

Ralph C. Martin II  
Office of the General Counsel  
Northeastern University  
360 Huntington Avenue – 378 CP  
Boston, MA 02115

Nahant Board of Selectmen  
Nahant Town Hall  
334 Nahant Rd.  
Nahant, MA 01908

Re: Proposed Expansion of Northeastern University's Marine Science Center at East Point, Nahant

Dear Mr. Martin and Nahant Selectmen:

I write to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the proposed expansion of the Marine Science Center at East Point, Nahant, Massachusetts. It is my understanding that it is Northeastern's intent to construct an approximately 60,000 sq. ft., two-and-a-half floor building on top of and to the east of the Murphy Bunker at East Point and a parking lot in the vicinity. A project of the size contemplated would have a significant negative impact on the habitat and the wildlife, including the hundreds of bird species which live, eat, nest and migrate at and through East Point. As a migratory site, the damage would not be isolated to East Point but would ripple up and down the Eastern seaboard.

Since the 1960s, when the U.S. Army finally left East Point, the natural habitat has been in a steady state of rejuvenation and restoration. Today, the East Point area of consideration has been preliminarily identified as a Maritime Shrubland, a priority vegetative habitat. It has taken 50 years of undisturbed growth to realize this extraordinary recovery. Rather than razing and developing portions of this site, it should be actively managed to encourage preferred growth through the removal of invasive species and the preservation of the Maritime Shrubland species. Please do not risk the loss of five decades of nature's work.

The current, maturing, habitat provides respite, shelter, food and nest sites for many species of birds documented there including threatened species such as Short-eared Owl, Northern Harrier, Northern Parula, Blackpoll Warbler and Mourning Warbler. In recent years, over 170 species of resident and migratory birds have been observed at East Point and documented through Cornell University's ebird.

Nahant has been designated an IBA, Important Bird Area, by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. It has met the criteria for ornithological significance, including the large fallouts of migrating birds, which would be significantly impacted by the proposed construction.

As a member of Brookline Bird Club, America's most active bird club, and as someone who cherishes the birds and their environments, I urge you to reconsider plans to develop this habitat.

Very truly yours,