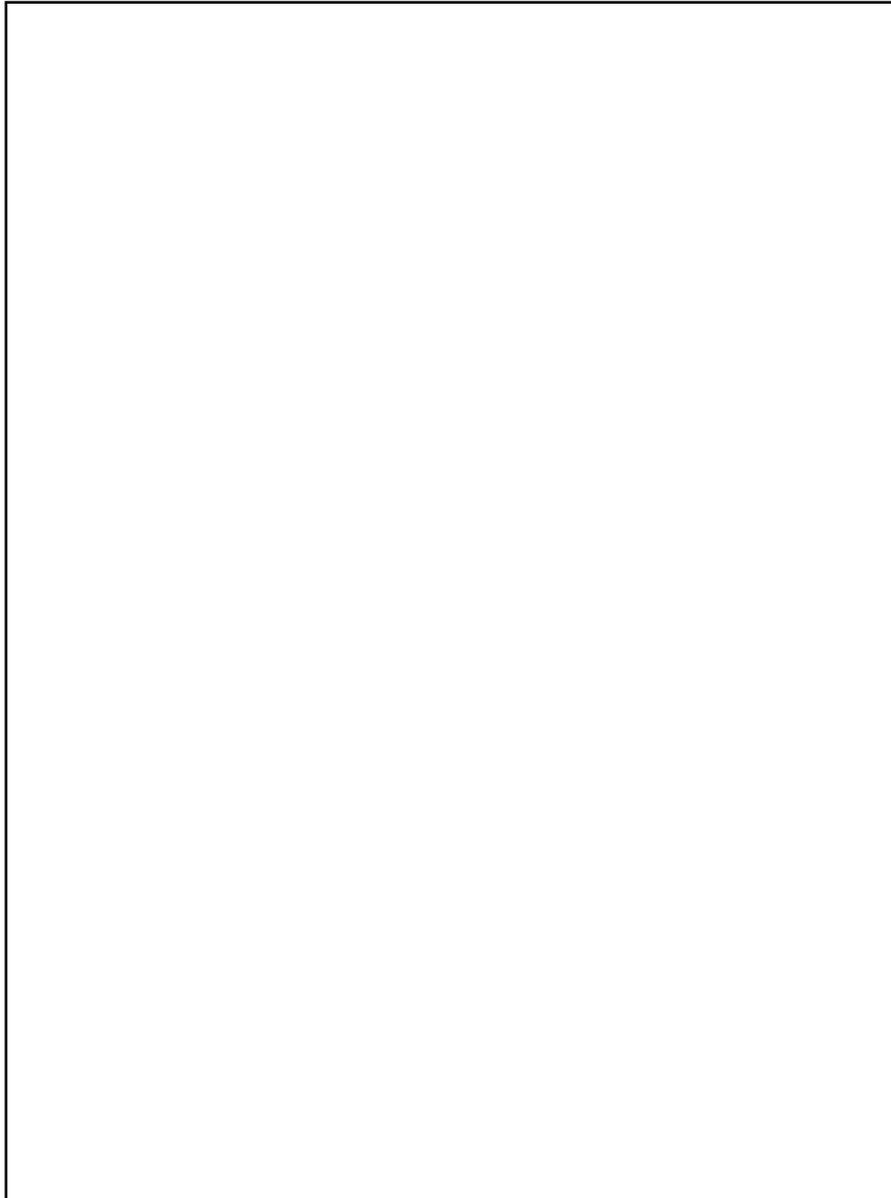
23 MR. PERGLER: Okay. Under normal
24 operations -- what we're trying to do is full
25 disclosure. Normal operations doesn't mean

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's comment regarding the impact of normal operations. As stated in the EIS only under accident conditions is there the potential for adverse impacts. 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. Chapter 3, 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 Chapter 2, 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 Chapter 3, 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 Chapter 2, 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 Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (APHIS). 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 as well as domestic and wildlife residing within the local area. 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: 2 Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's comment regarding normal operations. Normal operations are described in Chapter 2 and abnormal or accident events are address in Chapter 3. As stated in the EIS only under accident conditions is there the potential for adverse impacts. 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. Chapter 3, 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 Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.1 of the NBAF EIS, all laboratory staff would



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1 there's no effect.

2 For example, if we operate generators,
3 we've got some emissions of air pollution.

4 So we give that to you. We will also
5 disclose if that threatens to violate an air
6 quality standard, things like that.

7 So normal operations do have effects. So
8 we tell you what the operation is and tell
9 you what the effect is.

10 Now, we found effects under normal
11 operations to be within, for the most part,
12 the regulatory standards or did not have
13 adverse effects to, say, wildlife in the
14 area, things like that.

15 Now, we did also look at off-normal
16 events for the accident condition. And we
17 did give you the data there, too. We tell
18 you what the consequence is of a release.

19 For example, with Rift Valley Fever, if
20 the vector gets out, we could establish that
21 in this country. We disclose that
22 information.

23 Do we make a conclusion there?
24 Oftentimes unless there is a violation of a
25 federal statute/regulation/law, we will let

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1 the data speak for itself.

2 So, again, we've given you that data in
3 there, that it is not without consequence and
4 significant consequence. We allow you to
5 determine what you think that effect is in
6 the scale.

7 As does DHS and USDA. They're going to
8 look at the facts. The decision makers will
9 make a determination does the benefit of the
10 construction and operation of the facility
11 exceed the potential risk.

3|23.0

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, the problem
13 is, of course, is in the summary. Many of
14 the decision makers, at least here in
15 Georgia, have read past the summary. And the
16 summary gives you a very optimistic look at
17 the picture.

18 So I wish when you go into the final EIS
19 you will consider how you deal with the
20 definition of normal operations.

21 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. We're willing to do
22 that.

23 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

24 Yes, ma'am.

25 SUSAN HODGES: My name is Susan Hodges.

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 23.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the risk posed by the 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. Such operational or inherent design failures or unplanned events result in "accidents" or abnormal operating conditions, the consequences of which have been evaluated in Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS. Nevertheless, impacts would occur from construction and operation of the NBAF under normal operations such that resources would be consumed and effluents would be routinely emitted to the air and water within specified permit limits, etc. These effects are also assessed in resource-specific sections of the NBAF EIS.

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1|12.2

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1 I live here in Clarke County.

2 My question has to do with water. And I
3 have not had a chance to look at the entire
4 draft document yet. But I'd like to know:
5 In the analyses did you actually look at
6 where the water was going to come from?

7 I understand it will be the equivalent of
8 228 households' use of water. And,
9 specifically, did you address where that
10 water is going to come from in Clarke County,
11 where we've had increasingly severe droughts
12 with very tight water restrictions on the
13 citizens?

14 And my understanding is that whatever the
15 water use is at this facility they will not
16 be able to further decrease use under drought
17 conditions.

18 So that's my question, what did you look
19 into about the sources of water in the
20 various sites and specifically what about
21 here.

22 MR. PERGLER: Yeah. Basically you'll
23 find the answer in the infrastructure section
24 of the EIS where again we look at capacities,
25 safe water yield of that. So we looked at

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commenter'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.

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1 the water supply and looked at what the
2 capacity is and determined that if -- with
3 the projected water use from NBAF do we stay
4 within the safe yield capacity. And the
5 answer is yes in this case.

6 Now, under drought conditions, that's
7 going to have to be determined what the
8 action of DHS is based on community needs and
9 the plans in effect at that time. And that
10 will be determined when the site selection
11 process is made.

12 MR. JOHNSON: We'll determine what's the
13 mitigation action that we need to take. It's
14 important that we know that, and a decision
15 maker would know what we'd be doing in that
16 particular --

17 SUSAN HODGES: Don't you have to know
18 that when you're looking at the sites now?

19 MR. JOHNSON: That's --

20 SUSAN HODGES: If we don't have water
21 here, how come this is still a site?

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. COGHILL: Sir.

24 JOHN WILKINSON: Hello. My name is John
25 Wilkinson.

cont.| 1 | 12.2

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2|4.0

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1 I kind of believe you need to have this
 2 center somewhere. I'm not sure -- if we
 3 might want a desert site, in my opinion.

4 But my question is: In your rigorous
 5 analysis of the accidental release of
 6 contaminants did you consider land, air and
 7 water modes of new transmission such as with
 8 land you have rooming animals such as deer
 9 all over the place, research animals with
 10 UGA, private cattle, pets, dogs and cats of
 11 people in town and even humans.

12 And as far as air as the mode of
 13 transmission, we have the most hot and humid
 14 site on the list with the highest levels of
 15 water vapor, also the highest level,
 16 according to entomologists, of winged insect
 17 predators spreading diseases as they do with
 18 plant pathogens.

19 And then water transmission. There is a
 20 pond on a tributary to the Middle Oconee
 21 River right next to the property boundary,
 22 according to this map I've seen with the
 23 river itself approximately 1500 feet south of
 24 the site.

3|25.2

25 So when I look at all these modes of

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 4.0

DHS notes the commentor's concerns about DHS's toll-free fax number and the date by which comments on the NBAF Draft EIS had to be received in order to be considered by DHS. DHS is not aware of any misprints of the toll-free fax number in its public outreach literature but does regret any inconvenience or miscommunication of information in this regard during the public meetings. DHS did receive approximately 100 comments documents via fax. The 60-day public comment period on the NBAF Draft EIS ended on August 25, and DHS considered and has responded to in this Comment Response Document all comment documents postmarked on or before August 25, 2008.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 25.2

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

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cont.| 3| 25.2

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1 transmission in the accidental release,
2 Athens, quite honestly and sincerely, looks
3 like the worst site. And I would --

4 (Applause.)

5 JOHN WILKINSON: I would look to a less
6 hazardous -- I'd look to a less hazardous,
7 more biologically remote site where you can
8 get what you need to do to the site and we
9 can get the information for our cattle here
10 in Georgia that won't be victimized by a
11 release of contaminants, et cetera, et
12 cetera.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

15 Yes, ma'am.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He said it. He
17 said it. He covered my three, and I
18 appreciate it.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. COGHILL: This will be the last
21 question.

22 Yes, sir.

23 LAWRENCE SMITH: My name is Lawrence
24 Smith. I'm a resident of Athens.

25 And aside from all the risk factors that

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1|15.2

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1 people seem concerned about -- and you talked
2 about economic impact and impact on, I guess,
3 tax revenues for the area. And there was an
4 editorial in one of our local publications
5 today which I think hit this issue on the
6 head, that most scientists at this site are
7 likely -- I think it's not unrealistic to
8 assume most of them will choose to live in
9 suburban Oconee County and yet the
10 infrastructure needs will be in Clarke
11 County.

12 And Clarke County is very small. It's
13 the smallest county in the state and one of
14 the poorest, which is a surprise -- it was a
15 surprise to me to learn. So I think it
16 places an undue burden on our taxes here, us
17 as taxpayers here in Clarke county.

18 And I wonder if you addressed that or if
19 you just looked at sort of the regional
20 aspect of tax revenues and infrastructure.

21 MR. PERGLER: The methodology that we
22 used for the socioeconomics impact is we
23 assumed that all -- we used 326 employees for
24 the NBAF facility. For the purposes of this
25 analysis we assumed them all to come from out

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern. Funding for the design, construction, and operations for the NBAF will come from the Federal Government. Proposals for offsets to the site infrastructure (part of the construction costs) were requested by the Federal government. The decision as to what to offer (land donation, funding, other assets) is solely at the discretion of the consortium, state and local officials as part of the consortium bid site package. The amount of funding and how the funding is paid for (bonds, taxes, etc) is determined by the state and local government officials and not the decision of the Federal government.

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1 of state. That gives the greatest burden to
2 the infrastructure in the counties of -- in
3 the region of influence that we looked at.

4 We did not find that the infrastructure
5 would be overly burdened by those individuals
6 coming in. This was the most conservative
7 method we could -- we could use to make sure
8 that the capacity exists or if it didn't
9 exist we could develop mitigation. But,
10 again, we found the existent fire, police,
11 just housing and that sort of thing.

12 Bradley, would you like to add anything
13 to that?

14 BRADLEY: The -- I just want to --

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Stand up, please.

16 MR. PERGLER: They want you to stand
17 up.

18 BRADLEY: Yes. I just want to reiterate
19 what Chuck said.

20 For the impacts on community facilities
21 we did use the largest number to look at what
22 the impact would be on the community, on the
23 housing, the schools and fire and all the
24 community facilities. So we looked at 326
25 employees coming into the area, which would

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1 give you -- we also looked at journey to work
2 information, applied the number.

3 So it's actually not 326. It's actually
4 a little less than that because some may not
5 be living in the three-county region that we
6 looked at. But this gave us the largest
7 parameters to look at the impact on community
8 facilities. And we found no significant
9 impact on these.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That seems
11 unbelievable to me. But given the fact that
12 Clarke County is so small and the facility
13 located in Clarke County and right next to
14 the Oconee County line, I just find that
15 unbelievable.

16 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.
17 (Applause.)

18 MS. COGHILL: This is the formal comment
19 portion of the agenda. I'd like to go over
20 the parameters that we have set forth, ask
21 that you all follow them.

22 They're the same parameters that we've
23 put in place at all the sites to respect all
24 community members at each location. And we
25 expect that everybody here respects those

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1 people who have the floor, regardless of
2 their opinion that they get an opportunity to
3 speak.

4 Having said that, I will guide each
5 person through where they are on the clock.
6 But, like I said before, each speaker has
7 three minutes.

8 We do have a full agenda of speakers this
9 evening. We want to make sure everyone gets
10 a chance to speak.

11 Each person has, again, three minutes.
12 At two minutes, thirty seconds I will hold up
13 the yellow card and at three minutes when
14 your time is up the red. If you have not
15 finished your comments, please turn and
16 quietly go back to your seats, because we
17 have over forty people here who would like to
18 speak this evening.

19 The first person, it will be Cecilia
20 Herles.

21 I'm also going to call the next few folks
22 after her. So if you could move towards the
23 front of the room and step up to the
24 microphone when she's finished, that would be
25 great.

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1 Following Cecilia is Doc Eldridge, Arnett
2 Mace, Kittie Everitt and Charles Craig.

3 Ms. Herles, you have the floor.

1|25.2 4 CECILIA HERLES: I am strongly opposed to
5 NBAF. It's hard when the mighty Goliath of
6 profit stands before those of us who are
7 opposed to NBAF.

8 I am strongly opposed to NBAF here in
9 Athens. And, frankly, I'm dismayed but not
10 surprised at how the many vocal opponents of
11 NBAF here in Athens have been portrayed as
12 lacking the proper information or has some --
13 or, you know, been seen as somehow
14 irrational.

15 As someone who is very proud of my Ph.D.
16 from UGA, my research is focused on
17 environmental ethics. And I find that this
18 is, unfortunately, the typical kind of
19 bashing of those who dare to voice concerns
20 regarding the environment.

,cont.|1|25.2 21 We who oppose NBAF --
22 (Applause.)

23 CECILIA HERLES: -- are a large and
24 diverse group of concerned residents,
25 including local business owners, parents,

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.2

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

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cont.] 1|25.2

1 teachers, UGA students, faculty and staff.

2 We who oppose NBAF, like myself, prefer the

3 philosophy of caution, hindsight and risk

4 assessment. We who oppose NBAF prefer the

5 philosophy of quality of life.

2|7.2

6 To us NBAF represents destruction, not

7 protection. To us NBAF represents a loss of

8 a beautiful, aesthetic value of land to

9 replace -- to be replaced by this facility of

10 the size of five Walmarts.

11 I don't understand how it can be said in

12 good conscience that this is a, quote,

13 unquote, green facility. At one of the last

14 Department of Homeland Security meetings this

15 was actually a claim that was made. I think

16 this is the most outrageous statement I have

17 heard so far in all of this.

18 I teach classes here at UGA on the

19 environment. Believe me, I think this is a

20 gross misuse of the word.

21 When something is, quote, unquote,

22 green -- and that word is thrown around a

23 lot -- it does not endanger the surrounding

24 ecosystem, it does not place unnecessary

25 burdens on resources such as water that are

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 7.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the visual effects of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site, 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 viewshed of the area. 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, Section 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.

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3|12.2 1 in trouble already in terms of meeting the
2 needs of the community. And it certainly
3 does not pose serious and potentially
4 irrevocable threats to air, water and life.
5 Ideally if something is green it means it
6 adds to the flourishing, not the flushing of
7 one's resources.

8 In all of this I'm reminded of the word
9 spraypainted on the levy walls in New
10 Orleans: hindsight. I have been a local
11 resident for over ten years and I've been
12 fortunate enough to make Oconee County my
13 home, along with other family members, and
14 I've even convinced family members to move
15 down here. Up until now it's been a very
16 easy sell.

cont.|2|7.2 17 It's a beautiful place. I'm proud to
18 live here. I'm the mother of two young
19 children. And, like so many others, we love
20 the botanical gardens, the beautiful scenery
21 and the best views of Athens in town when we
22 go by Milledge and Whitehall.

4|5.2 23 I'm not opposed to something else going
24 there necessarily, just NBAF. The thought of
25 NBAF there with all of its glaring lights,

Comment No: 3 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 three surface water resources: the North Oconee River, the Middle Oconee River, and the Jackson County Bear Creek Reservoir. The access to three surface water resources would help ensure the availability of water in the event that any one of those sources becomes inadequate.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. Construction of a fence and security road would have minor effects, and there would be temporary effects due to increased noise and lighting during construction activities. Operation of the NBAF would result in minimal noise emissions due to heating and cooling systems as well as occasional testing and operation of emergency generators. Nighttime lighting would be designed as to minimize the potential effects.

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cont.|4|5.2

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1 suffering animal test subjects and possibly
2 armed guards keeps me awake at night.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. COGHILL: Doc Eldridge is our next
6 speaker.

7 DOC ELDRIDGE: My name is Doc Eldridge.
8 I reside at 530 West (unintelligible) in
9 Athens. I'm the president of the Athens Area
10 Chamber of Commerce.

11 I have struggled with what to say
12 tonight. I think everybody here knows
13 probably where I'm coming from.

14 The people that are here tonight, both
15 those who are for and against, I can't say
16 that I love Athens any more than they do.
17 They -- we all love our community. We are
18 not in agreement about what's best for our
19 future. But I commend everybody for coming
20 out. This is what makes our community great.

21 I have a lot of friends who have placards
22 that say no and a lot of neighbors. And I
23 think that we will all agree that while we
24 don't agree we will respect each other's
25 positions. And if we can't do that, I'm

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1 concerned about where we're headed.

2 The last time you were here I asked the
3 question if not this, then what. And I would
4 like to ask it again.

5 I -- I'm the president of the Chamber of
6 Commerce, the (unintelligible) Chamber of
7 Commerce. We are a co-convenor Progress for
8 a Prosperous Athens, a community group that
9 is addressing poverty in our issue -- in our
10 community.

