HAWAII-CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/ OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/
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Volume 5

Hawaii-California Training and Testing

Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

Volume 5

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Appendix L Public Participation

Environmental Impact Statement/
Overseas Environmental Impact Statement
Hawaii-California Training and Testing
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Appendix L Public Participation

This appendix describes outreach efforts to involve the public during the development of the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS).

Outreach and involvement efforts were conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and United States (U.S.) military service guidance.

L.1 Project Website

A website was established to provide the public with project information and includes public notices, project fact sheets, maps, virtual open house presentations, public meeting and commenting information (when applicable), information about NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 processes, and a project video. The public was able to submit comments via the website and subscribe to receive future notifications via email. The project website is www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/.

L.2 Public Scoping Period

The public scoping period began with publication of the Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* December 15, 2023, (88 Federal Register 86885) and ran through January 29, 2024.

L.2.1 Public Scoping Notifications

The U.S. military services made significant efforts to notify the public about the project, the scoping period, and public involvement opportunities. All public notices included information about the intent to prepare an EIS/OEIS; Proposed Action and its purpose and need; virtual open house presentation; NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, including how to request information on the NHPA Section 106 consultation process and how to participate; how to submit public comments; and website address. A summary of these efforts follows.

L.2.1.1 Notification Letters

Tribal letters with a fact sheet enclosure were mailed to 79 federally recognized tribal chairpersons and tribal staff. Stakeholder letters and fact sheets were mailed to 1,382 federal, state, and local elected officials and agencies; non-federally recognized tribes and tribal groups, and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs). Letters were mailed December 14, 2023. Entities that received a notification letter are listed in Table L-1. An example of the tribal and stakeholder scoping notification letter is found in Figure L-1.

Table L-1: Entities that Received the Scoping Notification Letter

California Federally Recognized Tribes, Non-Federally Recognized Tribes, and Tribal Groups	
Federally Recognized Tribes	**Non-Federally Recognized Tribes and Tribal Groups**
Barona Group of the Capitan Grande	Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria	Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
Cahto Tribe	Barbareño Band of Chumash Indians
Campo Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians
Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians	Chumash Council of Bakersfield
Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians	Costanoan Ohlone Rumsen-Mutsen Tribe
Ewiiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians	Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria	

Guidiville Rancheria of California	Esselen Tribe of Monterey County
Hopland Band of Pomo Indians	Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel	Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians Kizh Nation
Inaja-Cosmit Band of Indians	Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
Jamul Indian Village	Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria	Gabrielino/Tongva Nation
La Jolla Band of Luiseno Mission Indians	Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe
La Posta Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
Lytton Rancheria	InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council
Manchester Band of Pomo Indians of the Manchester Rancheria	Juaneno Band of Mission Indians
Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay Nation	Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation – Belardes
Mesa Grande Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation 84A
Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians	KaKoon Ta Ruk Band of Ohlone-Costanoan Indians of the Big Sur Rancheria
Pala Band of Mission Indians	Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Mission Indians
Pauma Band of Luiseno Indians	Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
Pechanga Band of Indians	Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area
Pinoleville Pomo Nation	Northern Chumash Tribal Council
Potter Valley Tribe	Noyo River Indian Community
Redwood Valley or Little River Band of Pomo Indians	Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation
Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians	Rumsen Ama Turataj Ohlone
Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians	Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties
Round Valley Indian Tribes	San Fernando Band of Mission Indians
San Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians
Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians	Serrano Nation of Mission Indians
Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo	The Ohlone Indian Tribe
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians	Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation
Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation	Wuksachi Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band
Tule River Indian Tribe	Xolon-Salinan Tribe
Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians	yak tityu yak tiłhini – Northern Chumash Tribe
	Yokayo Tribe

Federal Agencies – National

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Council on Environmental Quality
Federal Communications Commission
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Federal Maritime Commission
General Services Administration
    National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementation, NEPA Advisory Group
International Boundary and Water Commission
Marine Mammal Commission
National Science Foundation
Ocean Policy Committee
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Army National Guard
U.S. Department of Agriculture
    Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services

- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Department of Commerce
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries
    - Environmental Observation and Prediction
    - National Marine Protected Areas Center
    - National Ocean Service
      - National Marine Sanctuaries
      - Office for Coastal Management
    - Office of Habitat Conservation
    - Office of Protected Resources
      - Endangered Species Act Interagency Cooperation Division
      - Protected Resources Division
    - Office of Regulatory Programs
- U.S. Department of Energy
  - NEPA Policy and Compliance (GC-54)
  - Office of Environment, Health, Safety & Security
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency District 9
  - U.S. Coast Guard
    - Office of Environmental Management (CG-47)
    - Office of Operating and Environmental Standards (CG-OES-3)
- U.S. Department of Justice
  - Environment and Natural Resources Division
- U.S. Department of the Interior
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
    - Public Affairs
  - Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
  - Bureau of Reclamation
  - Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
    - Office of Offshore Regulatory Programs
  - Environmental Policy & Compliance
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - U.S. Geological Survey
  - U.S. National Park Service
    - National Historic Landmarks
- U.S. Department of Transportation
  - Federal Aviation Administration
    - Airport Planning and Environmental Division (APP-400)
    - Office of Policy, International Affairs, Environment and Energy
  - Maritime Administration
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
  - NEPA Compliance Division
  - Office of Federal Activities

Hawaii Federal Elected Officials and Federal Agencies

- U.S. House of Representatives (Districts 1, 2)
- U.S. Senators
- Federal Aviation Administration
  - Honolulu Airport District Office
- NOAA Fisheries
  - Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary

Honolulu Service Center
Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
Pacific Islands Regional Office
Protected Resources Division, Kaua'i
Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument
U.S. Coast Guard
District 14
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge
Kakahai'a National Wildlife Refuge
Kauai National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge
Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
Pacific Region
U.S. Geological Survey
Pacific Islands Water Science Center
Hawaii State Elected Officials and State Agencies
Office of the Governor
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
State Senators (all districts)
State Representatives (all districts)
House Committee on Corrections
Military & Veterans
House Committee on Water and Land
Senate Committee on Water and Land
Department of Hawaiian Home Lands
Office of the Chairman
Department of Health
Environmental Health Administration
Environmental Management Division
Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response Office
Office of Environmental Quality Control
Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Aquatic Resources
Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Division of State Parks
Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands
State Historic Preservation Division
Department of Transportation
Airports Division
Harbors Division
Department of Agriculture
Office of the Chairperson
Department of Defense
Hawaii Army National Guard
Office of the Adjutant General
Land Use Commission, Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism
Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
Western-Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

Hawaii Local Elected Officials and Local Agencies
City and County of Honolulu
City Council (all districts)
Mayor's Office
Environmental Services Department
Office of the Managing Director
Parks and Recreation Department
Planning and Permitting Department
Neighborhood Commission Office
County of Hawaii
County Council
Mayor's Office
Department of Research & Development
Planning Department
County of Kauai
County Council
Mayor's Office
Planning Department
Police Department
County of Maui
County Council
Mayor's Office
Department of Environmental Management
Department of Planning
Native Hawaiian Organizations
ʻAha Kāne
ʻAhahui Siwila Hawaiʻi O Kapōlei (Kapolei Hawaiian Civic Club)
Aha Kukaniloko Koa Mana mea ola kanaka mauli
Aha Mālama, Corp.
Aha Moku O Kahikinui
Aha Moku o Kaupo
Aha Moku o Maui Inc.
Aha Wahine
Ahahui Kiwila Hawaiʻi O Moʻikeha
Ahahui Siwila Hawaiʻi O Kapolei
Ahonui Homestead Association
Ahupuaʻa o Molokaʻi
Ahupuaʻa O Nānākuli Homestead
ʻAi Noa Foundation
Āina Momona
Ala Kahakai Trail Association
Alakaʻina Foundation Inc.
Alepa Hou Foundation
Aliʻi Pauahi Hawaiian Civic Club
Aloha First
ʻAoʻao O Nā Loko Iʻa O Maui
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Association of Hawaiians for Homestead Lands
Au Puni O Hawaiʻi
Brian Kaniela Naeʻole Naauao
Captain Kimo's Hawaiian Adventures
Charles Pelenui Mahi Ohana

Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement
E Ola Kākou Hawaiʻi
EAO Hawaiʻi Inc.
Elizabeth Kahanu Hawaiian Civic Club
Ewa-Puʻuloa Hawaiian Civic Club
Flores-Case ʻOhana
Friends of ʻIolani Palace
George K. Cypher ʻOhana
God's Country Waimanalo
Hanalei Hawaiian Civic Club
Hanalei River Heritage Foundation
Hanona
Hanona Hauʻouiwi Homestead Association on Lānaʻi
Hawaiʻi – Moku o Keawe
Hawaiʻi Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs | Moku o Keawe
Hawaiʻi Island Burial Council
Hawaiʻi State Aha Moku
Hawaiian Civic Club of Hilo
Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu
Hawaiian Civic Club of Kaʻū
Hawaiian Civic Club of Laupahoehoe
Hawaiian Civic Club of Wahiawa
Hawaiian Civic Club of Waimānalo
Hawaiian Islands Burial Council, Kauaʻi
Hawaiian Islands Burial Council, Maui
Hawaiian Islands Burial Council, Oʻahu
Hawaiian Kingdom Task Force
Ho Ohana
Hoʻokano Family Land Trust
Hoʻōla Lāhui Hawaiʻi
Hui Aloha Kīholo
Hui Hoʻoleimaluō
Hui Huliau Inc.
Hui Iwi Kuamoʻo
Hui Kaleleiki Ohana
Hui Mālama Ola Nā ʻŌiwi
Hui No Ke Ola Pono
Hui o Kuapā
Hui O Waʻa Kaulua
Hui ʻOhana O Hōnaunau
Hulu Mamo Hawaiian Civic Club
Imua Hawaiʻi
Independent District of Puna
Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture
KAʻEHU
Kahoʻolawe – Moku O Kanaloa
Kāhuli Leo Leʻa
Kai Palaoa and Mauna Kea Anaina Hou
Kailua Hawaiian Civic Club
Kākoʻo ʻŌiwi
Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation
Kalamaʻula Homesteaders Association
Kalihi Palama Hawaiian Civic Club

Kamealoha
Kamehameha Schools
Kamiloloa One Aliʻi Homestead Association
Kanaka Economic Development Alliance
Kānehūnāmoku Voyaging Academy
Kanu o ka ʻĀina Learning ʻOhana
Kapolei Community Development Corporation
Kapolei Hawaiian Civic Club
Kauaʻi – Mano O Kalanipo
Kauaʻi Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Kauaʻi Sea Farm
Kauhakō Ohana Association
Kaʻuikiokapō
Kauluakalana
Kaumualiʻi Hawaiian Civic Club
Kawaihapai Ohana
Kawaileo Law, LLC
Ke Kula Nui O Waimānalo
Ke One O Kakuhihewa, Oʻahu Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Keaukaha Community Association
Keoni Kealoha Alvarez
Kiaʻi Kanaloa
Kimokeo Foundation
King Kamehameha Hawaiian Civic Club
Kingdom of Hawaiʻi
Kipuka Olowalu
Koʻolau Foundation
Koʻolauloa Hawaiian Civic Club
Koʻolaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club
Koa Ike
Kohala Hawaiian Civic Club
Kona Hawaiian Civic Club
Kuaʻāina Ulu ʻAuamo
Kuakini Hawaiian Civic Club of Kona
Kula no na Poʻe Hawaiʻi
Kululoiʻa Lineage - I ke Kai ʻo Kululoiʻa
Kupeke Ahupuaʻa
LaʻiʻŌpua 2020
Lāhaina Hawaiian Civic Club
Lahui Kakaʻikahi
Laʻiʻōpua Community Development Corporation
Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club
Maʻa ʻOhana c/o Lani Maʻa Lapilio
Machado-Akana-Aona-Namakaeha Ohana
Mahamoku Ohana Council
Mahu Ohana
Makaha Hawaiian Civic Club
Makuʻu Farmers Association
Malama Anahola
Mālama Hulēʻia
Malama Kaʻu Foundation
Mālama Loko Ea Foundation
Maluʻōhai Residents Association

Mana Health Services, Inc.
Marae Haʻa Koa
Maui Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs | Nā Hono Aʻo Piʻilani
Maunalua Hawaiian Civic Club
Meje, Inc.
Meleana Kawaiaea, LLC
Menehune Foundation
Na Aikane O Maui
Na Koa Ikaika Ka Lahui Hawaiʻi
Na Kuʻauhau ʻo Kahiwakaneikopolei
Nā Kuleana o Kānaka ʻŌiwi
Na Kupuna Moku O Keawe
Na Mookupuna O Wailua
Na Ohana o Puaoi a me Hanawahine
Nā Puʻuwai
Nakupuna Foundation
Nānāikapono Hawaiian Civic Club
Nanakuli Housing Corporation
Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce
Native Hawaiian Church
Native Hawaiian Community Development Corporation
Native Hawaiian Education Council
Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association
Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation
Nekaifes Ohana
Niʻihau – Niʻihau O Kahele Lani
Nohopapa Hawaiʻi, LLC
ʻOhana Keaweamahi
ʻO Makuʻu Ke Kahua Community Center
Oʻahu – Moku O Kakuhihewa
Oʻahu Canoe Racing Association
Oʻahu Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Ohana Keohokālole
ʻOhana Lo
Order of Kamehameha I
PAʻI Foundation
Pacific Agricultural Land Management Systems
Pacific Justice & Reconciliation Center
Panaewa Hawaiian Home Lands Community Association
Papa Ola Lokahi
Papakōlea Community Development Corporation
Partners in Development Foundation
Paukukalo Hawaiian Homes Community Association
Peahi Ohana
Pearl Harbor Hawaiian Civic Club
Pele Defense Fund
Piihonua Hawaiian Homestead Community Association
Pōhaku Pelemaka
Polynesian Voyaging Society
Prince Kūhiō Hawaiian Civic Club
Protect Keopuka Ohana
Puʻuhonua o Wailupe
Queen Deborah Kapule Hawaiian Civic Club

Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club
Queen Julia Kapiʻolani Hawaiian Civic Club
Royal Hawaiian Academy of Traditional Arts
Sovereign Councils of the Hawaiian Homestead Associations
The Friends of Hokuleʻa and Hawaiʻiloa
The I Mua Group
The Makua Group
Wahiawa Ahupuaa LCA 7714B Apana 6 RP 7813
Wai Koa Kauaʻi
Waiʻanae Hawaiian Civic Club
Waialua Hawaiian Civic Club
Waiehu Kou Phase 3 Association
Waimānalo Hawaiian Homes Association
Waimānalo Health Center
Waimea Hawaiian Civic Club
Waimea Hawaiian Homesteaders' Association, Inc.

California Federal Elected Officials and Federal Agencies

U.S. House of Representatives (Districts 2, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52)
U.S. Senators
Bureau of Indian Affairs
    Southern California Agency
Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
    Pacific Outer Continental Shelf Region
        Public Affairs
Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
    Pacific Region Office
Federal Aviation Administration
    Los Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center
    Office of the Director, Western-Pacific Region, AWP-600
    San Francisco Air Route Traffic Control Center
NOAA Fisheries
    Alaska Fisheries Science Center
    California Coastal Area Office
    Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuaries, University of California at Santa Barbara
    Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary
    Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary
    Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary
    Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
    Oregon-Washington Coastal Office
    West Coast Region, Protected Resources Division
    Southwest Fisheries Science Center
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
    Region IX
Pacific Fishery Management Council
U.S. Army Corps of Engineer
    Los Angeles District
U.S. Coast Guard
    District 11
    Sector San Diego
    Channel Islands Harbor

- Los Angeles – Long Beach
- Santa Barbara

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Region 9
  - Natural Resources, Water, Aquaculture
  - Military & Tribal

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Carlsbad Office
- Pacific Region
- Sacramento Office
- San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge
- Ventura Office

U.S. Forest Service
- Los Padres National Forest Headquarters
- Pacific Southwest Region

U.S. Geological Survey
- California Water Science Center
- Northwest-Pacific Island Regional Director's Office
- Pacific Coastal and Marine Science Center
- Southwest Region
- Western Ecological Research Center
- Western Fisheries Research Center
- Western Geographic Science Center

U.S. National Park Service
- Channel Islands National Park
- Pacific West Regional Office
- Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

California State Elected Officials and State Agencies

Office of the Governor

State Assembly Members (Districts 2, 12, 30, 37, 38, 42, 44, 54, 55, 61, 66, 69, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79)

State Senators (Districts 2, 13, 17, 21, 24, 27, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39)

Attorney General's Office

California Air Resources Board
- Enforcement Division

California Bureau of Land Management
- California Coastal National Monument

California Coastal Commission
- Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency Division
- South Central Coast District

California Department of Conservation
- Geologic Energy Management Northern District

California Department of Education

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Air Services Unit
- Habitat Conservation Planning Branch
- Marine Region
  - Field Office
  - Habitat Conservation Program
- South Coast Region
- Wildlife Branch

California Department of Industrial Relations

California Department of Parks and Recreation

Division of Boating and Waterways
Office of Historic Preservation
California Department of Public Health
California Department of Toxic Substances Control
California Department of Transportation
California Department of Water Resources
California Department of Veterans Affairs
California Energy Commission
California Environmental Protection Agency
Air Resources Board
California Fish and Game Commission
California Natural Resources Agency
Department of Conservation
Ocean Protection Council
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Coast Region
Los Angeles Region
California Sea Grant
California State Coastal Conservancy
California State Lands Commission
California State Parks
Silver Strand State Beach
California Wildlife Conservation Board
Emergency Management Agency
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
California State Clearinghouse
Military Council
Native American Heritage Commission
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Quality
Division of Water Rights
California Local Elected Officials and Local Agencies
California American Water
Corporate Headquarters
Monterey County District
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Los Angeles Region
North Coast Region
San Diego Region
California Water Service
Salinas District
City of Avalon
City Council
Mayor
Harbor Department
City of Camarillo
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
Planning Division

City of Capitola
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Carmel-by-the Sea
- City Council
- Mayor

City of Chula Vista
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Mayor

City of Coronado
- City Council
- Mayor

City of Dana Point
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Del Rey Oaks
- City Council
- Mayor

City of Fort Bragg
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Huntington Beach
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Imperial Beach
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Mayor
- Planning Department

City of Laguna Beach
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Long Beach
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- Mayor

City of Los Angeles
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)
- Mayor

City of Malibu
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Marina
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Mayor

City of Monterey
- City Council (At-Large, Districts 1, 2)
- Mayor
- Fire Department

Police Department
City of Morro Bay
City Council
Mayor
City of National City
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
City of Newport Beach
City Council (District 1, 2, 3, 4)
Mayor
Vice Mayor
City of Oceanside
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
Mayor
City of Oxnard
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
Mayor
Planning Division
Police Department
City of Pacific Grove
City Council
Mayor
City of Port Hueneme
City Council
Mayor
Mayor Pro Tem
Planning & Zoning Division
City of Salinas
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
Mayor
City of San Diego
City Council (District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
Mayor
Environmental Services Department
Planning Department
City of San Luis Obispo
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
City of Sand City
City Council
Mayor
City of Santa Barbara
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
Mayor
City of Sausalito
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
City of Seaside
City Council
Mayor

City of Ventura
- City Council
- Deputy Mayor
- Mayor

Convention & Visitor Bureau of Oxnard
Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency
Gualala Municipal Advisory Council
Local Agency Formation Commission
Los Angeles County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Marin County
- Board of Supervisors (District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Parks
- Public Works

Mendocino County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Parks
- Planning and Building Services

Monterey County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Parks Department
- Planning Services
- Water Resources Agency

Monterey Peninsula Regional Airport
Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
Orange County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Oxnard Visitors Bureau
Pacific Grove Unified
Peninsula Community Planning Board
Port of Benicia
Port of Hueneme
Port of Long Beach
Port of Los Angeles
Port of San Diego
San Diego Air Pollution Control District San Diego County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Department of Planning & Development Services

San Diego Harbor Police
San Luis Obispo County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Environmental Health Services
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Planning and Building

Santa Barbara County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Planning and Development, Development Review Division
- Air Pollution Control Board, Tech and EA Division
- Association of Governments, Planning Division
- Parks Administration
- Public Health Department

Santa Barbara Waterfront Department

Santa Cruz County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Sonoma County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Regional Parks

Sonoma Public Infrastructure
Sonoma Water
South Coast Air Quality Management District
- Planning, Rule Development, and Implementation Department

Southern California Association of Governments
Ventura Council of Governments
Ventura County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Air Pollution Control District
  - Planning and Evaluation Division
- Cultural Heritage Board
- Harbor Department
- Public Health Services
- Public Works Agency
  - Watershed Protection District
- Resource Management Agency
  - Planning Division

Ventura Visitors and Convention Bureau
Ventura Water

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
250 MAKALAPA DRIVE
PEARL HARBOR HI 96860-3131

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5090
Ser N46/0939
December 7, 2023

Dear Sir or Madam:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR HAWAII-CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING

The Department of the Navy (Navy) (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, announces its intent to prepare the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) to assess the potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Action to conduct at-sea military readiness activities within the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area. The Navy also proposes to modernize and sustain its ranges in a manner necessary to support these readiness activities. The Proposed Action is needed to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions.

The Navy invites comments on the scope of the EIS/OEIS including identification of potential alternatives and environmental concerns, information and analyses relevant to the Proposed Action, issues that should be addressed in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, and the project's potential to affect historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). A virtual open house presentation is available on the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** during the scoping period from December 15, 2023, to January 29, 2024. The presentation provides information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, environmental resource areas to be analyzed in the EIS/OEIS, the NEPA process, the NHPA Section 106 process, and public involvement opportunities. The public can view the virtual open house presentation and submit comments at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** anytime during the scoping period. Additional project information can also be found in the enclosed fact sheet (Enclosure).

The Navy welcomes and appreciates the public's participation during the scoping period. Comments must be postmarked or received online no later than 11:59 p.m. PST on **January 29, 2024**, for consideration in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Comments may be submitted via the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** or by mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

This public scoping effort will also support consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 800, as members of the

Figure L-1: Scoping Notification Letter

5090
Ser N46/0939
December 7, 2023

public are invited to participate, provide comments, or raise concerns. Comments submitted via the project website or by mail will be considered under NEPA and pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA.

Visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** to learn more about the project, view maps of the Study Area, review prior NEPA-related documents, learn about the NHPA Section 106 consultation process, and submit comments. You may also contact Mr. Sean Gano, U.S. Pacific Fleet Command Environmental Public Affairs Specialist, 808-474-8441, sean.k.gano2.civ@us.navy.mil, if you have questions or would like to schedule a briefing.

Please help the Navy inform the community about the intent to prepare an EIS/OEIS for military readiness activities in Hawaii and California by sharing this information with your staff and interested individuals.

Sincerely,

J. H. BEATTIE
Captain, U.S. Navy
Deputy Fleet Civil Engineer
By direction

Enclosure: Hawaii-California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS fact sheet

2

Figure L-1: Scoping Notification Letter (continued)

L.2.1.2 Newspaper Advertisements

Display advertisements were published in 10 newspapers as shown in Table L-2. An example of the advertisement is shown in Figure L-2.

