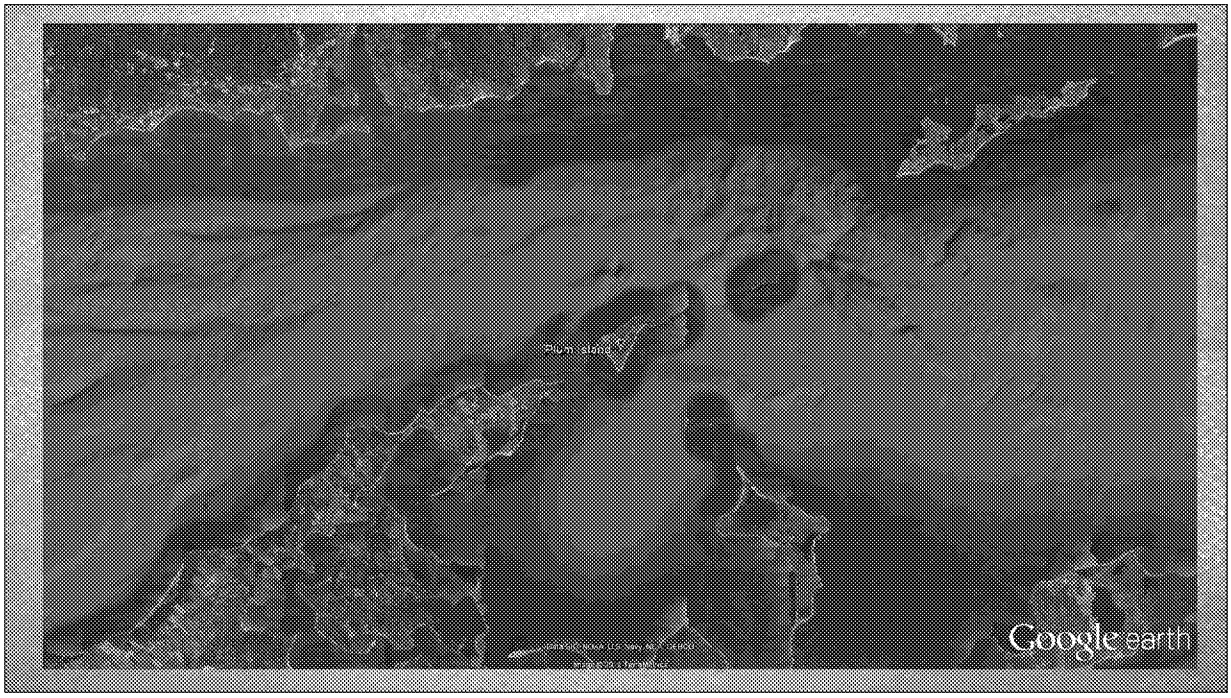
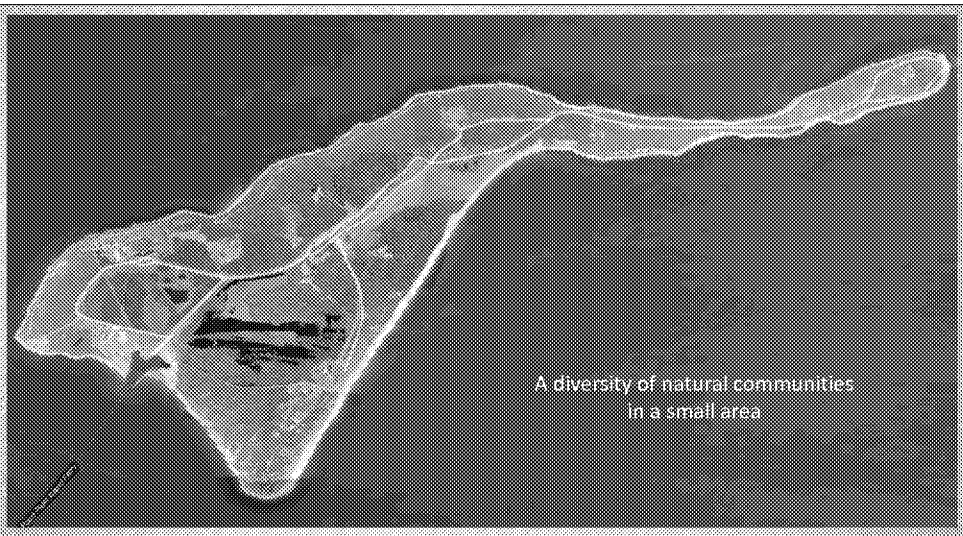
Envision Plum Island

Walter Mugdan, Acting Region 2 Administrator, US EPA

Louise Harrison
New York Natural Areas Coordinator
Save the Sound lharrison@savethesound.org

April 14, 2021


Google earth



Extant species: **Central Park**, NYC – 843 acres, 362 plant species, a majority exotic
Plum Island – 840 acres, 444 plant species, a majority ***native***
32 new species found in 2015!

