

1
2
3
4
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

NASA WALLOPS FLIGHT FACILITY
SHORELINE RESTORATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION PROGRAM
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING

March 16, 2010

Wallops Island, Virginia

TAYLOE ASSOCIATES, INC.
Registered Professional Reporters
Telephone: (757) 461-1984
Norfolk, Virginia

1 Appearances:

2

3 Keith Koehler, Public Affairs Office

4 Paul Bull, Shoreline Restoration Project Manager

5 Josh Bundick, NASA Wallops Environmental Office

6 Dr. David King, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

7 Shari Silbert, WICC Team Member

8

9 Also present:

10 Tracy Hand, RPR, Meeting Reporter

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 (The hearing commenced at 6:07 p.m.)

2 MR. KOEHLER: We will get started. The
3 idea tonight is kind of give everybody on update where
4 we are on the Shoreline Restoration Project and the
5 EIS program.

6 So the process tonight, we'll have a few
7 comments, we'll have an overview of where we're at on
8 the project. After that you'll be allowed to ask some
9 questions and answers to make sure everybody's clear
10 on what's going on, and then after that we have a
11 public comment period if anybody has any comments
12 after that point.

13 When we get to the questions and answer
14 session and the comments, raise your hands and I can
15 give you the mike so we can get everything recorded,
16 make sure she hears everything that everybody is
17 saying.

18 So we're going to get started and we'll
19 start out with Craig Purdy, who is the deputy director
20 here at Wallops. He will make a short statement.

21 MR. PURDY: Okay. I happen to be acting
22 facility director until my new boss gets here, so
23 that's the capacity I'm here. These guys have done a
24 real good job over the past year putting together a
25 plan for the restoration and the protection of our

1 infrastructure over on the island.

2 They got the input from the world's
3 experts in this area and they got the input from the
4 local experts in this area, and that's a lot of you
5 sitting out there that helped us put this plan
6 together. And they put out the EIS or the
7 environmental Impact Statement, and this is our time
8 to listen to your comments on it and take your
9 comments and see if we need to do another thing to
10 make this plan more palatable to everybody involved.

11 We are your neighbors, we want to do what
12 you think is right, but we have to protect Wallops,
13 and this plan is extremely important to the longevity
14 of Wallops and what we are doing here. These two guys
15 up here have put in a lot of work, a lot of good work,
16 and I'm sure they will be able to answer all your
17 questions. So thanks again for coming.

18 MR. KOEHLER: Thanks, Craig.

19 Okay. We're getting started with Paul
20 Bull, who's the project manager for the station
21 program, so, Paul.

22 MR. BULL: How is everybody doing this
23 evening? I'm the project manager for the -- this
24 project to hopefully protect or loss range. Josh is
25 the EIS manager; he will be right after me.

1 And we'll tell you things that you have
2 heard before. I think all the faces I see in the
3 crowd for the most part are familiar, but we'll go
4 ahead and shoot the same script we did last time.
5 Actually, I'll get to say it this time versus the
6 person in front of me. Kind of an inside joke.

7 Here is our agenda. We will talk about
8 the nor'easter damage. This is actually the
9 nor'easter damage from the November storm. Probably
10 should turn this the right way. We've had several
11 nor'easters after that storm and have done more
12 damage, not -- it's not sustained damage, as
13 sustained; it's just kind of chronic damage to our
14 seawall primarily and sand on some of our
15 infrastructure.

16 We will talk about the alternatives. We
17 have three project stats where we are today, new
18 technical information that I discussed last time and
19 we will go over it one more time, EIS update, Josh
20 will jump in there, and then we'll have the Q and A
21 for anybody who has any questions for us, and then
22 we'll open it up for public comments as well for the
23 record.

24 All right. Here is the slide that
25 basically shows why we're doing what we're doing. We

1 have about a billion dollars worth of federal assets
2 on Wallops Island and we have about a hundred million
3 of annual programs that activate on Wallops all year,
4 yearly, every year.

5 And this is the information we had when
6 we actually started this project. I think Craig says
7 we have been working the least year. Actually, 2006
8 is when we had the first Corps study, so it's been at
9 least four years we've been actively working on this
10 project.