Table L-2: Scoping Newspaper Advertisements

Oahu, Hawaii *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* Friday, December 15, 2023 Sunday, December 17, 2023 Monday, December 18, 2023	**Hawaiian Islands** *Ka Wai Ola News* Monday, January 1, 2024	**Ventura, California** *Ventura County Star* Friday, December 15, 2023 Sunday, December 17, 2023 Monday, December 18, 2023
Big Hawaii, Hawaii *Hawaii Tribune-Herald* Friday, December 15, 2023 Sunday, December 17, 2023 Monday, December 18, 2023	**Kauai, Hawaii** *The Garden Island* Friday, December 15, 2023 Saturday, December 16, 2023 Monday, December 18, 2023	**Los Angeles, California** *Los Angeles Times* Friday, December 15, 2023 Saturday, December 16, 2023 Sunday, December 17, 2023
Maui, Hawaii *The Maui News* Friday, December 15, 2023 Saturday, December 16, 2023 Monday, December 18, 2023	**San Diego, California** *The San Diego Union-Tribune* Friday, December 15, 2023 Saturday, December 16, 2023 Sunday, December 17, 2023	**Monterey, California** *The Monterey Herald* Friday, December 15, 2023 Saturday, December 16, 2023 Sunday, December 17, 2023
		San Luis Obispo, California *The Tribune* Friday, December 15, 2023 Sunday, December 17, 2023 Monday, December 18, 2023

L.2.1.3 News Release

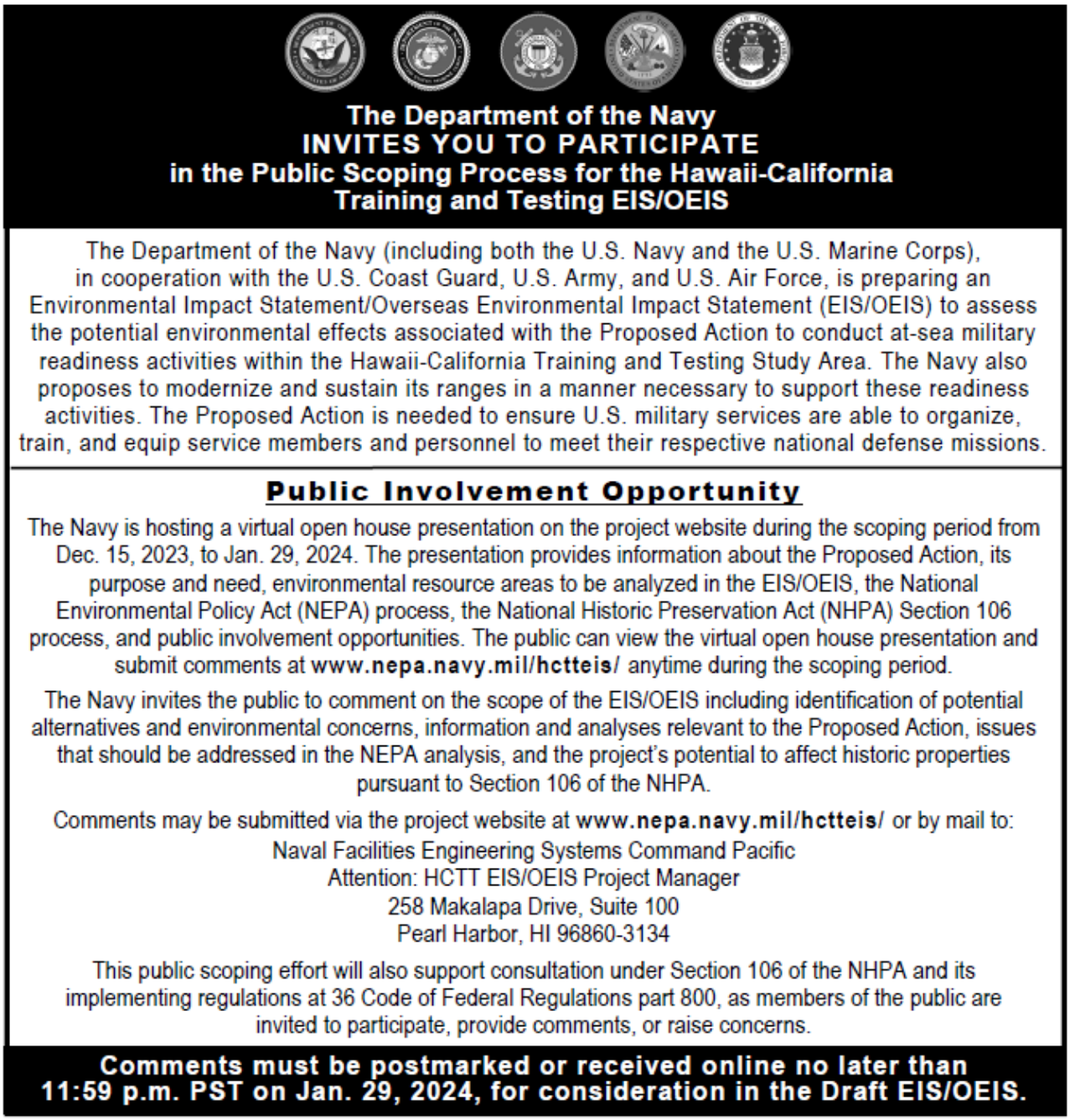
Navy regional Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) distributed news releases to local, regional, and national print and broadcast media December 14, 2023. An example news release is shown in Figure L-3.

L.2.1.4 Social Media Posts

Navy regional PAOs made social media posts December 14, 2023, and January 22, 2024, to established Navy social media pages, including the Navy Region Hawaii, Navy Region Southwest, and Stewards of the Sea Facebook pages. An example social media post is shown in Figure L-4.

L.2.1.5 Website Subscribers and Email Notifications

Email notifications were distributed December 15, 2023, and January 22, 2024, to 520 existing website subscribers. Website subscribers include those from the 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS, the 2022 Point Mugu Sea Range EIS/OEIS, and new subscribers who completed the form on the HCTT website.



The Department of the Navy
INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE
in the Public Scoping Process for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS

The Department of the Navy (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) to assess the potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Action to conduct at-sea military readiness activities within the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area. The Navy also proposes to modernize and sustain its ranges in a manner necessary to support these readiness activities. The Proposed Action is needed to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions.

Public Involvement Opportunity

The Navy is hosting a virtual open house presentation on the project website during the scoping period from Dec. 15, 2023, to Jan. 29, 2024. The presentation provides information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, environmental resource areas to be analyzed in the EIS/OEIS, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process, and public involvement opportunities. The public can view the virtual open house presentation and submit comments at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** anytime during the scoping period.

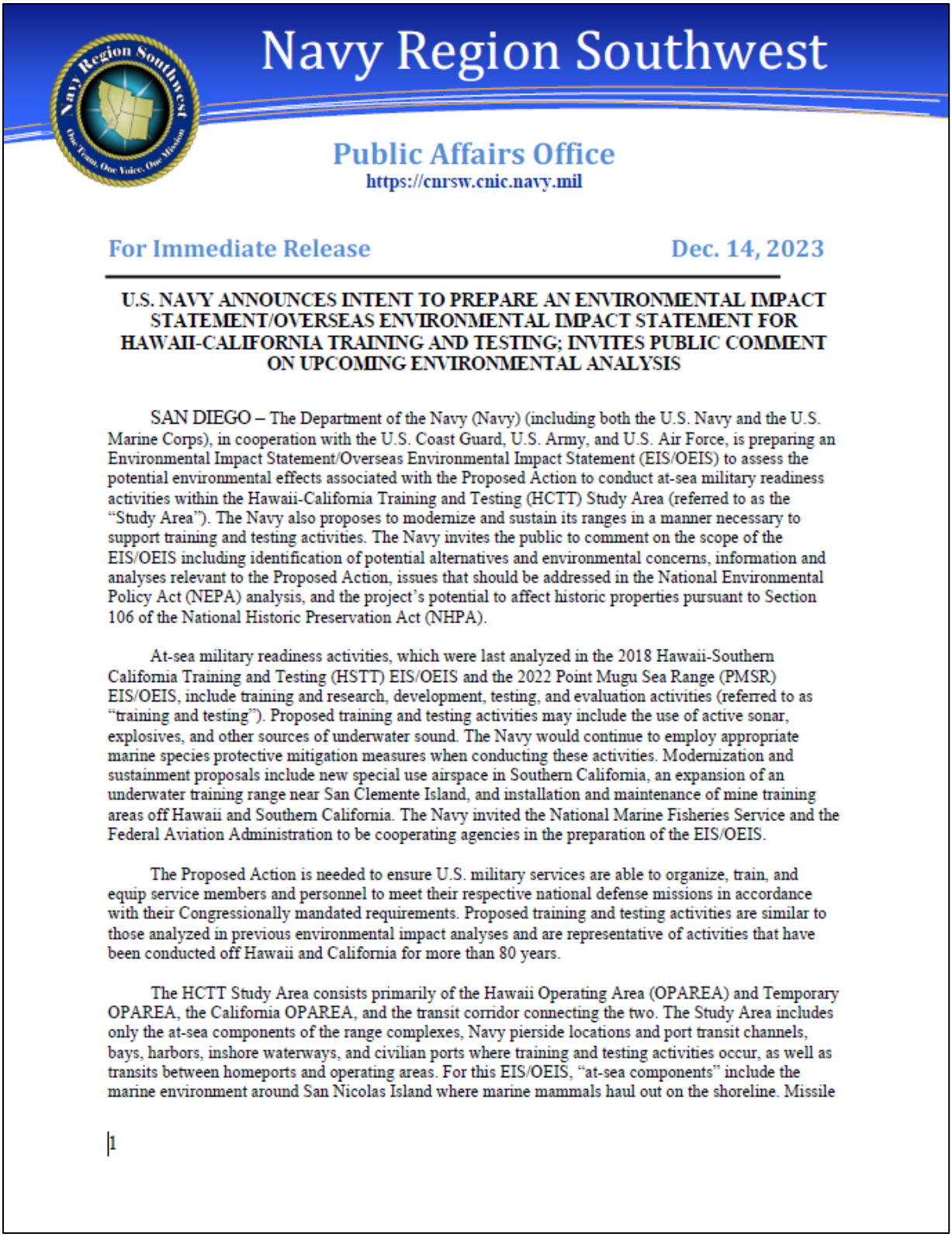
The Navy invites the public to comment on the scope of the EIS/OEIS including identification of potential alternatives and environmental concerns, information and analyses relevant to the Proposed Action, issues that should be addressed in the NEPA analysis, and the project's potential to affect historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA.

Comments may be submitted via the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** or by mail to:
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

This public scoping effort will also support consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations part 800, as members of the public are invited to participate, provide comments, or raise concerns.

Comments must be postmarked or received online no later than 11:59 p.m. PST on Jan. 29, 2024, for consideration in the Draft EIS/OEIS.

Figure L-2: Scoping Newspaper Advertisement



Navy Region Southwest

Public Affairs Office
https://cnrsw.cnic.navy.mil

For Immediate Release Dec. 14, 2023

U.S. NAVY ANNOUNCES INTENT TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR HAWAII-CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING; INVITES PUBLIC COMMENT ON UPCOMING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

SAN DIEGO – The Department of the Navy (Navy) (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) to assess the potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Action to conduct at-sea military readiness activities within the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area (referred to as the "Study Area"). The Navy also proposes to modernize and sustain its ranges in a manner necessary to support training and testing activities. The Navy invites the public to comment on the scope of the EIS/OEIS including identification of potential alternatives and environmental concerns, information and analyses relevant to the Proposed Action, issues that should be addressed in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, and the project's potential to affect historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

At-sea military readiness activities, which were last analyzed in the 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) EIS/OEIS and the 2022 Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR) EIS/OEIS, include training and research, development, testing, and evaluation activities (referred to as "training and testing"). Proposed training and testing activities may include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of underwater sound. The Navy would continue to employ appropriate marine species protective mitigation measures when conducting these activities. Modernization and sustainment proposals include new special use airspace in Southern California, an expansion of an underwater training range near San Clemente Island, and installation and maintenance of mine training areas off Hawaii and Southern California. The Navy invited the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Federal Aviation Administration to be cooperating agencies in the preparation of the EIS/OEIS.