11 The Chamber of Commerce board unanimously
12 voted to support the location here in Athens
13 for NBAF. Does that mean that every one of
14 our thousand members support it? No. But a
15 lot of them do. And for the 200 or 400 or
16 500 people that showed up today we have a
17 hundred thousand other people in our
18 community many of whom support, some that
19 don't.

20 (Audience boos.)

21 DOC ELDRIDGE: Now, I'm asked -- I
22 wonder -- your firm, you were charged with
23 plying basically a what if, what if certain
24 things happened. What if we did no research
25 in animal disease? What if we did no

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

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

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1 research at CDC in the heart of metro
2 Atlanta? Where would we be? Where would we
3 be in cancer, age research and other diseases
4 to the human.

5 This is what since basically the mid
6 1970s this community, in collaboration with
7 our partners at the University of Georgia, we
8 have been targeting for the biosciences, the
9 life sciences industries. This is what we
10 said we want.

11 Now, if we lose this selection on merit,
12 I can live with that. I don't personally
13 think we can. I think we've got the best
14 site. I think we offer a lot of things that
15 the other communities can't.

16 But the -- it's important to me if we do
17 lose how we lose. What have we said after
18 all these decades of targeting this type of
19 industry, this type of environment for our
20 community, what are we saying to the outside
21 world.

22 I want to thank you for your time and
23 patience. I want to thank each of the
24 citizens who have come out tonight. And I
25 appreciate the effort you're doing.

cont.
1|24.2

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1 (Applause and boos.)

2 MS. COGHILL: Folks, excuse me. As a
3 point of process, everybody here needs to
4 respect and tolerate the opinions of others.
5 The hissing and the commentary when someone
6 has the floor is not respectful of another
7 person in your community. Please stop that
8 and let the people who have the floor at the
9 time speak.

10 (Applause.)

11 ARNETT MACE: Good evening. I'm Arnett
12 C. Mace, Jr. I'm the senior vice-president
13 for academic affairs and provost at the
14 University of Georgia.

15 I want to thank the Department of
16 Homeland Security for the opportunity to
17 speak on behalf of myself and Dr. Michael F.
18 Adams, president of the University of
19 Georgia. Dr. Adams could not be here this
20 evening due to a longstanding commitment
21 abroad. I mention that not because or to
22 explain his absence but to underscore my
23 message.

24 University of Georgia administrators and
25 researchers have studied the report of the

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

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

1|24.2

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cont. | 1 | 24.2

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1 potential environmental impact and the safety
2 of NBAF. We accept while there may be
3 minimal risk associated with this facility
4 these are far outweighed by the much greater
5 benefits not only to Athens but to the larger
6 community to which we all belong. It is a
7 point on which I would like to expand.

8 Let me begin by starting on a strong
9 belief that it's the obligation and duty of
10 the university to apply its resources to the
11 service of the people of the state. And so
12 while attempting to say that diseases that
13 will be studied by NBAF are diseases that
14 are not here today in Athens, Georgia,
15 because they are foreign animal diseases and
16 emerging infectious diseases, we must be
17 honest and acknowledge the irrefutable fact
18 that Athens and Georgia are part of the
19 global community.

20 Today travel and interaction between the
21 continents, the exchange of people, animals,
22 animal products and food products are vastly
23 greater than in the past. But, too, is also
24 the potential for the microbes and diseases
25 that accompany them.

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1 Who among us have not been -- or had
2 second thoughts about the tomatoes or the
3 peppers that we buy often from international
4 countries? And who has been on an airplane
5 in which there have been coughing and
6 sneezing by the person next-door to them that
7 has raised a major concern.

8 Today there are no human or animal
9 diseases even in the smallest corner of the
10 globe that we cannot afford to ignore. What
11 is in China, Mexico, Brazil, Russia, the
12 Middle East and Africa today may well be
13 here, quite literally, in Athens tomorrow.

14 Chemistry is the cornerstone of our
15 quality of life. It's no accident that
16 through the University of Georgia history our
17 College of Agriculture, environmental
18 sciences and veterinary medicine have applied
19 their knowledge and their resources to
20 challenge and protect and ensuring the food
21 supply and safety.

22 And over all of the past decade the
23 university has focused on biomedical and
24 health sciences. Our Biomedical and Health
25 Sciences Institute, the Center for Emerging

2|1.0

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 1.0

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

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cont.|2|1.0

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1 and Global Diseases, the faculty of
2 infectious diseases, cancer center, our new
3 school of public health, all these resources
4 are devoted to that of public health.

5 But in the 21st century the safety of
6 food supply, the health of our citizens
7 across the globe cannot be considered
8 separate. So we as the university are very
9 committed to this program and very supportive
10 of this program for the health and welfare of
11 the people.

12 Thank you very much.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. COGHILL: Next is Kittie Everitt,
15 followed by Charles Craig, Doug Lowry and Jim
16 Sykes.

17 KITTIE EVERITT: I'm Kittie Everitt, and
18 I have just retired from teaching at the
19 university for many years.

20 I wanted to address this particular
21 point: Last month a Pakistani woman named
22 Aafia Siddique was arrested in Afghanistan by
23 the FBI. She graduated from MIT and then
24 earned a Ph.D. in neuroscience in Brandies
25 University.

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1|21.2

1 When she was arrested she had in her
 2 possession maps of New York City, also a list
 3 of potential targets that include the Statue
 4 of Liberty, Times Square, the subway system
 5 and, most pertinent to this evening's agenda,
 6 the animal disease center on Plum Island.
 7 She has been identified as the most
 8 significant, radicalized agenda -- Al Qaeda
 9 operative captured in five years by
 10 high-ranking CIA officers and also by the
 11 FBI.

cont.|1|
21.2

12 My immediate concern is that the animal
 13 disease center on Plum Island has already
 14 been targeted by Al Qaeda terrorists. By
 15 bringing that facility in our community we
 16 bring with it the potential of a terrorist
 17 attack. To make this decision --

18 (Applause.)

2|21.2

19 KITTIE EVERITT: To make this decision
 20 would be unjustified and also foolhardy.

21 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. COGHILL: Charles Craig.

24 CHARLES CRAIG: My name is Charles Craig.
 25 I'm president of Georgia Bio.

Comment No: 1 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 (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.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative based on concerns of a potential terrorist attack on the NBAF. Section 3.14 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 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.

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1 24.2	1 On behalf of Georgia Bio I want to
	2 express my organization's strong support for
	3 locating the National Bio and Agro-Defense
	4 Facility in Athens.
2 8.2	5 Georgia Bio is a private, nonprofit
	6 association representing the life sciences
	7 industry in Georgia. Our members total more
	8 than 300 pharmaceutical, biotechnology and
	9 medical device companies, research
	10 institutes, government groups and other
	11 business organizations across the state.
	12 These companies and organizations employ tens
	13 of thousands of life scientist professionals
	14 and are international leaders in research,
	15 development and manufacturing life sciences
	16 products.
3 15.2	17 Georgia State government officials have
	18 identified life sciences as a top strategic
	19 industry for economic growth. And Georgia
	20 Bio works for the state to support existing
	21 industry growth and recruit new companies and
	22 organizations to Georgia such as the National
	23 Bio and Agro-defense Facility.
cont 2 8.2	24 Georgia Bio's members are intensely
	25 interested in supporting life sciences

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 commentor.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 15.2

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

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cont.| 2| 8.2

1 industry growth, creating a greater -- a
2 critical mass of life sciences companies,
3 research institutes and related
4 organizations, facilitates more collaborative
5 research and development, strengthens the
6 work force and fosters a strong and
7 supportive professional community.

cont.| 2| 8.2

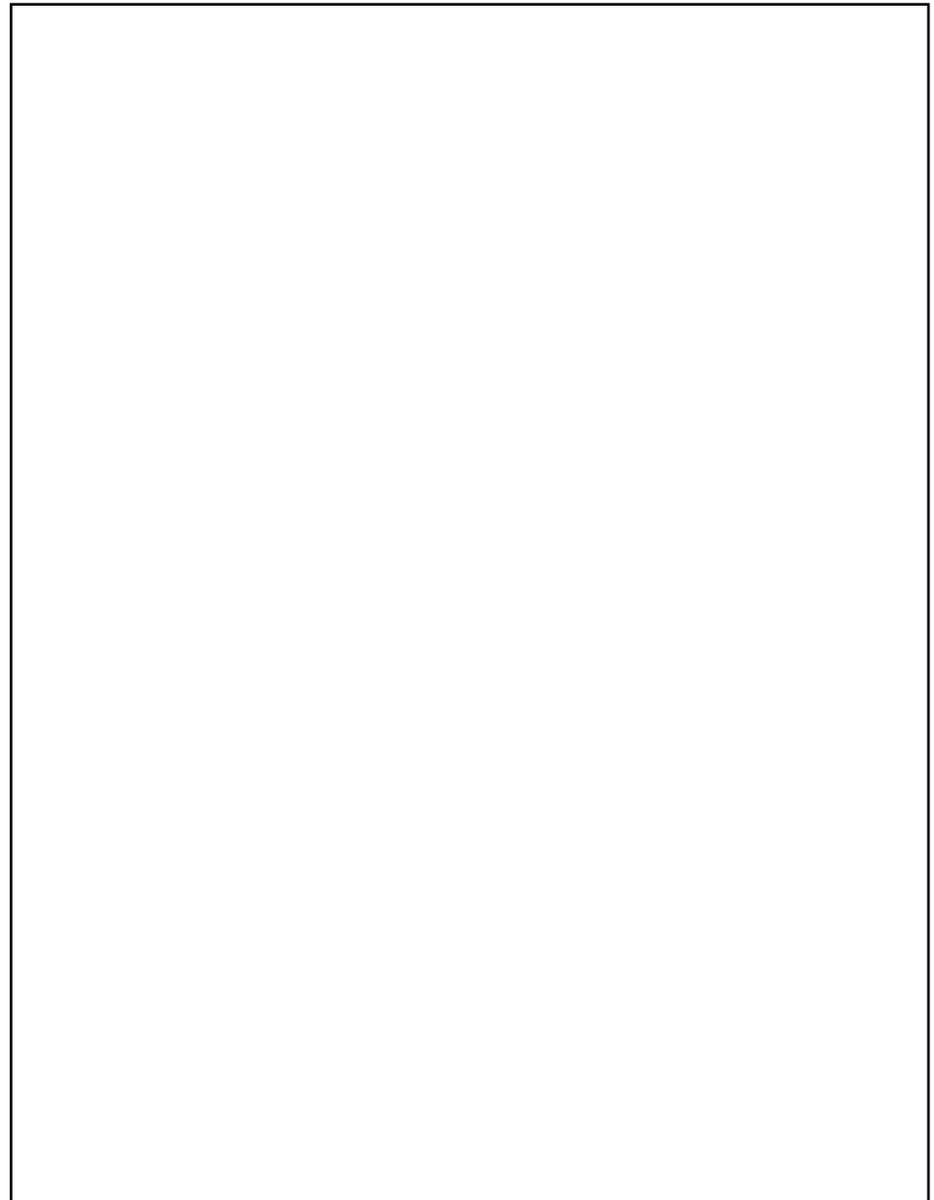
8 Locating the National Bio and
9 Agro-defense Facility in Athens will bring
10 hundreds of jobs to the state and will spur
11 even more growth as companies and
12 organizations locate in Georgia to
13 collaborate with the research center.

cont.| 1| 24.2

14 Athens is a prime location for the
15 National Bio and Agro-defense Facility for
16 many reasons. In addition to proximity to
17 the University of Georgia, U.S. Department of
18 Agriculture and Environmental Protection
19 Agency Research Centers, the region between
20 Athens and Atlanta is where 85 percent
21 Georgia's life sciences industry is located.

22 In fact, the 13-county region is
23 identified as Georgia's Innovation Crescent,
24 a center of excellence for life sciences
25 innovation. The local governments, business

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cont.|1|24.2

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1 organizations, state government, universities
2 and life sciences industry are working
3 together to promote the life sciences growth
4 in this evening. The National Bio and
5 Agro-Defense Facility will be a welcome
6 addition, an enormous boost to this region
7 and the state.

cont.|2|8.2

8 About 230 life sciences companies, the
9 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and
10 prevention, Yerkes National Primate Research
11 Center, Emory University, Georgia Institute
12 of Technology, Georgia State University,
13 Morehouse School of Medicine, Morehouse
14 College, Spelman College and Clark Atlanta
15 University are all within 70 miles -- are all
16 within 70 miles of Athens and all within the
17 innovation crescent. The Medical College of
18 Georgia, which is expanding to Athens, also
19 is part of the region.

cont.|2|8.2

20 The companies and universities in this
21 region employ the full range of life sciences
22 workers from management and administrative
23 personnel to technicians and scientists.
24 They represent a strong and robust life
25 sciences work force.

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cont.| 1|24.2

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1 This includes highly-skilled workers that
2 are trained for employment in several Level 3
3 and 4 biosafety laboratories in Georgia.

4 Where better to locate the National Bio and
5 Agro-Defense Facility than in a state that
6 already has a long track record of safety
7 with such laboratories and the work force to
8 help them train others to work there.

9 Georgia Bio and its members urge USDA and
10 Homeland Security to locate the National Bio
11 and Agro-Defense Facility in Athens where the
12 presence of fast-growing -- (unintelligible).

13 (Audience boos.)

14 MS. COGHILL: Folks, come on. There's
15 a -- this is very important to everybody here
16 in the room, and we need to make sure -- yes.
17 Next.

18 The next person to speak is Doug Lowry.
19 Thank you.

20 DOUG LOWRY: Thank you.

21 Good evening. My name is Doug Lowery.
22 I'm Athens-Clarke County Commissioner in
23 District 1.

24 Many of you know me. Many of you are my
25 friends. And I represent about 12,000 people

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1 in Athens-Clarke County. I have a prepared
2 statement I'd like to read to you tonight.

3 I believe the National Bio -- National
4 Bio and Agro-Defense Facility has become one
5 of the most important opportunities that
6 Athens-Clarke County has seen in the
7 generation. Although the decision to locate
8 this facility here will ultimately rest with
9 federal officials, local government may
10 nonetheless play a vital role in the success
11 of these efforts.

12 Other things being equal, the federal
13 government officials in charge of deciding on
14 the location of these facilities are less
15 likely to choose to locate in a community
16 where they believe a facility will be
17 unwelcome by the citizens. For this reason
18 it is important that local government
19 officials who have been elected to represent
20 local citizens such as myself make their
21 views known about the NBAF.

22 Virtually everyone recognizes that we
23 need to attract industry that brings
24 high-paying jobs. Athens-Clarke County is
25 one of the poorest counties in the country

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 24.2

DHS notes the commentator's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 15.2

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

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cont.|2| 15.2

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1 with a population of over one hundred
2 thousand. Every issue that has a potential
3 to effect economic development and financial
4 opportunities for our citizens, especially
5 the poorest among us, is paramount in
6 considering any issue, including the NBAF
7 proposal.

8 I would like to emphasize those on the
9 lowest end of the economic ladder because I
10 agree with Franklin Roosevelt when he said in
11 his second inaugural address the test of our
12 progress is not whether we add more to the
13 abundance of those who have much; it is
14 whether we provide enough for those who have
15 too little. The only issue more important
16 than raising the standard of living for our
17 citizens is protecting the safety of all
18 residents who are also our families, our
19 friends and our neighbors.

20 If I believed that any economic
21 development proposal would harm the people or
22 resources of our region, I would leave the
23 opposition to that proposal. I have been
24 gratified to learn that every one of the
25 elected officials, government representatives

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cont.|2|15.2

1 and every employee of the University of
2 Georgia with whom I have spoken feel exactly
3 the same way.

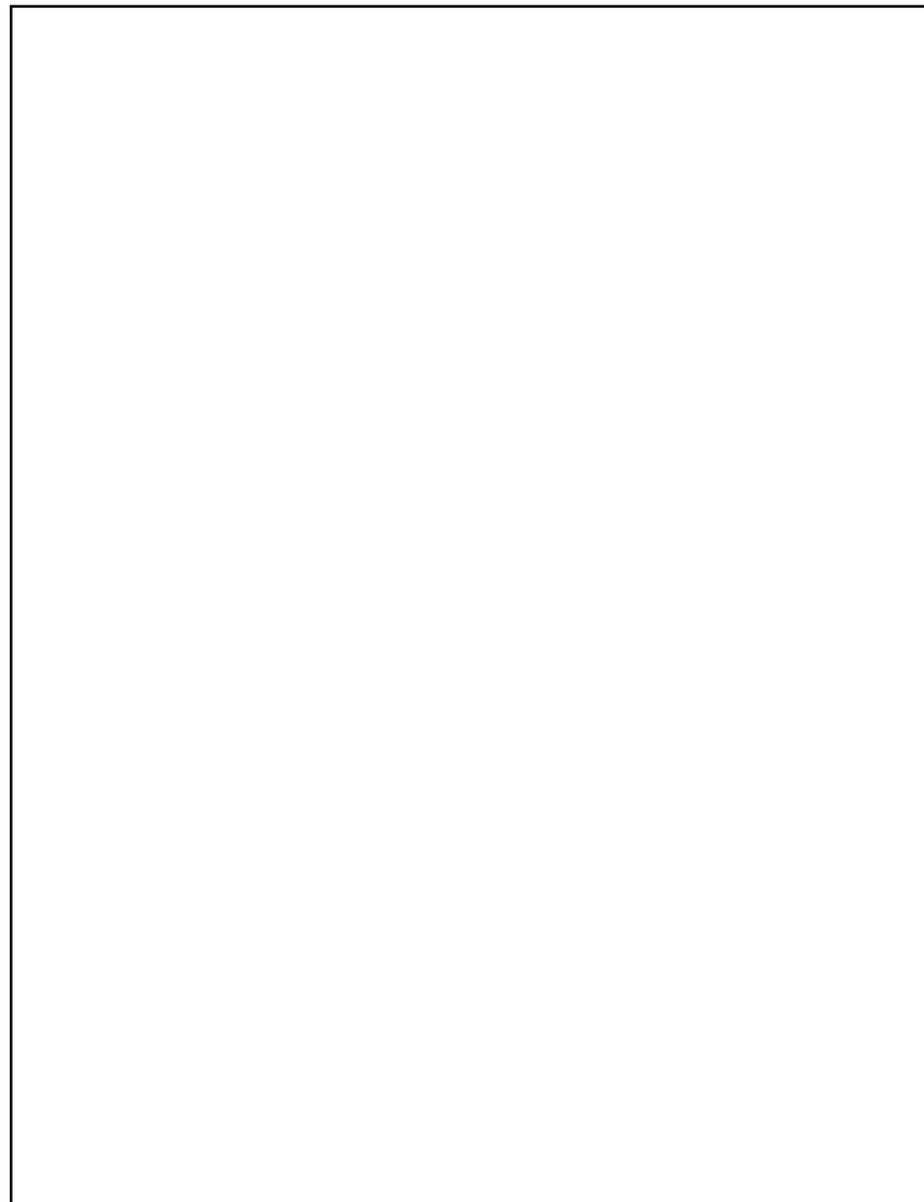
4 I know some people's mistrust of our
5 current federal administration has led them
6 to believe that this facility's true purpose
7 is different than what has been represented.
8 I also distrust much of what has been told by
9 the Bush/Chaney regime. I will never defend
10 many, if not most, of the actions of our
11 current federal administration. However, we
12 must not let our disgust and anger with the
13 administration in Washington blind us to a
14 genuinely safe once-in-a-lifetime opportunity
15 to bring in great jobs and not just a few
16 great jobs but jobs that could number in the
17 thousands.

