

KOMO News

Navy wants to conduct war games on Wash. coast

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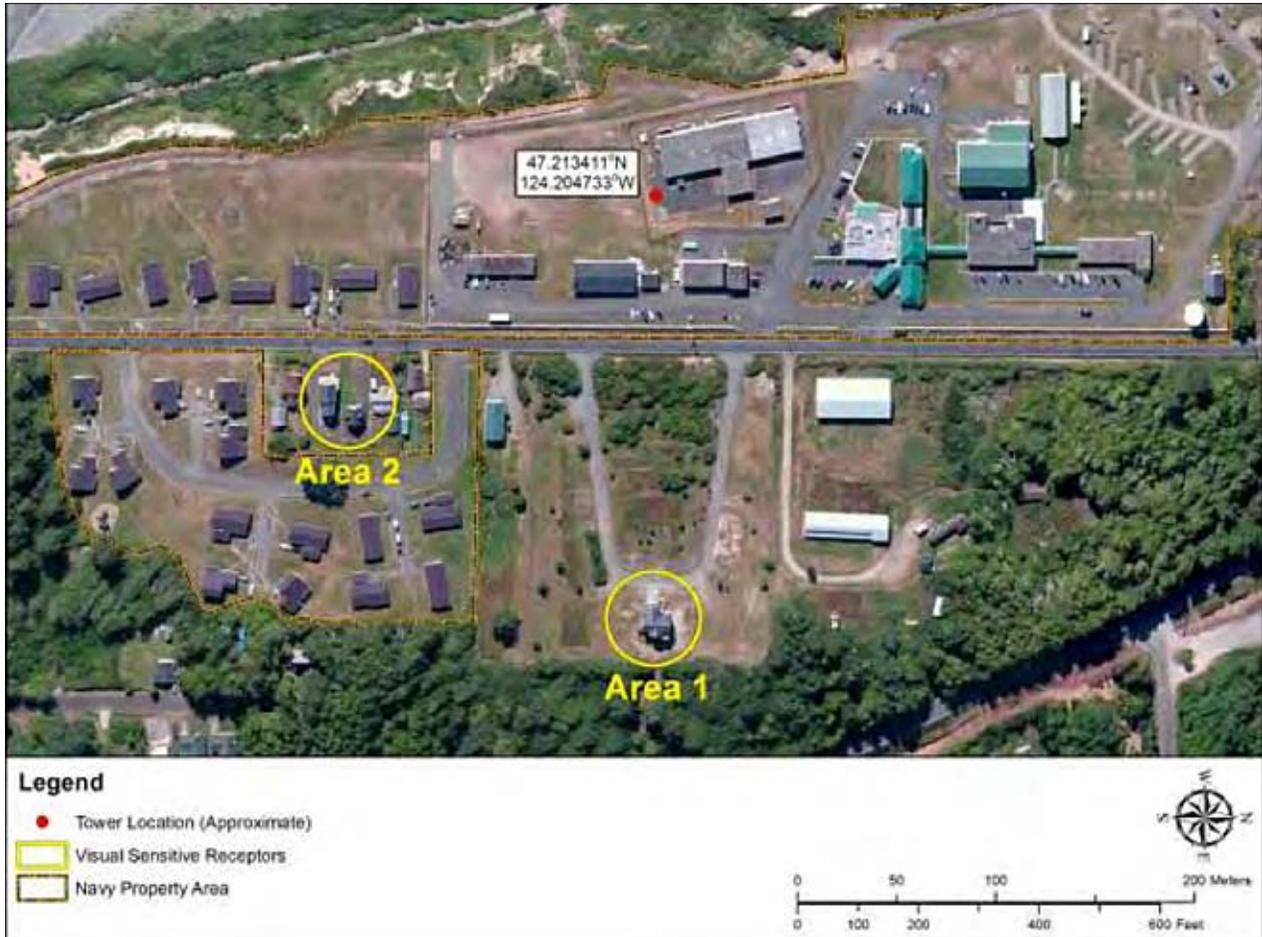


Figure 3.5-3: Visual Sensitive Receptors - Area 1 and Area 2. Environmental Assessment for the Electronic Warfare Range. (USDA Forest Service - JUNE 2014)

FORKS, Wash. (AP) - The U.S. Navy hopes to post three camper-sized trucks with electromagnetic-radiation equipment on the Olympic Peninsula to conduct war exercises with military aircraft from 15 sites.

The Navy plans to post warning signs and barriers near the trucks when the machines are operating because getting exposed at close range to the radiation could be dangerous, according to The Peninsula Daily News (<http://bit.ly/103Fz9Q>). The machines that emit the radiation would let the Navy simulate modern electronic warfare, according to a draft environmental assessment for the project posted on a U.S. Forest Service website (<http://bit.ly/1pygQi>).

Officials hope to begin the war games next year in Clallam, Jefferson and Grays Harbor counties. The exercises would be conducted at 12 sites in the Olympic National Forest and three

sites on state Department of Natural Resources land. The proposal would be part of the Pacific Northwest Electronic Warfare Range and would involve aircraft from the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.

Greg Wahl, an environmental coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service who is leading the project, said it will have no significant impact, which would eliminate the need for a study on the environmental effect of the war games, the newspaper said.

"Human tissue is directly susceptible to shock or burns when metallic objects, which have absorbed high electromagnetic radiation, are touched," according to the assessment. "This type of burn would be similar to the type of burn produced inside a microwave oven. There are no conclusive direct hazards to human tissue as a result of electromagnetic radiation."

"Links to DNA fragmentation, leukemia, and cancer due to intermittent exposure to extremely high levels of electromagnetic radiation are speculative; study data are inconsistent and insufficient at this time," the assessment said.

The deadline to comment on the draft environmental assessment for the Forest Service permit is Oct. 10.