The Proposed Action is needed to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions in accordance with their Congressionally mandated requirements. Proposed training and testing activities are similar to those analyzed in previous environmental impact analyses and are representative of activities that have been conducted off Hawaii and California for more than 80 years.

The HCTT Study Area consists primarily of the Hawaii Operating Area (OPAREA) and Temporary OPAREA, the California OPAREA, and the transit corridor connecting the two. The Study Area includes only the at-sea components of the range complexes, Navy pierside locations and port transit channels, bays, harbors, inshore waterways, and civilian ports where training and testing activities occur, as well as transits between homeports and operating areas. For this EIS/OEIS, "at-sea components" include the marine environment around San Nicolas Island where marine mammals haul out on the shoreline. Missile

1

Figure L-3: Scoping News Release

and target firings from San Nicolas Island that could disturb the marine mammals are included in this analysis. Aside from this one exception, no other terrestrial impacts will be covered in the EIS/OEIS.

The HCTT Study Area differs from the 2018 HSTT Study Area in that it includes:

- An extended Southern California Range Complex
- Special use airspace corresponding to the new extensions in California (the proposed W-293 and the proposed W-294)
- Two existing training and testing at-sea ranges, the PMSR and the Northern California (NOCAL) Range Complex
- Areas along the Southern California coastline from approximately Dana Point to Port Hueneme
- Four amphibious approach lanes providing land access from the NOCAL Range Complex and PMSR

Maps of the Study Area are available on the project website.

In the EIS/OEIS, the Navy will evaluate the potential environmental impacts from a No Action Alternative and two action alternatives. Resources to be evaluated include, but are not limited to, biological resources (including marine mammals, reptiles, fishes, vegetation, invertebrates, habitats, birds, and other protected species), sediments and water quality, air quality, cultural resources, socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety.

The development of the EIS/OEIS will help sustain the readiness of the Navy and other participating U.S. military services by supporting current and future training and testing requirements, increasing flexibility in conducting training and testing activities, modernizing and sustaining range capabilities, updating environmental impact analyses using the best available science and analytical methods, and supporting Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act consultations for the reissuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations within the Study Area.

Public Participation

The Navy is hosting a virtual open house presentation on the project website during the scoping period from Dec. 15, 2023, to Jan. 29, 2024. The presentation provides information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, environmental resource areas to be analyzed in the EIS/OEIS, the NEPA process, the NHPA Section 106 process, and public involvement opportunities. The public can view the virtual open house presentation and submit comments at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** anytime during the scoping period.

The Navy welcomes and appreciates the public's participation during the scoping period. Comments must be postmarked or received online no later than 11:59 p.m. PST on **Jan. 29, 2024**, for consideration in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Comments may be submitted via the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** or by mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

This public scoping effort will also support consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations part 800, as members of the public are invited to participate, provide comments, or raise concerns. Comments submitted via the project website or by mail will be considered under NEPA and pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA.

2

Figure L-3: Scoping News Release (continued)

There will be a public comment opportunity when the Draft EIS/OEIS is available, which is scheduled for fall 2024.

Visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** to learn more about the project, view maps of the Study Area, review prior NEPA-related documents, learn about the NHPA Section 106 consultation process, and submit comments.

Media seeking further information should contact Sergio Hernandez, the Navy Region Southwest Environmental Public Affairs Officer, at Sergio.j.hernandez.civ@us.navy.mil or (619) 705-5242.

Please help inform your community by sharing the information in this news release.

– USN –

3

Figure L-3: Scoping News Release (continued)

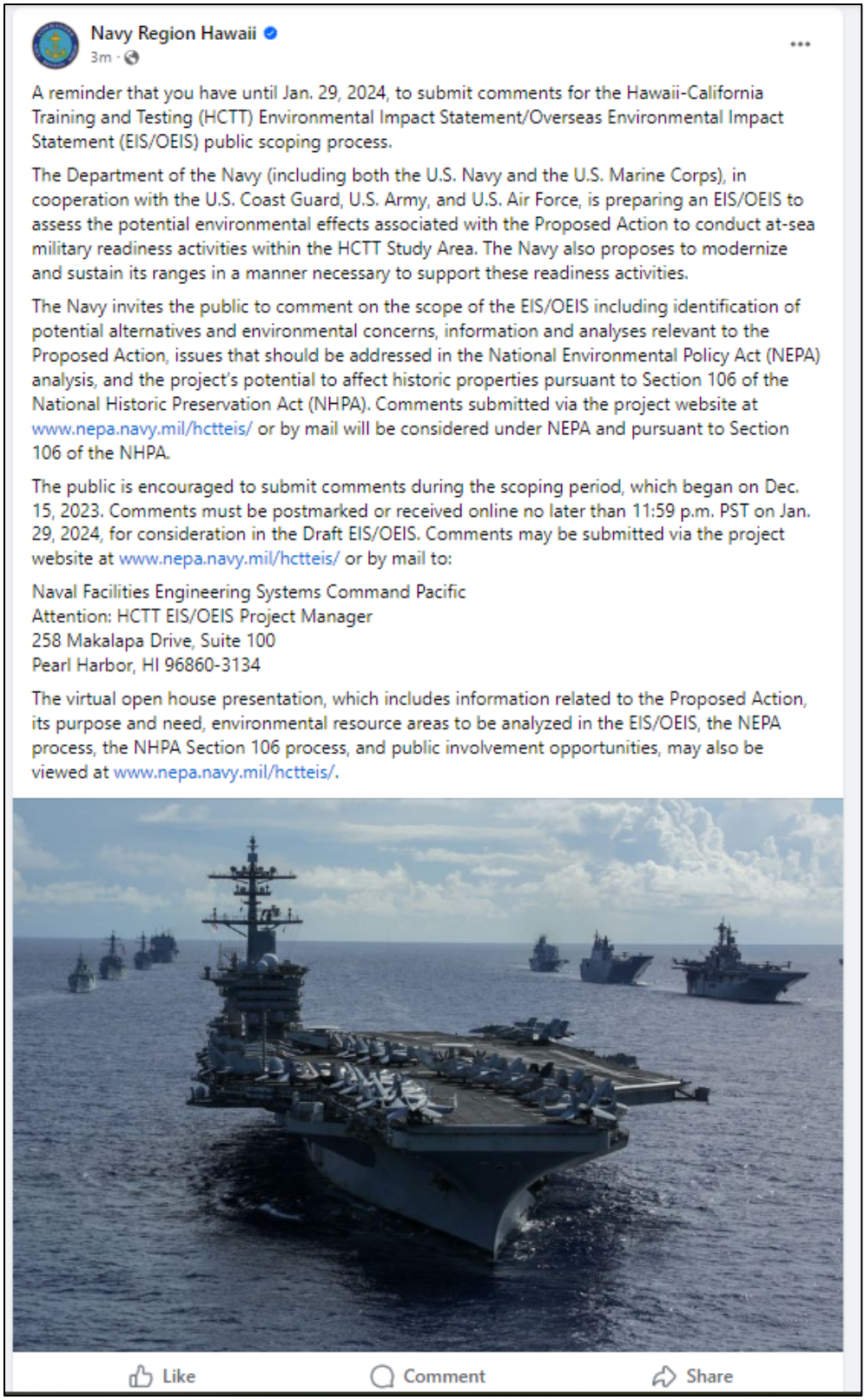


Figure L-4: Scoping Social Media Post

L.2.2 Public Information

The military services developed informational materials for the public to learn more about the Proposed Action, the environmental analysis process, and public involvement opportunities.

L.2.2.1 Stakeholder Briefings

The Navy briefed project stakeholders, including national marine sanctuary managers, the California Coastal Commission, the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region IX. Briefings were also offered upon request to recipients of the tribal and stakeholder letters.

L.2.2.2 Fact Sheet

Project fact sheets were mailed December 14, 2023, to 540 nongovernmental organizations, community groups, and business groups, in addition to the entities listed in Section L.2.1.1 (Notification Letters).

L.2.2.3 Virtual Open House Presentation

The military services prepared a virtual open house presentation and made it available on the website to provide the public with more detailed information of the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, and the importance of training and testing in the Study Area; a list of resource areas to be analyzed in the EIS/OEIS; the Navy's marine species research and monitoring program; a summary of the NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes; public involvement opportunities; and commenting information.

L.2.3 Public Scoping Comments

Public comments were accepted via the project website, email, and by postal mail. A total of 36 public comments were received. Comments received during the scoping period are found in Appendix L.1 (Public Scoping Comments). All comments submitted during the public scoping period are part of the public record, and relevant and substantive comments were considered during the development of the Draft EIS/OEIS. A summary of public scoping comments is found in Table L-3.