18 I understand some people are fearful of
19 the proposed NBAF facility. And if I
20 believed everything that has been said by the
21 minority who are opposed to all such
22 facilities, I, too, would oppose the NBAF.

cont.|1|24.2

23 If I believed in every false rumor, if I
24 believed in the orchestrated campaign of
25 misinformation about the dangers of the

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cont. | 1 | 24.2

1 facility, I would be a leader in a fight to
 2 stop in NBAF research proposal.

3 However, let me say here to all of you
 4 tonight that I do not believe these false
 5 rumors -- (inaudible).

6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

7 Jim Sykes.

8 JIM SYKES: Good evening. I'm Jim Sykes,
 9 regional vice-president of Georgia Power
 10 Company here in Athens, also a board member
 11 for the Economic Development Foundation and
 12 the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce.

1 | 15.2

13 All these organizations strongly support
 14 the location of NBAF here in Athens. Be a
 15 huge economic impact for our region both now
 16 and in the future. Capital investment in the
 17 creation of new jobs are critical factors in
 18 sustaining our quality of life here in
 19 Athens.

2 | 21.2

20 Much has been said and written about risk
 21 and safety. I am certainly not an expert in
 22 this area, but I would suggest that there are
 23 risks with any endeavor. I am confident that
 24 NBAF, University of Georgia and other
 25 agencies have studied these risks and found

Comment No: 1 Issue 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.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 21.2

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.

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cont|2|21.2

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1 them to be very minimal.

3|24.2

2 As you make a final decision I would urge
3 that it be made on the qualifications. I am
4 convinced that when we are compared against
5 the other sites with our proximity to CDC, to
6 Emory and especially to the University of
7 Georgia, along with our numerous other
8 attributes, that Athens will be selected.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

11 Kathy Hoard.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. COGHILL: Kathy Hoard is our next
14 speaker, followed by Michael Cassidy, Heidi
15 Davison, Matt DeGennaro and Stephanie Sharp.
16 If y'all can make your way to the front of
17 the room, that would be most appreciative.

18 KATHY HOARD: May I go ahead.

19 Good evening. My name is Kathy Hoard. I
20 am a 30-year resident of Athens-Clarke
21 County. This is my home. I am a member of
22 the Citizens Advisory Committee for the UGA
23 Animal Health Research Center.

1|1.0

24 Through the education of our members and
25 the transparency of all activities at this

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 1.0

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

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 24.2

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

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cont|1|1.0

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1 BSL-3 facility I have come to understand the
 2 significance of the work accomplished there
 3 and the enormous safeguards utilized to
 4 protect those working there, as well as
 5 citizens living and working in the general
 6 population around it.

7 I have also served three terms as a
 8 member of the Athens City Council and
 9 presently am serving in a second term as a
 10 member of the Athens-Clarke County
 11 Commission. I do represent the area of our
 12 community where the NBAF would be located.

2|24.2

13 I am here tonight in support of this
 14 project. I do not think this facility would
 15 pose a threat to the safety of -- or security
 16 of the citizens of our community; but it
 17 will, however, be a tremendous resource for
 18 ensuring the safety of our nation's food
 19 supply and hence our own safety.

3|7.2

20 I do have concerns, however. They are
 21 identified in the EIS with the appearance of
 22 the structure and with environmental issues.
 23 But I do believe these concerns can be
 24 addressed working together, especially with
 25 DHS's publicly-stated announcement that this

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 24.2

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

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 7.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement regarding the visual and environmental effects of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site.

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1 enhance and focus the capabilities of our
2 university research enterprise and to direct
3 it toward bringing economic prosperity and a
4 superior quality of life to Georgia, the
5 region and the nation.

6 Since 1990 the State and the private
7 sector in Georgia have worked together
8 investing more than half a billion dollars in
9 building the necessary critical mass to
10 support our strategy. Examples of such
11 investments include the recruitment of
12 several of the world's leading virologists,
13 immunologists and vaccinologists like Ralph
14 Trip, Raphe Ahmed (phonetic spellings) and
15 Julia Hilliard, scientists who are at the
16 frontiers of research and discovery.

17 We also invest in laboratory
18 infrastructure and develop -- have developed
19 cutting edge facilities such as the Animal
20 Health Research Center at the University of
21 Georgia, a facility for large and small
22 animal modeling of zoonotic infectious
23 diseases, the Emory Vaccine Center, an
24 international leader in basic immunology and
25 vaccine development and the Viral Immunology

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1 Center at Georgia State University which
2 houses the National B Virus Resource Center.
3 It's worth noting that several BSL-3
4 laboratories and a BSL-4 facility exist
5 within these resources.

6 These investments, as well as our State's
7 practice of fostering research and
8 development that is cross-disciplinary,
9 interinstitutional and collaborative will be
10 a strong complement and a valuable resource
11 to NBAF.

1|242

12 We believe that the NBAF will serve a
13 vital role in securing our nation's health
14 and economy. And we believe that the mission
15 and goals of the NBAF will best be served in
16 Athens, Georgia, a city and a state that have
17 made a substantial and a sustained commitment
18 to building a worldclass scientific
19 establishment.

20 On behalf of the public and private
21 partners represented by the Georgia Research
22 Alliance, we remain very enthusiastic about
23 helping NBAF to develop a worldclass center
24 in Athens that will generate significant
25 advances in the field of bio and

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

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

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cont.|1|24.2

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1 agro-defense.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. COGHILL: Heidi Davison.

6 HEIDI DAVISON: Hi. My name IS Heidi

7 Davison. I'm the mayor here in Athens-Clarke

8 County.

9 And I want to thank you for another

10 opportunity for the citizens of Athens to

11 comment on NBAF. We're thankful for your

12 time, thankful for the citizens here who are;

13 and we're honored to be so highly regarded to

14 become a finalist.

15 I have been listening to the comments

16 since the scoping meetings have started from

17 supporters and opponents, and I've read and

18 responded to e-mails that have come to me

19 from my constitutents as best I can as time

20 has allowed. I've read the letters in the

21 paper and the forums; and I've been reading

22 the blogs, as well. And I fully understand

23 and respect all of the opinions and the fears

24 and concerns and uncertainties that the

25 citizens feel and have sought answers to

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1 those questions as well as the questions that
2 I have of my own, which in some cases mirror
3 those of the citizens, of course.

4 I've read the majority of the EIS. I
5 need to go back and look at it again.

6 I've talked with scientists affiliated
7 and unaffiliated with UGA. I've talked with
8 individuals regarding the security and the
9 safety protocols, including our local firemen
10 who are first responders.

11 I've toured the Animal Research Health
12 Complex on the UGA campus just down the
13 street, once before it was commissioned and
14 again just this week. I've observed the lab
15 areas, the lab procedures, the safety
16 protocols, the air handling areas, the -- the
17 incinerator, the tissue digester.

18 And I've studied maps of Plum Island and
19 its proximity to the mainland. I've also
20 done some comparison analysis to other
21 facilities here in Athens of comparable size.

22 After all this research and discovery
23 I've come to understand and appreciate the
24 science and the research and the safety
25 protocol and especially the need for the

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 1.0

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

11.0

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cont. | 1 | 1.0

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1 mission of NBAF. And I'm very comfortable
2 having this facility in Athens after all of
3 that work that I have done.

4 We enjoy the ability to eat food that is
5 safe, thanks to government scientists who
6 work and have worked in similar facilities
7 for over half of a century. And in order for
8 us to continue enjoying a safe and secure
9 food supply this kind of research is
10 necessary and it must be ongoing. We need
11 labs with the needed capacity to do this kind
12 of work. So I would like to believe that
13 Athens is the best location to replace an
14 aging facility given our location to
15 complementary assets within our region.

2 | 2.0

16 I do want to note that the EIS talks
17 extensively about various local and
18 environmental regulations that I'm familiar
19 with, in addition to those imposed by
20 the State and federal government. So I
21 appreciate that you took the time to look at
22 our local regulations. So it was clear to me
23 that you've done a good bit of research on
24 that.

25 I'm asking for assurances that our local

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 2.0
DHS notes the commentor's statement. DHS and USDA ensure that the NBAF operation at the South Milledge Avenue Site will comply with all applicable local, state, and Federal regulations.

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cont. | 2 | 2.0

1 regulations be adhered to, as well as those

2 of state and local jurisdiction and that

3 again -- and I also agree with Ms. Hoard that

3 | 8.2 4 we would like you to very much consider that

5 this be a LEED certified building. If you

6 can build one in Atlanta as a BSL facility at

7 the CDC, you can build a LEED facility in

8 Athens just as easily.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you very much.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. COGHILL: Matt DeGennaro.

13 Stephanie Sharp, Keith Harris and then

14 John Willcutts are our next speakers.

15 Matt.

16 MATT DEGENNARO: Hi. I'll be good.

1 | 25.2 17 I'm here to tell you you've been misled

18 by the consortium on one of the criteria for

19 selecting a site for NBAF. There was and

20 continues to be no demonstrated community

21 acceptance of this project.

2 | 4.2 22 The January 16th, 2006, Federal Register

23 states in DHS's call for expressions of

24 interest, quote, DHS will evaluate each EOI

25 submission using four site criteria

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: 4.2

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 (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: 3 Issue Code: 8.2

DHS notes commentor's recommendation to design the NBAF facilities at the Umstead Research Farm site to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. 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, Section 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.

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cont.| 2| 4.2

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1 categories: Research capabilities, work
2 force acquisition, construction and community
3 acceptance to determine if it should be
4 further evaluated as part of the site's
5 planning process.

6 The Georgia Consortium for Health and
7 Agro-Security offered up two sites of
8 expression of interest. Reportedly, Georgia
9 also has an appropriate local work force and
10 broad-based community support to guarantee
11 the success of NBAF.

12 Also, in the heading under community
13 acceptance we read Georgia Wants NBAF.
14 Georgia officials, from senators and the
15 governor on down, wrote letters of support to
16 DHS Director Michael Chertoff as part of the
17 EOI. Our elected officials in March 2006 all
18 used the word we in their supportive welcome.
19 Athens Mayor Heidi Davison wrote we stand
20 ready to accept this facility and are
21 prepared to assist in any way we can.

22 Well, in March 2006 Athens, Georgia, not
23 only didn't want NBAF, we had no idea what
24 the hell NBAF was. And many still don't
25 today.

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1 The first meeting that was hold -- that
2 was open to the entire community was held
3 almost a year and a half later, on August
4 30th, 2007. Despite lack of community
5 knowledge or acceptance when DHS came to
6 inspect the site six months later, on April
7 24th, 2007, Mayor Davison told DHS that UGA
8 leaders have done a good job keeping people
9 informed about the proposal and because
10 Athens has a very educated and engaged
11 citizenry the public has kept a close eye on
12 the proposal and what it would mean for the
13 community.

14 The same ABH article quotes Homeland
15 Security spokesman Chris Kelly as saying
16 that, quote, UGA leaders must incorporate
17 feedback from residents within a 60-mile
18 radius of the site and show they have either
19 received community input or have a specific
20 plan to draw feedback from area residents.
21 But when asked UGA's David Mead about this in
22 email exchange and at a meeting he called
23 this misinformation.

24 Jeff Wilson, publisher of the Athens
25 Banner Herald, is on the board of the

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1 Athens-Clarke County Economic Development
2 Foundation, which itself is a member of the
3 Georgia Consortium: With news headlines like
4 UGA chief likes bio-defense chances, senators
5 hoping Georgia assets will win fed labs and
6 editorials titled defense facility seems
7 natural fit for university and bio-technology
8 dreams could become reality, newspaper
9 publishing could best be described as
10 cheerleading.

11 Anyone seeking facts about potential
12 risks of such a lab have to look to press of
13 other states where the newspapers reported
14 the down side of NBAF and the communities
15 turned against it.

16 And the show goes own with the discovery
17 yesterday of a captured terrorist possessing
18 maps of Plum Island the headline this morning
19 might be NBAF a possible terrorist target.
20 Instead the Banner Herald reads NBAF Salaries
21 on Top of Local Scale.

22 But make no mistake. You have been
23 grossly misinformed. When the consortium
24 told you there was broad-based community
25 superior, there was neither community

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1 knowledge -- and if Athens is selected to --
2 (inaudible).

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. COGHILL: Stephanie Sharp is our next
5 speaker.

6 Stephanie.

7 STEPHANIE SHARP: My name is Stephanie
8 Sharp. I live in Athens and have been here
9 for about 15 years. And my children go to
10 school about five miles from the planned
11 facility at Athens Montessori.

12 I own a local web development firm here
13 in Athens and I employ ten people here, ten
14 people that need these jobs. In the spirit
15 of full disclosure, I'm also a board member
16 on the Athens Economic Development Foundation
17 board.

18 I've come here tonight to speak about the
19 special interests that are being served by
20 the support of this project. We do not
21 support this project because we're
22 pro-government or pro-military or
23 anti-environment. We are simply pro-business
24 and want to see Athens take full benefit of
25 the knowledge that's being developed at our

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

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

1|24.2

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cont. | 1 | 24.2

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1 university systems.

2 This opportunity came to us because of
3 our scientific community and our economic
4 development leaders and because of our
5 special -- and because of the special
6 interest this community has. We have a
7 special interest in more jobs for the Athens
8 area.

9 Many of the opponents have argued that
10 the highest-paying jobs will be given to
11 transplants while Athenians will be left with
12 the lower-paying jobs. The truth is that
13 people will live in and among us, they will
14 spend their money at local businesses, they
15 will buy real estate in our area and
16 contribute to the tax base in our area.
17 Over time these positions will inevitably
18 transition to more locally learned
19 professionals.

20 Even if only fifty jobs go to Athenians
21 at an average salary of thirty to fifty K a
22 year with federal benefits, that's a great
23 benefit to those fifty people who might work,
24 are in underpaid positions or be unemployed.
25 And who are we to turn those jobs away.

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement regarding employment. In addition to creating temporary construction jobs, the proposed action is expected to directly and indirectly support permanent jobs. A portion of the permanent jobs at the NBAF will be filled locally and the household spending by new residents and the operations of the NBAF are expected to indirectly support additional jobs that will be filled by the local labor force. The number of short-term and permanent jobs that will be directly and indirectly created by the construction and operations of the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative are discussed in Section 3.10 of the NBAF EIS.

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cont.| 2| 15.2

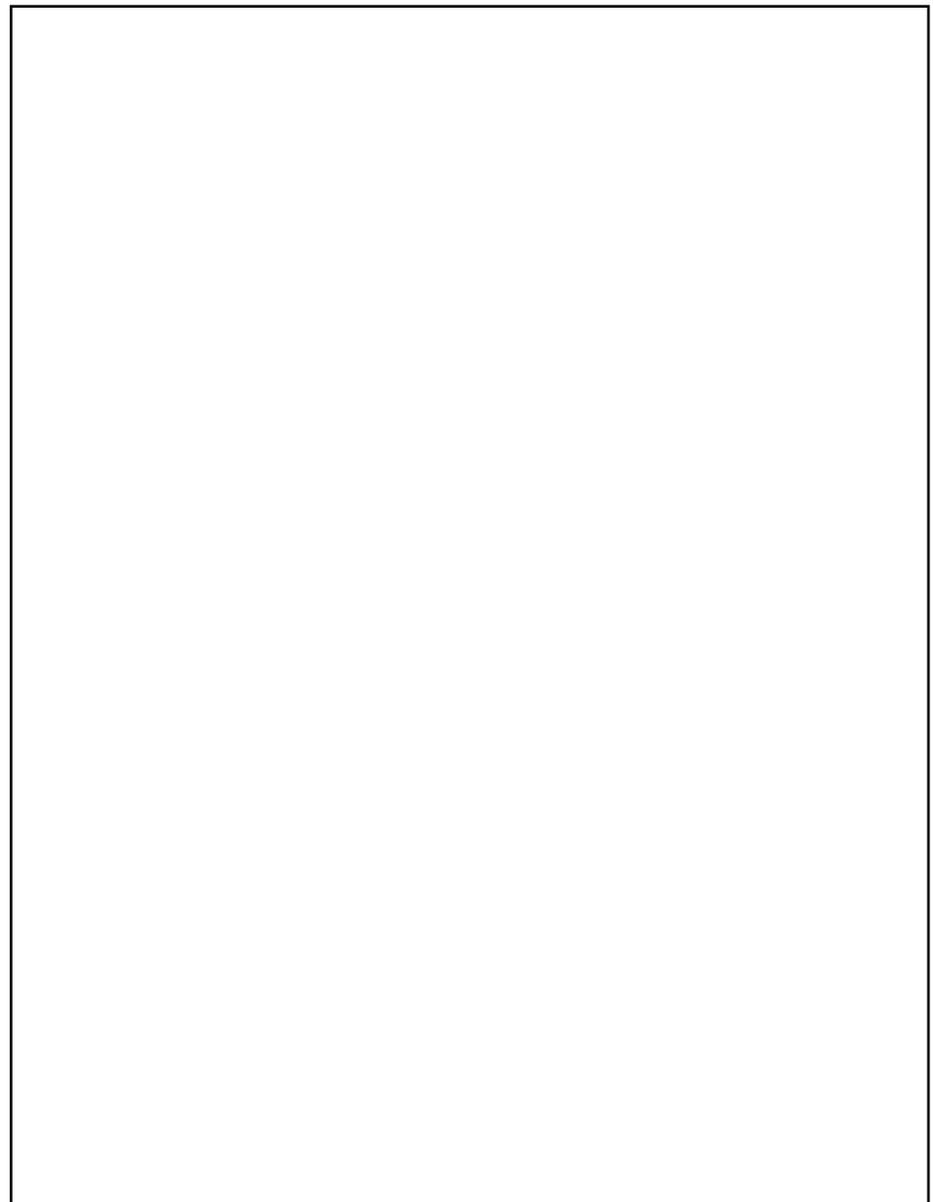
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1 We have a special interest in building an
2 economic base that will help fund the
3 creation of new business and more jobs in
4 existing businesses. We have a special
5 interest in expanding our scientific
6 knowledge and our ability to attract
7 businesses that will enable us to keep more
8 of the graduates from all the post-secondary
9 institutions we are fortunate to have in
10 Athens.

