

Hawaii-California Training and Testing

Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement



Reader's Guide

October 2025

ID# EISX-007-17-USN-1724283453

INTRODUCTION

This resource has been developed in order to assist the reader in navigating the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS). It provides an overview of the organization of information within the EIS/OEIS as well as guidance on what the reader can be expected to find in each chapter and appendix. This guide highlighted changes made from the Draft EIS/OEIS, provides a brief discussion of notable topics presented in the EIS/OEIS and where one can find more information on that topic, as well as detailed maps of the HCTT Study Area and a glossary of commonly used terms.

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Additional project information, including public outreach materials, can be found on the project website: www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis

DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

Volume

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Abstract
Executive Summary
Chapter 1 – Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action
Chapter 2 – Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives
Chapter 3 – Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences:
Air Quality, Sediments and Water Quality, Vegetation, Invertebrates, Abiotic Habitats, Fishes, Marine Mammals, Reptiles, Birds, Cultural Resources, Socioeconomic Resources, Public Health and Safety
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Chapter 6 – Regulatory Considerations

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CONTENT DESCRIPTION

VOLUME 1: Executive Summary, Chapters 1–7

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary contains a concise description of each of the chapters and sections of the EIS/OEIS, including a description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives and a summary of the environmental analysis conclusions for each of the resource sections presented in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. The Executive Summary is written as a standalone summary, and the reader can refer to the main body of the EIS/OEIS and appendices for additional detail.

Chapter 1: Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the EIS/OEIS, background information important to understanding the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action, and the legal context surrounding the EIS/OEIS, including the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) role as a cooperating agency involved in EIS/OEIS coordination. This chapter also lists the resource areas to be analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Finally, the reader can learn about the ways the public can be involved in the EIS/OEIS process, with details on public notices, meetings, and comment periods.

Chapter 2: Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

Chapter 2 provides a description of the Proposed Action and action alternatives. When considered alongside Appendix A (Activity Descriptions, sufficient detail is provided to analyze the environmental impacts that would occur if the Action were implemented. To prime the reader for the environmental impact analysis, an overview of resource management measures applied to the resources analyzed in Chapter 3 is provided. This chapter also summarizes alternatives that were considered but eliminated.

Chapter 3: Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

Chapter 3 begins with a description of the overall approach to analysis and provides descriptions of the stressors analyzed in each resource section the EIS/OEIS. It then introduces the environmental resources described and analyzed in the EIS/OEIS; resource areas include Air Quality (Section 3.1), Sediments and Water Quality (Section 3.2), Vegetation (Section 3.3), Invertebrates (Section 3.4), Abiotic Habitats (Section 3.5), Fishes (Section 3.6), Marine Mammals (Section 3.7), Reptiles (Section 3.8), Birds (Section 3.9), Cultural Resources (Section 3.10), Socioeconomic Resources (Section 3.11), and Public Health and Safety (Section 3.12). For each resource area, a definition of resource, regulatory framework, and description of the affected environment, as it relates to the resource is provided, to provide context for the following environmental effects analysis.

Chapter 4: Cumulative Impacts

Chapter 4 examines the effects of the Proposed Action implemented in conjunction with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Each of the resources analyzed in Chapter 3 are evaluated with regard to cumulative effects.

Chapter 5: Mitigation

Chapter 5 describes and assesses mitigation the Action Proponents will implement under Alternatives 1 or 2 of the Proposed Action. If available at release, changes to mitigation from regulatory processes (i.e., Endangered Species Act [ESA], Marine Mammal Protection Act [MMPA], and Coastal Zone Management Act [CZMA]) will be noted.

Chapter 6: Regulatory Considerations

Chapter 6 includes considerations required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and a description of how the Proposed Action complies with plans, policies, and regulations at the federal level.

VOLUME 2: Appendices A-C

Appendix A: Activity Descriptions

Appendix A provides descriptions of the proposed military readiness activities. These descriptions including details such as information on components and active sonars used, mitigation, and location.