Table L-3: Summary of Scoping Comments

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Proposed Action and Alternatives	• Concerns about military training around the Hawaiian Islands, which are considered fragile environments. • Request for military training to be conducted away from the Hawaiian Islands, which are considered sacred lands. • Concerns about the impacts training with explosives may have on the Hawaiian Islands. • Concerns that proposed activities would be conducted within the California Coastal National Monument Corridor and would have an impact on migratory bird populations, marine mammal populations, and nearshore intertidal species. • Concerns that the Proposed Action would have negative impacts on coral reefs and other ocean wildlife, such as whales and dolphins. • Concerns about new training and testing technologies currently under development that have not been described or reviewed in current literature. • Concerns about Rim of the Pacific and international militaries training with the U.S. military and requesting analysis of international military activities in separate EISs. • Concerns about the perceived lack of clean-up for unexploded ordnance and other debris as a result of military activities.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Request for the Navy to research and develop an alternative to active sonar. • Question about why the Navy needs to use sonar since there have been no recent attacks on U.S. vessels. • Support of the No Action Alternative. • Request for greater detail on the locations of underwater detonation training and testing. • Concerns about using the Northern California Range Complex, especially since the range complex has not been included and analyzed in other Navy environmental analyses, and concerns about potential impacts on this area. • Questions about where amphibious landing areas in central California would be located, and request for improved figures in the Draft EIS/OEIS to allow for better understanding of the precise locations. • Concerns about any separate NEPA documents the U.S. Marine Corps may prepare for land-based amphibious landing activities once ashore. • Request to include maps and diagrams of the proposed testing areas, including all staging areas and access routes, to ensure minimal impacts on sensitive species, essential habitats, and state and federally listed species of the marine environment. • Request to include a range of feasible alternatives. • Request to evaluate specific alternative locations in areas with lower biological species or habitat sensitivity compared with the preferred or existing locations. • Question about why the Navy cannot use other areas of the ocean to train and test. • Recommendation of a more robust alternatives analysis. • Recommendation to evaluate an additional action alternative that incorporates temporal and geographic mitigation protections.
Air Quality	• Request for the Navy to evaluate all potential air quality impacts that may result from the project, both short term and long term. • Request for the Navy to consider reactive organic compounds, nitrogen oxide emissions, and particulate matter from proposed sea range operations, as well as any potential stationary source emissions located in Ventura County Air Pollution Control District Channel Islands. • Request for the Navy to conduct a NEPA Air Quality Analysis, including a Clean Air Act General Conformity Analysis and evaluation of potential exposures to toxic air pollutant emissions, to assess potential impacts of air pollutant emissions from proposed activities. • Request for the Navy to quantify the direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions of the Proposed Action and alternatives, and how the Proposed Action would help meet or detract from achieving relevant climate action goals and commitments, including federal goals and international agreements. • Recommendation to apply the best available estimates of the social cost of greenhouse gases to the incremental metric tons of each individual type of greenhouse gas emissions to assess the significance of climate impacts. • Recommendation to refrain from comparing project emissions to global emissions to better characterize the extent of a Proposed Action's contributions to climate change. • Request to identify impacts of aviation emissions released at altitude and the impact of burning fossil fuels in the atmosphere versus burning the same fossil fuels at ground level.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Request for the Navy to follow Air Pollution Control Districting permitting requirements for applicable stationary engines and equipment. • Request for the Navy to clearly state in the Draft EIS/OEIS the amount of increase in stressors the Navy is proposing, and to evaluate the existing conditions, along with cumulative stressors, especially those from climate change.
Marine Mammals/Marine Species/Fishes	• Request for the Navy to use the most recent scientific research when analyzing impacts and behavioral responses on all marine mammals, marine species, fishes, sea turtles, invertebrates, and seabirds. • Request for information on how the Navy will assess potential impacts on marine species in the Draft EIS/OEIS. • Concerns that activities may kill, injure, disorient, or have long-lasting impacts on marine species and marine habitat. • Concerns about military underwater acoustical communication systems that may not be disclosed to the public and potential impacts on the environment. • Concerns about how the frequency of various military technologies may overlap with the communication and biosonar range of odontocetes and other species, including dolphins (including orcas), porpoises, melon-headed whales, pilot whales, beaked whales, grey whales, seals (including the critically endangered Hawaiian monk seal), and sea lions. • Concerns about military use of high kurtosis signals (a statistical parameter used to characterize a signal) versus low kurtosis signals and the behavioral impacts of those signals on marine species. • Request for the Navy to analyze the entire operational soundscape when assessing potential biological impacts, since many operating systems could be in use simultaneously. • Recommendation of early consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife if California Endangered Species Act-listed species may be taken. • Request to not only consider regulatory thresholds when evaluating technology noise profiles, but to also consider the “digital warfare soundscape.” • Question on whether ultrasonic anti-fouling technology would be used on military vessels, and if yes, a request for detailed analysis for potential impacts on marine species. • Concerns about the rise in vessel strikes and the increase in numbers of incidental takes allowed. • Request for information on comprehensive research on cetacean mass stranding deaths as a result of military activities. • Concerns about “lumping” marine species and areas between Hawaii and California. • Request to ensure migratory species and patterns are properly analyzed. • Concerns about the short- and long-term effects of sonar on all marine mammals. • Request to include information unique to the California region, such as green sea turtles, California grunion, and southern sea otters. • Request to refer to the Department’s California Natural Diversity Database for current information on California marine resources. • Recommendation that focused species-specific surveys be conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when species are active or otherwise identifiable.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Recommendation to clarify that any sonar-related impacts on species in the Northern California Range Complex would be new impacts. • Recommendation to summarize the latest scientific information regarding impacts from mid-frequency active sonar on marine mammals, including a history of strandings and mortalities that coincided in space and time with the deployment of military sonar regardless of geographic area. • Recommendation to consult with local biologists, researchers, and organizations on marine species for most current information. • Recommendation to account for recent Biologically Important Areas in Hawaii and watch list, both in evaluating potential impacts and environmentally preferred alternatives. • Request for the Navy to address impacts on specific training and testing locales rather than "averaging" impacts over large ocean areas, and to avoid using terminology such as "localized effects." • Concerns that the methodology for previous impact analyses may be underrepresenting the number of whales and other marine mammals that could be injured or killed during Navy activities.
Marine Sanctuaries	• Request for the Navy to include the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument as a resource to be evaluated and analyzed in the EIS/OEIS. • Concerns about potential impacts on submerged maritime heritage resources, such as aircrafts, shipwrecks, and archaeological sites, within the waters of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. • Request for the Navy to evaluate marine sanctuaries within the Hawaii Operating Area and California Operating Area as traditional cultural properties.
Habitats/Coral Reefs	• Concerns about how military activities may disrupt sensitive ecosystems along the California coastline. • Concerns about coral reefs from the effects of active sonar, explosives, or other sources of underwater sound. • Concerns about coral reefs affected by electrical currents discharged from Navy ships and submarines. • Concerns about Oahu shorelines and sand erosion due to the dying of coral reefs. • Request for the military to properly analyze the impacts on coral reef ecosystems from Navy ships and submarines. • Request for the Navy to conduct Essential Fish Habitat consultation. • Recommendation to clearly present the footprint, timing, and frequency of military activities that occur in waters shallower than 400 meters, which are essential fish habitat for bottomfish management unit species. • Concern about military activities conducted near Penguin Bank and other habitat areas of particular concern. • Request for the Navy to include a detailed discussion of what activities are proposed in Marine Protected Areas and how the Marine Life Protection Act would be considered. • Recommendation to map and analyze potential impacts on deep-sea coral and sponge habitats off Southern California. • Recommendation to avoid deep-sea coral and sponge habitats during underwater detonations, mine neutralization, and other activities that could impact the living sea floor.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Public Health and Safety	• Concerns about potential impacts from military training and testing activities on Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act sites; hazardous substance sites; and military munitions response sites located within the Study Area. • Request for avoidance of these sites; however, if these sites are disturbed or hazardous substance spills occur, request that proper notification and response actions are taken, including notification to the State of Hawaii Department of Health and other appropriate state and federal agencies. • Concerns about the proper disposal of hazardous wastes, including the need for reporting to the Ventura County Certified Unified Program Agency, to minimize potential environmental impacts.
Noise	• Concerns about noise impacts on people and local communities. • Concerns about noise impacts on marine mammals, fishes, and seabirds in the Study Area, including the expanded airspace. • Concerns about noise impacts on submerged marine species, such as marine mammals and fishes. • Concerns about noise impacts on a largely “dormant” Northern California Range Complex. • Recommendation to assess noise impacts along expected flight paths and corridors, including from aircraft, surface vessels, and the new amphibious landing areas. • Request to assess noise impacts on children’s schools and learning. • Request to ensure the results of noise analyses are presented in the Draft EIS/OEIS in an understandable manner.
Cultural Resources/ National Historic Preservation Section (NHPA) 106 Process	• Request to engage in early consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA. • Concerns that the Study Area is within the Traditional Use Area of the Luiseño people. • Concerns about potential impacts on historic properties. • Request for tribal consultation to provide input on the technical studies in the EIS/OEIS. • Request for the Navy to consult with Native Hawaiians and homestead communities to better understand traditional and customary practices that take place at sea and how best to mitigate potential effects on the constitutionally protected rights of Native Hawaiians. • Request for the Navy to conduct an archaeological literature review of the Hawaiian Islands to better understand any possible impacts on historic properties. • Concerns about the Study Area, including the expanded areas in Southern California, containing known, and as-yet undiscovered or documented, historic resources, and the impact military activities may have on those resources. • Request that the Navy develop goals, policies, and programs for the treatment of historic and cultural resources within the Study Area and evaluate the historical significance of sites that contain objects that are 50 years of age or older. • Request for the Navy to consult with the Kanaka Maoli of Hawaii, the 'Iipai-Tiipai Kumeyaay of San Diego County, the Payomkawichum of the Southern California coast, and the Ventureño Chumash and North Coast Chumash. • Consider the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ recently developed Best Practices Guide for federal agencies regarding tribal and Native Hawaiian sacred sites.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Environmental Justice	• Recommendation to analyze impacts on subsistence fishers in all locations and to consider impacts on Native Hawaiian populations. • Recommendation to review the Administrations' recently released Ocean Justice Strategy, which addresses environmental justice concerns related to the use of the ocean for economic, cultural, spiritual, and recreational purposes, and food security. • Recommendation to identify the approximate number of days per year that subsistence fishing would be affected for each subsistence fishing population. • Suggestion that the Navy utilize the information in the Environmental Protection Agency's environmental justice screening and mapping tool.
Mitigation Measures and Research	• Interest in what mitigation measures will be implemented to minimize impacts on sensitive ecosystems. • Interest in specific measures in place to protect marine life during training and testing activities. • Concerns about the effectiveness of the Navy's mitigation measures, including whether ship strikes occurring in 2021 and 2023 were a result of unsuccessful implementation of mitigation measures. • Request that the Navy consider mitigation that helps restore or enhance species and ecosystems, rather than just minimizing harm. • Request to research innovative mitigation measures. • Concerns about marine mammal observers determining behavioral impacts. • Request for the military to fund behavioral and metabolic observations of select marine mammals in the Study Area to determine how proposed activities would impact or disrupt normal marine mammal behaviors. • Request to consider baseline behavioral studies on coastal and pelagic odontocetes prior to conducting training and testing activities. • Request to consider remote sensing through drones for both aerial behavioral observations and serum sampling for more accurate data on marine mammal responses to military activities. • Request that activity-based mitigation zones be extended to the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument to protect marine species and cultural and environmental resources. • Concerns about not allowing independent marine observers on Navy vessels during activities. • Concerns about the effectiveness of Navy Lookouts because many species are deep divers. • Questions about the lack of transparency and species specificity on threshold monitoring. • Request to include mitigation measures for adverse impacts on sensitive marine plants, animals, habitats, and ecosystems. • Request for the Navy to be a leader in protection of marine ecosystems of Hawaii. • Request for the Navy to provide funding to the Vessel Speed Reduction Program for Protecting Blue Whales and Blues Skies, as an air pollution mitigation measure. • Concerns about mitigation effectiveness in weather conditions with poor visibility and for marine mammals with a low probability of visual observation (e.g., beaked whales).

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Consider time and area restrictions to protect marine mammals from noise and disturbance.

Cumulative Impacts	• Request that the Navy include in the cumulative impact analysis:
	  ○ Assessment of impacts on deep sea mining.
	  ○ Take of marine mammals by foreign vessels conducting military training.
	  ○ Impacts on Native Hawaiian cultural resources and NHPA Section 106 consultation.
	  ○ Discussion on marine debris and unexploded ordnance removal.
	  ○ Impacts on fishing fleets.
	  ○ Impacts on the aquarium trade.
	  ○ Impacts on sacred places.
	• Request to identify where quantitative data is used versus qualitative data.
	• Request to identify ways that quantitative data can be obtained through additional research.
	• Request to include cumulative stressors on all ocean resources.
	• Recommendation that each resource section conclude with a cumulative effects section instead of a separate cumulative impacts section.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process	• Concerns about the NEPA process and the timing of the release of project information over the holiday season. • Concerns about how the Draft EIS/OEIS will be released without direct editing capabilities for interested commenters. • Appreciation of a 45-day comment period compared to the typical 30-day comment period, especially with the comment period overlapping numerous holidays. • Request that the Navy consult with the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Aquatic Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other agencies regulating coasts, waterways, and ports. • Concerns that information on the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was not provided on the project website and virtual open house presentation. • Request to include various scientific literature in the Draft EIS/OEIS. • Confusion on whether the Draft EIS/OEIS was released for public review. • Concerns about the online comment form website functionality. • Concerns that the public information materials, including the virtual open house presentation, were vague and not informative for comment facilitation. • Concerns that no public meetings or briefings were offered to the public. • Request that the public have ample time to review the Draft EIS/OEIS because scoping information was too general. • Recommendation that the Navy consider a 60-day comment period for the EIS/OEIS. • Recommendation of a minimum 30-day notice prior to any public meetings. • Recommendation of public engagement meetings or consultations to allow speakers 5–10 minutes each to speak on topics. • Suggestions to include the Council on Environmental Quality's recent guidance on Indigenous Knowledge.
Other Regulations and Laws	• Request that the Navy comply with the State of Hawaii Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) requirements managed under the Environmental Review Program (ERP) and adhere to all HEPA and ERP requirements per Hawaii Administrative Rule Chapter

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	11-200 (administered by the Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development). • Request to include the California Coastal National Monument Corridor as an interested party or cooperating agency to the EIS/OEIS in compliance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Navy and the Bureau of Land Management. • Concerns that military activities would have reasonably foreseeable coastal effects, requiring a Coastal Zone Management Act federal consistency determination submitted for review. Environmental issues of concern include biological resources (including marine mammals and threatened and endangered species), sediments and water quality, air quality, noise, cultural resources, socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety. • Request for compliance with applicable state and local regulations to reduce potential project-specific impacts and cumulative impacts. • Concerns about how the Clean Water Act Section 404 applies to the project and its expected permitting strategy.
Other	• Request to demilitarize the Hawaiian Islands, returning the land to the people of Hawaii with no trace of previous military activities. • Concerns about how the military is perceived to treat the Hawaiian Islands. • Concerns about the U.S. military and destruction caused to other countries. • Request to include updates on Navy-funded efforts since the 2018 Final HSTT EIS/OEIS. • Concerns about low-flying aircraft flying over Hawaii's national parks. • Recommendation to consider monitoring results as best available science.