Courtesy of the NYNHP

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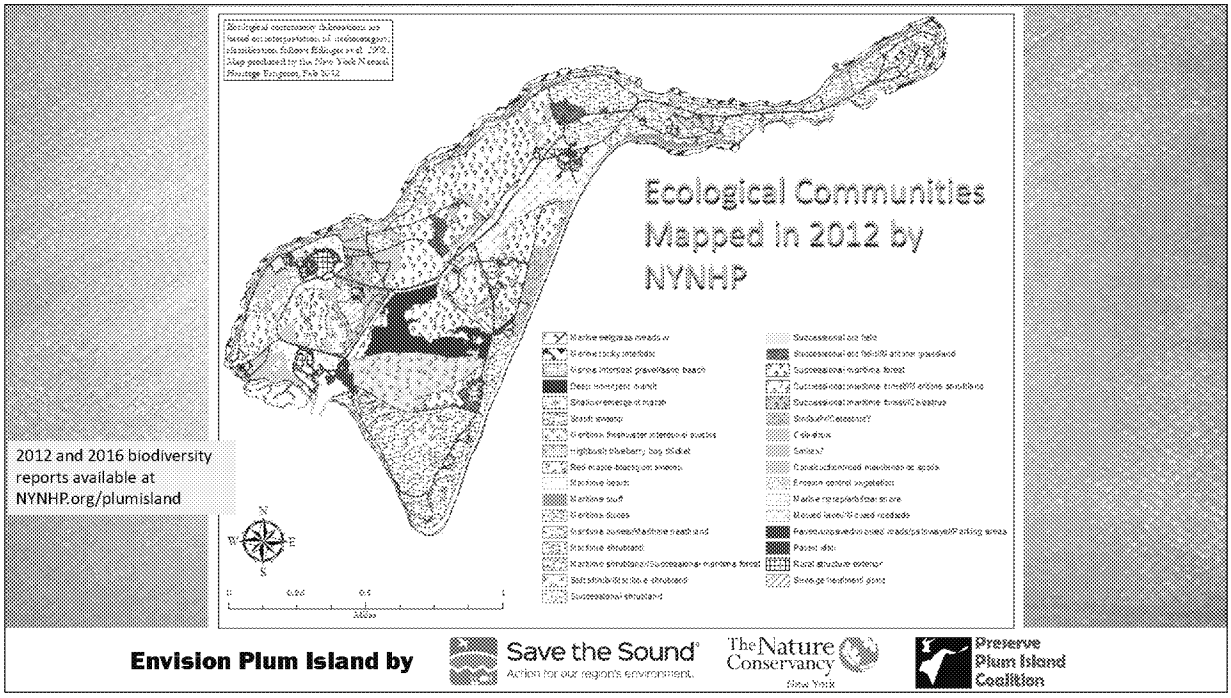

