
Appendix B

Cooperating Agency Correspondence



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO

5090
Ser N456E/7U158218
2 Aug 2007

Dr. William T. Hogarth
Assistant Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration (NOAA) Fisheries
1315 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Dr. Hogarth:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Executive Order 12114, the Department of the Navy (Navy) is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) to evaluate potential environmental effects of using the Northwest Training Range Complex (NWTRC) to achieve and maintain Fleet readiness and to support and conduct current, emerging, and future training activities and research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) events.

In order to adequately evaluate the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action, Navy and the National Marine Fisheries Service would need to work together on acoustic effects to marine species protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the Endangered Species Act. To assist in this effort and in accordance with 40 CFR Part 1501 and the Council on Environmental Quality Cooperating Agency guidance issued on January 30, 2002, Navy requests NMFS serve as a cooperating agency for the development of the NWTRC EIS/OEIS.

The Proposed Action for the Navy NWTRC EIS/OEIS is to:

- Maintain baseline operations at current levels;
- Increase training operations from current levels as necessary to support the Fleet Readiness Training Plan;
- Accommodate mission requirements associated with force structure change;
- Implement enhanced range complex capabilities;

- Increase and accommodate planned RDT&E events (primarily Unmanned Aerial Vehicles).

The Proposed Action will further our statutory obligations under Title 10 of the United States Code governing the roles and responsibilities of the Navy.

The No Action Alternative is the continuation of training activities and major range events in the NWTRC at the current level. Two action alternatives are proposed to accomplish the Proposed Action. Alternative 1 consists of an increase in the number of training activities, from levels described in the No Action Alternative, along with force structure changes associated with the introduction of new weapon systems, vessels, and aircraft into the Fleet. Alternative 2 consists of all elements of Alternative 1 with an increase in the number of training activities and implementation of range enhancements.

The EIS/OEIS will address measurably foreseeable activities in the particular geographical areas affected by the No-Action Alternative and action alternatives. This EIS/OEIS will analyze the effects of sound in the water on marine mammals in the areas where NWTRC activities occur. In addition, other environmental resource areas that will be addressed applicable in the EIS/OEIS include: air quality; airspace; biological resources, including threatened and endangered species; cultural resources; geology and soils; hazardous materials and waste; health and safety; land use; noise; socioeconomics; transportation; and water resources.

As the lead agency, the Navy will be responsible for overseeing preparation of the EIS/OEIS that includes but is not limited to the following:

- Gathering all necessary background information and preparing the EIS/OEIS and all necessary permit application associated with acoustic issues on the underwater ranges.
- Working with NMFS personnel to determine the method of estimating potential effects to protected marine species, including threatened and endangered species.
- Determining the scope of the IES/OEIS, including the alternatives evaluated.

- Circulating the appropriate NEPA documentation to the general public and any other interested parties.
- Scheduling and supervising meetings held in support of the NEPA process, and compiling any comments received.
- Maintaining an administrative record and responding to any Freedom of Information Act requests relating to the EIS/OEIS.


As a cooperating agency, the Navy requests NMFS support the Navy in the following manner:

- Provide timely comments after the Agency Information Meeting (which will be held at the onset of the EIS/OEIS process) and on working drafts of the EIS/OEIS documents. The Navy requests that comments on draft EIS/OEIS documents be provided within 21 calendar days.
- Respond to Navy requests for information. Timely NMFS input will be critical to ensure a successful NEPA process.
- Coordinate, to the maximum extent practicable, any public comment periods that is necessary in the MMPA permitting process with the Navy's NEPA public comment periods.
- Participate, as necessary, in meetings hosted by the Navy for discussion of EIS/OEIS related issues.
- Adhere to the overall project schedule as agreed upon by the Navy and NMFS.
- Provide a formal, written response to this request.

The Navy views this agreement as important to the successful completion of the NEPA process for the Northwest Training Range Complex EIS/OEIS. It is Navy's goal to complete the analysis as expeditiously as possible, while using the best scientific information available. NMFS assistance will be invaluable in this endeavor.

My point of contact for this action is Ms. Karen M. Foskey,
(703) 602-2859, email:Karen.Foskey@navy.mil.