Notes: EIS = Environmental Impact Statement, ERP = Environmental Review Program, HEPA = Hawaii Environmental Policy Act, HSTT = Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing, OEIS = Overseas Environmental Impact Statement, U.S. = United States

L.3 Notification of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement, Public Review and Comment Period, and Public Meetings

The Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period began with the issuance of the Notice of Availability (NOA) and Notice of Public Meetings (NOPM) in the *Federal Register*. The public was invited to review the Draft EIS/OEIS and provide substantive comments on the Proposed Action and the environmental analysis, as well as the project's potential to affect historic properties as it relates to Section 106 of the NHPA. Comments were accepted by mail, through the EIS/OEIS website at www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/, and at the in-person public meetings.

L.3.1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement and Public Meeting Notifications

The military services prepared materials to notify the public of the availability of the Draft EIS/OEIS and public meetings (in-person and virtual) and provide project information and public involvement opportunities. The notifications provided a description of the project, which may have included information about the Study Area, Proposed Action, its purpose and need, resources analyzed in the Draft EIS/OEIS, project website address, public commenting, virtual open house, in-person and virtual

public meetings, and consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA. The military services disseminated notices starting December 12, 2024. The following is a summary of those notices.

L.3.1.1 Notification Letters

The Navy mailed personalized tribal letters December 12, 2024, to 82 California federally recognized tribal chairpersons, tribal historic preservation officers, and other cultural resource tribal staff. The Navy mailed personalized stakeholder letters December 12, 2024, to 98 federal and Kauai elected officials, and mailed 1,312 generic letters to state and local elected officials; federal, state, and local agencies; non-federally recognized tribes and tribal groups; and NHOs. Entities that received a notification letter are listed in Table L-4. An example of the tribal and stakeholder letter is found in Figure L-5.

Table L-4: Entities that Received the Draft EIS/OEIS Notification Letter

California Federally Recognized Tribes, Non-Federally Recognized Tribes, and Tribal Groups	
Federally Recognized Tribes	**Non-Federally Recognized Tribes and Tribal Groups**
Barona Group of the Capitan Grande	Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria	Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
Cahto Tribe	Barbareño Band of Chumash Indians
Campo Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians
Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians	Chumash Council of Bakersfield
Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation
Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians	Costanoan Ohlone Rumsen-Mutsen Tribe
Ewiiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians	Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria	Esselen Tribe of Monterey County
Guidiville Rancheria of California	Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
Hopland Band of Pomo Indians	Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians Kizh Nation
Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel	Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
Inaja-Cosmit Band of Indians	Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
Jamul Indian Village	Gabrielino/Tongva Nation
Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria	Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe
La Jolla Band of Luiseno Mission Indians	Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
La Posta Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council
Lytton Rancheria	Juaneno Band of Mission Indians
Manchester Band of Pomo Indians of the Manchester Rancheria	Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation – Belardes
Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay Nation	Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation 84A
Mesa Grande Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	KaKoon Ta Ruk Band of Ohlone-Costanoan Indians of the Big Sur Rancheria
Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians	Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Mission Indians
Pala Band of Mission Indians	Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
Pauma Band of Luiseno Indians	Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area
Pechanga Band of Indians	Northern Chumash Tribal Council
Pinoleville Pomo Nation	Noyo River Indian Community
Potter Valley Tribe	Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation
Redwood Valley or Little River Band of Pomo Indians	Rumsen Ama Turataj Ohlone
Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians	Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties
Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians	San Fernando Band of Mission Indians
Round Valley Indian Tribes	
San Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission Indians	
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	

Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation Tule River Indian Tribe Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians	San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians Serrano Nation of Mission Indians The Ohlone Indian Tribe Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation Wuksachi Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band Xolon-Salinan Tribe yak tityu yak tiłhini – Northern Chumash Tribe Yokayo Tribe

Federal Agencies – National

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Council on Environmental Quality
Federal Communications Commission
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Federal Maritime Commission
General Services Administration
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementation, NEPA Advisory Group

International Boundary and Water Commission
Marine Mammal Commission
National Science Foundation
Ocean Policy Committee
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Army National Guard
U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

U.S. Department of Commerce
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries
  - Environmental Observation and Prediction
    - National Marine Protected Areas Center
  - National Ocean Service
    - Office for Coastal Management
    - National Marine Sanctuaries
  - Office of Habitat Conservation
  - Office of Protected Resources
    - Endangered Species Act Interagency Cooperation Division
    - Endangered Species Conservation
    - Permits and Conservation
  - Office of Regulatory Programs

U.S. Department of Energy
- NEPA Policy and Compliance (GC-54)
- Office of Environment, Health, Safety & Security

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Federal Emergency Management Agency District 9
- U.S. Coast Guard
  - Office of Environmental Management (CG-47)
  - Office of Operating and Environmental Standards (CG-OES-3)

U.S. Department of Justice
- Environment and Natural Resources Division

U.S. Department of the Interior

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
  - Public Affairs
- Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
  - Office of Offshore Regulatory Programs
- Environmental Policy & Compliance
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey
- U.S. National Park Service

U.S. Department of Transportation
- Federal Aviation Administration
  - Airport Planning and Environmental Division (APP-400)
  - Office of Policy, International Affairs, Environment and Energy
- Maritime Administration

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- NEPA Compliance Division
- Office of Federal Activities

Hawaii Federal Elected Officials and Federal Agencies

U.S. House of Representatives (Districts 1, 2)
U.S. Senators
Federal Aviation Administration
- Honolulu Airport District Office

NOAA Fisheries
- Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary
- Honolulu Service Center
- Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
- Pacific Islands Regional Office
  - Protected Resources Division, Kaua‘i
- Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

U.S. Coast Guard
- District 14

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge
- Kakahai‘a National Wildlife Refuge
- Kauai National Wildlife Refuge Complex
- Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge
- Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
- Pacific Region

U.S. Geological Survey
- Pacific Islands Water Science Center

Hawaii State Elected Officials and State Agencies

Office of the Governor
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
State Senators (all districts)
State Representatives (all districts)
House Committee on Corrections
- Military & Veterans

House Committee on Water and Land
Senate Committee on Water and Land
Department of Hawaiian Home Lands

Deputy to the Chairman
Office of the Chairman
Department of Health
Environmental Health Administration
Environmental Management Division
Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response Office
Office of Environmental Quality Control
Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Aquatic Resources
Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Division of State Parks
Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands
State Historic Preservation Division
Department of Transportation
Airports Division
Harbors Division
Department of Agriculture
Office of the Chairperson
Department of Defense
Hawaii Army National Guard
Office of the Adjutant General
Land Use Commission, Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism
Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
Western-Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
Hawaii Local Elected Officials and Local Agencies
City and County of Honolulu
City Council (all districts)
Mayor's Office
Department of Design and Construction
Environmental Services Department
Office of the Managing Director
Parks and Recreation Department
Planning and Permitting Department
Neighborhood Commission Office
County of Hawaii
County Council
Mayor's Office
Department of Research & Development
Planning Department
County of Kauai
County Council
Mayor's Office
Planning Department
Police Department
County of Maui
County Council
Mayor's Office
Department of Environmental Management
Department of Planning
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve

Native Hawaiian Organizations
ʻAha Kāne
ʻAhahui Siwila Hawaiʻi O Kapōlei (Kapolei Hawaiian Civic Club)
Aha Kukaniloko Koa Mana mea ola kanaka mauli
Aha Mālama, Corp.
Aha Moku O Kahikinui
Aha Moku o Kaupo
Aha Moku o Maui Inc.
Aha Wahine
Ahahui Kiwila Hawaiʻi O Moʻikeha
Ahahui Siwila Hawaiʻi O Kapolei
Ahonui Homestead Association
Ahupuaʻa o Molokaʻi
Ahupuaʻa O Nānākuli Homestead
ʻAi Noa Foundation
Āina Momona
Ala Kahakai Trail Association
Alakaʻina Foundation Inc.
Alepa Hou Foundation
Aliʻi Pauahi Hawaiian Civic Club
Aloha First
Aloha in Action
ʻAoʻao O Nā Loko Iʻa O Maui
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Association of Hawaiians for Homestead Lands
Au Puni O Hawaiʻi
Brian Kaniela Naeʻole Naauao
Captain Kimo's Hawaiian Adventures
Charles Pelenui Mahi Ohana
Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement
E Ola Kākou Hawaiʻi
EAO Hawaiʻi Inc.
Elizabeth Kahanu Hawaiian Civic Club
Ewa-Puʻuloa Hawaiian Civic Club
Flores-Case ʻOhana
Friends of ʻIolani Palace
George K. Cypher ʻOhana
God's Country Waimanalo
Hanalei Hawaiian Civic Club
Hanalei River Heritage Foundation
Hanona
Hauʻouiwi Homestead Association on Lānaʻi
Hawaiʻi Moku o Keawe
Hawaiʻi Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs | Moku o Keawe
Hawaiʻi Island Burial Council
Hawaiʻi State Aha Moku
Hawaiian Civic Club of Hilo
Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu
Hawaiian Civic Club of Kaʻū
Hawaiian Civic Club of Laupahoehoe
Hawaiian Civic Club of Wahiawa
Hawaiian Civic Club of Waimānalo

Hawaiian Islands Burial Council, Kauaʻi
Hawaiian Islands Burial Council, Maui
Hawaiian Islands Burial Council, Oʻahu
Hawaiian Kingdom Task Force
Ho Ohana
Hoʻokano Family Land Trust
Ho'opae Pono Peace Project
Hoʻōla Lāhui Hawaiʻi
Hui Aloha Kīholo
Hui Hoʻoleimaluō
Hui Huliau Inc.
Hui Iwi Kuamoʻo
Hui Kaleleiki Ohana
Hui Mālama Ola Nā ʻŌiwi
Hui No Ke Ola Pono
Hui o Kuapā
Hui O Waʻa Kaulua
Hui ʻOhana O Hōnaunau
Hulu Mamo Hawaiian Civic Club
Imua Hawaiʻi
Independent District of Puna
Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture
KAʻEHU
Kahoʻolawe – Moku O Kanaloa
Kāhuli Leo Leʻa
Kai Palaoa and Mauna Kea Anaina Hou
Kailua Hawaiian Civic Club
Kākoʻo ʻŌiwi
Kalaeloa Heritage and Legacy Foundation
Kalamaʻula Homesteaders Association
Kalihi Palama Hawaiian Civic Club
Kamealoha
Kamehameha Schools
Kamiloloa One Aliʻi Homestead Association
Kanaka Economic Development Alliance
Kānehūnāmoku Voyaging Academy
Kanu o ka ʻĀina Learning ʻOhana
Kapolei Community Development Corporation
Kapolei Hawaiian Civic Club
Kauaʻi – Mano O Kalanipo
Kauaʻi Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Kauaʻi Sea Farm
Kauhakō Ohana Association
Kaʻuikiokapō
Kauluakalana
Kaumualiʻi Hawaiian Civic Club
Kaunalewa
Kawaihapai Ohana
Kawaileo Law, LLC
Ke Kula Nui O Waimānalo
Ke One O Kakuhihewa, Oʻahu Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Keaukaha Community Association
Keoni Kealoha Alvarez