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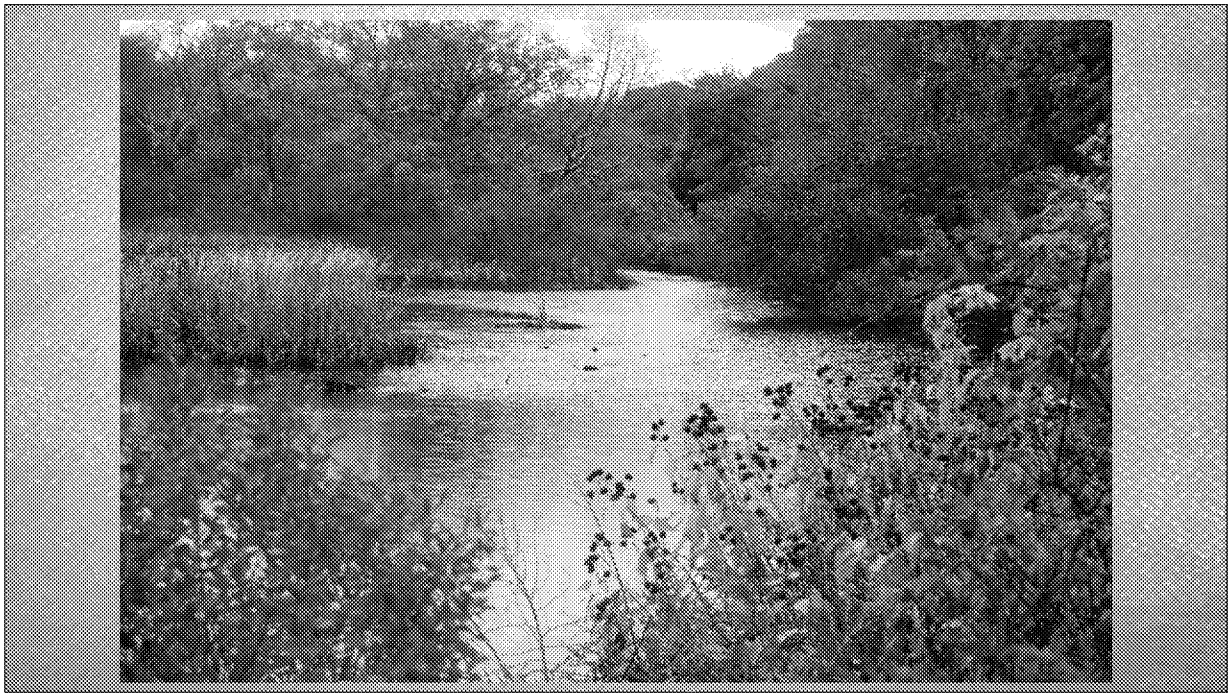
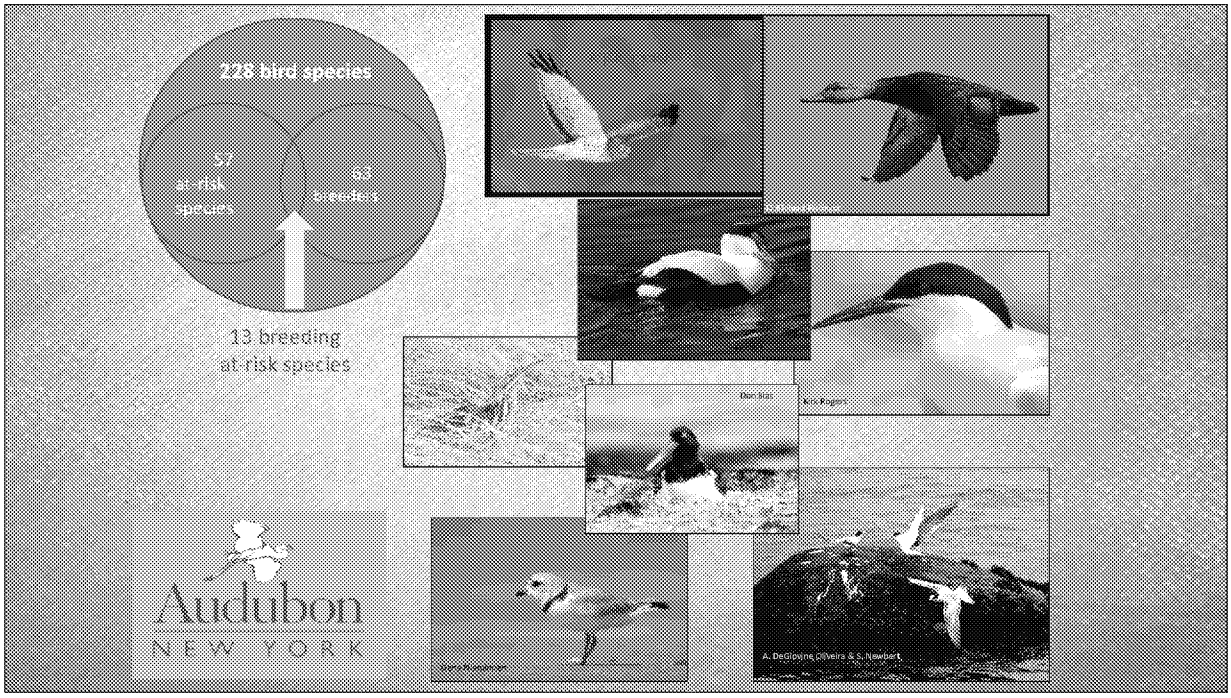