Appendix A.1: U.S. Coast Guard Supporting Information

Appendix A.1 provides background information about the U.S. Coast Guard. This information includes U.S. Coast Guard history, missions, capabilities and their relevance in the Study Area, and activities analyzed in the EIS/OEIS.

Appendix B: Activity Stressor Matrices

Appendix B consists of four tables that show the relationship between stressors associated with the proposed military readiness activities and the environmental resources analyzed. Stressors that are relevant to a particular activity or resource are marked with a check mark.

Appendix C: Biological Resources Supplemental Information

Appendix C contains information supplemental to Sections 3.2 (Sediments and Water Quality), 3.3 (Vegetation), 3.4 (Invertebrates), 3.5 (Abiotic Habitats), 3.6 (Fishes), 3.7 (Marine Mammals), 3.8 (Reptiles), and 3.9 (Birds) of the EIS/OEIS, including general background information, ESA-listed species, and species not listed under the ESA.

VOLUME 3: Appendices D-F

Appendix D: Acoustic and Explosive Impacts Supporting Information

Appendix D contains background information on the acoustic and explosive energy, propagation, and methods used to determine how biological resources may be affected. In addition to providing this overview, the appendix details hearing for fishes, marine mammals, and reptiles, as well as how species respond to different sounds and noises.

Appendix E: Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis for Marine Mammals, Reptiles, and Fishes in the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area

Appendix E analyzes how biological resources are potentially affected by acoustic and explosive energy in the water. Impacts on marine mammals, reptiles, and fishes are detailed, including impacts on specific species.

Appendix E.1: In-Air Acoustic Effects on Pinnipeds from Weapons Firing Noise

Appendix E.1 presents the analysis of weapons firing at San Nicolas Island (SNI) and Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) resulting in estimated in-air acoustic effects on pinnipeds. The appendix analyzes the effects on pinnipeds due to noise associated with missile and aerial target launches occurring on land-based sites at SNI and PMRF, and noise associated with artillery firing at PMRF from land-based sites.

Appendix E.2: Pile Driving Acoustic Analysis

Appendix E.2 analyzes the number of times marine mammals and sea turtles could be affected by pile driving and removal. Factors included in the analysis are a description of the activity, sound exposure criteria, and the number and distribution of marine mammals and sea turtles.

Appendix F: Acoustic and Non-Acoustic Effects Supporting Information

Appendix F includes information and methods used to determine how biological resources may be affected by acoustic, such as sonar and explosives, and non-acoustic stressors, such as energy stressors and entanglement stressors. The analysis focuses on the likelihood of a resource (e.g., a bird or marine mammals) encountering a stressor, the primary stimulus, responses, and recovery of individual organisms.

VOLUME 4: Appendices G-K

Appendix G: Air Quality Supplemental Information, Emission Calculations, and Record of Non-Applicability

Appendix G provides additional details related to the analysis in Section 3.1 of the EIS/OEIS (Air Quality), and contains emission calculation methodologies, detailed calculations, and results of emissions modeling.

Appendix H: Description of Systems and Ranges

Appendix H provides detailed information on typical systems (e.g., military hardware, weapons, aircraft, vessels, etc.) used during training and testing and the ranges where military readiness activities would occur. The appendix also includes additional maps and descriptions of the study area, and photographs of different targets, weapons, and mine detection systems.

Appendix I: Military Expended Materials, Direct Strike, and Ship Strike Effects Analysis

Appendix I includes the methods, calculations, and results for quantifying the effects to bottom substrate from explosions, the potential for military expended materials to strike a marine mammal or sea turtle, and the probability of a vessel strike to a marine mammal. Tables in the appendix provide information on the number and effects of materials used during training and testing activities, the effect from explosives on or near the bottom of the ocean, and estimated representative marine mammal and sea turtle exposures.

Appendix J: Agency Correspondence

Appendix J primarily includes images of letters and memorandum to and from the cooperating agency and joint lead agencies in relation to the EIS/OEIS. The appendix also contains correspondence related to compliance with the MMPA, ESA, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and CZMA.