Kiaʻi Kanaloa
Kimokeo Foundation
King Kamehameha Hawaiian Civic Club
Kingdom of Hawaiʻi
Kipuka Olowalu
Koʻolau Foundation
Koʻolauloa Hawaiian Civic Club
Koʻolaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club
Koa Ike
Kohala Hawaiian Civic Club
Kona Hawaiian Civic Club
Kuaʻāina Ulu ʻAuamo
Kuakini Hawaiian Civic Club of Kona
Kula no na Poʻe Hawaiʻi
Kululoiʻa Lineage - I ke Kai ʻo Kululoiʻa
Kupeke Ahupuaʻa
LaʻiʻŌpua 2020
Lāhaina Hawaiian Civic Club
Lahui Kakaʻikahi
Laʻiʻōpua Community Development Corporation
Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club
Maʻa ʻOhana c/o Lani Maʻa Lapilio
Machado-Akana-Aona-Namakaeha Ohana
Mahamoku Ohana Council
Mahu Ohana
Makaha Hawaiian Civic Club
Makuʻu Farmers Association
Malama Anahola
Mālama Hulēʻia
Mālama Kaʻu Foundation
Mālama Loko Ea Foundation
Maluʻōhai Residents Association
Marae Haʻa Koa
Maui – Nā Hono Aʻo Piʻilani
Maui Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs | Nā Hono Aʻo Piʻilani
Mauna Kea Anaina Hou
Maunalua Hawaiian Civic Club
Meje, Inc.
Meleana Kawaiaea, LLC
Menehune Foundation
Na Aikane O Maui
Na Koa Ikaika Ka Lahui Hawaiʻi
Na Kuʻauhau ʻo Kahiwakaneikopolei
Nā Kuleana o Kānaka ʻŌiwi
Na Kupuna Moku O Keawe
Na Mookupuna O Wailua
Na Ohana o Puaoi a me Hanawahine
Nā Puʻuwai
Nakupuna Foundation
Nānāikapono Hawaiian Civic Club
Nanakuli Housing Corporation
Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce
Native Hawaiian Church

Native Hawaiian Community Development Corporation
Native Hawaiian Education Council
Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association
Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation
Native Tenant Protection Council Mahi-hani
Nekaifes Ohana
Niʻihau – Niʻihau O Kahele Lani
Nohopapa Hawaiʻi, LLC
ʻOhana Keaweamahi
ʻO Makuʻu Ke Kahua Community Center
Oʻahu – Moku O Kakuhihewa
Oʻahu Canoe Racing Association
Oʻahu Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Ohana Keohokālole
ʻOhana Lo
Order of Kamehameha I
PAʻI Foundation
Pacific Agricultural Land Management Systems
Pacific Justice & Reconciliation Center
Panaewa Hawaiian Home Lands Community Association
Papa Ola Lokahi
Papakōlea Community Development Corporation
Partners in Development Foundation
Paukukalo Hawaiian Homes Community Association
Peahi Ohana
Pearl Harbor Hawaiian Civic Club
Pele Defense Fund
Piihonua Hawaiian Homestead Community Association
Pōhaku Pelemaka
Polynesian Voyaging Society
Prince Kūhiō Hawaiian Civic Club
Protect Kahoolawe 'Ohana
Protect Keopuka Ohana
Puʻuhonua o Wailupe
Queen Deborah Kapule Hawaiian Civic Club
Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club
Queen Julia Kapiʻolani Hawaiian Civic Club
Royal Hawaiian Academy of Traditional Arts
Sovereign Councils of the Hawaiian Homestead Associations
The Friends of Hokuleʻa and Hawaiʻiloa
The I Mua Group
The Makua Group
Wahiawa Ahupuaa LCA 7714B Apana 6 RP 7813
Wai Koa Kauaʻi
Waiʻanae Hawaiian Civic Club
Waialua Hawaiian Civic Club
Waiehu Kou Phase 3 Association
Waimānalo Hawaiian Homes Association
Waimānalo Health Center
Waimea Hawaiian Civic Club
Waimea Hawaiian Homesteaders' Association, Inc.

California Federal Elected Officials and Federal Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives (Districts 2, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52)
U.S. Senators
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Southern California Agency
Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Pacific Outer Continental Shelf Region
Public Affairs
Pacific Region
Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
Pacific Region Office
Federal Aviation Administration
Los Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center
Office of the Director, Western-Pacific Region, AWP-600
Regional Administrator, Western-Pacific Region
San Francisco Air Route Traffic Control Center
NOAA Fisheries
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
California Coastal Area Office
Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuaries, University of California at Santa Barbara
Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary
Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary
Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Oregon-Washington Coastal Office
Pacific Remote Islands National Marine Sanctuary
West Coast Region, Protected Resources Division
Southwest Fisheries Science Center
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Region IX
Pacific Fishery Management Council
U.S. Army Corps of Engineer
Los Angeles District
U.S. Coast Guard
District 11
Sector San Diego
Channel Islands Harbor
Los Angeles – Long Beach
Santa Barbara
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9
Natural Resources, Water, Aquaculture
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Carlsbad Office
Pacific Region
Sacramento Office
San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge
Ventura Office
U.S. Forest Service
Los Padres National Forest Headquarters

Pacific Southwest Region
U.S. Geological Survey
California Water Science Center
Northwest-Pacific Island Regional Director's Office
Pacific Coastal and Marine Science Center
Southwest Region
Western Ecological Research Center
Western Fisheries Research Center
Western Geographic Science Center
U.S. National Park Service
Channel Islands National Park
Pacific West Regional Office
Preservation Partnerships and History Program
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
California State Elected Officials and State Agencies
Office of the Governor
State Assembly Members (Districts 2, 12, 30, 37, 38, 42, 44, 54, 55, 61, 66, 69, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79)
State Senators (Districts 2, 13, 17, 21, 24, 27, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39)
Attorney General's Office
California Air Resources Board
Enforcement Division
Office of Community Air Protection
California Bureau of Land Management
California Coastal National Monument
California Coastal Commission
Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency Division
South Central Coast District
California Department of Conservation
Geologic Energy Management Northern District
California Department of Education
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Air Services Unit
Habitat Conservation Planning Branch
Marine Region
Habitat Conservation Program
South Coast Region
Wildlife Branch
California Department of Industrial Relations
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Division of Boating and Waterways
Office of Historic Preservation
California Department of Public Health
California Department of Toxic Substances Control
California Department of Transportation
California Department of Veterans Affairs
California Department of Water Resources
California Energy Commission
California Environmental Protection Agency
Air Resources Board
California Fish and Game Commission
California Natural Resources Agency
Department of Conservation

Ocean Protection Council
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Coast Region
Los Angeles Region
California Sea Grant
California State Coastal Conservancy
California State Lands Commission
California State Parks
Silver Strand State Beach
California Wildlife Conservation Board
Emergency Management Agency
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
California State Clearinghouse
Military Council
Native American Heritage Commission
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Quality
Division of Water Rights
California Local Elected Officials and Local Agencies
California American Water
Corporate Headquarters
Monterey County District
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Los Angeles Region
North Coast Region
San Diego Region
California Water Service
Salinas District
City of Avalon
City Council
Mayor
Harbor Department
City of Camarillo
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
Planning Division
City of Capitola
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
City of Carmel-by-the Sea
City Council
Mayor
City of Chula Vista
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
Mayor
City of Coronado
City Council
Mayor

City of Dana Point
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Del Rey Oaks
- City Council
- Mayor

City of Fort Bragg
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Huntington Beach
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Imperial Beach
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Mayor
- Planning Department

City of Laguna Beach
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Long Beach
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- Mayor

City of Los Angeles
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)
- Mayor

City of Malibu
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Marina
- City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Mayor

City of Monterey
- City Council (At-Large, Districts 1, 2)
- Mayor
- Fire Department
- Police Department

City of Morro Bay
- City Council
- Mayor

City of National City
- City Council
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Newport Beach
- City Council (District 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Mayor
- Vice Mayor

City of Oceanside

City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4)
Mayor
City of Oxnard
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
Mayor
Planning Division
Police Department
City of Pacific Grove
City Council
Mayor
City of Port Hueneme
City Council
Mayor
Mayor Pro Tem
Planning & Zoning Division
City of Salinas
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
Mayor
City of San Diego
City Council (District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
Mayor
Environmental Services Department
Planning Department
City of San Luis Obispo
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
City of Sand City
City Council
Mayor
City of Santa Barbara
City Council (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
Mayor
City of Sausalito
City Council
Mayor
Vice Mayor
City of Seaside
City Council
Mayor
City of Ventura
City Council
Deputy Mayor
Mayor
Convention & Visitor Bureau of Oxnard
Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency
Gualala Municipal Advisory Council
Local Agency Formation Commission
Los Angeles County
Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
Marin County
Board of Supervisors (District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
Parks

- Public Works
- Mendocino County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
  - Parks
  - Planning and Building Services
- Monterey County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
  - Parks Department
  - Planning Services
  - Water Resources Agency
- Monterey Peninsula Regional Airport
- Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
- Monterey Peninsula Water Management District
- Orange County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Oxnard Visitors Bureau
- Pacific Grove Unified
- Peninsula Community Planning Board
- Port of Benicia
- Port of Hueneme
- Port of Long Beach
  - Environmental Planning Division
- Port of Los Angeles
- Port of San Diego
- San Diego County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
  - Department of Planning & Development Services
  - San Diego Air Pollution Control District
- San Diego Harbor Police
- San Luis Obispo County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
  - Environmental Health Services
  - Parks and Recreation Department
  - Planning and Building
- Santa Barbara County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
  - Planning and Development, Development Review Division
  - Air Pollution Control Board, Tech and EA Division
  - Association of Governments, Planning Division
  - Parks Administration
  - Public Health Department
- Santa Barbara Waterfront Department
- Santa Cruz County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Sonoma County
  - Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
  - Regional Parks
- Sonoma Public Infrastructure
- Sonoma Water
- South Coast Air Quality Management District
  - Planning, Rule Development, and Implementation Department
- Southern California Association of Governments
- Ventura Council of Governments

Ventura County
- Board of Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Air Pollution Control District
  - Planning and Evaluation Division
- Cultural Heritage Board
- Harbor Department
- Public Health Services
- Public Works Agency
  - Watershed Protection District
- Resource Management Agency
  - Planning Division

Ventura Visitors and Convention Bureau
Ventura Water

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
250 MAKALAPA DRIVE
PEARL HARBOR HI 96860-3131

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5090
Ser N46/0810
November 20, 2024

The Honorable Josh Green
Governor
Office of the Governor State of Hawai'i
Executive Chambers State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Governor Green:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILTY OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR HAWAII-CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Department of the Navy (Navy) (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), as the lead agency, jointly with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, has prepared the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS). The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of the potential environmental effects associated with conducting at-sea training and testing activities, and modernization and sustainment of ranges (collectively referred to as "military readiness activities") within the HCTT Study Area. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to conduct military readiness activities in the HCTT Study Area to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel, needed to meet their respective national defense missions. Visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** to learn more about the Draft EIS/OEIS and public meetings, and to submit comments electronically.

The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of military readiness activities using new information, including an updated acoustic analysis, updated marine mammal density data, and evolving and emergent best available science. Proposed military readiness activities are similar to those analyzed in the 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) EIS/OEIS and the 2022 Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR) EIS/OEIS and are consistent with activities conducted off Hawaii and California for more than 80 years. Training and testing activities that include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of underwater sound would employ mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse effects on marine species. Range modernization and sustainment activities include new special use airspace in Southern California, installation and maintenance of underwater ranges in Southern California and Hawaii, deployment of seafloor cables and connected instrumentation south and west of San Clemente Island in California and northeast of Oahu and west of Kauai in Hawaii, installation and maintenance of mine warfare and other training areas offshore of Hawaii and Southern California, and installation and maintenance of underwater platforms in Hawaii and Southern California.