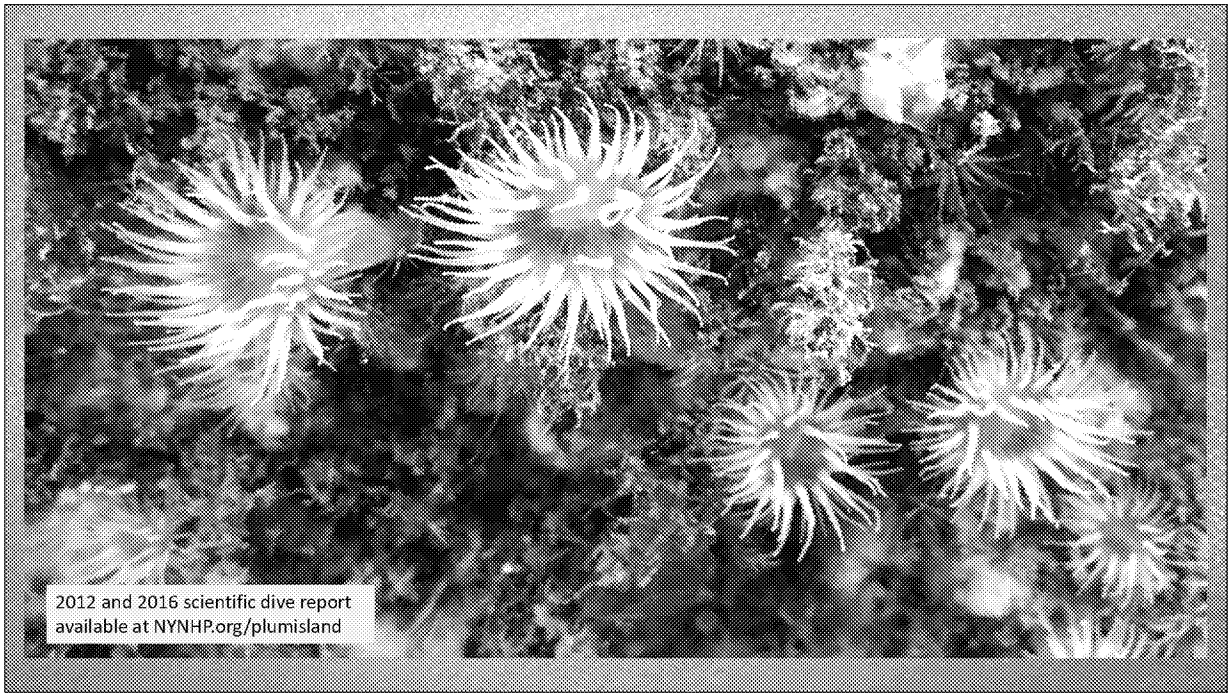
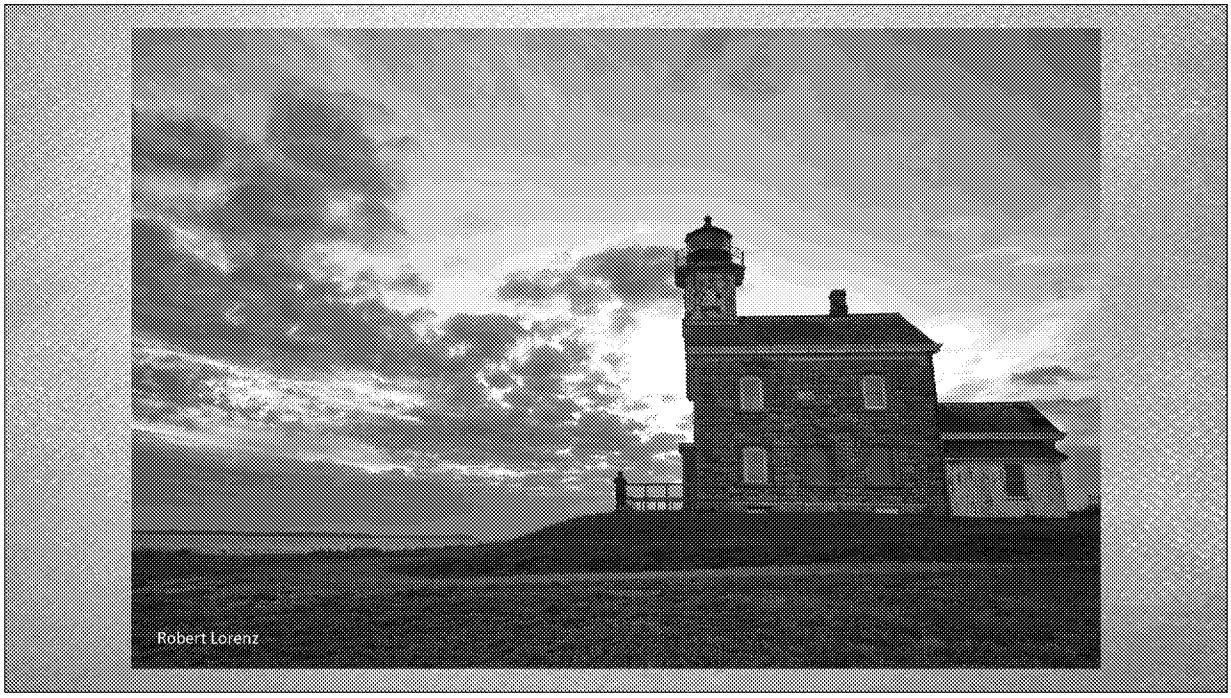
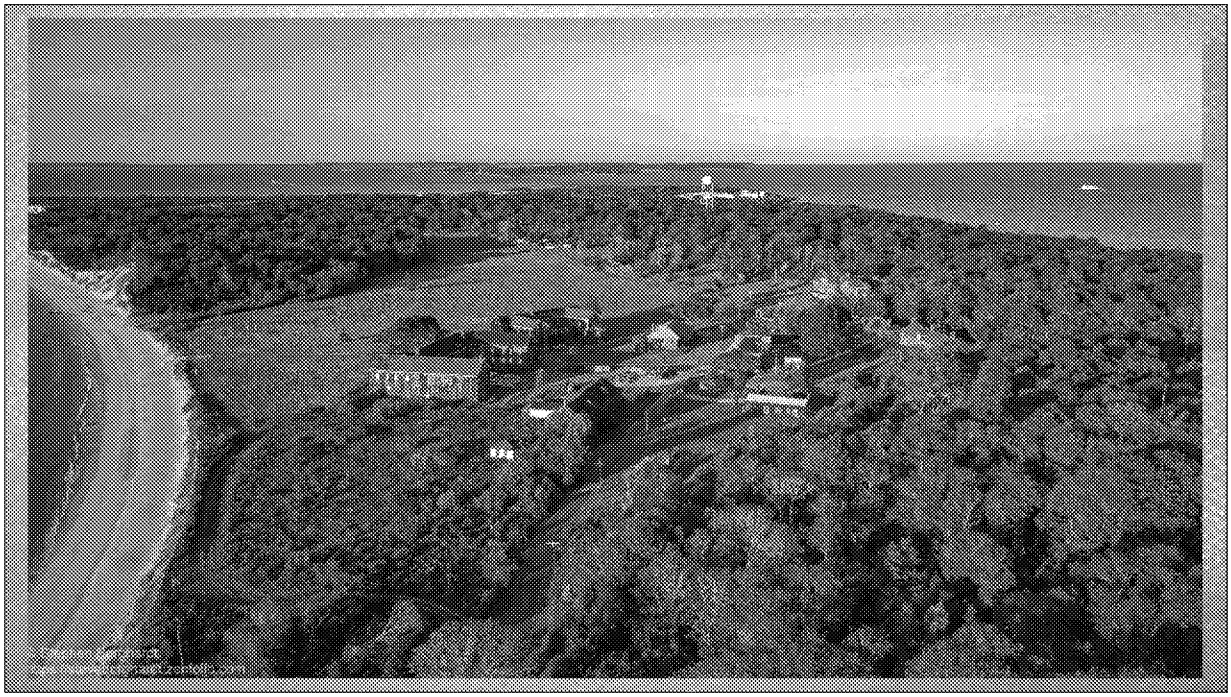