11 Whether NBAF is built here or not, our
12 primarily special interest should be in
13 making sure that Athens isn't overlooked as a
14 possible location for other business and
15 industry, because we need the jobs and we
16 need the income. When a potential business
17 contacts the Georgia Department of Economic
18 Development looking for a suitable location,
19 we don't want Athens to be at the bottom of
20 the list because economic development is a
21 dirty word here.

cont.| 1| 24.2

22 During my tenure on the Economic
23 Development Foundation board these are the
24 only special interests I have been introduced
25 to. And I support each and every one of



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cont. | 1 | 24.2

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1 them.

2 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. COGHILL: Keith Harris.

5 KEITH HARRIS: Hi. My name is Keith
6 Harris. I'm one of the newer residents to
7 the area, having moved here less than two
8 weeks ago with my family.

9 I'm the new head of veterinarian
10 pathology at the College of Veterinary
11 Medicine at UGA. Part of my responsibility
12 are the diagnostic labs in Athens and Tifton.
13 And part of their mission is protect the
14 livestock industry in Georgia, specifically
15 and even broader than that in part of the
16 consortium of the state and federal
17 laboratories to protect the national
18 livestock industries. And I think that's
19 been reviewed in detail.

1 | 21.2

20 One thing to me that's clear is that
21 foreign animal diseases eventually will get
22 here. It's going to come, and it's going to
23 have a significant impact. And it's really,
24 I think, an attribute to the USDA and their
25 colleagues at the State that have kept it out

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

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cont| 1|21.2

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1 as long as it has.

2|24.2

2 For me -- well, first of all, I believe
3 scientifically this is -- versus the other
4 options, this is the best place to put it
5 just scientifically. Again, it's spelled
6 out, it's close to CDC, close to the College
7 of Veterinary Medicine, close to UGA and on
8 and on.

9 I think if you're looking for zero risk
10 in something like this, forget it. There's
11 always a risk. I think the bigger risk,
12 though, is not protecting our country by
13 developing the means of diagnosing these
14 diseases early, by preventing them, by
15 containing them is bigger than that, a lot
16 bigger than that.

17 So that's -- I support bringing it here.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. COGHILL: John Willcutts.

22 JOHN WILLCUTTS: Hi. I'm John Willcutts.
23 And I'm definitely pro-agriculture and proud
24 to have a thorough education experience in
25 agriculture and hydrological engineering.

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 24.2

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

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1 I'd also like to note that I'm not
 2 against this facility in its construction and
 3 implementation to protect the nation's
 4 agricultural natural resources from any
 5 potential threats through biohazards.
 6 However, I honestly and sincerely believe
 7 that the Athens Milledge Avenue site is
 8 biologically and economically potentially the
 9 most hazardous site and most vulnerable to
 10 spreading the biological contaminants and any
 11 associated mutated viral diseases in the
 12 event of an inadvertent accidental or even
 13 intentional release of such biohazard
 14 contaminants.

15 The reasons I feel this way are the
 16 potential for gases or air transmission of
 17 contaminants, Athens is the warmest and the
 18 most humid site with ample water vapor in the
 19 air to help facilitate transmission and
 20 biological contaminants, insect vectors are
 21 at the greatest pressures of all the sites
 22 here in Georgia for transmission through the
 23 gases medium or the air just as they might
 24 transplant diseases, which they do here in
 25 Georgia. And we should know they do in

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.2

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

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commenter's concern. A description of the potential for a pathogen or infected vector to spread with an accidental release is included in Section 3.14. 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 [RVF] virus) becoming established in native mosquito populations 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. Additional effects of a pathogen release to wildlife is included in Section 3.8.9 and the potential economic effects are included in Section 3.10.9 and Appendix D.

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cont.|2| 19.2

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1 foreign agriculture.

2 We have the highest insect population
3 pressures of all the sites or anywhere in the
4 U.S. Mosquitoes are an admitted vector of
5 transmission and all over Athens of one of
6 the diseases, the Rift Valley fever.

3| 12.2

7 Also, we have the case of a liquid
8 aqueous transmission of contaminants. The
9 Athens site is precariously close to the
10 Middle Oconee River enabling transmission via
11 water medium going downstream to the southern
12 coastal plains where we have an agricultural
13 sector. In the Piedmont we have a lot of
14 cattle.

15 The watershed has ample site for mosquito
16 breeding which might lead to the spread of
17 pathogens. There's a pond on a tributary
18 bordering the property for this site that
19 goes to the Middle Oconee River which is
20 approximately 1500 feet from the border of
21 the site.

cont.|2| 19.2

22 If we consider the land transmission of
23 contaminants and inadvertent release, we have
24 land animals and the associated solids. Deer
25 run all over the place. They are roaming

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's regional watershed concerns. The NBAF EIS Section 3.7.3 describes the water resources at the South Milledge Avenue Site alternative and the potential construction and operational consequences. Section 3.14 describes the hazard and accident analysis including site-specific consequences.

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cont. | 2 | 19.2

1 animals like those who get Foot and Mouth
 2 Disease. We got cattle, rodents, dogs and
 3 pets and people. People can get the Hendra
 4 virus.

4 | 21.2

5 Pets and rodents are noted vectors of
 6 some diseases to be studied, including the
 7 Nipah Virus. Roamers like the deer and
 8 research sheep, cattle and horses, as well as
 9 private cattle and horses, can spread the
 10 Foot and Mouth Disease.

5 | 5.2

11 So it seems that, you know, the Athens
 12 site has the highest risk. It seems as --
 13 almost as if the people who suggest the
 14 Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi sites
 15 may be out of touch with the agricultural and
 16 biological realities in the Southeast like
 17 the humid Southeast and the potential hazards
 18 associated with release of contaminants.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. COGHILL: Gary Black is our next
 21 speaker, who will be followed by Grady
 22 Thrasher, Kathy Prescott and Thom Jenkins.

23 GARY BLACK: Good evening. Welcome to
 24 Georgia. I am Gary Clack. I'm president of
 25 the Georgia Agri-Business Council. And I'm a

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 21.2

The NBAF would provide state-of-the-art operating procedures and biocontainment features to minimize the potential for laboratory-acquired infections and accidental releases. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operation 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. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the NBAF. Section 3.8.9 of the NBAF EIS addresses existing and potentially applicable response plans that provide insight into some of the livestock and wildlife protective and mitigating measures that could be employed in the event of a pathogen release from the NBAF.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commenter's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative and concern regarding the potential consequences from a NBAF accident. Section 3.14 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 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. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low, but the economic effect would be significant for all sites.

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1 Jackson County neighbor and cattle producer.

2 I want to thank the Department of

3 Homeland Security, U.S. Department of

4 Agriculture for this opportunity to comment

5 on NBAF and its Draft Environmental Impact

6 Statement.

7 I know of no greater service that can be

8 rendered to any country than the improvement

9 of its agriculture. These words were spoken

10 over 200 years ago by our nation's first

11 president, George Washington. And they

12 remain true today.

13 But tonight I choose to strengthen this

14 quote to include the protection of

15 agriculture and the protection of the quality

16 of life for all of our citizens. The

17 citizens of our nation is so important.

18 Such, I believe, is the purpose of NBAF.

19 For over forty years my organization has

20 represented and promoted Georgia's 55 billion

21 dollar agriculture industry. And that

22 includes the interest of cattle, sheep, swine

23 and poultry producers throughout the state.

24 We have over 750 member farms and

25 companies in this state for whom a strong

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 1.0

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

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 24.2

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

11.0

2|24.2

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cont.| 2| 24.2

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1 agriculture and food defense program is
2 extremely vital for the future. Importantly,
3 an implicit part of our mission is ensuring
4 the quality of life for all of our citizens.
5 My organization believes that NBAF would be
6 an asset to Georgia and that Georgia is the
7 best possible place to locate this important
8 facility.

9 We've heard much about the foreign animal
10 diseases that NBAF will study, including Foot
11 and Mouth Disease and the very real potential
12 to disrupt the food supply and devastate the
13 economy of our state and our country. What
14 we need to understand is it is our vigilance,
15 our ongoing investment in animal health
16 research that protects our agriculture.

3| 19.2

17 In a world where global trade is
18 increasing, we cannot let our guard down. If
19 we, in fact -- if we ignore this fact, it's
20 at our peril.

cont.| 1| 1.0

21 We have a complete confidence that NBAF
22 can and will conduct research on foot and --
23 Foot and Mouth Disease and other diseases
24 safely. The danger is not that we study them
25 on the mainland of this country but that we

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 19.2
DHS notes the commenter's support for the proposed research that would be conducted within the NBAF.

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cont.| 1| 1.0

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1 don't study them in the best place.

cont.| 2| 24.2

2 We believe that Georgia is the best

3 location for NBAF. The University of

4 Georgia, the USA Navy, Marial, the CDC and

5 other critical assets in Athens and nearby

6 represent some of the world's greatest

7 expertise in diagnosis, prevention and

8 treatment of foreign animal and zoonotic

9 diseases.

4| 21.2

10 We know that time is critical when an

11 animal disease outbreak occurs. And the

12 critical mass of expertise located in close

13 proximity to NBAF will be a significant

14 difference in its ability to fulfill the

15 mission to protect the animal and human

16 health.

17 Thank you for the privilege of being here

18 this evening.

19 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. COGHILL: Grady Thrasher.

22 GRADY THRASHER: My name is Grady

23 Thrasher. My wife, Kathy Prescott, and I

24 represent the Concerned Citizens of Athens,

25 Georgia, and surrounding communities in

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 21.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

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1 Clarke and Oconee Counties. Our nonprofit
2 organization is called For Athens Quality of
3 Life.

4 We do not represent the pandering
5 politicians, disingenuous academics or
6 financially-interested gain seekers that
7 comprise the Georgia Consortium. We
8 represent the people of our community whose
9 consent has never been sought and whose
10 consent never will be given to the proposed
11 NBAF being developed in the midst of our
12 pleasant, peaceful and progressive town.

1|25.2

13 Do not mistake politeness or even natural
14 congeniality of our people for a passivity or
15 absence of resolve. Our purpose is to
16 prevent NBAF from being located in our
17 community. Our purpose is to inform people
18 of the truth obscured by proponents,
19 propaganda and to expose the conflicted
20 interest and perverse logic of those who
21 would seek to degrade our environment and
22 place our population and much of our economy
23 at risk for the convenience, perceived
24 prestige and financial gain of a few.

25 In our opposition to NBAF in Athens we

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.2

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

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cont. 1 25.2	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 102</p> <p>1 will not back down nor will we step aside.</p> <p>2 To bring NBAF to Athens DHS will have to</p> <p>3 climb a mountain of legal briefs and live</p> <p>4 with a lifetime of negative reaction and</p> <p>5 public resentment.</p> <p>6 NBAF is not compatible with the</p> <p>7 recreational nature and character of the land</p> <p>8 on South Milledge. In particular, it is not</p> <p>9 compatible with the character of the unique</p> <p>10 and distinctive landscape UGA so cavalierly</p> <p>11 offered up in its haste to meet the</p> <p>12 competitive deadline set by DHS.</p> <p>13 We find your willingness to put us at</p> <p>14 risk, potentially catastrophic risk, using a</p> <p>15 flawed site selection, quote, competition,</p> <p>16 unquote, is irresponsible and repugnant to</p> <p>17 the proper role of government, particularly a</p> <p>18 government agency formed to protect</p> <p>19 communities, not exploit them.</p> <p>20 Please understand this, for we want it to</p> <p>21 be abundantly clear. The vast majority of</p> <p>22 the people of Athens, Georgia, do not want</p> <p>23 NBAF in their community. We, the people,</p> <p>24 will fight you and your irresponsible</p> <p>25 enablers at the University of Georgia and in</p>
2 16.2	
3 5.2	
cont. 1 25.2	

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 16.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern. 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 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.

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: 3 Issue Code: 5.2

See response to Comment No. 2. DHS notes the commentor's preference for the Plum Island Site Alternative.

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cont.|1|25.2 1 the Athens-Clarke County government by every
2 lawful means every step of the way should you
3 choose to impose NBAF on us.

cont.|3|5.2 4 The DEIS clearly shows that the safest
5 location for NBAF, if anywhere at all, is
6 Plum Island, New York. Plum Island is an
7 800-acre site already owned by DHS that has
8 been used for dangerous pathogen
9 experimentation for over fifty years. The
10 DEIS fails to show any compelling reason for
11 creating greater risk to our population and
12 economy by placing NBAF anywhere on the U.S.
13 Mainland.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. COGHILL: Kathy Prescott.

17 KATHY PRESCOTT: My comment is about --
18 oh, I'm sorry. Did you say --

19 MS. COGHILL: Next.

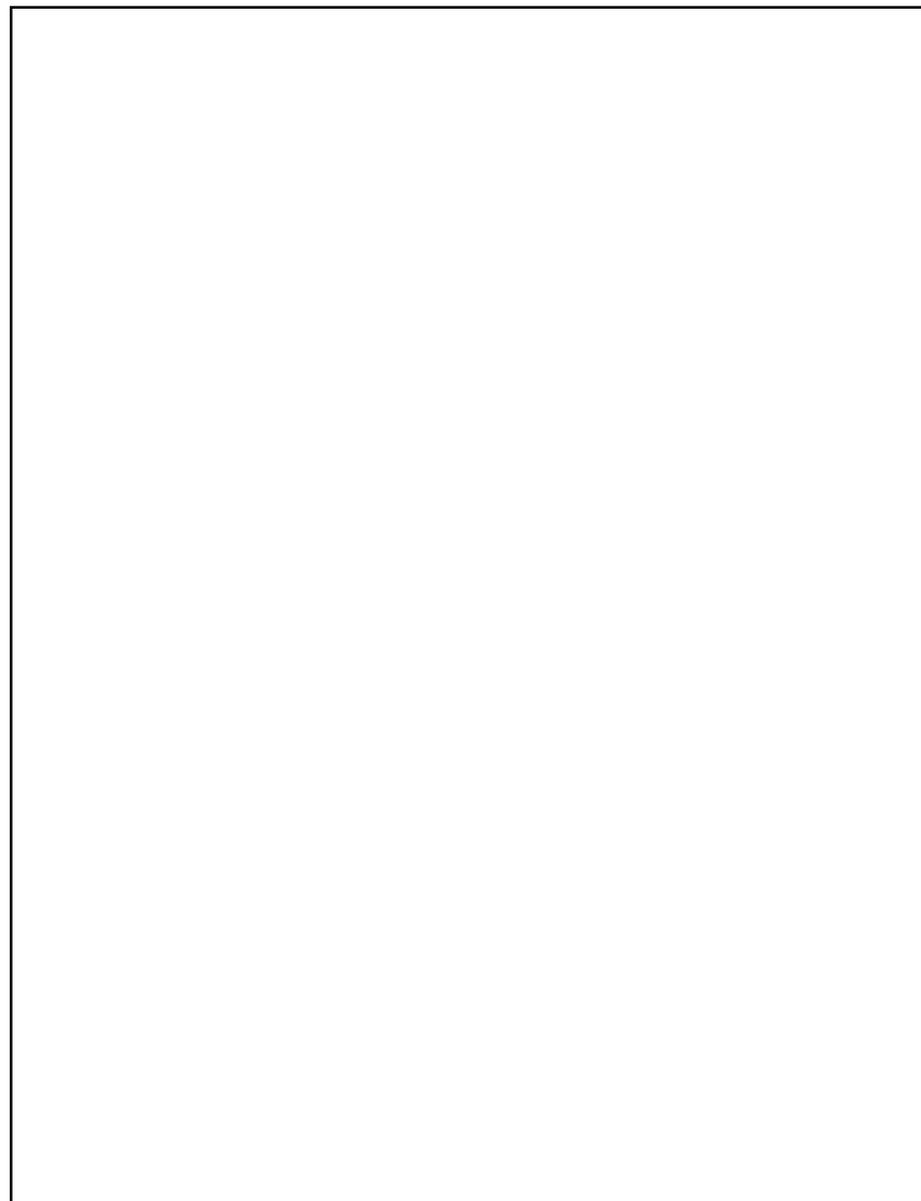
20 KATHY PRESCOTT: Oh, okay.

21 Will you start the timer over.

22 MS. COGHILL: Yes, ma'am.

23 KATHY PRESCOTT: Thank you.

1|19.2 24 My comment is about the mission of NBAF.
25 I know that you are reluctant to talk about



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cont.| 1| 19.2

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1 the effects of zoonotic diseases because you
 2 are going to work on animals. But I'm forced
 3 to just read some quotes from documents that
 4 I found.

5 The Federal Register, January '06: The
 6 proposed NBAF is an integrated human, foreign
 7 animal and zoonotic disease research
 8 development and testing facility that will
 9 support the complementary missions of DHS,
 10 Health and Human Services and the USDA. The
 11 proposed NBAF is envisioned to provide the
 12 nation with the first integrated agriculture,
 13 zoonotic disease and public health research
 14 development testing evaluation facility with
 15 the capability to address threats from human
 16 pathogens, high-consequence zoonotic disease
 17 agents and foreign animal diseases.

2| 2.0

18 From the DHS website the first downselect
 19 for potential sites: The work plan for the
 20 NBAF will address biological and agricultural
 21 national security risk by co-locating
 22 scientists from several federal agencies in a
 23 state-of-the-art biosafety containment
 24 facility. DHS plans to equip the NBAF with
 25 numerous labs that will conduct research in

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the potential effects to humans from zoonotic diseases. Information on the human symptoms of zoonotic pathogen exposure to humans for Rift Valley Fever Virus, Nipah Virus, Hendra Virus, and Japanese Encephalitis Virus is provided in Chapter 3, Section 3.14.1 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS.

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the NBAF. As described in Chapter 1 of the NBAF EIS, DHS's mission is to study foreign animal, zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) and emerging diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy. The NBAF would enable research on the transmission of these animal diseases and support development of diagnostic tests, vaccines, and antiviral therapies for foreign animal, zoonotic and emerging diseases. By proposing to construct the NBAF, DHS is following policy direction established by the Congress and the President.

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cont.| 2| 2.0

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1 high-consequence biological threats involving
2 foreign animal, zoonotic and human diseases.
3 House Bill 1717 that has been overrode
4 by -- -ridden by the Farm Bill said the
5 purpose of NBAF shall be an integrated human,
6 foreign animal and zoonotic disease research
7 development testing evaluation facility with
8 complementary missions from DHS, Department
9 of Agriculture, Department of Health and
10 Human Services.
11 From DHS website, the second downselect
12 last July: The NBAF, when built, we're going
13 to enhance our nation's defense against
14 animal and plant disease threats, said Jay
15 Cohen, Undersecretary of Science and
16 Technology, unquote. A joint activity with
17 the Departments of Agriculture and Health and
18 Human Services, the NBAF will address
19 biological and agricultural security risks.
20 The facility will be equipped with numerous
21 laboratories to conduct research involving
22 diseases that may be transmitted between
23 humans, diseases that may be transmitted from
24 animals to humans, as well as foreign animal
25 disease.