Appendix K: Geographic Mitigation Assessment

Appendix K describes the Navy's methodology in assessing potential mitigation areas within the HCTT Study Area to avoid or reduce potential effects on marine mammals in key areas of biological importance. The appendix includes information (e.g., stressor analysis and mitigation assessment) on biologically important areas within the Hawaii and California study areas.

VOLUME 5: Appendices L-N

Appendix L: Public Participation

Appendix L describes outreach efforts to involve the public during the development of the HCTT EIS/OEIS including notifications, a summary of comments received on the Draft EIS/OEIS, and distribution of the Draft EIS/OEIS and Final EIS/OEIS.

Appendix L.1: Public Scoping Comments

Appendix L.1 provides thirty-six comments that were received during the public scoping period which began on December 15, 2023, and ran through January 29, 2024.

Appendix L.2: Public Comments and Responses

Appendix L.2 provides a listing of all comments received on the HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS and the Action Proponents' responses.

Appendix M: Federal Register Notices

Appendix M consists of images of Federal Register notices applicable to this project. These include the notice of intent to prepare an EIS/OEIS, a notice of public meetings, and a notice of availability of the Draft EIS/OEIS.

Appendix N: List of Preparers

This appendix presents a list of the government and contractor personnel who contributed to the development of the HCTT EIS/OEIS.

CHANGES FROM THE DRAFT EIS/OEIS

Introduction

Changes from the Draft EIS/OEIS to the Final EIS/OEIS, which are explained in detail below, are due to one of the following reasons:

- Changes in the regulations and recent executive orders;
- Completion of consultations;
- Agency and public comments; and
- Corrections of errors.

General

1. Due to the rescission of Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations, removed “Environmentally Preferable Action Alternative” from the Abstract, Executive Summary, and Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives).
2. In accordance with recent Executive Orders, removed Environmental Justice.
 - a. Changed name of Section 3.11 (Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice).
 - b. Abstract and all other locations where the resource sections were listed.
3. Throughout the document, removed reference to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500 et seq. (due to rescission of CEQ NEPA regulations).
4. In accordance with Executive Orders and Administration direction, removed analysis of “climate change” throughout the document.
5. ESA effect determination tables have been removed from the biological resources sections; that information can be found in the biological opinion.
6. Changed “Draft” EIS/OEIS to “Final” and changed tense of language where applicable (e.g., “will consult” to “did consult”).

Executive Summary

1. Added clarifying language in Section ES.1.1 that military readiness activities is comprised of three components: training, testing, and modernization and sustainment of ranges.
2. Corrected effects determinations for Fishes in Table ES-1 for Energy, Entanglement, and Ingestion stressors to align with the effects analysis in Section 3.6.
3. Made updates to Tables ES-3, ES-4, ES-5, ES-6, and ES-7 to maintain alignment with recent updates to Chapter 5 (Mitigation).
4. Added new Section ES.8.3 (Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement), which describes the release of the Draft EIS/OEIS and review and comment of the document.

Chapter 1

1. Revised the NMFS purpose statement in Section 1.5 and the description of the MMPA process in Section 1.7 in response to a NMFS comment.

Chapter 2

1. Revised Section 2.3.1 (Foreign Military Participation), describing when foreign military activities are part of this Proposed Action and when they are not.

Section 3.0

1. Added link to Tech Reports in Section 3.0.1.2, 3.0.1.2.1, and 3.0.1.2.2.
2. Revised Section 3.0.2 (Effects Analysis Framework) to remove CEQ regulations and updated Table 3.0-2 to make it more relevant to this project. (This change is also reflected in every resource section in the significance determination language.)
3. Revised Table 3.0-7 to add Unmanned Aircraft System aircraft for comparison to manned aircraft.
4. Revised Table 3.0-7 to reflect airborne noise levels of more current F/A-18 (E/F) aircraft and more applicable F-35 (B/C) aircraft.
5. Revised Table 3.0-27 to show additional Standard Operating Procedures for cable installation and revised several procedures related to prevention of invasive species, including a new footnote regarding compliance with invasive species management procedures as they evolve.

