NEPA Process

The U.S. Navy has been training in the Northwest Training Range Complex for national defense purposes for over 100 years. In line with the Northwest Training Range Complex-wide management practices, the U.S. Navy has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) to comprehensively evaluate the effects of current and future Navy activities within the range complex on the environment.

Why is the Navy Conducting an Environmental Impact Statement?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires federal agencies to examine the individual and cumulative, or additive environmental effects of their activities. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a detailed public document that provides an assessment of the potential effects a Federal action might have on the human, natural, or cultural environment. An Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) is prepared to comply with Executive Order 12114, Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions, signed by President Carter in 1979. This order requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of actions that may affect the environment outside U.S. territorial waters.

How was the Community Involved in the Development of this Document?

The NEPA process emphasizes the importance of community involvement during the development of the EIS/OEIS. The community was involved in the development of the Northwest Training Range Complex EIS/OEIS by attending scoping meetings to learn about the project, providing comment on the proposed action during the scoping meetings, providing comment upon publication of the Draft EIS/OEIS, and by attending the public hearings and providing comment on the analysis of environmental impacts presented in the Draft EIS/OEIS.

When and where were the Scoping Meetings and Public Hearings held?

In September 2007, the Navy held five scoping meetings in Washington, Oregon, and northern California, to inform the public of the Proposed Action and to solicit public comment. Government agencies, organizations, and the public were encouraged to submit comments at the scoping meetings or to provide written comments throughout the public comment period. The scoping comment period ended on September 29, 2007. The Navy has carefully considered each of the comments received and addressed them in the Draft EIS/OEIS. A summary of these comments may be viewed here.

Five public hearings were held to inform the public about the Navy’s Proposed Action and to obtain written and oral comments on the Draft EIS/OEIS for consideration in the final document. All public hearings included an open-house information session beginning at 5:00 p.m. and a public hearing beginning at 7:00 p.m. At each public hearing, informational poster stations and Navy project team representatives were available to provide the public with additional information. Public hearings were held on the following dates and locations: