



Norwalk River Watershed Association, Inc.

New Canaan, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Wilton, CT; Lewisboro, NY

July 5, 2018

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

The Honorable Rosanna Rosado
Secretary of State
New York Department of State
One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Ave.
Albany, NY 12231-0001

Dear Governor Cuomo and Secretary of State Rosado:

I am writing on behalf of the Norwalk River Watershed Association (NRWA), a non-profit organization with a membership of approximately 500 households in Lewisboro, NY and six CT towns. NRWA is dedicated to protecting water quality and wildlife habitat in the Norwalk River Watershed and Norwalk Harbor. As a member of the Plum Island Coalition, NRWA asks you to **please use the powers vested in you as the Governor and Secretary of State of New York to prevent the sale of Plum Island.** We ask you to please act to secure the island's future for wildlife, estuarine ecosystems, historic preservation, public access to the coast, ground- and freshwater quality, and high-quality jobs attendant to a research institution.

Our members are extremely concerned about the threats to our environment posed by the Trump administration and the Pruitt and post-Pruitt EPA. We are more motivated than ever before to act to protect our rivers and Long Island Sound. The fact that Homeland Security canceled our planned trip to Plum Island for August 1st without explanation and has halted all bird counts and other environmental research concerns us gravely. The halting of research suggests the Federal Government's indifference to the value of this crucial and unique wildlife sanctuary. Once lost, this ecosystem will be gone forever. In its place will likely be another Trump golf course devoid of the life currently thriving on the island and leaching pesticides and fertilizer into the Sound.

We believe that a careful review by your Department of State staff and leadership will show that the unrestricted sale of Plum Island out of public ownership is not consistent with New York's coastal management program policies. We think an objection issued by you upon a consistency determination made by DHS can block the sale. Please exercise New York's federally delegated authority to protect Plum Island for its ecological values and zoned re-use potential for the area where the current lab is situated. Please do not concur with any federal consistency determination that a sale out of public ownership is consistent with coastal policy. Plum Island should be retained in public ownership. Please do not allow this vital and irreplaceable public resource to be sold to the highest bidder, bulldozed and made another playground for the very rich. Please protect this internationally recognized ecological treasure for public appreciation.

Sincerely,

Louise Washer, President,
Norwalk River Watershed Association