Section 3.1 Air Quality

1. Updated Ventura County's nonattainment area for Ozone, based on comment from Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (Table 3.1-3 and Section 3.1.9.4.2.3).
2. In accordance with recent Executive Orders, removed discussion of "social cost of carbon."
3. Updated Table 3.1-1: National and State Ambient Air Quality Standards.
4. Updated all tables showing Alternative 1 (and 2) Emissions.
5. Clarified some terms in Table 3.1-25: Net Change in Criteria and Precursor Emissions for Alternative 2.

Section 3.2 Sediments and Water Quality

1. Removed Section 3.2.2.3.4 (Climate Change and Water Quality).
2. Added information about fuel release during aerial refueling in Table 3.2-3 in response to an agency comment.

Section 3.3 Vegetation

1. Revision to effects of Military Expended Material (MEM) on plants (Section 3.3.3.2.2.1)

Section 3.4 Invertebrates

No changes.

Section 3.5 Abiotic Habitats

1. Shrapnel debris was added as a concern in the "Explosions in the air" sub-stressor in Table 3.5-3.

Section 3.6 Fishes

1. Corrected scientific name of the giant manta in text (Section 3.6.2.2) and in Table 3.6-1.
2. Updated Table 3.6-3 (Relevant Mitigation Measures for Fishes) to align with recent updates to Chapter 5 (Mitigation).
3. Minor change to description of High-Energy Lasers in Table 3.6-6.

Section 3.7 Marine Mammals

1. Table 3.7-2. Updated abundances for five species/stocks (Southern Resident killer whale, Hawaiian monk seal, Guadalupe fur seal, northern elephant seal, and northern fur seal [both stocks], based on the draft 2024 Stock Assessment Reports (SARs) and input from Norris (2025) on the new abundance for Guadalupe fur seal that supersedes the SAR.

2. Removed pile driving from physical disturbance and strike stressors.
3. Updated Table 3.7-4 to show only applicable mitigations and not standard operating procedures.
4. Replaced Table 3.7-6 of annual Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 takes from sonar testing and training.
5. Replaced Table 3.7-7 of 7-year Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 takes from sonar testing and training.
6. Replaced Table 3.7-9 of 7-year Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 takes from air gun testing.
7. Replaced Table 3.7-15 of annual Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 takes from explosive testing and training.
8. Replaced Table 3.7-16 of 7-year Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 takes from explosive testing and training.
9. Updated probabilities of vessel strike in Table 3.7-19 based on latest calculations.
10. Revised analysis of pile driving (Section 3.7.3.2.3.1) due to change in pile driving mitigation zone described in Chapter 5 (Mitigation).
11. Added a paragraph under the Conclusion in Section 3.7.3.5.1.1 to describe the number of takes requested for vessel strike, in response to a public comment.
12. Significant rewrite of Section 3.7.4.1 (Combined Effects of All Stressors Under Alternative 1) and Section 3.7.4.2 (Alternative 2).
13. Deleted ESA determinations Table 3.7-23.
14. Updated goose-beaked whale name to include “Cuvier’s” in all locations.

Section 3.8 Reptiles

No changes.

Section 3.9 Birds

1. Updated Table 3.9-4 (Relevant Mitigation Measures) to align with recent updates to Chapter 5 (Mitigation).

Section 3.10 Cultural Resources

No changes.

Section 3.11 Socioeconomic Resources

1. Rewrote 3.11.1 Introduction and Methods to remove mention of CEQ regulations.
2. Deleted extraneous information regarding military aviation in Section 3.11.2.1.2.2.
3. Replaced and renamed Figure 3.11-8 to properly reflect the Pearl Harbor Naval Defensive Sea Area extends into Pearl Harbor and added Danger Zones, Prohibited Areas, and Restricted Areas.
4. Renamed Figure 3.11-9 to mention included Danger Zones.

Section 3.12 Public Health and Safety

No changes.