11 Since that time I guess -- I'm going to
12 get the date wrong, but I remember sitting in a
13 conference room, Jay Pittman, our launch manager,
14 looked at his BlackBerry, whatever, and said, we've
15 got Taurus II. So that's after this -- this is above
16 and beyond what's here, a hundred -- a billion dollars
17 worth of federal assets, a hundred million dollars of
18 annual activity on the island, and now Taurus II is
19 coming with a \$2 billion program and at least a
20 hundred million dollars worth of assets being
21 constructed today that's not on this slide right now.

22 Here is a picture of UAV runway to the
23 south, pad 0A -- 0B, I'm sorry, 0B here. Basically,
24 Assawoman Island is about 2000 feet off the V100
25 camera stand. This is a picture probably in 2008,

1 early 2008 time frame.

2 Flipping to November of 2009, and you can
3 see all the geo tubes are mostly gone, the beach is
4 kind of gone, UAV runway is inundated with sand and
5 debris. This is just a nor'easter. Of course,
6 nor'easters tend to do the most damage here.

7 Okay. This is the alternative portion of
8 our discussion. Ongoing seawall maintenance. As I
9 mentioned before, these storms that we've had have
10 been kind of chronic in nature; they have just been
11 eating at our seawalls. They've sat here -- I think
12 the November storm sat here for seven high tides; it
13 just ate -- chewed up on the seawall and the sand in
14 front of it, and we've lost some elevation because of
15 it.

16 But we're going to do some ongoing
17 seawall maintenance as part of this project. We just
18 had funding to do that. We have three alternatives to
19 consider. I think some of you were here when we
20 considered the beach fill groin as our primary
21 alternative, but we will talk about that in a little
22 bit more detail.

23 So we have three alternatives: Beach
24 fill only, which also extends the seawall. All of
25 them have the extension of the seawall in this project

1 embedded. Beach fill only, beach fill and groin
2 perpendicular to our property line, and beach fill
3 with detached breakwaters.

4 We have had ongoing meetings and
5 discussions with our folks that are helping us from
6 the Corps. The URS is doing the EIS, and we also have
7 the ITR Team, Independent Technical Review Team. I
8 think the next slide speaks to who those individuals
9 are and what they are doing for us.

10 Through those meetings and constant
11 dialogue and research and design, we've kind of
12 determined that when we first met you, we were
13 thinking that our groin project would be our primary
14 alternative, but we got public comment against that,
15 we got -- and then we met with our ITR team and our
16 design team, and they basically have -- we figured out
17 that all three of these projects have similar
18 technical merits, and what's important for us is the
19 cost of all three projects is similar.

20 So we -- knowing all that, we decided to
21 make beach fill the preferred alternative. One other
22 issue we discussed when we first met you-all was
23 Blackfish Bank. The idea is taking sand off Blackfish
24 Bank. Blackfish Bank is the closest structure out in
25 the ocean we can pull sand from. But we had a lot of

1 comments, we did a fish -- a survey of all the
2 fishermen and all the charter boat captains, and they
3 wanted us to stay away from Blackfish Bank. And then
4 we had some further modeling by folks in the Corps,
5 and they determined that if we mined Blackfish Bank
6 long term, there would be some negative effects to
7 Assateague. So we backed away from that, and I will
8 have a slide show on that shortly.

9 Our implementation schedule for this
10 project, we hope sometime later this summer to begin a
11 seawall repair in targeted areas, about 2500 feet or
12 so of seawall we need to repair. We need more, but
13 that's what we have budgeted. And we hope to start
14 extending our seawall south up to 4600 feet. Right
15 now the project is probably in the 1500-foot range
16 this fall as well, probably extending into 2011
17 calendar year.

18 Then in 2011, probably springtime, we
19 hope to begin our first phase of a two-phase project
20 to put 3 million cubic yards of beach on Wallops
21 Island that is not there today. That will end up
22 being somewhere between 70 feet and 110 feet of dry
23 beach at high tide, depending on how we get bids in
24 and what gets funded.