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cont.|2|2.0

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1 What is the mission of NBAF? I think
2 this is something we've never gotten an
3 answer to, as well.

4 Quote: Research involving diseases that
5 may be transmitted between humans appears on
6 your own website. Tell me why we, including
7 our local representatives and government,
8 should believe anything you say now or ever.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. COGHILL: Thom Jenkins is the next
11 speaker, followed by Patty Olinger, Ken
12 Starratt and Paul Smith.

13 THOM JENKINS: Can you give me a minute.
14 I'll lift this up.

15 MS. COGHILL: It should work, sir.

16 THOM JENKINS: Yeah. That's better.

17 MS. COGHILL: Okay.

18 TOM JENKINS: Thank you.

19 Thom Jenkins, retired DuPont, currently
20 active in environmental research and
21 academic.

22 And this discussion takes me back to the
23 first grade and the dunk-and-cover kind of
24 activities we went into diving under your
25 desk to practice being shielded from Russian

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1 nuclear attack. It's got the same sort of
2 feel to me. And I'm going to come at this
3 from a feel standpoint rather than from a
4 logic standpoint, because most of our logic
5 is designed to support decisions we've
6 reached emotionally.

7 In a merely -- I'm in my seventieth year.
8 So I look back a long way. And I started out
9 thinking about what was good for me and then
10 I started out thinking about what was good
11 for my kids, and then I started thinking
12 about what was good for my grandchildren.
13 And now I'm starting to think about what's
14 good for my grandchildren's grandchildren.
15 And we've raised a lot of issues here.

16 I was raised on a farm, a hundred-acre
17 farm that I put myself through college
18 building houses on. And most of our food
19 issues right now are related to the fact, I
20 believe, that we have mistakenly applied
21 industrial thinking to agriculture.

22 (Applause.)

23 THOM JENKINS: The Government
24 Accountability Office says that the
25 concentration of livestock in the United

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

11.0

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cont.| 1| 1.0

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1 States is one of the primary reasons we are
2 so subject to disease in livestock. NBAF
3 doesn't address that at all.

4 I just read a book called The Plowman's
5 Folly, written in the 1930s, that gave
6 exhaustive research that plowing is the
7 fundamental problem with soil preservation
8 because we rob the soil's ability to
9 replenish itself with the decaying vegetable
10 matter. Yet plowing has been a fundamental
11 of agriculture.

12 I think we need to ask ourselves the
13 question is defense against microorganisms
14 that are the result of a strategic approach
15 to agriculture a logical way of proceeding
16 from here and guaranteeing food security for
17 this country. Fifty percent of our food is
18 imported.

19 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. COGHILL: Patty Olinger.

22 PATTY OLINGER: Thank you, gentlemen, for
23 being here today. I appreciate your time and
24 efforts.

25 I'm a resident of Oconee County. I have

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1 made Oconee County my residence over this
2 last year. And I have grown to love this
3 community.

4 I'm a parent of a UGA student. I also
5 have a student who is in high school. So I
6 am a resident here.

7 I am also the director for environmental
8 health and safety at Emory University. So my
9 office looks over at CDC quite a -- quite
10 often. Actually it looks right out the
11 window.

12 Prior to Emory I was responsible for the
13 health and safety program at Kalamazoo,
14 Michigan, advisory on health and also for the
15 human health side for research and
16 development, infectious disease research with
17 a former pharmaceutical corporation.

18 I'm a registered biosafety professional
19 with the American Biosafety Association. I'm
20 on the National Biosafety and Biocontainment
21 Treating Advisory Board. In addition to
22 that, over the last five years I've had the
23 opportunity to work on the similar shop
24 agreement for Bio-Risk Management with Dr.
25 Stephan Wagner (phonetic spellings) from your

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1 sister facility in Winnipeg, Canada.

2 I know a little bit about these
3 facilities and how they're managed and how
4 they're designed. I'm also on the ballot
5 this year as one of two candidates for the
6 presidency of the American Biological Safety
7 Association.

8 It cannot be stressed enough the
9 importance of the mission of what you're
10 doing, the importance to our security, our
11 safety to this -- to community, let alone to
12 the United States and to -- actually to the
13 world. I applaud what you're doing. I've
14 seen multiple results of what you're doing.
15 And I'm here to support your effort in that.

16 I have been on many, many facility design
17 teams up through Level 3. And I understand
18 that when these facilities are designed and
19 managed appropriately they're some of the
20 safest facilities in the world. And I'm here
21 today to publicly support not only the
22 mission of NBAF but also for here in Athens.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

Comment No: 1 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.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 24.2

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

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1 MS. COGHILL: Ken Starratt.
2 Ken will be followed by Paul Smith, John
3 Fischer, Tim Hollibaugh and Steven Meeks. If
4 y'all could make your way to the front of the
5 room. Thank you.

6 KEN STARRATT: Yeah. My name is Ken
7 Starratt. I am a building contractor from
8 Oconee County, although I do most of my
9 business here in Athens.

10 But I spent the last 25 years building a
11 homestead in Oconee County for my -- my
12 children, my family, I hope future
13 generations, grandchildren, great
14 grandchildren, keeping the family together,
15 if possible, the way they used to do it in
16 this country. And I live -- I make my own
17 electricity. I have a family garden. And we
18 live inside the six-mile infection zone.

19 And I'm really here to represent my -- my
20 five-year-old son, who's too young to speak
21 for himself. But rather than betray him I've
22 decided that -- and remain silent, I decided
23 I would speak out and let you people know
24 that the DHS and your laboratory are unwell
25 come in this community. And --

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 25.2

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

1|252

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cont| 1|25.2

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1 (Applause.)

2 KEN STARRATT: -- if you choose this
3 site, Athens as your site, we will -- as
4 Grady said, we will begin litigation, endless
5 litigation, to stop you. And if litigation
6 fails we will organize massive civil
7 disobedience. And I'm not talking about
8 people demonstrating in downtown Athens or a
9 couple of people chaining themselves to a
10 fence. I'm talking about a massive,
11 permanent occupation of the site.

12 I don't think you people realize the
13 opposition to this laboratory in this town.
14 There's a bit of complacency from an article
15 written two days that implied that Athens was
16 not going to be the site. And I think it had
17 a bit of an effect on the number of people
18 that came out here today.

19 But how many people here would stand up
20 and show that -- your opposition to the
21 project.

22 (Applause.)

23 KEN STARRATT: Okay. My point is that,
24 you know, I didn't see any of the county
25 commissioners stand up.

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1 Heidi? Anybody stand up from the county
2 commissioners?

3 No.

4 Well, you know what I say. I say shame
5 on you for betraying your constituents, shame
6 on you for betraying your children and your
7 grandchildren, because those are the people
8 who are going to be affected by this, future
9 generations.

2/52

10 What I say to you is take this thing back
11 to Plum Island, off the mainland, where it
12 belongs. It's the only logical thing to do.

13 You will be facing massive opposition in
14 this town. And maybe in some of the other
15 places you've chosen, too. But I think Plum
16 Island and I think everybody here agrees that
17 Plum Island is the most logical, safest place
18 off of the mainland.

19 Thanks very much.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. COGHILL: Paul Smith.

22 PAUL SMITH: My name is Paul Smith. I'm
23 a Ph.D. student here at the University of
24 Georgia.

25 I think that as scientists who work with

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the five mainland site alternatives in favor of the Plum Island Site Alternative.

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1 infectious diseases and who understand and
 2 have experience in how these facilities work
 3 we often overlook what -- how large of a
 4 scary proposition it is to go to a community
 5 and say we would like to put a facility here
 6 and work with these infectious diseases.

1|19.2

7 These facilities are built and run with
 8 multiple layers of safety protection to
 9 prevent escape and exposure to the agents
 10 that are being worked with there. This
 11 begins at the administrative level by
 12 limiting access to the facility to only those
 13 who have extensive background investigations.

14 I know. I've worked at Plum Island. It
 15 took over a year of them investigating me
 16 before I could get clearance to work there.

2|23.0

17 Medical surveillance and personnel who
 18 work at these facilities is an important part
 19 of their program. The facility itself is
 20 engineered in such a way that it's virtually
 21 impossible for anything to escape from that
 22 facility.

23 In addition, the people who are working
 24 in this facility are trained. They wear
 25 appropriate protective -- personal protective

Comment No: 1 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. The NBAF would have the levels of protection and control required by applicable DHS security directives. A Threat and Risk Assessment (designated as For Official Use Only) was prepared that evaluated site-specific security issues and will be considered in the decision making process on whether or not the NBAF is built, and, if so, where.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 23.0

See response to Comment No. 1.

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cont|2|23.0 1 equipment to minimize exposure to the agents
2 that they are working with. In addition, the
3 scientists who are working in this facility
4 are putting their family and their well-being
5 and their careers on the line. Safe conduct
6 of the science that they are working is
7 necessary for their continued existence and
8 for the safety of their families.

3|24.2 9 Having experience working in these type
10 of facilities, I know that this work can be
11 done safely. I believe that the work
12 proposed by NBAF is essential to the nation,
13 and I believe that the facility would be a
14 benefit to Athens.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. COGHILL: John Fischer.

1|24.2 19 JOHN FISCHER: Thank you very much. I'm
20 John Fisher. I'm at the College of
21 Veterinarian Medicine. I'd like to voice my
22 strong support for bringing NBAF to Athens
23 Georgia. I'd like to line out some of the
24 reasons I feel this way.

2|1.0 25 Number one, along with some of the other

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

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

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 1.0

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

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 24.2

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

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cont.|2|1.0

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1 speakers tonight, I see the strong need for
2 this facility, for -- particularly for
3 foreign animal disease work, for research of
4 foreign animal diseases and for diagnostics
5 in recognizing foreign animal diseases and
6 training so people can recognize these
7 diseases when they appear, because they will
8 appear sooner or later. It's not a matter of
9 if but when. We're going to see them.

10 I've been fortunate enough to have been
11 to Plum Island a number of times and received
12 the training and have had the opportunity to
13 go back and assist in instructing others with
14 this training. It's very important.

cont.|1|24.2

15 Another reason I strongly support it
16 coming to Athens is because of the
17 collaborative opportunities that are here.
18 And I'm going to give an example.

19 We've heard already about the ARS's
20 Southeast Poultry Lab here in Athens. And we
21 have had, because of that opportunity,
22 collaborations between the vet school and ARS
23 that have developed some of the key
24 information on highly pathogen avian
25 influenza and what it looks like in native

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cont. | 1 | 24.2

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1 wild birds in this country. And it helps
2 greatly in developing the diagnostics that
3 we're using to conduct surveillance as well
4 as the surveillance strategies that we use.

5 Finally, I'd like to say that the
6 opportunities I've had to work at Plum Island
7 and with those researchers there has led me
8 to believe that they are wonderful people.
9 And I think, if you could agree with me here
10 tonight, we have a very unique and passionate
11 community here in Athens, and I think those
12 people would make a wonderful addition.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. COGHILL: Jim Hollibaugh.

17 TIM HOLLIBAUGH: Good evening. Thank you
18 for letting me speak, and thank you for
19 taking your time to be here.

20 My name's James Hollibaugh. I'm a
21 faculty member at the university in the
22 department of immunosciences and a
23 microbiologist/environmental scientist and,
24 oceanographer actually with 30 years of
25 professional experience. Over the course of

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1 my career I've contributed to writing
 2 environmental impact statements on a number
 3 of large governmental and private sector
 4 projects, and I've reviewed many more of
 5 them.

1|4.2

6 I've read the EIS for this project, and
 7 I've paid special attention to the
 8 methodologies used to evaluate the potential
 9 environmental impacts and the risks. And I
 10 agree with the basic conclusions of the study
 11 that the NBAF facility in its operation will
 12 have minor impacts that can be mitigated to
 13 acceptable levels and that any risks to
 14 health are negligible and acceptable.

2|15.2

15 I live in Athens, less than three miles
 16 from the proposed site. So basically my
 17 back yard. If the impact that CDC has had on
 18 the surrounding Decatur neighborhood is any
 19 indication of what the impact might be on my
 20 back yard, my back yard's going to get more
 21 valuable.

3|1.0

22 I recognize that some of the people in
 23 the community have concerns about this
 24 facility. As a resident of Athens, I am much
 25 more concerned about some of the risks

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 4.2

DHS notes the commentor's support for the basic conclusions of the NBAF EIS.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement. A discussion of the effects of the NBAF on property values was included in Section 3.10, which concluded that there would be no expected adverse effect for any of the sites. It is possible that with the relocation of highly skilled workers to the immediate area, property values could increase due to an increase in demand, and there is no empirical evidence that a facility such as the NBAF would reduce property values in the study area.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 1.0

DHS notes the commentor's support for NBAF. The risks and associated potential effects to human health and safety were evaluated in Section 3.14 of the NBAF EIS. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low for all sites.

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cont.| 3| 1.0

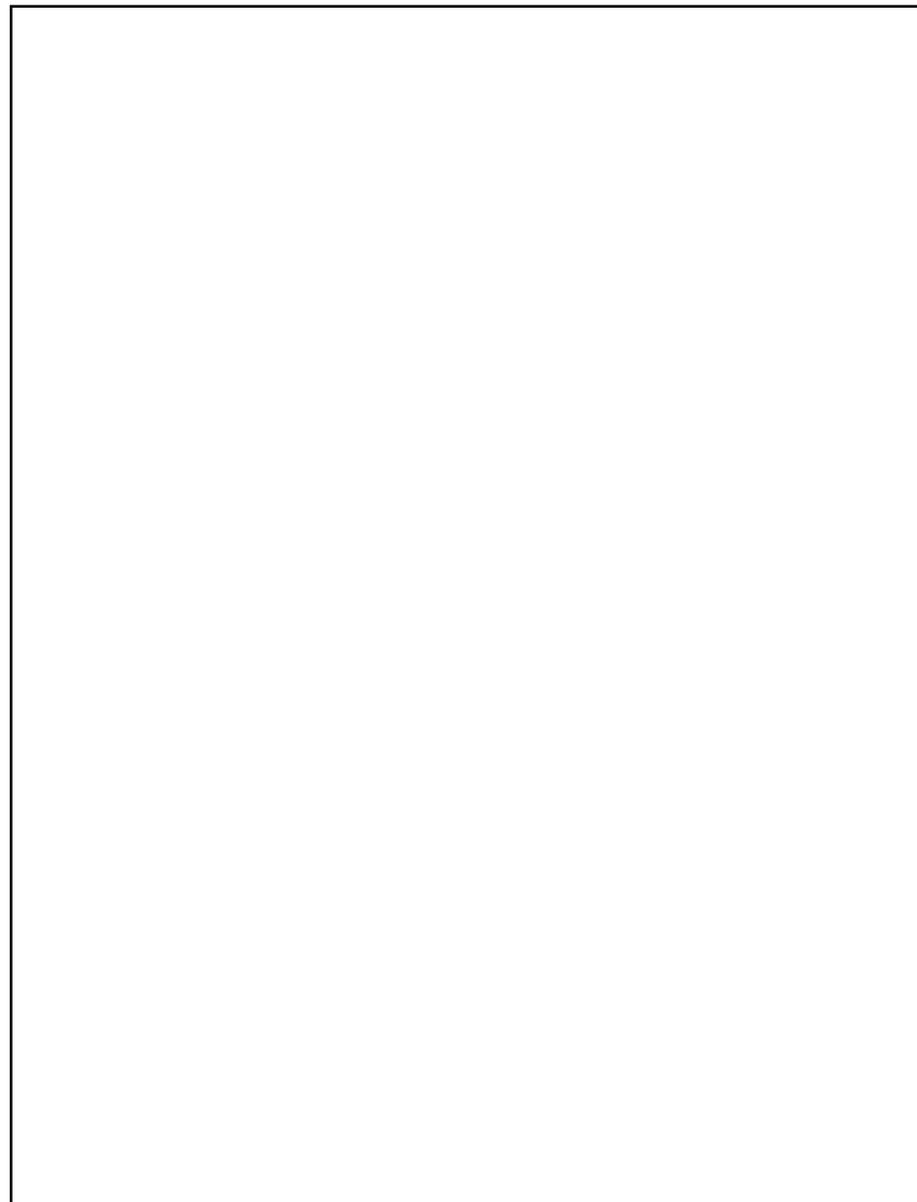
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1 associated with very simple, everyday acts
2 like driving around town than I am about the
3 operation and siting of this facility. Of
4 much greater concern to me, as a scientist,
5 is the consequence of not building NBAF,
6 regardless of where it may happen to be, at
7 Athens or another site.

8 I travel a lot professionally. As an
9 oceanographer I go to many places in the
10 world, various research projects. And as a
11 microbiologist I realize how hard it is to
12 keep microbes and their vectors, the kinds
13 that will be worked on at the NBAF facility,
14 out of the country.

cont.| 3| 1.0

15 It's not a matter -- as other people have
16 said, it's not a matter of if we keep them
17 out of the country, it is simply a matter of
18 when they will be here. Whether they are
19 introduced by accident, for example, as a
20 traveler bringing back a keepsake, whether
21 it's an undeclared shell or tortoise or
22 something like that or a shipment of imported
23 projects -- products or intentionally by
24 someone seeking to do us harm, they will get
25 here. And we need the facilities and the



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cont.] 3] 1.0	Page 120
1 knowledge and the techniques and the tools to 2 fight them once they do.	
4] 24.2	3 As a nation we need this research, and I 4 welcome in it in my back yard.
	5 Thank you.
	6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.
	7 (Applause.)
	8 MS. COGHILL: Steven Meeks is our next 9 speaker, followed by Brenda Rashleigh, Harry 10 Dickerson and Susan Hodges.
	11 STEVEN MEEKS: Thank you, ma'am.
	12 Good afternoon, gentlemen. Welcome to 13 Georgia.
1] 4.2	14 I'm Stephen Meeks. I'm representing both 15 of Georgia's US senators, Johnny Isakson and 16 Saxby Chambliss. And I have a brief 17 statement to make, that we commend the 18 Department of Homeland Security for 19 continuing the public outreach for the NBAF 20 final sites. These forums have provided the 21 opportunity for the community and the public 22 to participate in a process to ensure that 23 all opinions and views are heard.
2] 5.2	24 Senators Saxby Chambliss and Johnny 25 Isakson believe that this project is critical

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.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 24.2

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

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cont.| 2| 5.2

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1 to our national security efforts and our
2 ability as a nation to deter and detect
3 incidents of agro-terrorism. The state of
4 Georgia already plays a critical role in the
5 field of animal research right here in
6 Athens, as well as infectious diseases at the
7 Center of Disease Control in Atlanta. Given
8 our experience in these areas of critical
9 importance, Georgia is honored to be a
10 finalist in the NBAF site; and we are
11 confident the DHS will find the City of
12 Athens to be a gracious host and an effective
13 partner.

