



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

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

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5090

Ser N465/1038

September 24, 2015

Dear Sir or Madam:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE NORTHWEST TRAINING AND TESTING FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Department of the Navy (Navy), in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard and National Marine Fisheries Service, has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) to conclude evaluation of the potential environmental effects associated with two categories of military readiness activities - training and testing - conducted within the Northwest Training and Testing (NWTT) Study Area.

The NWTT Study Area (see Enclosure 1) is comprised of established maritime operating areas and warning areas in the eastern North Pacific Ocean, including the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Puget Sound and Western Behm Canal in southeastern Alaska. The NWTT Study Area includes: air and water space within and outside Washington state waters, and outside state waters of Oregon and Northern California; four existing range complexes and facilities (the Northwest Training Range Complex, Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Keyport Range Complex, Carr Inlet Operations Area and Southeast Alaska Acoustic Measurement Facility); and Navy pierside locations where sonar maintenance and testing occur (Naval Base Kitsap Bremerton, Naval Base Kitsap Bangor and Naval Station Everett).

The Navy's Proposed Action is to conduct training and testing activities within the NWTT Study Area, to include the use of active sonar, acoustic sources and explosives, as well as pierside sonar maintenance and testing. Many of these training and testing activities have historically occurred in the NWTT Study Area and have been previously analyzed pursuant to the

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National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Executive Order 12114, Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions. While training and testing, the Navy follows strict guidelines and employs measures to reduce effects on marine species.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to conduct training and testing activities to ensure that the Navy accomplishes its mission to maintain, train and equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas. This mission is achieved in part by conducting training and testing within the NWTT Study Area. This mission is mandated by federal law (Title 10 U.S. Code § 5062), which charges the Chief of Naval Operations with the responsibility for ensuring the readiness of the nation's naval forces. Military readiness training and testing activities must be as realistic as possible to provide Sailors with the experiences necessary for success and survival. Navy range complexes and operating areas located in the NWTT Study Area have these realistic environments, with sufficient sea and airspace vital for safety and mission success. The Final EIS/OEIS also supports the renewal of federal regulatory permits and authorizations for current training and testing activities and future activities requiring environmental analysis.

With use of the best available science, the following resource areas were analyzed in the Final EIS/OEIS: sediments and water quality, air quality, marine habitats, marine mammals, sea turtles, birds, marine vegetation, marine invertebrates, fish, cultural resources, American Indian and Alaska Native traditional resources, socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety.

The completion of the Final EIS/OEIS follows years of research, analysis and public involvement. The Navy held nine public scoping meetings in March 2012, eight public meetings in February/March 2014 for the Draft EIS/OEIS and four public meetings in January 2015 for the Supplement to the NWTT Draft EIS/OEIS. Meetings took place in Washington, Northern California, Oregon and Alaska. Public, government agency and tribal comments received during the public review and comment periods for the Draft EIS/OEIS and the Supplement to the Draft EIS/OEIS were considered and responded to in the Final EIS/OEIS.

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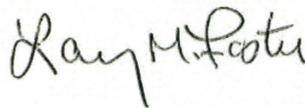
Regulations provide for a 30-day wait period after the Final EIS/OEIS is published before the Navy may take action. The Final EIS/OEIS will be available to the public on October 2, 2015.

A copy of the NWTTC Final EIS/OEIS is included on the enclosed CD-ROM (see Enclosure 2). The Final EIS/OEIS, as well as supporting technical reports and other reference materials, is also available online at [www.NWTTEIS.com](http://www.NWTTEIS.com). Printed copies are available for viewing at 21 community libraries in the affected coastal counties. Community libraries are found online or by requesting additional information (see below).

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact the NWTTC EIS/OEIS project manager at:

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Northwest  
Attention: Ms. Kimberly Kler - NWTTC EIS/OEIS  
Project Manager  
Tautog Circle, Suite 203  
Silverdale, WA 98315-1101

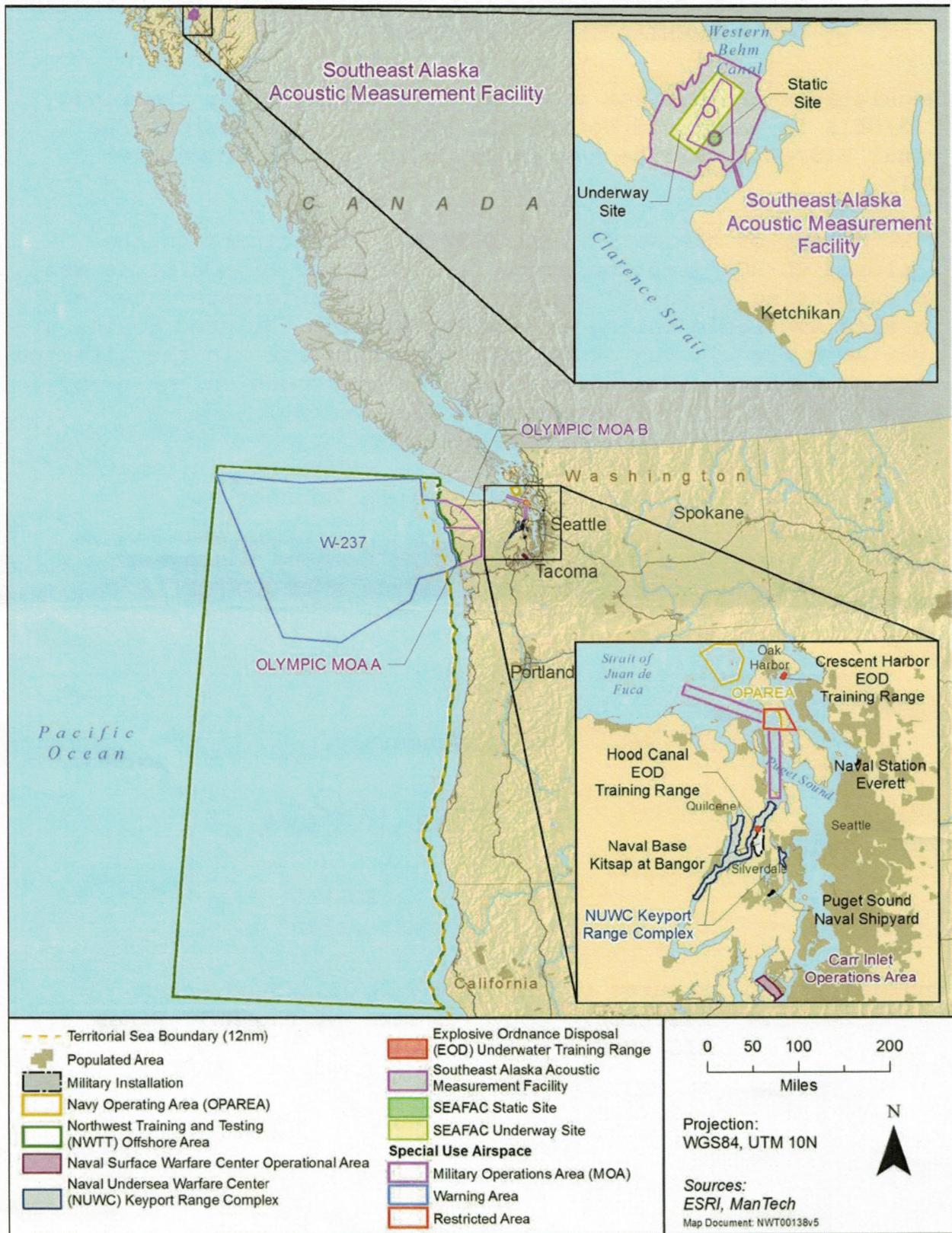
Sincerely,



L. M. FOSTER  
By direction

Enclosure: 1. Figures of the NWTTC EIS/OEIS Study Area  
2. Electronic Copy (CD-ROM) of the NWTTC Final EIS/OEIS

Enclosure 1: Northwest Training and Testing Study Area



Enclosure (1)

Enclosure 1: Inland Waters of the Northwest Training and Testing Study Area

