



Lincoln County Board of Commissioners

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November 3, 2010

Dr. Jane Lubchenco
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Room 5128
Washington DC 20230

RE: Navy Northwest Training Range Complex

Dear Dr. Lubchenco:

Last year, our Board of Commissioners filed official comments and was in contact with our Congressional delegation regarding our concerns about the Navy's plans for the Northwest Training Range Complex (NWTRC). We are again contacting our delegation, and are also appealing directly to you to insure that our marine environment is protected. It appears in the latest EIS that the Navy has not taken necessary steps to do so.

As you well know, Oregon has been a national, and even a world leader, in taking steps to recover fish populations. These efforts could be jeopardized by the Navy's activities. It seems foolish to allow the Navy to negatively impact threatened resources when significant public resources are being invested at the state and local levels to protect them. Commercial and sport fishing are more than important elements of our coastal economy; they are inextricably a part of our coastal way of life.

The Navy's plans are also troubling in the light of the move of NOAA's Pacific Research Fleet to the Oregon Coast. The NOAA fleet, when added to the existing scientific resources based at the OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center complex, promises to make Newport one of the premiere bases for ocean research in the country. It would truly be a shame to see our ocean subjected to potentially harmful activities at a time when we are poised to expand our important scientific work. Some of the work in the coming years could provide key data, including on the health of threatened marine mammal populations, that will be critical for informed decision-making the next time the Navy's permits come up for review. Without the work of the NOAA fleet and other scientists, we will find ourselves in this same situation next time.

We would request that you consider delaying issuance of the required permit under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) in order to allow time for adequate public input and potential inquiry and oversight by Congress. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Hall, Chair

Don Lindly, Commissioner

Terry N. Thompson, Commissioner