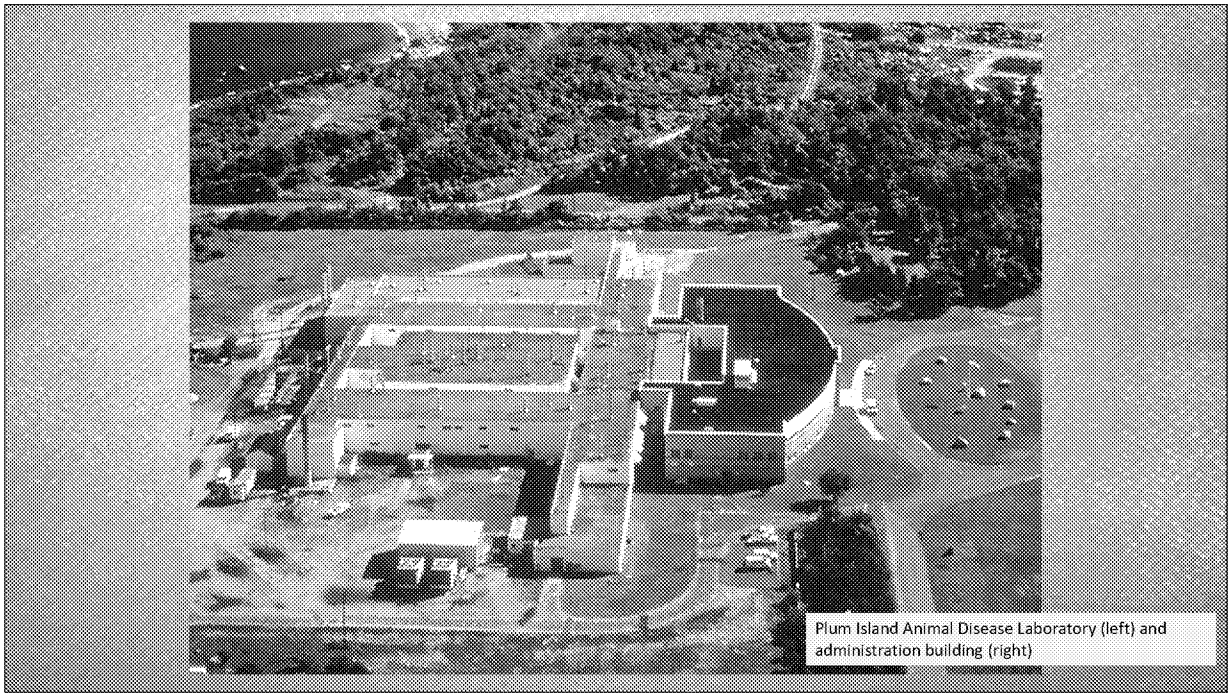

228 bird species
57
at-risk
species
63
breeders
13 breeding
at-risk species
Audubon
NEW YORK
A. DeGlovine Oliveira & S. Newbert


2012 and 2016 scientific dive report
available at NYNHP.org/plumisland



2nd lighthouse built 1869. previous one only lasted 43 years.
Getting a lighthouse was a major political win for mariners and eastern Long Islanders, who saw over 100 shipwrecks before the federal government finally acted to install a light and keeper in 1826.
An automated light on a metal scaffolding was built next to this building on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 – scarcely as beautiful or romantic.