Sincerely,



WILLIAM G. MATTHEIS

Acting Director, Environmental
Readiness Division (OPNAV N45)

Copy to:

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Environment)
Office of Assistant General Counsel (Installation & Environment)
Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (N73, N77)
Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (N01CE, N7)
Commander, Naval Installations Command (N45)
Commander, Navy Region Northwest (N40)
Commander, Navy Region Southwest (N40)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDER
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
250 MAKALAPA DRIVE
PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII 96860-3131

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5090
N01CEB/0692
9 Aug 07

Ren Lohofener
Regional Director
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Pacific Region
911 NE 11th Ave
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Lohofener:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Department of the Navy (Navy) is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) to support decisions by the Navy concerning the Proposed Action to increase usage and to enhance capability of the Northwest Training Range Complex (NWTRC). In order to adequately evaluate the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action on threatened and endangered species, the Navy is requesting, in accordance with 40 CFR Part 1501 and the Council on Environmental Quality Cooperating Agency guidance issued on January 30, 2002, that U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service serve as a cooperating agency for the development of the EIS/OEIS.

The No Action Alternative is the continuation of training activities and major range events in the NWTRC. Two action alternatives are proposed to accomplish the Proposed Action. Alternative 1 consists of an increase in the number of training activities from levels described in the No Action Alternative, along with force structure changes associated with the introduction of new weapon systems, vessels, and aircraft into the Fleet. Alternative 2 consists of all elements of Alternative 1 with an increase in the number of training activities and implementation of range enhancements.

The purpose of the proposed action is to:

- Achieve and maintain Fleet readiness using the NWTRC to support and conduct current, emerging, and future training activities and research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) events (primarily Unmanned Aerial Vehicles);

- Expand Warfare Missions supported by the NWTRC, consistent with the requirements of the Fleet Readiness Training Plan (FRTP) and other transformation initiatives; and

Upgrade/modernize existing range capabilities to enhance and sustain Navy training and RDT&E events.

The EIS/OEIS will address measurably foreseeable activities in the particular geographical areas affected by the No-Action Alternative and action alternatives. The EIS/OEIS will also analyze the potential impacts of additional training missions. This EIS/OEIS will analyze the effects of sound in the water on marine mammals in the areas where NWTRC activities occur. In addition, other environmental resource areas that will be addressed as applicable in the EIS/OEIS include but not limited to: air quality; airspace; biological resources, including threatened and endangered species; cultural resources; geology and soils; hazardous materials and waste; health and safety; land use; noise; socioeconomics; transportation; and water resources.

As the lead agency, the Navy will be responsible for overseeing preparation of the EIS/OEIS that includes but is not limited to the following:

- Gathering all necessary background information and preparing the EIS/OEIS.
- Working with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service personnel to evaluate potential impacts of changes and enhancements on wildlife refuges, critical habitat, and wildlife resources including threatened and endangered species.

Determining the scope of the EIS/OEIS, including the alternatives evaluated.

- Circulating the appropriate NEPA documentation to the general public and any other interested parties.

Scheduling and supervising meetings held in support of the NEPA process, and compiling any comments received.

- Maintaining an administrative record and responding to any Freedom of Information Act requests relating to the EIS/OEIS.

As a cooperating agency, the Navy requests the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service support the Navy in the following manner:

- Providing timely comments throughout the EIS process, to include, on working drafts of the EIS/OEIS documents. The Navy requests that comments on draft EIS/OEIS documents be provided within 30 calendar days.
- Responding to Navy requests for information. Timely U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service input will be critical to ensure a successful NEPA process.
- Participating, as necessary, in meetings hosted by the Navy for discussion of EIS/OEIS related issues.
- Adhering to the overall schedule as set forth by the Navy.
- Providing a formal, written response to this request.

My point of contact for this is Carolyn L. Winters, (360) 315-5092 or at Email: carolyn.winters@navy.mil.

Sincerely,



J. P. RIOS
Captain, U.S. Navy
Deputy Fleet Civil Engineer
By direction

Copy to:

Chief of Naval Operations (N45)
Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (N73, N77)
Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (N7)
Commander, Naval Installations Command (N45)
Commander, Navy Region Northwest (N40)
Commander, Navy Region Southwest (N40)
Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Northwest (N45)
Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southwest (N45)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
THE DIRECTOR

SEP 17 2007

William G. Mattheis
Acting Director, Environmental Readiness Division
Department of the Navy
2000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-2000


Dear Mr. Mattheis:

Thank you for your letter requesting that NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) be a cooperating agency in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate potential environmental effects of using the Department of the Navy's Northwest Training Range Complex to achieve and maintain military readiness and to support and conduct training activities and research, development, test, and evaluation events.

We support the Navy's decision to prepare an EIS on these activities and agree to be a cooperating agency, due, in part, to our responsibilities under section 101(a)(5)(A) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. As agreed upon with Navy staff, NMFS staff will provide comments on draft EISs to the Navy within 28 days of receipt of the document. Otherwise, NMFS will make every effort to support the Navy in the specific ways described in your letter.

If you need any additional information, please contact Ms. Jolie Harrison at (301) 713-2289, ext. 166.

Sincerely,



William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.