Chapter 4 Cumulative Effects

1. Revised opening paragraph in Sections 4.1 and 4.3 to remove discussion of CEQ regulations that were in effect at the onset of this EIS/OEIS.
2. Made a slight revision in Table 4-1 on page 4-8 regarding the support to P-8A aircraft at Kaneohe Bay. This was in response to a public comment stating confusion over the original text.
3. Added “Changes to the Falcon Launch Program at VSF” as a foreseeable action (page 4-12).
4. On page 4-14, added that wastewater spills including contaminants are included for cumulative effects analysis.
5. On page 4-15, removed “global warming”.

Chapter 5 Mitigation

1. Revised Hawaii Humpback Whale Awareness Message requirements to show the window going through May instead of April.
2. Modified the geographic extent (increased the size) of the Hawaii 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area.
3. Finalized name of “California Large Whale Awareness Messages” and “California Real-Time Notification Large Whale Mitigation Area.”
4. Reduced the large whale aggregation size from four or more to three or more whales as a trigger for issuing a notification within the California Real-Time Notification Large Whale Mitigation Area.
5. Made revisions to Table 5-3:
 - a. Added bullet for most explosive activities to suspend the event and follow established reporting procedures if a visibly injured or dead marine mammal is observed.
 - b. Added manta rays and hammerhead sharks for Explosive Mine Neutralization (With Divers).
 - c. Revised mitigation requirements for Explosive Sonobuoys and Research-Based Sub-Surface Explosives and Explosive Torpedoes.
6. Clarified the “designated areas” in Table 5-7 for shallow-water coral and precious coral beds.
7. In Tables 5-9 and 5-10 added MF1C sonar as another sound source to be seasonally limited in two mitigation areas.
8. In Table 5-11, revised Hawaii Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area window from December 15–April 15 to November–May.
9. In Table 5-12, revised Hawaii Humpback Whale Awareness Message requirements to show the window going through May instead of April.
10. Reduced mitigation zone size from 100 to 5 yards (yd.) for pile driving and removal.
11. Updated Table 5-20.

6 Regulatory Considerations

1. Removed “climate change.”
2. Opening paragraph revised to remove mention of CEQ regulations.
3. Table 6-1:
 - a. Added Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and Marine Mammal Protection Act.
 - b. National Marine Sanctuaries Act revised due to there now being seven sanctuaries in the Study Area.
 - c. Deleted Executive Orders (EOs) 12898 and 14096 (Environmental Justice).
 - d. Deleted EOs 13990 and 14008 (Climate Change).
 - e. Deleted EO 14057 (Clean Energy) per new EOs.
4. Updated Coastal Zone Management Act Compliance (Section 6.1.1) due to include recent progress in CZMA consultation.
5. Table 6-2:
 - a. Revised Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary to show it is no longer proposed and is now a sanctuary.
 - b. Revised all other sanctuaries to show that consultation has been completed.
6. Updated status of Government to Government Consultation in Section 6.1.4 to include Native Hawaiian Organizations as part of the NHPA Section 106 consultation.
7. Section 6.4: Opening paragraph revised to remove mention of CEQ regulations.

Appendix A Activity Descriptions

1. A.1.9.3 Amphibious Breaching Operations: Parameters for Analysis changed to remove specific mention of Pyramid Cove and Horse Beach Cove, instead stating the activity could occur “in the nearshore [San Clemente Island] waters.”
2. Updated the description of the Hawaii Cable Project (Phase I) in Section A.3.5.2.1.
3. Added a new Appendix A.1, background information about the U.S. Coast Guard.

Appendix C Biological Resources Supplemental Information

1. Removed climate change throughout the appendix unless the language was used by a cited source.
2. C.2.1.2.6: Due to increased focus on the threat of invasive species, added mention of plastic debris as possible vectors.
3. Corrected scientific name of the giant manta and updated its recovery goals.
4. In Section C.6.1 - General Background, added description of the Cross Seamount beaked whale.
5. Updated the habitat and geographic range information on the:
 - a. Blue whale (Section C.6.2.1.2) from Lagerquist et al. (2024).
 - b. Fin whale (Section C.6.2.2.2) from Lagerquist et al. (2024) and Falcone et al. (2022).
 - c. Hawaiian monk seal (Section C.6.2.9.1).
 - d. Harbor seal (Section C.6.3.33.2).
6. C.6.2.8.2: Revised text due to finalization of 2024 SAR.
7. Updated abundance numbers of marine mammal species to reflect changes.
8. Minor text edits throughout.