Plum Island Animal Disease Laboratory (left) and administration building (right)

The Problem: Congressional sale language, 2008, updated 2012

"Secretary shall liquidate the Plum Island asset…through public sale all…personal property assets which support Plum Island operations *subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect government interests* and meet program requirements."

FOR SALE
BY OWNER
United States Government

Preserve Plum Island Coalition

117 regional and national organizations

See our members: www.preserveplumisland.org/partners

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What do you see, instead? Show us.
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Action for our region's environment.
The Nature Conservancy
New York
Preserve Plum Island Coalition

Save the Sound and The Nature Conservancy with consulting firm Marstel-Day

- Three formal workshops
- Many additional smaller meetings
- Local, Regional, and State interests
- Questions raised
- Iterative process
- Results

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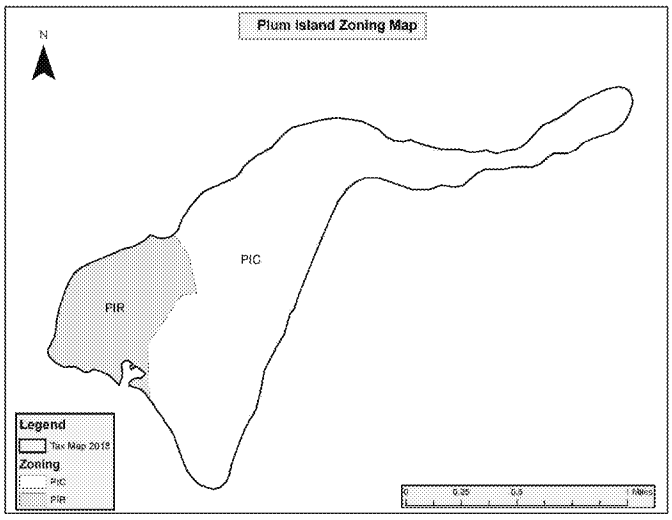
10

Southold Town Zoning Widely Supported



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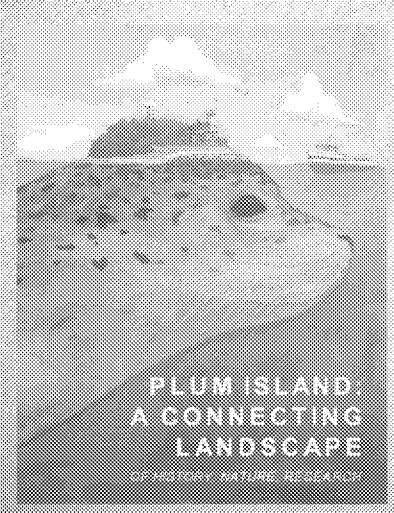
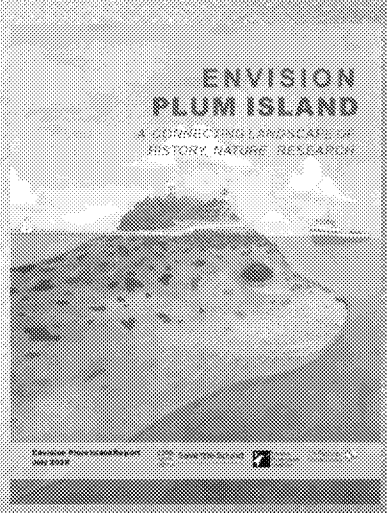
www.preserveplumisland.org/envision-report

Pictorial Brochure



Full Report



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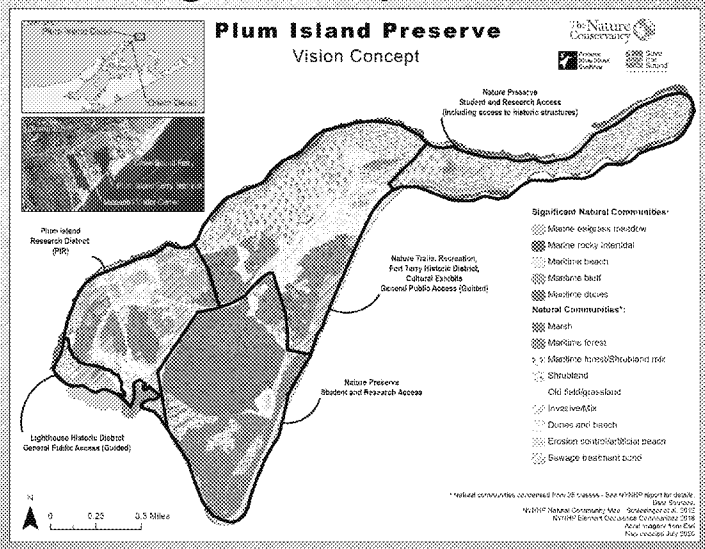
Our region developed the Vision