3| 24.2

14 In addition, Athens is an attractive
15 location that will -- that will secure
16 necessary private industry support and
17 scientific expertise to fulfill the mission
18 of NBAF. The state of Georgia and the Athens
19 community stand ready to serve side by side
20 with our Department of Homeland Security.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. COGHILL: Brenda Rashleigh.

25 BRENDA RASHLEIGH: Hi. I'm Brenda

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 24.2

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

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1 Rashleigh, and I'm representing the Upper
 2 Oconee Watershed Network, a ten-year-old
 3 nonprofit organization based here in Athens
 4 and dedicated to protecting the Upper Oconee
 5 Watershed.

1|25.2

6 We oppose the siting of this facility at
 7 this site right next to the river. We feel
 8 like it's an environmentally sensitive area
 9 and it's not appropriate for such a large
 10 high-risk facility.

2|12.2

11 I'd like to make three comments
 12 specifically on the EIS. First of all, we
 13 feel like erosion and sedimentation is not
 14 adequately addressed. We feel that's --
 15 there will be substantial disturbance during
 16 construction. We think a more rigorous
 17 analysis such as environmental simulation
 18 modeling is needed to quantify these effects
 19 on the river.

20 We also ask that stream restoration be
 21 considered to maintain the current quality in
 22 the river and that the cost of restoration,
 23 which can range from one hundred to two
 24 hundred dollars per foot, be considered in a
 25 cost benefit analysis of the site.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative based on risks to the river. The NBAF would be designed and constructed using modern biocontainment technologies, and operated by trained staff and security personnel to ensure the maximum level of worker and public safety and least risk to the environment in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's opinions. The NBAF EIS Section 3.7.3 describes the water resources at the South Milledge Avenue Site alternative including potential construction and operational consequences. A detailed geotechnical report will be prepared as part of the final design and following the proposed NBAF final site selection. During the NBAF final design, avoidance, minimization and mitigation will be further considered in efforts to address potential stream side impacts.

Section 3.3.3.4 describes the Middle Oconee WWTP's sewage acceptance criteria that the NBAF would have to meet. DHS acknowledges the regional drought conditions. DHS notes the commentor's drought concerns and DHS acknowledges the drought conditions. As described in Section 3.7.3.3.1, the NBAF at the South Milledge Avenue Site 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 potable water usage is comparable to 228 residential home's annual potable water usage. Section 3.7.3.1.1 describes the potential potable water sources, the Middle and North Oconee Rivers and the Jackson County Bear Creek Reservoir.

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cont. | 2 | 12.2

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1 Second, we ask that the risk of the
2 increased discharge of treated waste to our
3 rivers be considered in the EIS to ensure
4 that the standards and criteria are not
5 exceeded.

6 The treated waste can reduce oxygen in
7 streams and kills fish. This happened twice
8 last year, two fish kills last year due to
9 lack of water for dilution. And so we would
10 like this specifically addressed in the EIS
11 quantitatively.

12 Third, we feel like there's not enough
13 water to support this facility. On Page 3-35
14 there's two alternatives. The first one it
15 looks like will not meet peak flow
16 requirements, and the second one is not
17 recommended by ACC. So it seems to us that
18 there is really no workable solution.

19 We ask that the EIS include a
20 quantitative and comprehensive analysis of
21 water withdrawal within the context of all
22 the competing water uses and demands and the
23 future estimates of water resources for this
24 basin.

3 | 13.2

25 Also, scientific literature recognizes

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 13.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding potential effects on aquatic species and water quality at the South Milledge Avenue Site. As described in Section 3.15, best management practices and requirements for a stormwater pollution prevention plan would mitigate potential erosion and sedimentation impacts during the construction process, and 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. By minimizing stormwater runoff, LID techniques would minimize the potential for adverse effects on flow regime.

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cont|3| 13.2

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1 the adverse impact of flow alteration on
2 fish, on mussels, on amphibians. And we ask
3 that the EIS specifically address the effect
4 on the greater than one hundred species that
5 live downstream.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. COGHILL: Harry Dickerson.

10 HARRY DICKERSON: Good evening. My name
11 is Harry Dickerson. I'm a veterinarian on
12 the Associate Team for Research and Graduate
13 Affairs at the University of Georgia College
14 of Veterinary Medicine.

15 I've lived and worked in Clarke County
16 for 28 years. And my wife, Madeline, and I
17 have raised both our kids in this community.
18 I appreciate this opportunity to express my
19 comments and opinions tonight. And I thank
20 the DHS panel for the time they've put in
21 this afternoon and this evening.

1|19.2

22 As you've heard this afternoon and this
23 evening again, there's considerable concern
24 among my neighbors here regarding safety and
25 the risk to this community, both real and

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 19.2
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

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cont.| 1| 19.2

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1 perceived, associated with the study of
2 infectious diseases. This is understandable.
3 You should also know that I and others at
4 the university have worked hard to address
5 these concerns and to build an atmosphere of
6 public confidence and trust, specifically
7 regarding the Animal Health Research Center,
8 one of only BSL-3 ag facilities in the
9 country that's located on a university
10 campus, to my knowledge.
11 We have openly discussed issues regarding
12 the costs, the construction and the operation
13 of this BSL-3 ag facility. We conduct tours.
14 We hold public meetings. And we engage in
15 many one-on-one conversations with concerned
16 individuals in this community. We continue
17 to communicate operational issues and
18 research initiatives through our Community
19 Liaison Committee which was founded -- or
20 set up in 2004.
21 I commend our elected community leaders
22 who have availed themselves of these
23 opportunities and as a result have better
24 understanding of these facilities and what we
25 do in them. As a result I feel personally

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1 confident that they can make informed
2 decisions with regard to NBAF.

2|24.2 3 I am a proponent of NBAF because I feel
4 its benefits to agriculture, public health
5 and our environment are immense and far
6 outweigh the minimal risk associated with
7 doing this type of research. The Draft
8 Environmental Impact Statement that you have
9 provided puts to rest my concerns and -- with
10 locating the lab here in Georgia.

3|5.2 11 And I think there have been other issues
12 that have been raised here that I think
13 you're going to take seriously concerning
14 water uses and other issues. I believe that
15 the opportunities that Athens affords for
16 doing the best science are exceptional.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. COGHILL: Susan Hodges.

21 SUSAN HODGES: Good evening. Thank you
22 for this opportunity.

23 I don't represent an organization. I'm a
24 resident of the Clarke County. I have a
25 master's degree in plant pathology. I'm

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: 5.2

DHS notes the commentator's statement. DHS gave equal consideration to all comments, regardless of how or where they were received. All comments received during the public comment periods have been considered in this NBAF EIS.

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1 married to a research scientist in plant
 2 pathology at the university . So I have some
 3 understanding of research and procedures.

4 I came here tonight with an open mind. I
 5 came and I read the posters and I asked
 6 questions, and I've listened all evening.

7 And while -- completely aside from whether
 8 NBAF is a good idea or not, nothing I have
 9 heard tonight has convinced me that this site
 10 in Athens is in any way an appropriate site
 11 for this facility. The drawbacks of
 12 proximity to the river and to the botanical
 13 gardens and other environmental concerns have
 14 been brought up.

15 There has been no local referendum or
 16 similar process for assessing the feelings of
 17 the community of Clarke County, yet --
 18 (applause)

19 SUSAN HODGES: -- yet our elected
 20 officials, including our mayor and our local
 21 commissioners, have spoken tonight as if they
 22 represent the people of Clarke County. I
 23 don't know how they can know that they're
 24 representing their viewpoint. They have not
 25 convinced me that Athens-Clarke would be --

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 and acknowledges the proximity of the South Milledge Avenue Site to the State Botanical Garden and the Oconee River. As described in Section 3.8.3.1.1 of the NBAF EIS, 80% of the site consists of pasture, and the adjacent lands consist of forested lands and small, perennial headwater streams. Approximately 30 acres of open pasture, 0.2 acres of forested habitat, and less than 0.1 acres of wetlands would be affected by the NBAF. However, construction and normal operations of the NBAF would have no direct impact on the State Botanical Garden as indicated in Sections 3.8.3.2 and 3.8.3.3. Only minimal indirect effects would occur from operations due to increases in light and noise. As described in Section 3.8.3.2.2, impacts to a headwater stream would impact aquatic resources within a 50-foot reach. However, a properly designed road crossing would have little or no adverse effect on downstream aquatic resources. The impacted stream, which extends into the fenced pasture, has been severely impacted by loss of buffering vegetation and erosion and sedimentation. If the final design plan does not avoid stream impacts, DHS would consider restoration of the unaffected stream segments as mitigation for the impacts. As described in Section 3.8.3.2.3, best management practices and requirements for a stormwater pollution prevention plan would mitigate potential erosion and sedimentation impacts during the construction process. The NBAF EIS acknowledges the potential for minor adverse impacts on aquatic communities due to direct stream impacts, stormwater runoff, pollutant transport, and erosion and sedimentation. However, as described in Section 3.8.3.3.1, best management practices and low impact design (LID) features would be used to minimize the potential for such impacts. 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.

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1 would actually benefit economically from this
2 facility being here on the whole of it.

3 We, the citizens of Clarke County, are
4 the ones that have to live with NABF (sic).
5 The business interests of organizations such
6 as bio -- the gentleman spoke earlier and all
7 the research scientists here can still be met
8 with putting NABF (sic) in a different site.

9 People have already traveled to Plum
10 Island. My husband collaborates with
11 scientists across the country. This is very
12 possible to do.

3|12.2

13 Finally, I am really disappointed that
14 even though I brought up the issue of water
15 supply this was not addressed by any of our
16 local officials. Where is the water going to
17 come from for this facility, and what is the
18 impact going to be on the community in terms
19 of costs and the availability of potable
20 water in the next twenty years or fifty years
21 or however long this facility is using this
22 water?

23 Nobody has addressed this issue. You
24 folks didn't when I asked earlier. How can
25 this site be considered when we have not

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's drought concerns and 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.

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cont.) 3) 12.2

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1 addressed where is the water going to come
2 from for this site?

3 Thank you.

4 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. COGHILL: Jenny Culler. Jenny Culler.

7 Jenny will be followed by David Cowart
8 and Dr. Rebecca COOKE.

9 JENNY CULLER: Sewage sludge applied as
10 fertilizer to farms in Richland County,
11 Georgia, was found to have high levels of
12 metals and other toxins and it resulted in
13 the death of hundreds of cattle that grazed
14 on these farms. The NBAF supporting
15 documents, which are not attached to the
16 document or available on the DHS website but

1) 19.0

17 I found them anyway, showed that it is
18 completely unknown whether the pathogens from
19 the foreign animal diseases that would be
20 studied here are destroyed by tissue
21 digestion or incineration.

22 In light of the recent article indicating
23 that Athens-Clarke County intends to start
24 selling its sewer sludge, which will include
25 the waste from NBAF if it is located here,

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 19.0

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the use and availability of reference documents cited in the NBAF EIS. DHS has endeavored to prepare the NBAF EIS utilizing reference sources that are reasonably available for inspection by the public as required by Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1502.21). Further, DHS has and will respond in a timely manner to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for copies of NBAF EIS references or other background documents, which members of the public may have had difficulty locating in the public domain. As cited by the commentor, the Cost Analysis, Site Characterization Study, and the Plum Island Facility Closure and Transition Cost Study and other support documents were made available on DHS's NBAF Web page (<http://www.dhs.gov/nbaf>) in early August 2008 because these studies were commissioned by DHS and not otherwise publicly available. Nevertheless, information from these studies relevant to the NBAF EIS was included in the NBAF Draft EIS published in June 2008.

DHS does not believe that any new information has been revealed that would require a supplemental NEPA evaluation.

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cont. | 1 | 19.0

1 DHS must complete a new, honest study of the
 2 risks involved. Due to this new information
 3 and all of the other new information learned
 4 by DHS during its public comment period, DHS
 5 should prepare a supplemental EIS so the
 6 agency can properly consider all of the
 7 information before the decision is made and
 8 so the public can comment again on all of the
 9 information.

2 | 4.2

10 The Draft Environmental Impact Statement
 11 is a very large document. All of the
 12 materials that are listed as the supporting
 13 documents are enormous and technical. Some
 14 of them are listed in the appendices, and
 15 some are not. A 45-day comment period to
 16 allow the public to seriously digest and
 17 comment on this is absurd. It's not
 18 sufficient.

19 Thank you.
 20 (Applause.)

21 MS. COGHILL: David Cowart.

22 DAVID COWART: Yes. Earlier this evening
 23 Doc Eldridge re-asked his question from the
 24 past if not this, then what. And one answer
 25 would be a bio-biotech project that would not

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 4.2

DHS notes the commentor's concerns regarding the adequacy and complexity of the NBAF EIS and its presentation of analyses and conclusions and compliance with notice and comment requirements. DHS disagrees with the commentor's characterization of the NBAF EIS in these areas. DHS fully complied with notice and provisions of NEPA and Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1502.21).

DHS notes the commentor's opinion regarding the length of the public comment period. 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. During this comment period, public meetings were held in the vicinity of the NBAF site alternatives and in Washington, D.C. DHS also accepted comments submitted by mail, telephone and fax lines, and online through the NBAF Web page (<http://www.dhs.gov/nbaf>). All comments, both oral and written, received during the comment period were given equal consideration and were responded to in the NBAF Final EIS.

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1 bring with it the unnecessary risks that NBAF
2 would bring.

3 Now, I used to work in economic
4 government development at the state level and
5 I understand Georgia's long history of trying
6 to attract bio-biotech I've even worked to
7 help bring bio-biotech as well as other
8 high-tech industries. I understand the
9 competition that traditionally goes on
10 between Georgia and North Carolina in trying
11 to attract bio-biotech projects.

12 It's a competition in which North
13 Carolina usually wins. But in this case I
14 think it's interesting that North Carolina no
15 longer wants this particular bio-biotech
16 project. I think our local economic
17 developers need to ask themselves why.

18 Well, there are a lot of comments I want
19 to make; and I will be submitting a full list
20 of my comments to DHS. There's some
21 discrepancies in the DEIS I want to talk
22 about at that point, also some omissions I'm
23 concerned about being there.

24 But I want to say tonight, just very
25 briefly, the GAO report suggests that Plum

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the five mainland site alternatives including the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative. DHS has adhered to the NEPA process, which requires agencies to consider the environmental consequences of major Federal actions that could potentially affect the human environment for a full spectrum of reasonable alternatives. 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.

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 5.2

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

1|5.2, 25.2

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cont. | 1 | 5.2,
25.2

1 Island would be the safest place to build
2 NBAF. The DEIS says the same thing, that
3 Plum Island would be safer than the five
4 mainland locations. And in light of this I
5 just want to say I am appalled that DHS is
6 even still considering the five mainland
7 locations, especially ours here in Athens.
8 Thank you.
9 (Applause.)
10 MS. COGHILL: Dr. Rebecca Cooke.

1 | 23.0

11 DR. REBECCA COOKE: I used to do a lot of
12 performing, until I became an expert in
13 infectious diseases. I don't have a
14 doctorate in it. I have personal experience
15 in it. So when I hear some people coming up
16 here and telling me and the rest of you that
17 they can run a perfect laboratory and never
18 have anything escape from it, I think they
19 should look for another job.
20 (Applause.)

2 | 19.2

21 DR. REBECCA COOKE: Our panel here has
22 told us that that is one of the problems,
23 that there is human error. You read the EIS
24 and you read the same thing. And yet we have
25 professor or student after student coming up

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 23.0
DHS acknowledges commentor's statement.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 19.2
DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the potential consequences from a NBAF accident 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. 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.

DHS notes the commentor's concern about apportionment of financial liability for medical treatment in the event of a pathogen release. However, it is not possible to determine in advance who might be responsible for an incident. DHS will follow applicable local, state, and federal law, whether in asserting or defending against a claim for damages should a pathogen be released from the NBAF.

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cont.|2|19.2

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1 here and telling us there's no danger in any
2 of the pathogens escaping a laboratory. Then
3 I have people that I've interviewed that are
4 lying to me. They've told me there's no
5 laboratory that doesn't make mistakes.

6 And I'm talking to people who are in the
7 laboratory. And they're not just workers.
8 They're administrators. And we've heard it
9 from our panel.

cont.|2|19.2

10 So let's stop fooling ourselves. You're
11 looking at a dangerous laboratory coming in
12 here.

13 Now, who's going to pay for your illness
14 that you get from the laboratory? What
15 arrangements do they have in this
16 thousand-page document that says if the
17 pathogens get out and a community suffers a
18 breakdown in disease who's going to pay for
19 it?

20 If it's an incurable disease then your
21 Medicare doesn't pay for it. There has to be
22 a cure for it before they pay. I know. I've
23 got one of them. They don't pay for it.
24 You'll have to do experimental, and we don't
25 pay for experimental.

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3|21.2

1 Are they making any provisions for
2 laborers who get ill and go out in the
3 community? And who's going to pay for the
4 hospitals that have to take care of these
5 people?

6 You're going to be out of work. You're
7 going to have extra expenses. Where are the
8 finances coming from?

9 This type of disease -- and I speak from
10 experience -- can break you financially.
11 Now, if you don't care about anything else, I
12 know you care about money, because that's
13 what all of this has been about today, is --
14 (applause).

4|2.0

15 Now, no one has mentioned the fact that
16 the government has a habit -- and I'm sure
17 some of the administrators know this is true.
18 They have a habit of wonderful ideas and
19 starting projects and then somehow or other a
20 few years later they cut the budgets. And do
21 you know what suffers when you cut the budget
22 with a laboratory? The security is the first
23 thing to suffer. And you can't very well go
24 before Congress and say hey, we're cutting
25 down our security, why don't you give us a

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 21.2

See response Comment No. 2.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commenter's concerns about the sustainability of funding for NBAF to ensure safe and secure operations. The U.S. Congress and the President are responsible for determining funding priorities for government programs. DHS spends funds in accordance with congressional intent. DHS would maintain the NBAF and ancillary facilities in compliance with applicable environmental, safety, and health requirements and provide for safe operation and maintenance.

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cont.|4|2.0

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1 little more money and they say well, we have
2 other projects this year, maybe next time.
3 That is the situation.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

7 Dr. Richard Cooke.

8 Dr. Cooke will be followed by Daniel
9 Cottar, Ed Tant, Paul Chambers and Brenda
10 Wade.

11 DR. RICHARD COOKE: Once again, panel and
12 all of the people here, I want to thank you
13 for the opportunity to express my thoughts.
14 I'm want to thank Dr. Lopner for being so
15 kind to talk to me.

16 I also understand the bias from which you
17 come. If I were hired by the United States
18 government or I had produced the document
19 that gave me the lowest bid and my company
20 was working, I certainly would work with the
21 same bias. I like to get paid.