Appendix F Acoustic and Non-Acoustic Impacts and Supporting Information

1. Section F.7.1.2: Revised description of effects from high-energy lasers.
2. Added Section F.7.1.3 (Effects from High-Power Microwave Devices).
3. Section F.7.2.5: Removed Effects from Pile Driving as a Physical Disturbance and Strike stressor.
4. Revised F.8.1.1 Effects from High-Energy Lasers on sea turtles.
5. Added Section F.8.1.2 (Effects from High-Power Microwave Devices).

Appendix G Air Quality Supplemental Information, Emission Calculations, and Record of Non-Applicability

1. Removed “Climate Change” globally. Replaced with “Greenhouse Gas Emissions” where applicable.
2. Revised Section G.1.5 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions).
3. Updated tables on emission increases.

Appendix H Description of Systems and Ranges

1. Added “towed” mid-frequency active sonar systems in description of surface ship sonars on page H-3.
2. Revised Figures H-37 and H-39 to maintain consistent color scheme with mine warfare ranges on Hawaii figures.

Appendix I Military Expended Materials, Direct Strike, and Ship Strike Effects Analysis

1. Removed Table I-1 that gave MEM size and footprints of MEM items. This was to maintain better consistency with the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing EIS/OEIS and to reduce extraneous information from the document.
2. Most of the tables in Section I.1 and Section I.2 were removed as extraneous.

3. Complete rewrite of Section I.4 (Navy and Coast Guard Vessel Strike of Large Whale Species).

Appendix J Agency Correspondence

1. Updated to reflect most recent correspondence with agencies.

Appendix K Geographic Mitigation Assessment

1. Populated the section on “Areas Suggested During the Public Involvement Process,” Section K.1.1.2.
2. Populated the section on “Additional Mitigation Measures Suggested during the Draft EIS/OEIS Public Involvement Process,” Section K.1.1.2.1.
3. Corrected time period of gray whale Parent Biologically Important Area (Table K-8) from “June–November” to “November–June.”
4. Populated Section K.5 – (Areas Identified During the [National Environmental Policy Act] Public Involvement Process).
5. Made corrections and revisions to geographic mitigation areas to match changes in Chapter 5.

Appendix L Public Involvement

1. Updated Table L-1 to more accurately show the organizations receiving scoping notification letters.
2. Added Notice of Availability materials (letter, postcard, newspaper ad, news release, social media post).
3. Updated Table L-6 to reflect actual stakeholder briefings.
4. Revised Summary of Draft EIS/OEIS Comments (Table L-7) to remove environmental justice.
5. Added Section L.2 (Public Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement).
6. Added Section L.6 (Final Environmental Impact Statement Notifications).

NOTABLE TOPICS

Agencies and Action Proponents

The United States (U.S.) Department of the Navy (Navy) is the lead agency for the Proposed Action and is responsible for the scope and content of the EIS/OEIS. Action Proponents within the Navy include Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet, the U.S. Marine Corps, Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center (EXWC), Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR), and Office of Naval Research (ONR). In addition to the Navy Action Proponents, U.S. Coast Guard, Army, and U.S. Air Force are participating as Joint Lead Agencies due to the inclusion of their training activities, which are similar to Navy training covered in the EIS/OEIS. The lead and joint agencies are collectively referred to as the Action Proponents. NMFS is a cooperating agency.