By 2023:
Plum
Island
Preserve



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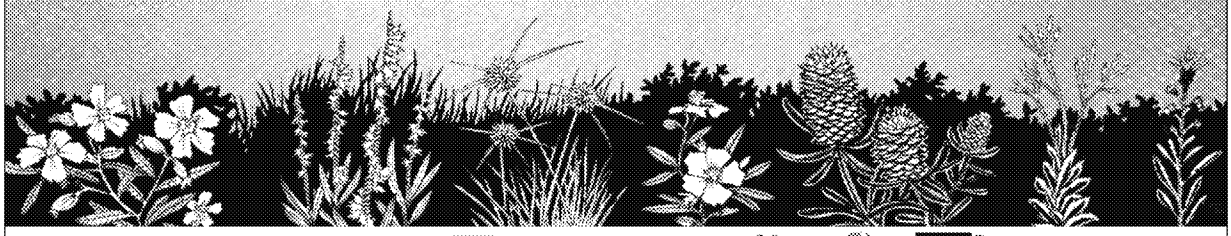
PLUM ISLAND PRESERVE

***Preserve* ecological value**
***Preserve* history and cultural heritage**
***Preserve* high quality jobs**



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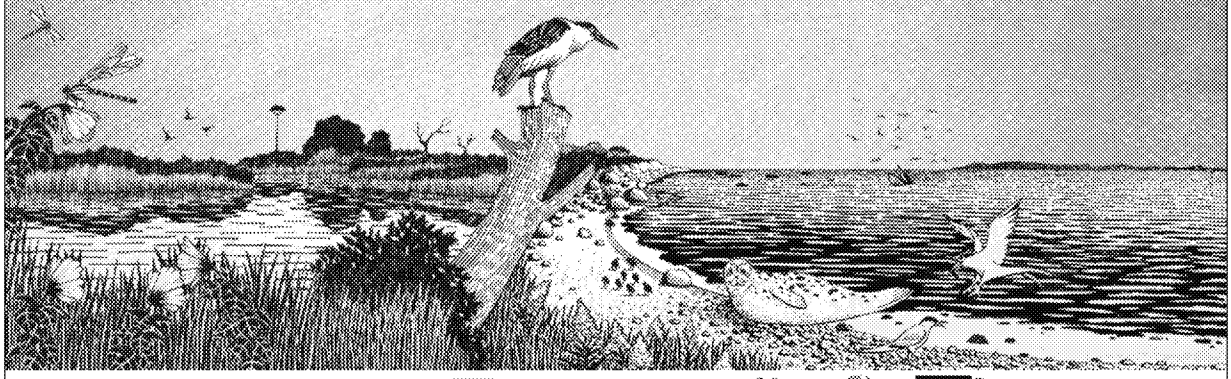
Opportunity Zone

Park • Research • Education



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Conservation District

James Dineen

- Protect biodiversity
- Public access, *controlled*
- Wildlife observation
- Cultural heritage
- Historical interpretation
- Research areas
- Ecological restoration

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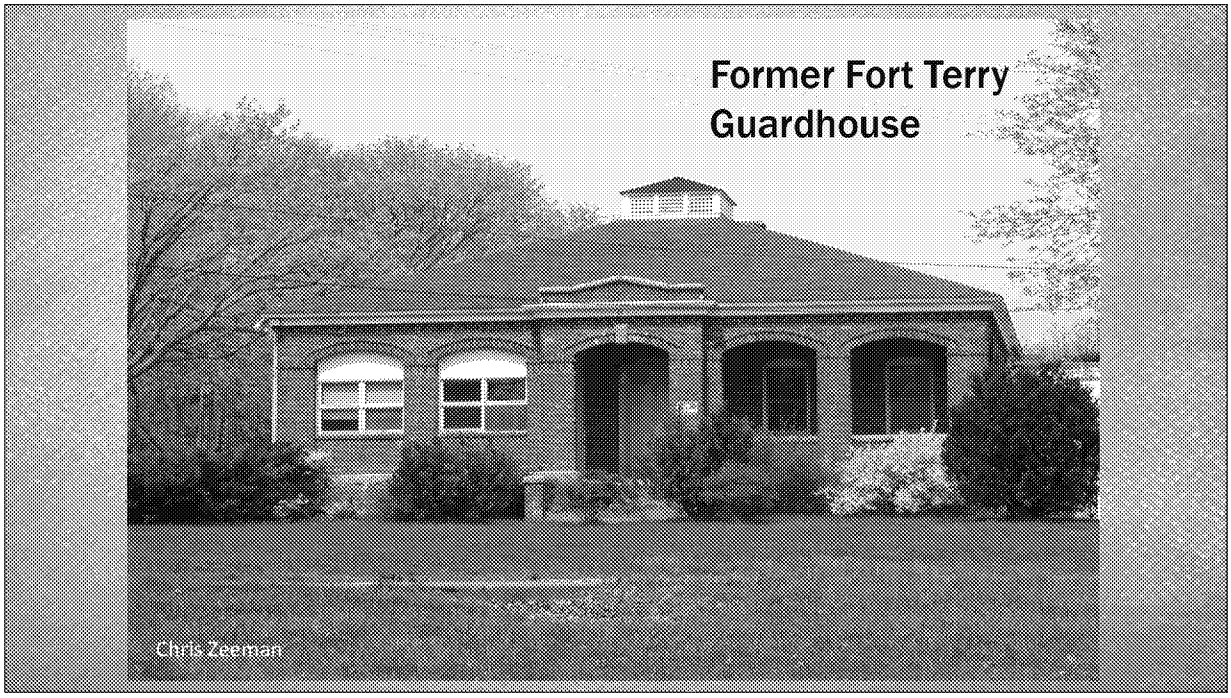
Long Island Association of Professional Geologists last spring