25 Project status. I won't dwell on the

1 draft PEIS's while you-all are here. Josh will talk a
2 little bit about that, so I'm going to jump down and
3 talk about design. 30 percent design we've already
4 marched through up in October, February, Josh and I
5 traveled to Norfolk and reviewed the 60 percent,
6 90 percent should be here in May, and then July
7 timeframe to coincide with our EIS project completion
8 will be in July, a hundred percent.

9 Okay. I spoke briefly about the ITR,
10 Independent Technical Review Team, and I know a lot of
11 you were here last time and you know who they are, but
12 we will speak a little bit about it.

13 The idea about the ITR Team actually was
14 brought up way earlier in our project, and I kind of
15 didn't think it was a good idea, then I slowly warmed
16 up to the idea. But, basically, it's to provide
17 independent technical review of all documentation
18 related to this project, to evaluate the scientific
19 and engineering studies relative to the stakeholder
20 comments, all the comments we received from the
21 public, we allow them to look at that and the response
22 on that, and they've commented on that.

23 They identified strengths and weaknesses
24 for our project. They made -- or part of the deciding
25 voice to push us away from the groin. They consist of

1 four university professors with 125 years experience
2 doing this kind of work, and they have -- most of them
3 have done work in this area.

4 Technical information that was new to us
5 last time, but I will repeat this time in case anybody
6 didn't hear. We've done additional modeling. We
7 remodeled the model again, and we've determined the
8 net sediment transport along Wallops Island is to the
9 north.

10 Any given day, any given year it could be
11 to the south, net, but the net, sediment transport, is
12 to the north. Primary reason of that is the groin --
13 fishing point groin to the south. So our predominant
14 wave action that comes from the northeast is sheltered
15 basically by that piece of land growing south, and we
16 believe it's going to continue to go south.

17 Blackfish Bank, here's the issue of
18 Blackfish Bank: Blackfish Bank is obviously the
19 closest structure to us to grab sand from; however,
20 it's also the closest to Assateague, and it costs
21 money to steam out here.

22 This costs less money than going to here
23 and there, and there is even more, so... But we got
24 comments from the public that Blackfish Bank was a bad
25 idea. We got the modeling results that also said it

1 could potentially be a negative impact to Assateague,
2 so we have now decided to go to Site A and take
3 Blackfish totally out of the running for getting sand.

4 One other small thing, we have a large
5 build-up to our north. Our north is kind of secreting
6 sand, and we are investigating the idea anyway in the
7 EIS to potentially take some of this sand off our own
8 beach and use it for some of our renourishment
9 efforts.

10 The problem with that is not enough sand,
11 Number 1, but it may not be cost effective to do it as
12 well. It might be cost effective to just bring a
13 dredge in and do the whole shooting match.

14 With that, I'll turn it over to Josh, and
15 then when Josh finishes, we will sit here and take any
16 questions you might have.

17 MR. BUNDICK: Thank you, Paul. Again,
18 Josh Bundick, and I am the project manager for the
19 environmental impact statement. I work in the
20 environmental office, and our job is to make sure all
21 Wallops projects follow the NEPA process.

22 And I will give you the quick 15-,
23 20-second debrief on NEPA. NEPA is a federal
24 requirement that the government assess the
25 environmental impacts of its proposals prior to

1 implementing those proposals, and that's, of course,
2 why we're here tonight. We assess the impacts,
3 disclose those impacts to the public and to the
4 regulatory community, and then incorporate those
5 comments into our final decision document, and then,
6 in effect, make an informed decision based on the best
7 technical and scientific information available. So
8 that's kind of why we are here tonight, and I'm to
9 talk more about the EIS process.

10 Back in April of 2009 we all were in this
11 room listening to this initial proposal, and the
12 purpose of that meeting was to conduct scoping, and
13 the purpose of scoping is to get feedback on the
14 proposal prior to beginning the EIS process.

15 And the concerns that were raised during
16 that 45-day window and the meeting that we had here in
17 April was that the preferred alternative at that time
18 was an alternative that included a terminal groin at
19 the south end of the project, and that was the lion's
20 share of the comments that were received during that
21 time.

22 And, of course, in the EIS we do disclose
23 the uncertainties inherent in the modeling that we
24 predicted and that although the modeling may have
25 shown that the groin would not have an adverse effect

1 on sediment transport to the south, we couldn't say
2 that for sure.