22 Now, with that in mind, regardless of
23 whether the United States government admits
24 its responsibility or any complicity in the
25 release of and/or spread of Lyme Disease --

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1 by the way for which there is no known cure
2 and for which the government won't pay by
3 medicare and for which my wife and I paid
4 more than \$24,000 to be able to even live to
5 come here tonight -- this has not been
6 addressed.

1|19.2

7 The effect upon one or many of the human
8 diseases and what the cause is to the
9 population has not been expressed. I wonder
10 why.

11 Both I and my wife, my sister-in-law, our
12 children, their wives and now it appears most
13 of their grandchildren are also recipients of
14 this wonderful gift called Lyme disease. My
15 career was drastically affected.

16 At one time I was a tenor that had a
17 glorious high C. Lyme Disease took it away
18 from me. How would you like to get sick and
19 lose your job? Try it out.

20 Having spent -- sat through the earlier
21 session respectfully listening to and
22 carefully weighing each presentation, pro and
23 con, several observations and questions
24 remain, and they surface. First, I am a
25 former college president, small college

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern that human health effects from exposure to NBAF pathogens are not provided in the NBAF EIS. Section 3.14.1 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS provide information on the human health effects from exposure to NBAF pathogens.

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1 president, and dean of faculty. I understand
2 that a lot of the people here were
3 auditioning for a job.

4 And you know what. If I worked for the
5 university here and received their, pay I
6 certainly would want to get the pay that you
7 all offer because it's a heck of a lot better
8 than what it is here at the university.

9 Not only that. The emphasis on the
10 potential economic rewards reminded me of a
11 quote from my father: Follow the green and
12 if it sounds like it's too good to be true,
13 it is.

14 Thirdly, it is more than blatantly
15 obvious that many of the university and
16 affiliates were swayed by prestige, by
17 egocentric rewards, by peer pressure. And I
18 assure you pressure only warrants McDonald's
19 coffee at senior prices.

20 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

21 (Applause.)

22 MS. COGHILL: Daniel Connor.

23 DANIEL COTTAR: Cottar. My name is
24 Daniel Cottar, C-o-t-t-a-r.

25 Okay. The majority of the people are

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1 absolutely opposed to this. Of course,
2 you're putting this demonstration on. So you
3 make sure to have your people. And, of
4 course, people, they have to work, blah,
5 blah, blah, they're not here.

6 Okay. Like many people said before, your
7 Allies stand to gain either financially or
8 career wise. Okay.

9 I meant to say Crawford, Texas, earlier,
10 not Crawford, Georgia, for the site. Anyway.
11 Okay.

12 Potting soil has sludge with toxins in
13 it. I mean, you want to be healthy, you get
14 potting soils to grow your own stuff.
15 Factories put sludge in it. Okay. So
16 anyway.

17 Okay. The wacko guy, what was his name?
18 Ivans. The anthrax guy, that's all we need
19 to hear is one of those guys or McVeigh or
20 somebody like that. Remember Three Mile
21 Island. Okay. I don't know if people
22 remember that, you know.

23 So things don't happen safely. I've
24 worked on construction sites and in
25 factories. The EPA, they're just a pawn.

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1 Come on. They won't even let California have
2 stronger regulations if they wanted to.
3 That's ridiculous. They should be
4 encouraging that.

5 Let's see here. I don't believe Condi
6 Rice about yellow cake from Nejare (phonetic
7 spelling). I don't believe George Bush about
8 WMDs, and I don't believe this is the safest
9 site in the U.S. for this facility.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 DANIEL COTTAR: Feel free to -- okay.
13 And like Ken was saying earlier, I and he and
14 a whole bunch of other people are going to
15 never rest until you -- if -- to make sure
16 you don't come here.

17 Don't get me wrong. I think it's a
18 necessary thing. It should be out in the
19 middle of the desert somewhere, the
20 Bonneville Sale Flats or something. But
21 we'll do everything possible legally to --
22 for you.

23 Okay. You've admitted about air
24 pollution. You already admitted that.

25 You admitted that Plum Island is more

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: 5.0

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.

1|25.2

2|5.0

cont.|2|5.0

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cont.|2| 5.0

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1 isolated. Okay. You admitted significant
2 consequences.

3| 12.2

3 Okay. And, once again, the drought,
4 Florida and Alabama and Georgia constantly
5 fighting about the water. I mean, it's
6 already terrible now. So what are you going
7 to do. You're going make it much worse.

8 And you keep referring to the report --
9 with the red tie -- every time somebody asks
10 you a direct question about the effects, you
11 always say oh, yeah, we talk about that in
12 the report and then you start talking about
13 lots and lots of stuff. Well, you know,
14 put -- what the report should say is that
15 people will get killed. Okay.

16 And -- okay. That's everything I have to
17 say.

18 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

19 DANIEL COTTAR: I gave you some extra
20 time. It's a mess, people. Whew.

21 MS. COGHILL: Ed Tant.

22 Ed will be followed by Paul Chambers,
23 Brenda Wade and Chris Moder.

24 Mr. Tant.

25 ED TANT: Hello. My name's Ed Tant.

Comment No: 3Issue 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

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1 I am a concerned Athenian, a concerned
2 American, a concerned world citizen. I'm a
3 volunteer with the Athens Human Rights
4 Festival that's been going on here in Athens
5 for the last 30 years.

1|25.2

6 And I'm also a columnist with the Athens
7 Banner Herald here in town. And I'm living
8 proof that not everybody at the Banner Herald
9 supports the Homeland Security's plan.

2|5.0

10 Back on March the 1st I wrote a column
11 about my views on the Homeland Security
12 laboratory in the March 1st, 2008, edition.
13 My two main concerns with the facility are
14 matters of trust and location.

15 Far as trust goes, I quoted a fellow by
16 the name of Eddie Addlestein (phonetic
17 spelling). He's an associate professor of
18 pathology at the University of Missouri and
19 an interim medical examiner in the state.
20 And he said why would a group of respected
21 citizens, including business people,
22 scientists, university administrators and
23 politicians, attempt to recruit a Level 4
24 research facility that handles treacherous
25 agents to our town.

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: 5.0

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

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1 The answer is simple: Money. They
2 always talk about wanting to make the
3 University of Georgia a great research
4 institution. I got a novel idea for this
5 university: How about trying to make it a
6 great teaching institution.

3| 15.2

7 I don't trust anything that comes out of
8 the PR flax at that university. I don't
9 trust anything that comes from a president of
10 this university that makes more money than
11 his pal, the president of the United States.
12 I don't trust a facility that's supposed to
13 cost so many millions of dollars not to go
14 into cost overruns for us taxpayers.

15 The Vince Dooley plaques that they want
16 to build up here was supposed to cost a
17 million bucks. Now it's up to two million
18 bucks.

19 I don't trust the University of Georgia.
20 I don't trust the local politicians that are
21 pushing this malarkey.

22 And I also said in my column on the March
23 1st and in previous comments I've made here
24 since the Bush Administration has in the past
25 altered and edited scientific reports that

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's opinion; 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.

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1 conflict with its agenda, led us into an Iraq
2 war under dubious and ever-changing
3 rationales and pushed no-bid contracts for
4 its corporate friends, how can the citizens
5 of Athens and America be expected to trust a
6 Homeland Security Department that is the
7 creation of an untrustworthy administration.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. COGHILL: Paul Chambers.

10 PAUL CHAMBERS: First of all, I want to
11 say, like everyone else that's spoken
12 respectfully tonight, thank you for being
13 here and for listening to us, for the
14 opportunity to speak to NBAF in Athens.

15 My name is Paul Chambers. I'm district
16 manager with AT&T here in Athens. And I
17 stand in front of you today wearing a few
18 different hats.

19 First of all, I represent a company that
20 serves Athens. As such, we're concerned
21 about maintaining and improving the economic
22 vitality of the community.

23 We're also involved in being a part of
24 initiatives that's helped the community like
25 Athens we've served for 126 years. We've

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1 been involved in our local efforts to help
 2 those mired in poverty in our efforts to
 3 recruit more biotech jobs.

1|24.2

4 But I also stand before you today as a
 5 husband and father of four who lives just one
 6 mile from the proposed site. I drive by it
 7 every day. It's beautiful and situated near
 8 very good roads and infrastructure. And as
 9 I've read all about the building and the work
 10 to be conducted there, I'm convinced my
 11 family will be at no greater safety risk than
 12 when they drive the Athens Bypass.

2|15.2

13 For all the discussion around the safety
 14 aspects -- and there have been many good
 15 questions in that regard -- it's always been
 16 notable to me that the scientists who will be
 17 doing this research will actually live here
 18 too.

19 As a result of the Brack (phonetic
 20 spelling) process the Naval Supply Corps
 21 School in Athens closes in three years. We
 22 know we'll be losing approximately eight
 23 million dollars in annual federal payroll
 24 when that base is gone. Replacing that in
 25 the local economy will not be easy. The 27

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.2

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

Comment No: 2Issue 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, with much of the scientific work force relocating to the region.

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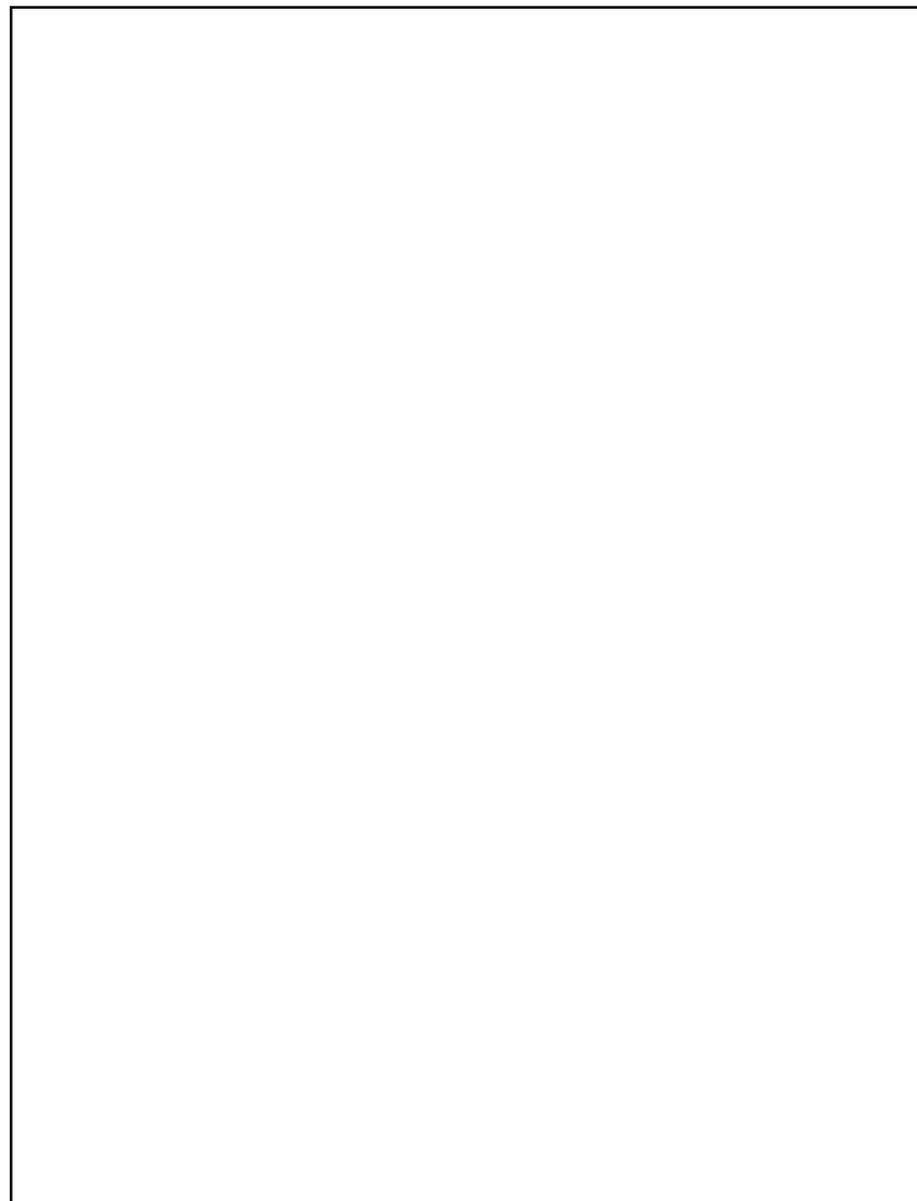
cont.| 2| 15.2

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1 million payroll NBAF would bring, not to
2 mention ancillary businesses and research
3 that would spring up, would be incredible.
4 I grew up in Athens but had a chance to
5 live in three other wonderful major cities
6 during the 16 years I was away. But none
7 compared to this one which truly deserves to
8 be called the Classic City of the South. I'm
9 glad I'm back.

cont.| 1| 24.2

10 As I've said, the site is excellent. And
11 I live a mile down the road. My family and I
12 would welcome NBAF to our community and hope
13 that you'll come to see why Athens is the
14 place to be.
15 Thank you.
16 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
17 (Applause.)
18 MS. COGHILL: Brenda Wade.
19 BRENDA WADE: Hi. Brenda Wade. I'm a
20 30-year resident of the Athens-Clarke County
21 community. I'm the mother of a proud student
22 at the University of Georgia. I'm a staff
23 member of the University of Georgia.
24 And I don't know who's right or who's
25 wrong. But my emotions about this are so



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1|25.2

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1 tormented. I can't believe that the people
2 in Athens that I've trusted and lived with
3 for so many years and respected are actually
4 saying that this is a good thing. None of
5 the information that I can read says this is
6 good for our community.

7 And I'd like to give the rest of my time
8 to the lovely lady in the purple suit that
9 says it a lot better than I do.

10 But I'd like for everybody who's against
11 this in the room to stand up and show.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. COGHILL: Chris Moder.

14 CHRIS MODER: My name is Chris Moder. I
15 am -- I serve the State of Georgia through
16 the University of Georgia and the University
17 System of Georgia.

1|8.2

18 UGA's commitment to NBAF has been made
19 clear. And what I'd like to do is to
20 reiterate that UGA is one of 35 institutions
21 that are part of the University System of
22 Georgia, which is also a very strong
23 supporter in the Georgia Consortium for
24 Health and Agro-Security.

25 The System serves over 270,000 students

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.2

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

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 8.2

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

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cont,1| 8.2

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1 in degree programs, over 400,000 in
2 continuing professional education and is
3 supported by faculty and staff of over
4 38,000. This makes it one of the nation's
5 largest systems and have an anticipated
6 growth between now and 2020 of additionally a
7 hundred thousand more students.

8 It's also one of the nation's most
9 effective systems benefiting from a number of
10 public/private partnerships and annual
11 extramural funds that are about one billion
12 dollars annually. And this is received for
13 research, instruction and public service.

14 I don't think I can articulate it any
15 better than Timothy Shellnut, former chair of
16 the Board of Regents, when he stated a
17 remarkable mix of academic, private sector
18 and government resources and collaborations
19 distinguish Georgia's capabilities to create
20 the most effective environment in which NBAF
21 can excel. These assets involve a number of
22 areas in which the university system has
23 invested in developing worldclass expertise,
24 including public health and communication,
25 veterinary medicine, animal and human

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cont. | 1|8.2

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1 medicine, agriculture, food safety and other
2 basic and applied sciences.

3 The University System of Georgia commits
4 to building upon their existing relationships
5 and partnerships with the U.S. Department of
6 Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of
7 Agriculture to establish and operate a safe
8 and effective worldclass NBAF in Georgia.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. COGHILL: Drew Page.

13 Drew will be followed by Pat Priest,
14 Joellen Childers and Laurie Scott.

15 DREW PAGE: Good evening, gentlemen. I'm
16 part of the marketing team for the Innovation
17 Crescent for Georgia and president of the
18 Athens Economic Development Foundation.

1|24.2

19 The Athens Economic Development
20 Foundation continues to be a proponent of
21 locating NBAF in Athens. And our membership
22 consists of leadership of local government,
23 business and education.

cont. | 1|24.2

24 And we've listened intently to all the
25 negative assessments. We would like to

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.2

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

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cont. | 1 | 24.2 Page 149

1 present a positive view of the project and
2 continue our assistance to the DHS in siting
3 here in Athens. We believe this project
4 conforms to our community profile very well
5 and the potential benefits to the world are
6 enormous.

2 | 8.2
7 As your research has already shown,
8 Athens is an outstanding small city with an
9 amazing university-based population and a
10 highly-educated work force. Your location in
11 Athens is extremely successful as it joins an
12 astonishing array of research facilities and
13 existing international life science
14 companies.

15 We have a skilled work force job training
16 facility, suppliers, complementary academic
17 and private sector research to maximize your
18 growing efficiency. And we have all of that
19 in place now.

3 | 1.0
20 The benefits to NBAF to agriculture,
21 wildlife and public health and safety are
22 globally significant. The development of new
23 vaccines, diagnostic procedures and rapid
24 response to foreign animal diseases would
25 protect animal health in our hemisphere.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 8.2
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 1.0
DHS notes the commentor's support for the proposed research that would be conducted within the NBAF.

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4|5.2 1 We have asked the pertinent questions of
2 our existing life science professionals and
3 appreciate their candor. We believe that a
4 very limited risk in locating this facility
5 versus the positive impact of so many issues
6 are -- are more than acceptable and the
7 environmental impacts are minimal.

5|7.2 8 Visual and traffic impacts are less than
9 it would be for building a hospital or a new
10 high school. And all other effects are minor
11 or negligible and will be mitigated through
12 the above agencies and regulations.

6|15.2 13 In conclusion, we strongly believe that
14 NBAF as an integral part of our research
15 community will be a successful and
16 Athens-Clarke County and will complement our
17 existing scientific community. The facility
18 will be a significant economic driver. Yet
19 its greatest value to the community is the
20 addition of a global research facility to our
21 existing health science cluster of companies.
22 And the fact that it is here will assist us
23 in attracting biotech industries to Athens.
24 Your positive position is appreciated.
25 Thank you.

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 5.2
DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 7.2
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

Comment No: 6 Issue Code: 15.2
DHS notes the commentor's support for the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative.

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1 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 MS. COGHILL: Pat Priest.

4 (Inaudible.)

5 PAT PRIEST: Well, I'd like to face

6 everyone then.

7 I want to start by saying thanks to Kathy

8 Prescott, Grady Thrasher. (Unitelligible.)

9 We're here really for other people who

10 couldn't be here tonight, they don't want to

11 be on the record who can't be here. But also

12 I've been amazed at the number of people who

13 have not wanted to come forward and speak

14 about this because -- and I know you guys

15 don't mean this at the university probably.

16 I want to give you the benefit of the doubt.

17 But people really feel like their jobs will

18 be threatened if they speak against it.

19 (Applause.)