Former Fort Terry
Guardhouse
Chris Zeeman

Research District

Doug Kurtz, East Hampton Star

- Academic/industry research campus, 125 Ac
- Long Island Research Corridor LIA Priority
- Renewable energy, biotech, grid cyber-security, climate, ecology
- Provide ferry access
- Resources for Conservation District

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Community benefit packages through offshore wind project mitigation requirements?

Plum Island as a field station for the proposed Global Climate Center on Governors Island?

Commercial opportunities for research?

Sustainable Tourism

- Restored, reused National Historic Register Plum Island Lighthouse
- Possible Bed-and-Breakfast
- Ferry Access
- Easements to Conservation District
- Passive recreation

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Structures Adapted for Jobs

Note the bird-safe windows with kelp-forest motif look out over Plum Gut with Orient Point in background. Artist's concept.

- Former administration building
- Auditorium space
- Museum at Plum Island ferry dock, Orient Point
- Fort Terry structure for field research
- Retain job opportunities after PIADC leaves

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Getting There

- Three ferries with island
- Transport workers
- Plum Island dock adjoins major ferry service across Long Island Sound
- Need not increase local congestion
- Popular and fun travel

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Plum Island Ferry Dock, Orient Point, NY

- September 2020: Southold's rezoning to Marine III (MIII)
- MIII dedicated solely to ferry travel to and from Plum Island
- Potential for small museum/visitors center
- Public access to Plum Island can be sustainable

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Property transfer (conveyance) types that could work for New York State:

Public Benefit Conveyance
Negotiated Sale

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We learned...

Conveyance Pathways for Plum Island

- Repeal of 2008 and 2012 laws reinstitutes the standard federal property disposal process
- The process can provide for wildlife conservation, historic preservation, and positive economic outcomes

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Repeal the
problem
legislation
ACHIEVED!
December 2020

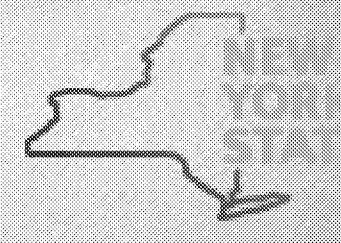
Department of Interior

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge

National Park Service

New York State

- Transfer,
- Low-cost public benefit conveyance, or
- Negotiated sale

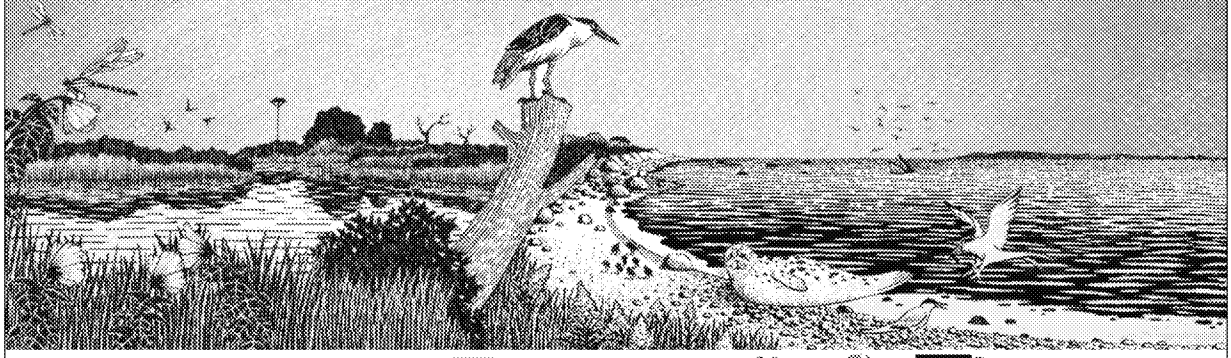


For any future public acquisition:

Friends of Plum Island

Plum Island Preserve is feasible
Plum Island Preserve has broad support

With public ownership and a
Friends of Plum Island group, we can make it a reality



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THANK YOU

We are grateful to the following for major support of our work on* Envision Plum Island*:

The Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut • Fisher Family Fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo • The Geoffrey C. Hughes Foundation • The Jaeger Family Fund • Chester Kitchings Family Foundation • Michael S. and Carolyn W. Levine •Henry D. Lord • Ruth Lord Charitable Trust • The M.L.E. Foundation • Overhills Foundation • Robert F. Schumann Foundation • The M. & H. Sommer Foundation • Tortuga Foundation

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Envision Plum Island

Report and Brochure at

preserveplumisland.org/envision-report

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