3 But there is some uncertainty out there
4 with having a rock structure in the ocean, and,
5 therefore, it was changed that the project's preferred
6 alternative would not include that terminal structure.

7 A second comment that was received was
8 regarding the relocation of our launch range
9 infrastructure, perhaps moving it westward from
10 Wallops Island where it's been since the '40s to
11 perhaps the mainland or to the main base.

12 And in the EIS we considered those
13 concerns and actually worked with our range safety
14 office in developing an analysis of what type of
15 effects that might have on landowners in Assawoman, in
16 Atlantic near Chincoteague if we were to do such a
17 thing. And, again, we explained why the risks -- the
18 safety risks are inherently unacceptable to NASA and
19 why that's not an acceptable alternative for us to
20 consider in the EIS.

21 And regarding biological impacts at the
22 bar sites, as Paul mentioned, we did remove Blackfish
23 Bank as a shoal under consideration due to the
24 potential effects to commercial and recreational
25 fishing in the area.

1 Also, we are consulting very heavily and
2 closely with the National Marine Fishery Service in
3 determining the best way to dredge the shoal, whether
4 it be Shoal A or B, 10 or 15 miles off of Assateague
5 to minimize the environmental impacts on those shoals
6 throughout the life of the 50-year project.

7 And, of course, there was some concern
8 regarding the ability of NASA to maintain and/or fund
9 the project. And, of course, as being a federal
10 agency, we are subject to the appropriations from
11 Congress, and in the EIS we do acknowledge the fact
12 that there is some uncertainty in the out years, say
13 45 years down the road, whether or not we can
14 guarantee funding or not.

15 And, of course, having a rock structure
16 in the open ocean is inherently risky given those
17 considerations. So, again, we acknowledge that in the
18 EIS, and our preferred alternative certainly contains
19 the least damaging -- environmentally damaging
20 alternative if funding in the out years was unable to
21 be secured.

22 Just a brief rundown on the studies and
23 the analyses that have been conducted to support the
24 EIS: First, Dr. Dave King with the ERDC, down in
25 Vicksburg with the Army Corps of Engineers, performed

1 a very thorough sediment transport analysis, both the
2 effects of the dredging on the offshore shoals and
3 Assateague Island, but, also, the near shore sediment
4 transport on Wallops Island and Assawoman Island.

5 And we found through that modeling, there
6 should be no measurable impacts to either Assawoman
7 Island or Assateague Island from the project.

8 Regarding the biological resources, Jeff
9 Ridenhour and his team from URS spent a couple of the
10 best weeks of his life out in the boat in the Atlantic
11 Ocean this past summer, not only performing underwater
12 archeology but actually out there with a drop camera
13 taking video footage of those shoals at I believe it
14 was 40 different stations at each shoal to better
15 characterize the bottom dwelling habitat, do we have
16 any hard substrate out there that fish might find to
17 be preferable or is it all consistently sand.

18 And what we found is that both Shoals A
19 and B are consistently the same. We are also
20 consulting with the National Marine Fishery Service
21 and the Fish and Wildlife Service right now to
22 determine the level of effects we might expect to
23 threaten an endangered species, namely sea turtles,
24 protected whales, protected mammals, seals and
25 porpoises and whatnot, as well as piping plovers, red

1 knots, and the nesting birds on the beach.

2 And regarding the cultural resources, I
3 mentioned before, we've been consulting with the
4 Virginia Department of Historic Resources since the
5 beginning of the project, and just today we received
6 their concurrence that the project should have no
7 effect whatsoever on historic or prehistoric
8 archeological resources for either alternative.

9 And as the programmatic environmental
10 impact statement continues to develop from draft to
11 final, we will keep our website continually updated
12 with its status. I recall at the December 8th meeting
13 that we had here there was some interest in our
14 sharing the video footage from the shoals on the
15 website. We have updated the website to include that
16 information. Of course, it includes all of the EIS
17 and its supporting documents.

18 And there's, of course, the web link.
19 The document in its hard copy format is available at
20 all the local libraries from Chincoteague south to
21 Nassawadox. We also have hard copies and CD's
22 available for those of you who might want your own
23 personal copy, and, of course, if there is anyone that
24 is not on our existing project distribution list for
25 both e-mail and hard copy information, you can

1 certainly sign up in the back tonight and we will be
2 glad to add you to that.

