October 28, 2010

The Honorable U.S. Congressman Mike Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
231 Cannon Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Thompson:

You may find the following six quotes taken from the U.S. Navy Final E.I.S. and their ROD of interest:

1) **Volume II - Page G-417  U.S. Navy Quote Final EIS – NWTRC** 
   
   "...The Navy is not 'testing' new weapons within the NWTRC. All weapons and platforms coming to the NWTRC as a result of the proposed action have been tested in other training areas/ranges..."

2) **Volume II - Page G3  U.S. Navy Quote Final EIS – NWTRC** 
   
   "...The Navy is not proposing to test any new weapons or sonar in the Northwest Training Range Complex. Only flight testing of unmanned aerial systems is proposed. The proposed action calls for continued training of Navy personnel with established weapons systems, similar to what has been conducted in this same areas since World War II..."

3) **Volume II - Page GE  U.S. Navy Quote Final EIS – NWTRC** 
   
   "...The Navy does not dump toxic pollutants into sensitive marine protection areas..." However, if you read their Hazard Materials section (Volume I) they do dump toxic chemicals into the ocean - See Navy Graph. Also the current PEER Lawsuit against the Navy accuses them of dumping toxic chemicals into the ocean since the Navy can't account for their disposal elsewhere at this time.

4) **ROD (Rule of Decision) U.S. Navy NWTRC October 25, 2010 Pages 1-2 Navy Quote** 
   
   "...The NWTRC will support an increase in most training activities, to include force structure changes associated with the introduction of new weapons systems, vessels, and aircraft into the Fleet. Under Alternative 2, most baseline training activities will be increased. In addition, training activities associated with force structure changes will be implemented for the EA-18G Growler, Guided Missile Submarine, P-8A Poseidon Multi-missions Maritime Aircraft, and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UASs). Force structure changes associated with new weapons systems will include air-to-air missiles and sonobuoys..."

5) **ROD (Rule of Decision) U.S. Navy NWTRC October 25, 2010 Page 2 - Navy Quote** 
   
   "...The Chief of Naval Operations meets that directive, in part, by establishing and executing training programs, including at-sea training and exercises, including mid-frequency active (MFA) and high-frequency active (HFA) sonar activities..."
We feel that the change in status of the Navy from their early draft EIS in 2007/2008, to their Final EIS issued on September 10, 2010, has changed the whole scope of what was intended for our area with regard to the NWTRC.

Now with the addition of the ROD (Rule of Decision) on October 25, 2010, we realize that sweeping changes not noted in either their draft or final EIS have been dramatically changed. The Navy is not exempting any area at this time due to it being a national marine sanctuary, marine reserve or biologically sensitive area. And the ROD also notes sharp increases in the testing of new weapons systems and other Navy training in this range.

Since there are currently no protections for any of these sensitive areas and we don't know what impacts all of these new weapons systems and new sonar systems (including laser sonar and electromagnetic weapons testing), will have on marine mammals, we are asking that the NOAA permit for the Navy to "take" marine mammals be delayed 60-90 days in order for a new evaluation of these new weapons systems be undertaken and also for the public to see any new data or reports produced by NOAA in the past year which were not part of their draft for final public comment period.

It appears that the Navy mission has changed and also that the Navy has added a new 5-Year warfare testing range in the Pacific which will include the areas between the Hawaiian and Southern California ranges which are currently engaged in their respective 5-Year warfare testing. This is just one of two ranges that were noted in the Federal Register on July 15, 2010. We have no idea what the impacts of these two new ranges will be but we are betting that the 11.7 million marine mammal figure will need to be raised now that they are part of this program.

We look forward to hearing from you on these critical issues in the near future. The public needs time to evaluate this new information from the Navy. We hope that you will look into this information and take immediate action to protect our coastal region by extending the NOAA public comment period and delaying the NOAA permit to the Navy for the “taking” of marine mammals in the NWTRC.

Respectfully,

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