Study Area

The Study Area for this document is defined in Chapter 1. It encompasses the waters of the Pacific Ocean along the coast of California, the waters around the Hawaiian Islands, and a transit corridor between these areas; the high seas west of California and surrounding Hawaii; nearshore waters in Northern California; pierside locations at Navy installations, within port transit channels and near civilian ports; and inshore waterways (e.g., San Diego Bay, Port Hueneme, Pearl Harbor).

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is defined in Chapter 1. As explained in the chapter, the Proposed Action is to conduct military readiness activities, comprised of training, testing, and modernization and sustainment of ranges in the HCTT Study Area. NMFS also has a Proposed Action, which is to promulgate regulations and issue Letters of Authorization under the MMPA of 1972.

Preferred Alternative

As explained in Chapter 2, the Preferred Alternative for this project is Alternative 1. It reflects a representative level of training and testing and has lesser effects on certain resources compared to Alternative 2.

Military Expended Material

As listed in Chapter 3, military expended materials are items such as munitions, targets, sonobuoys, and chaff that are destroyed or consumed during combat or training.

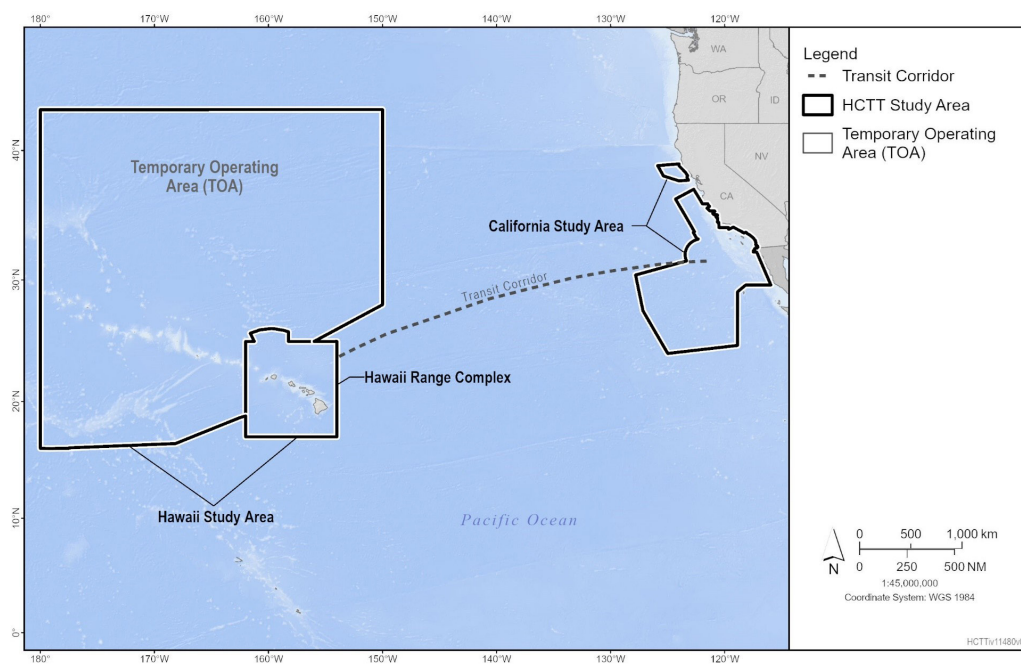
Marine Mammals & Endangered Species

The marine mammals and other endangered species, such as fishes, reptiles, and birds, are detailed in their respective sections in Chapter 3 (see Content Description). Additional information on these species is also available in Appendix C. These species and their habitats are listed as either threatened or endangered, as defined by the ESA of 1973.