3 And the comments on the project at this
4 point are due April 19th. Our previous announcement
5 that we may have sent out noted April 15th, but we
6 have extended it out an additional four days to
7 incorporate some processing time that was needed prior
8 to our Federal Register announcement back in March.
9 So, again, the comments are requested by April
10 the 19th.

11 And with that, just I would like to open
12 it up for any questions that you might have on the
13 project. And as Keith mentioned before, this is not
14 necessarily the time to speak for the record as, you
15 know, this is more of an informal session where, you
16 know, anybody has any questions regarding both the
17 project or the environmental effects.

18 We will be glad to answer those, or if
19 Paul or I can't answer them, we will certainly defer
20 to our technical team sitting here in the audience.
21 So thank you.

22 MR. KOEHLER: If anybody has any
23 questions at this point about the project itself, just
24 raise your hand and I will bring the mike to you.

25 Yes, state your name and ask away.

1 MR. SEYBOLT: My name is Ace Seybolt. I
2 have a comment, which I will do later, but I have one
3 question. Should eventually NASA have to switch to
4 Alternative 2 or 3, would you do this whole, I guess
5 you call it NEPA or EIS process all over?

6 MR. BUNDICK: Yes. The purpose of --
7 what -- the document that we prepared was the
8 programmatic document, meaning that there are elements
9 within the program that are, you know, of course,
10 unknown at this point. We can't say with absolute
11 certainty between now and fiscal year 2017 how
12 exactly -- are we going to have to put 2.3 million
13 cubic yards or 2.4 million yards back on the beach.

14 So we recognize that uncertainty and
15 prepared this document knowing that for future
16 renourishment actions or changes to the program that
17 are outside of what we select as our preferred
18 alternative would be subject to additional NEPA
19 review, focusing on that specific action. So the
20 answer is yes.

21 MS. SCHUPP: This question, I think
22 really is for Dr. David King. In the engineering
23 report on the impact for the Assateague shoreline, Dr.
24 King suggested that perhaps dredging Shoal A, which is
25 a little further south but closer to Assateague

1 Island, that that might have fewer impacts on that
2 narrow part of Assateague that's retreating a lot
3 faster than the part just south of Tom's Cove.

4 I was wondering if you could shed a
5 little more insight on the resolution of that, if
6 that's a plus or minus ten miles shoreline impact or
7 if it's on a smaller scale than that.

8 DR. KING: Can you guys hear me? I don't
9 have the figures in front of me, but in Chapter 8
10 there are those three figures that show the impacts to
11 Blackfish Bank, to Shoal A, and to Shoal B.

12 This isn't a real scientific study, but
13 if you just look at where the largest impacts are
14 relative to where Tom's Cove is, relative to where
15 Fishing Point is on those figures, you will see that
16 for Shoal A they're shifted to the fishing point area,
17 whereas in the impacts to Shoal B are a little more
18 focused on the Tom's Cove area.

19 I didn't do any kind of statistical
20 analysis up and down the beach saying where the
21 biggest impacts were. I was -- the origin of that
22 comment was just from looking at those figures,
23 basically, okay?

24 MR. BUNDICK: And here they are, Dave.

25 DR. KING: I can hold them up, but

1 that's -- yeah, just the squiggly lines that are
2 adjacent to the pictures on the left-hand side of
3 those three pictures.

4 MS. SCHUPP: Right. And conceptually
5 that makes sense, but I was wondering for -- you know,
6 from a land management perspective if that -- you
7 know, how big a grain of salt to take it with, you
8 know, if I should really be concerned about a 20-mile
9 stretch or if it's really safer say to Dredge A versus
10 B.

11 DR. KING: There is probably not going to
12 be a lot of impact. The guidelines that Mineral
13 Management Services provided that they give us that
14 coefficient, that was the basis for that line that I
15 present in the report. It's a fairly conservative
16 number, result to get.

17 They could have given other guidelines
18 that would have allowed more leeway, I think. I'm not
19 sure it's necessarily in the guideline I would have
20 chosen if I were -- if I were presenting that, but
21 that's not me.