20 PAT PRIEST: And that's not just at the

21 university. That's at other public service

22 jobs.

23 Sorry. Am I standing up straight? This

24 is nerve-racking for us.

25 Thank you.

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 15.2

DHS notes the commentor's concern. Since the inception of the NBAF project, DHS has supported a vigorous public outreach program. DHS has conducted public meetings in excess of the minimum required by NEPA regulations; to date, 23 public meetings have been held in the vicinity of NBAF site alternatives and in Washington D.C. to solicit public input on the EIS, allow the public to voice their concerns, and to get their questions answered DHS has also provided fact sheets, reports, exhibits, and a Web page (<http://www.dhs.gov/nbaf>). Additionally, various means of communication (mail, toll-free telephone and fax lines, and NBAF Web site) have been provided to facilitate public comment.

1|15.2

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1 MS. COGHILL: I need you to turn just a
2 little bit more. You might want to --

3 PAT PRIEST: Yes. I'm sure you heard me.
4 Don't you?

5 COURT REPORTER: (Nods head affirmatively.)

6 PAT PRIEST: You folks have spent so much
7 time, and I appreciate that. But I also want
8 to speak to people, my friends like Heidi
9 Davison, my friends Doug Lowry and Doc
10 Eldridge. I know you do the balancing
11 differently. It's not fair to vilify you
12 guys.

cont.| 1| 15.2

13 But I think that it's -- what's important
14 to remember is that there are very few more
15 pro-social and life-affirming monies out
16 there. And that's what we need to change,
17 something like soil conservation or embryonic
18 research. That's where we need money.

19 So with a new administration in power we
20 can perhaps have that. And maybe this will
21 go away. But we can't count on that.

22 And so I especially thank you guys on
23 your leadership on that. I know it seems
24 prudent and, in fact, necessary to fight this
25 by bringing, you know, this germ lab that may

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2|21.2

1 seem at first blush to be a good idea.
 2 President Reagan had the Star Wars
 3 Initiative that he spent billions on. And
 4 that, in fact, caused an escalation of
 5 weapons development. And we risk that
 6 escalation. But we also have greater risk by
 7 a single mishap, a single mad scientist or,
 8 you know, a single terrorist attack will
 9 threaten us.

3|19.2

10 In fact, you guys say this will come,
 11 this will come. It's going to come because
 12 you guys would bring it here. You would
 13 bring these -- these pathogens.

14 (Applause.)

15 PAT PRIEST: You know, we already have
 16 this toxic effect. And that's in the way
 17 we're separated and divisive about this.

18 And so I hope there's not like a big
 19 nuclear power plant or something that's next
 20 in line that is -- yes, that would bring
 21 jobs. But I instead hope that we will work
 22 together.

4|13.2

23 And there's a great local historian in
 24 town named Steve Sturrey (phonetic spelling).
 25 Thank you. And he is -- he talks about how

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 21.2

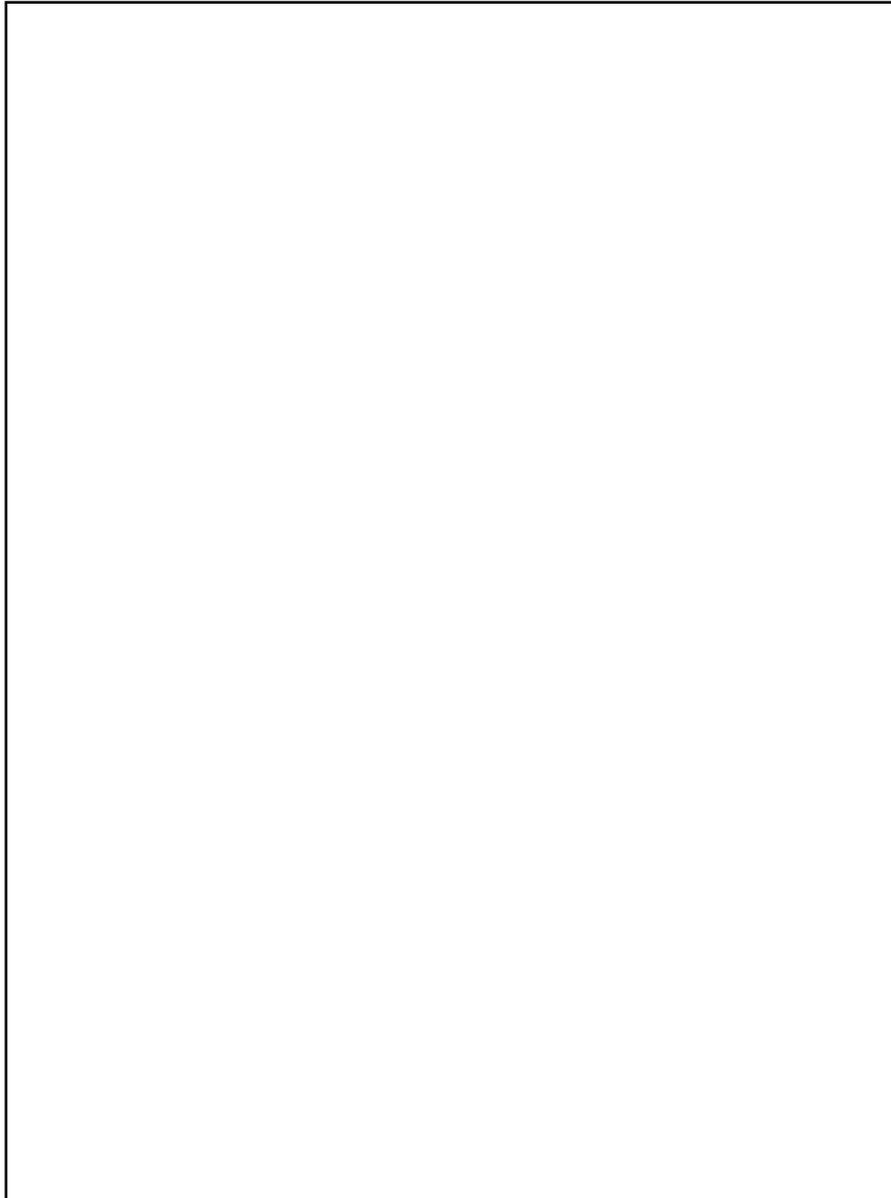
DHS notes the commentor's statement. DHS's mission is to study foreign animal and zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans) diseases that threaten our agricultural livestock and agricultural economy. The purpose of the NBAF would be to develop tests to detect foreign animal and zoonotic diseases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

DHS notes the commentor's concern about safety. 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 investigate 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. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. 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. 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.

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 19.2

DHS notes the commentor's lack of confidence in the DHS. Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS state that the specific objective of the hazard identification 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 NBAF would provide state-of-the-art operating procedures and biocontainment features to minimize the potential for laboratory-acquired infections and accidental releases. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. Appendix B describes biocontainment lapses and laboratory acquired infections. Laboratory-acquired infections have not been shown to be a threat to the community at large. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operation 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 human, livestock, and wildlife 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 the NBAF.

Comment No: 4Issue Code: 13.2



DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding potential effects on the Middle Oconee River at the South Milledge Avenue Site. 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.

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cont.| 4| 13.2

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1 the Native American people called certain
2 people and places in this area as beloved.
3 Thank you. And one of these beloved places
4 was the Oconee River. And I think we've all
5 been awakened to the fact that this is a
6 beloved place.

5| 25.2

7 And what I'd like to see us do is work
8 together, maybe to use SPLOST funds to
9 protect and save this place, not put a drain
10 on it, in fact, put nothing there. Let's
11 work to save it and keep it pristine.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. COGHILL: Joellen Childers will be
15 our next speaker. Joellen.

16 JOELLEN CHILDERS: Thank you.

17 Hi. My name is Joellen Childers, and I
18 live here in Athens. And I am staff at the
19 university.

20 I want especially to thank people who
21 felt their backs were against the wall and
22 they had to pass a lot of great federal law
23 and regulation that created this gathering
24 here tonight and that created the need for a
25 draft EIS and created the need for yet

Comment No: 5 Issue Code: 25.2
DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the South Milledge Avenue Site Alternative and would like to preserve the site.

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1 another step in terms of there being a final
2 EIS.

3 This public comment has not -- kind of
4 thing has not always been in place. And if
5 it hadn't been for people who felt they had
6 to institute that kind of thing -- we're
7 fortunate to have that. I bring that up
8 because we also live in a very interesting
9 state.

10 The Open Record Requirements in the state
11 of Georgia for the state government are
12 really quite extraordinary, from what I
13 understand. And I want for people everywhere
14 to know that we're kind of at the brink that
15 it's annoying to me when people talk again
16 and again about transparency. There really
17 is no requirement -- we're coming to a point
18 where there are no requirements in terms of
19 transparency. Some things may be published,
20 they may not be published. Who knows.

21 We're really entering a zone where we're
22 not going to know a hell of a lot about what
23 would be going on at this facility. There
24 are no disclosure requirements.

25 It is the human factor in all of this

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 4.2

DHS notes the commentor's statement about the importance of transparency for public records.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 2.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern. NBAF would incorporate modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, as further discussed in Section 2.2.1.1 of the NBAF EIS. A discussion of human health and safety is included in Section 3.14 of the NBAF EIS, and a description of potential safeguards can be found in the NBAF Engineering Technical Feasibility Study. As noted in Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, an Institutional Biosafety Committee, comprised of interdisciplinary expertise, safety experts and community representatives, would review and approve of the use of any biological agent. DHS also notes the commentor's questions regarding the public availability and transparency of NBAF research. There would no classified research at the NBAF, however there may occasionally be classified FBI forensics cases. Currently, the PIADC facility publishes research in publicly available research journals; NBAF would publish its research in publicly available research journals as well.

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1 that I think is really hard to calculate.
 2 Certainly at the University of Texas -- at
 3 Texas A&M there have been the discovery --
 4 the way-after-the-fact discovery of some
 5 incidents at that institution. And I think
 6 it's very much human nature to cover things
 7 up.

8 In fact, we may be living in an age of
 9 public relations where that is a very
 10 prominent feature of institutions everywhere.
 11 And this can leave us who are very, very
 12 concerned about the public good very much in
 13 the lurch.

14 Thank you very much for your time.

15 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. COGHILL: Laurie Scott.

18 LAURIE SCOTT: My name is Laurie Scott,
 19 and I live at -- on South Milledge Avenue.
 20 And there is enough traffic on South Milledge
 21 Avenue. And I am sensitive to chemicals, and
 22 it would be hazardous for me to continue to
 23 live in this area if they were to put this
 24 NBAF there.

25 It's the wrong place to put it. There

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 17.2

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.

Comment No: 2 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.

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to 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.

1|17.2

2|19.2

3|5.2

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cont. | 3 | 5.2

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1 are apartments all over the place, and there
 2 are houses. And people are going to be
 3 injured and hurt because of the diseases and
 4 all and the air pollution. And I'm concerned
 5 about the air pollution and the water and all
 6 that.

7 And my mother has CPOD (sic), which is
 8 pulmonary lung disease; and she's elderly.
 9 And what are they going to do about the
 10 elderly people that are going to be affected
 11 by all of this?

12 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.
 13 (Applause.)
 14 MS. COGHILL: Laura Fleury.
 15 LAURA FLEURY: Hi. Thanks again.

16 Okay. My name is Laura Fleury. I am an
 17 undergrad student at UGA and here once again
 18 to speak on behalf of the Facebook group of
 19 over 200 students and residents of Athens
 20 called No Bioterror Lab in Athens.

21 I'm here in total opposition to NBAF and
 22 want the DHS to know that Athens does not
 23 want NBAF here. I have many objections with
 24 the building and site location of this lab.

25 If safety is supposed to be a main

4 | 9.2

1 | 25.2

2 | 5.2

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: 5.2

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

Comment No: 4 Issue Code: 9.2

DHS notes the commentor's air and water concerns. The potential effects of NBAF operations on air quality are discussed in Section 3.4 of the NBAF EIS and includes the potential effects from incineration. Section 3.4.1 describes the methodology used in assessing potential air quality consequences at each site. Carcass/pathological waste disposal, including incineration, is discussed in Section 3.13. Conservative assumptions were used to ensure the probable maximum effects were evaluated. Once the final design is determined, a more refined air emissions model will be used during the permitting process. The final design will ensure that the NBAF %does not significantly affect% the region's ability to meet air quality standards. Section 3.7.3 describes the water resources at the South Milledge Avenue Site alternative including potential construction and operational consequences.

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cont. | 2 | 5.2

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1 concern, why place this BSL-4 smack in the
2 middle of our tiny community. Humans do make
3 mistakes, and they will at this lab.

3 | 12.2

4 I have been receiving flyers all summer
5 from the ACC about water saving tips since we
6 are in a drought. It has been irresponsible
7 of our leaders to offer money and land to a
8 facility that will use over a hundred
9 thousand gallons of water a day. We are
10 being told to limit our shower time, collect
11 rainwater for our plants and limit how much
12 we flush our toilets. How dare our leaders
13 then turn around and offer accommodations for
14 NBAF.

15 (Applause.)

16 LAURA FLEURY: After the last meeting I
17 was approached by David Lee, who was
18 surprised when I said earlier that UGA
19 students were in the dark about NBAF. But
20 how can the students know of the risk and
21 concern when the information we're given is
22 highly filtered by the university and
23 politicians with ties to the local
24 newspapers. My point is there is still a
25 huge population of Athens that has no clue

Comment No: 3Issue Code: 12.2

DHS notes the commentor's opinion and drought concern.

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1 what's going on.

2 The University of Georgia has always been
3 the heart and soul of Athens. The students
4 keep the city alive and kicking.

5 So I end by asking this question: Does
6 this site have the best in mind for the
7 students and citizens of Athens? It doesn't
8 seem that way to me. A wise man once told me
9 to follow the green. And it seems to me that
10 this project is financially and politically
11 driven with no care and concern for the
12 people of Athens.

13 Please keep us, the students and
14 citizens, safe by keeping NBAF out of Athens.
15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. COGHILL: THANK you.

18 Laurin Smith is our next speaker.

19 Following Laurin is Ron Blount.

20 LAURIN SMITH: I am not employed by
21 anyone who would not give me a promotion or
22 affect my salary in any way if I support or
23 don't support the location of the NBAF in
24 Athens. But I would like to ask why are all
25 the sites -- I'd just like to ask everybody

Comment No: 1

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.

cont. | 1 | 25.2

1 | 15.2

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cont. | 1 | 15.2

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1 why are all the sites in the southeast, where
2 there's a tradition of impoverishment and
3 lack of vigorous community involvement.

2 | 5.2

4 I'd like to ask why is there not a site
5 in Vermont, why not Cornell University, which
6 has an outstanding agro-science area. And
7 I'd like to ask why is it Georgia,
8 Mississippi, Texas, North Carolina.

9 We don't need this kind of prestige.
10 What we need is quality of life.

11 (Applause.)

12 LAURIN SMITH: And I don't want to vilify
13 people who think we do, who personally think
14 that we need this, because I know that myself
15 I would love to have certain things here
16 which would enhance my career and my
17 activities. But the bottom -- and we come --
18 we logically -- as somebody said, we support
19 what emotionally we feel. We come up with
20 logic to support that. But I think a lot of
21 us are sweeping things under the rug.

22 And I'm very disappointed in the County
23 government here and the politicians that I
24 voted for, and I will not vote for them
25 again.

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 5.2

See response to Comment No. 1.

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1 (Applause.)

2 LAURIN SMITH: And I don't trust the
3 University of Georgia. They have proved
4 themselves to be a very poor citizen in the
5 past here in many ways in terms of
6 development of land around our communities.

7 And I don't trust the federal government.
8 I would like to trust the federal government.

9 I do believe in the mission of NBAF. I
10 think it's important. But why not in the
11 middle of Kansas or the middle of a desert or
12 on Plum Island, not in a biologically-diverse
13 and sensitive area such as Athens, Georgia.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. COGHILL: Ron Blount.

16 RON BLOUNT: My name is Ron Blount.
17 I went to the last of these meetings, and
18 I thought for a long time about what the
19 arguments really came down to and listened to
20 the people speak. And it seemed to me that
21 there were two cut points on it.

22 On one hand you have people who had --
23 who see the possibility of economic
24 opportunity. Doc Eldridge, other business
25 leaders, other direct -- people who would

cont| 2| 5.2

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1 directly benefit from bringing in industry of
2 its kind, UGA as well, as well as some of
3 their faculty who have researched those -- in
4 those particular areas. So there's direct
5 benefit there.

6 On the other hand, there's safety and
7 trust. And for those of us who follow on
8 that side, which I do, then that's our
9 decision that would go on.

10 If you bring it here or probably even if
11 you bring it on the mainland it's because
12 somebody has pandered to the money. And they
13 have encouraged you.
14 UGA's offered up a lot of money. Our
15 local politicians have offered up a lot of
16 money. They think they're going to get a lot
17 of money back in return.

18 If you make the decision based on safety,
19 you won't put it on the mainland here or
20 otherwise. You'll put it on Plum Island.
21 That's the only single choice that you can
22 make.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. COGHILL: That concludes the comment
25 period for this evening's meeting. At this

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 19.2

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

Comment No: 2

Issue Code: 5.2

DHS notes the commentator's opposition to the five mainland site alternatives and support for the Plum Island Site Alternative.

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1 point in time I'd like to turn it over to
2 Jamie.

3 MR. JOHNSON: I want to thank everyone
4 for their comments tonight -- thank everyone
5 for their comments tonight, taking time out
6 for the entire meeting. I know many of you
7 sat through and participated in the meeting
8 this afternoon, and we very much appreciate
9 that.

10 And I said at the conclusion of the
11 afternoon meeting I think the comments have
12 been very helpful, meaningful. I think, you
13 know, probably more than from the other
14 sites. And there's been some very specific
15 comments on the EIS. And it will help us
16 draft a very informed final EIS.

17 So, again, if you think of a comment
18 later that maybe you didn't make one tonight,
19 whether in writing or in person, you can
20 submit it at a later time, as long as you get
21 it in by August 25th. Again, you've seen
22 this slide with the various mechanisms we
23 have to submit your comments.

24 So I want to thank everyone again for
25 coming. And with that we will officially

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1 adjourn the meeting.

2 Good night.

3 (Meeting concluded at 10:00 p.m.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 STATE OF GEORGIA:

4 COUNTY OF JASPER:

5 I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript
6 was reported, as stated in the caption, and reduced to
7 typewriting under my direction; that the foregoing
8 Pages 1 through 164, inclusive, represent a true,
9 complete and correct transcript of the said
10 proceedings; and I further certify that I am not of
11 kin or counsel to the parties in the case, am
12 not in the employ of said parties, nor am I in anywise
13 interested in the result of said case.

14 This, the 26th day of August 2008.

15

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19

Susan W. Tarpley
Certified Court Reporter
Certificate No. CCR B-1489

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