Acoustic Effects

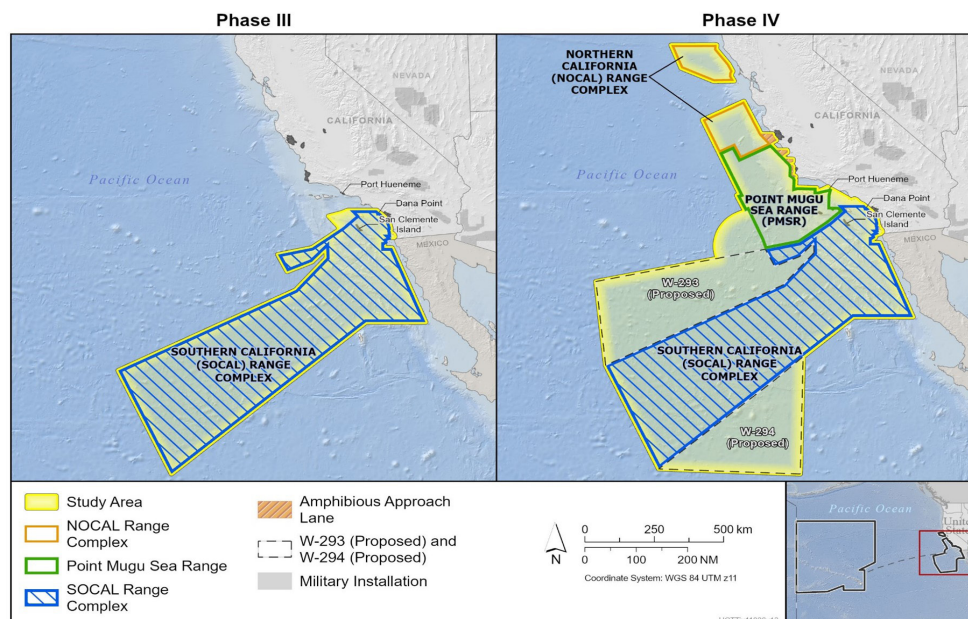
Acoustic effects are mentioned in Chapter 3. They are the ways in which sonar, air guns, and explosives impact the marine environment. Effects can include temporary threshold shift and auditory injury.

AREAS OF INTEREST



HCTT Study Area

The HCTT Study Area is defined and discussed in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives).



**Changes from
HSTT Study Area
(Phase III) to
HCTT Study Area
(Phase IV)**

The changes from the HSTT Study Area (Phase III) to the HCTT Study Area (Phase IV) are discussed in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives).

GLOSSARY

Above Ground Level (AGL)

The height of an aircraft above the ground surface.

Attainment

The state of air quality within an area when it meets or exceeds the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Clean Air Act (CAA)

The federal law that empowers the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to establish standards that regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants and protect public health.

Critical Habitat

As defined by the Endangered Species Act (ESA), this is habitat with physical or biological features that are essential to the conservation of an endangered or threatened species, and that may require special management and protection.

Decibel (dB)

A unit that expresses the intensity of a sound wave. It equals 20 times the common logarithm of the ratio of the pressure produced by the sound wave to a reference pressure, usually 0.0002 microbar.

Endangered Species

As defined by the ESA, an endangered species is “any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.”

Endangered Species Act

Enacted in 1973, the purpose of the ESA is to protect and recover fish, wildlife, and plant species at risk of extinction and to promote the conservation of the ecosystems and habitats upon which these species depend, both domestically and abroad. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) share responsibility for implementing the ESA. NOAA Fisheries is responsible for most marine species. The

USFWS is responsible for terrestrial and freshwater species, and several marine mammal species (e.g., walrus, sea otter, manatee, and polar bear). The two agencies share jurisdiction over several other species, such as sea turtles.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

A requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, this is a detailed, written statement that analyzes the potential environmental impacts of a proposed major federal action that could significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

Mitigation

Action taken to reduce the potential for unavoidable adverse impacts on resources caused by a proposed action. Examples of mitigation measures include requiring trained Lookouts to conduct visual observations for marine species during activities, and establishing geographic areas where activities are limited or prohibited in order to protect physical habitats, marine species habitats, or cultural resources.

Nonattainment

In terms of air quality, an area in which a criteria pollutant level exceeds the NAAQS.

Notice of Intent (NOI)

A public notice that the decision making process for a proposed action will include the preparation and consideration of an EIS.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Procedures implemented to avoid potential impacts and minimize unavoidable impacts with implementation of a proposed action.

Threatened Species

As defined by the ESA, a threatened species is “any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.”