22 But your question is a good one, and I
23 think that you're probably getting to the limits of
24 the modeling capability. I don't want to speak in
25 very dogmatic terms about the details of that. You're

1 at about the limit of what the models are capable of
2 telling us. I shouldn't be leaning back here.

3 Yeah, to get to a more detailed
4 understanding, you're going to very rapidly get to the
5 point of saying that we just don't know, don't have
6 the capability of saying where the zero impact is,
7 where the real minimal impact is, and where you draw
8 the line between what is an acceptable impact and an
9 unacceptable impact.

10 The -- what the -- this figure -- and I'm
11 sure that most of you are thoroughly lost on this
12 subject -- shows is -- compares the changes in the
13 transport rate that you get on the beach from
14 modeling -- from dredging each of these different
15 shoals compared with what the normal year-to-year
16 variability in the wave climate is.

17 It's not reasonable to say that if
18 there's one more grain of sand or less, more or less
19 transported because of the offshore dredging, that
20 that's an unacceptable site.

21 But, okay, well, if one grain is more or
22 less than -- then will get moved is okay, is
23 two grains okay? Is five or ten grains? Well, all of
24 those, sure. But a hundred gazillion grains where you
25 have huge cutbacks in the beach is not.

1 And there is no obvious line that you can
2 draw and say that this is a significant impact and
3 something a little bit less is an insignificant
4 impact. And, frankly, you're also at about the limit
5 of how much you want to trust the modeling effort.

6 I'm not sure that's the best answer or
7 the answer that you would like to hear, but that's
8 pretty much the state of modeling of where we are.

9 Now, did that go into it enough?

10 MS. SCHUPP: Yes, thank you.

11 DR. KING: More than enough?

12 MR. BUNDICK: Now, just to add one thing
13 to Dr. Dave's response was that -- just for everybody
14 else: The modeling, the analysis that he did assumed
15 that all the sediment required for the 50-year life of
16 the project was all removed in one fell swoop, which,
17 of course, would not be the case in reality; it was
18 just, again, designed that way so that we could
19 provide a conservative analysis to make up for some of
20 the uncertainties.

21 MR. WOLFF: Ron Wolff. The question that
22 I would have, this year being a very different year as
23 far as storms that have affected the island, with this
24 50-year project in mind, is this year and the number
25 of northeast storms that have affected the island, is

1 this something that is unique or is this something
2 that is usual in your 50-year analysis?

3 Do you plan for these type of storms on a
4 more frequent basis or less frequent basis? I know,
5 you know, this one is kind of unusual, but --

6 MR. BULL: That's why I asked Shari to
7 put us on this slide. This is the data set that
8 Dr. King worked from. Nor'easters, we had 39 between
9 '54 and 2003. Of course, what we're having this year
10 is not modeled, but I can't say, and maybe -- we don't
11 have a meteorologist here, but I can't say any years
12 within that time period had the same kind of veracity
13 of storms that we had this year.

14 I don't know if you want to add a little
15 bit to that.

16 DR. KING: Yeah, just a little bit.

17 MR. BULL: Just a little bit.

18 DR. KING: I will try not to be too
19 windy.

20 Yeah, the modeling is based on historical
21 data sets. And this is the storm data set that was
22 used. There is also a 20-year wave climate that was
23 used between -- the years for that were from 1980 to
24 1999.

25 Yeah, this has been a bad winter. How

1 bad it is is not clear since I know there were big
2 waves out there, but I don't have the actual data on
3 them.

4 So to really answer your question, we
5 needed to do the modeling work before we got to this
6 winter, so this stuff has not been incorporated into
7 the modeling effort to date.

8 MR. BULL: I guess to follow up on that,
9 Dave, if this project was already done, we wouldn't
10 have experienced any of the effects to the extent
11 we've experienced this winter. That's pretty much an
12 easy thing to say. If you had 70-foot or a
13 hundred-foot of beach at mean high water out there
14 when we had these storms, the impact would have been
15 minimal.

16 MR. BUNDICK: The fact that the crashing
17 waves would not have been on our seawall, it would
18 have been a hundred, a hundred five feet seaward would
19 be the benefit of having the beach out in front.

