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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Queen Anne's Conservation Association Calls for Investigation of Decision to Locate Security Training Center in Ruthsburg**

Queen Anne's Conservation Association (QACA) today formally asked the Inspector General of the General Services Administration (IG/GSA) to examine the decision-making process that led to Ruthsburg being chosen as the preferred site for the proposed Foreign Affairs Security Training Center (FASTC).

In a six-page single-space letter to the IG/GSA from Jay Falstad, QACA Director of Communications, the conservation group detailed facts and circumstances giving rise to what it described as the appearance that "the federal decision-making process on the siting of FASTC . . . has been improperly conducted and subjected to improper influences" (page 1).

The letter describes alleged instances of governmental misconduct at the January 5 public information hearing (pages 2-3) and January 7 "scoping" meeting (pages 3-4); the two-week notice of the hearings and January 15 deadline for public comment (page 4); "ever-shifting accounts" (pages 4-5) of what kinds of security training activities are to be consolidated at FASTC; and asserted conflicts with the Recovery Act and other federal policies (pages 5-6).

The letter complains throughout of actions that are said to have created the appearance that the Ruthsburg selection was pre-determined and therefore "in violation of the spirit and letter of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)" (page 1), "rendering the NEPA process simply a formality" (page 3).

The conservation group states in the letter that the Inspector General's examination will likely conclude that "the process needs to be re-started" and suggests six specific steps to make that happen (page 6).

Falstad commented: "Rather than trying to fix this irreparably broken process, GSA should start over as of November 30 when Ruthsburg was selected as the preferred site. If GSA were to write off the 41 days since then as a lost cause, and get its act together as Senator Mikulski has told them to do, they could make a fresh, untainted site decision in the next 2-3

weeks, and then start up an honest environmental review process, not what happened here 3 days ago. In the meantime, diplomatic security training would continue to go forward at the 19 unconsolidated facilities, just as it has for the many months that GSA and State have been bumbling forward on this project at a leisurely pace.”

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Attachments:

- (1) QACA Letter to GSA, 1-10-10
- (2) “Official History” of FASTC decision-making

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