20 MR. KOEHLER: Any more questions? Any
21 more comments from you guys?

22 MR. BULL: I don't think so.

23 MR. KOEHLER: At this point then, we will
24 go into the official comment period. If anybody would
25 like to make an official comment, just raise your

1 hand, I will come by with the mike.

2 MR. SEYBOLT: Someone has to speak.

3 Again, my name -- for the recorder, my name is Ace
4 Seybolt. I spoke last, I guess that was April or
5 whenever. As I said before, I own the farms behind
6 Assawoman Island and I used to own Assawoman Island.

7 As a taxpayer and a citizen of the
8 county, I appreciate all the work you have done,
9 especially since this winter you were probably looking
10 over your shoulder holding a life jacket some of the
11 time.

12 As before, my comment deals with the
13 groin and the detached breakwater. They do not seem
14 to have been foreclosed as an option in the report,
15 and to a layman nothing in the report seemed to
16 incorporate all the negative impacts or studies
17 concerning groins.

18 And, actually, you seem to be saying
19 there would be no impact on Assawoman. So that is my
20 comment. Thank you.

21 MR. CHESSER: I'm Grayson Chesser, and
22 I'm the supervisor for Accomack County representing
23 District 3. And before I spoke and I spoke against
24 the seawall. Now -- not the seawall but the groin.

25 And I'm really happy to see that -- I'm

1 kind of unhappy to see it's still on the list, but I'm
2 very happy to see that it's dropped down to Number 2.
3 And because I think it would be disastrous for you if
4 you go to that option.

5 And, you know, Wallops is very important
6 to us. Some people I think think because I express my
7 concerns about Wallops that I am somehow opposed to
8 it. But a large part of my closest family members
9 work at Wallops. An awful lot of my friends, former
10 classmates work at Wallops.

11 It's absolutely, you know, vital to the
12 county that you succeed, and I wish you-all the best.
13 The reason I spoke against the groin is because I
14 think it would be detrimental not only to you but to
15 all of us who depend on you.

16 You know, we have a lot riding on you and
17 your success, and we want you to be successful, and I
18 hope that -- hope that you are, and I think you have
19 made the right choice.

20 Like I said, I would rather see the groin
21 completely eliminated because I've spent an awful lot
22 of time out there in the winter. Almost all these
23 slides you can see show places that I hunt, and so I
24 see a lot of what's going on. And I think I started
25 going out there in the '50s and, you know, seeing all

1 the changes, and it's very dynamic, and I think the
2 choice that you have made is the only logical one to
3 make. Thank you.

4 MR. PARKER: For the lady with the flying
5 fingers, I have this in writing again. My name is
6 Steve Parker. I'm director of The Nature
7 Conservancy's Virginia Coast Reserve.

8 This globally important natural area
9 consists of 14 barrier islands and several mainland
10 properties owned and managed for conservation purposes
11 south of Wallops Island. The Nature Conservancy is a
12 nonprofit organization with operations in 50 states
13 and 35 foreign countries. Our mission is to preserve
14 the plants, animals, and natural communities that
15 represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting
16 the lands and waters they need to survive.

17 We help with the protection of over 100
18 million acres globally. The Virginia Coast Reserve is
19 one of our most important preserves.

20 I wish to thank NASA for conducting an
21 open, participatory NEPA process and for listening
22 carefully to the comments of scientists, stakeholders,
23 and this community.

24 And in completion of our internal review
25 of the PEIS, the Conservancy is in agreement with the

1 preferred alternative. Our concurrence, as well as
2 our concerns with Alternative 2 and other comments and
3 suggestions will be stated in writing during the
4 present public comment period.

5 NASA Wallops has a mission that's very
6 important to this country and to our community. The
7 Nature Conservancy looks forward to continuing to work
8 with NASA in the future, and thank you again for the
9 opportunity to participate in this very important
10 process.

11 MR. KOEHLER: Any further comments?
12 Okay. Seeing no further comments, we thank everybody
13 for coming out tonight, and, again, any written
14 comments you need to provide, do so by April the 19th.
15 Okay. Thank you.

16 (The hearing was concluded at 6:44 p.m.)
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25