Figure L-5: Notice of Availability Notification Letter

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The HCTT Study Area consists primarily of the Hawaii Study Area, the California Study Area, and the transit corridor connecting the two. The HCTT Study Area includes the at-sea components of the range complexes (Hawaii Range Complex, Southern California [SOCAL] Range Complex, PMSR, Northern California [NOCAL] Range Complex), Navy and Coast Guard pierside locations and port transit channels, bays, harbors, inshore waterways, amphibious approach lanes, and civilian ports where training and testing activities occur. The HCTT Study Area differs from the 2018 HSTT Study Area in that HCTT includes an expanded SOCAL Range Complex; special use airspace (Proposed Warning Area [W]-293 and Proposed W-294) corresponding to the expanded SOCAL Range Complex; new testing sea space between Proposed W-293 and PMSR; two existing training and testing ranges, the PMSR and NOCAL Range Complex; areas along the Southern California coastline from approximately Dana Point to Port Hueneme; and four amphibious approach lanes providing land access from the NOCAL Range Complex and PMSR. While the overall boundaries of the Hawaii Study Area have not changed from the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS, nearshore areas, such as Kaneohe Bay or Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, are proposed to be used more frequently or for new training or testing activities, such as mine warfare training.

The military services are seeking the issuance of regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the Endangered Species Act to support at-sea military readiness activities within the HCTT Study Area, beginning in December 2025. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS/OEIS. In the rule-making process, NMFS will consider the potential effects of the Proposed Action on the marine environment. The EIS/OEIS will support NMFS' rule-making process to issue MMPA authorizations.

The military services analyzed the potential environmental effects of a No Action Alternative and two action alternatives:

a. Under the No Action Alternative, no military readiness activities would be conducted. This alternative does not meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action and MMPA permits would not be reissued by NMFS.

b. Under Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative and Environmentally Preferable Action Alternative), training, testing, and range modernization and sustainment activities would be conducted into the reasonably foreseeable future. This alternative reflects a representative level of annual activities to account for natural fluctuations in training and testing schedules.

c. Alternative 2 includes training, testing, and range modernization and sustainment activities, but assumes a maximum number of activities occurring in a given year and assumes that the maximum level of activity would occur every year over any seven-year period.

Potential effects on environmental resources resulting from activities included in the No Action Alternative and the two action alternatives were evaluated in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Resources evaluated include biological (including marine mammals, reptiles, fishes, vegetation, invertebrates, habitats, birds, and other protected species), sediments and water quality, air quality, cultural, socioeconomics and environmental justice, and public health and safety. The

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Figure L-5: Notice of Availability Notification Letter (continued)

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analysis includes the marine environment around San Nicolas Island in Southern California and Pacific Missile Range Facility in Hawaii where marine mammals (e.g., California sea lion, harbor seal, northern elephant seal, Hawaiian monk seal) haul out on the shoreline. Noise from missile and target launches and artillery firing from these two locations are analyzed in the Draft EIS/OEIS to estimate potential effects on hauled out pinnipeds. The Draft EIS/OEIS also includes an analysis of measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects potentially resulting from military readiness activities.

The public is invited to review the Draft EIS/OEIS and provide substantive comments on the Proposed Action and the environmental analysis, as well as the project's potential to affect historic properties as it relates to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

In support of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, the Navy is holding three in-person public meetings in California and Hawaii. In-person public meetings will consist of an open-house information session, a short presentation by the Navy, and a public oral comment session. Comments will also be accepted in writing at the in-person public meetings. Navy representatives will be available during the open-house information sessions to answer questions and clarify information related to the Draft EIS/OEIS. All open house public meetings will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. (local time). The presentation will begin at approximately 5 p.m., followed by the public oral comment session.

a. **Monday, January 13, 2025:** Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego, CA 92106

b. **Wednesday, January 15, 2025:** Ke'ehi Lagoon Memorial Weinberg Hall, 2685 N. Nimitz Highway, Honolulu, HI 96819

c. **Thursday, January 16, 2025:** Kauai Veterans Center, 3215 Kauai Veterans Memorial Highway, Lihue, HI 96766

The Navy is also holding a virtual public meeting, which will consist of a presentation and question-and-answer session. Questions concerning the Draft EIS/OEIS will be accepted in advance through **January 15, 2025**, via the question form on the project website. Questions may also be submitted in writing during the virtual public meeting. Please note that questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session are not official public comments. Visit **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** to learn more about and attend the virtual public meeting. An audio-only option will also be available.

a. **Wednesday, January 22, 2025:** 3 to 4 p.m. HST/5 to 6 p.m. PST/8 to 9 p.m. EST

If you are unable to attend the in-person meetings, a virtual open house presentation is also available on the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period from December 13, 2024, to February 11, 2025. The presentation provides information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, potential effects on environmental resource areas from the Proposed Action, the NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, and public involvement opportunities. The public can view the virtual open

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Figure L-5: Notice of Availability Notification Letter (continued)

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house presentation at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** anytime during the public review and comment period.

In an effort to improve and strengthen the EIS/OEIS, the military services welcome and appreciate the public's participation during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. Comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. HST on **February 11, 2025**, for consideration in the Final EIS/OEIS. Comments may be submitted at one of the in-person public meetings, electronically via the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/**, or via mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

The Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period also supports consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations, as members of the public are invited to participate, provide comments, or raise concerns about potential effects on historic properties. Comments will be considered under NEPA and pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA.

Visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** to learn more about the project, NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, and in-person and virtual public meetings; download an electronic version of the Draft EIS/OEIS; view the virtual open house presentation; and submit questions for the virtual public meeting and/or public comments on the environmental analysis. The website also includes locations where you can view a printed copy of the Draft EIS/OEIS. You may contact Ms. Heather Paynter, U.S. Pacific Fleet Command Environmental Public Affairs Specialist, 808-474-8441, CPF-Environmental-PA@us.navy.mil, if you have questions or would like to schedule a briefing.

Please help the military services inform the community about the availability of the Draft EIS/OEIS and upcoming public meetings by sharing this information with your staff and interested individuals.

Sincerely,

J. H. BEATTIE
Captain, U.S. Navy
Deputy Fleet Civil Engineer
By direction

ID# EISX-007-17-USN-1724283453

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Figure L-5: Notice of Availability Notification Letter (continued)

L.3.1.2 Postcard

The military services mailed a postcard December 12, 2024, to 579 postcards nongovernmental organizations, community and business groups, research institutes, universities, fishing, and aviation and recreation groups. The postcard mailer is shown in Figure L-6.

L.3.1.3 Newspaper Advertisements

Display advertisements were published in 10 newspapers as shown in Table L-5. An example advertisement is shown in Figure L-7.

Table L-5: Notice of Availability Newspaper Advertisements

Oahu, Hawaii *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* Friday, December 13, 2024 Friday, January 10, 2025 Sunday, January 12, 2025 Monday, January 13, 2025	**Hawaiian Islands** *Ka Wai Ola News* Wednesday, January 1, 2025	**Ventura, California** *Ventura County Star* Friday, December 13, 2024 Friday, January 10, 2025 Sunday, January 12, 2025 Monday, January 13, 2025
Big Hawaii, Hawaii *Hawaii Tribune-Herald* Friday, December 13, 2024 Friday, January 10, 2025 Sunday, January 12, 2025 Monday, January 13, 2025	**Kauai, Hawaii** *The Garden Island* Friday, December 13, 2024 Friday, January 10, 2025 Saturday, January 11, 2025 Monday, January 13, 2025	**Los Angeles, California** *Los Angeles Times* Friday, December 13, 2024 Friday, January 10, 2025 Saturday, January 11, 2025 Sunday, January 12, 2025
Maui, Hawaii *The Maui News* Thursday, December 19, 2024 Thursday January 9, 2025 Thursday, January 16, 2025	**San Diego, California** *The San Diego Union-Tribune* Friday, December 13, 2024 Friday, January 10, 2025 Saturday, January 11, 2025 Sunday, January 12, 2025	**Monterey, California** *The Monterey Herald* Friday, December 13, 2024 Friday, January 10, 2025 Saturday, January 11, 2025 Sunday, January 12, 2025
		San Luis Obispo, California *The Tribune* Sunday, December 15, 2024 Wednesday, January 8, 2025 Sunday, January 12, 2025

L.3.1.4 News Releases

Navy regional PAOs distributed news releases December 13, 2024, to local, regional, and national print and broadcast media. The PAOs redistributed the news releases January 7, 2025, or January 8, 2025. An example news release is shown in Figure L-8.

L.3.1.5 Social Media Posts

Navy regional PAOs posted information on their respective existing social media platforms on December 13, 2024, January 8, 2025, January 15, 2025, and/or January 16, 2025. An example social media post is shown in Figure L-9.

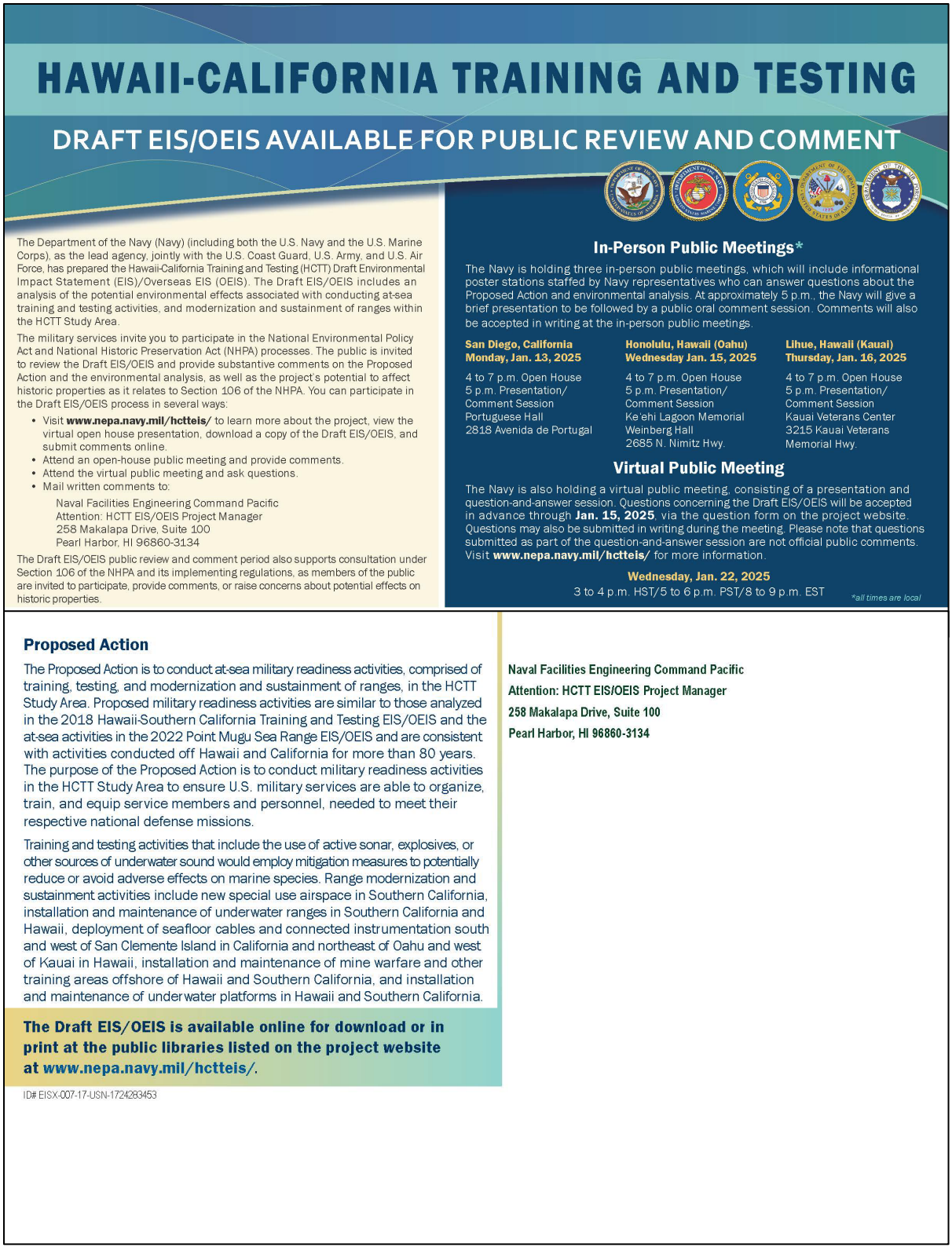

Figure L-6: Notice of Availability Postcard

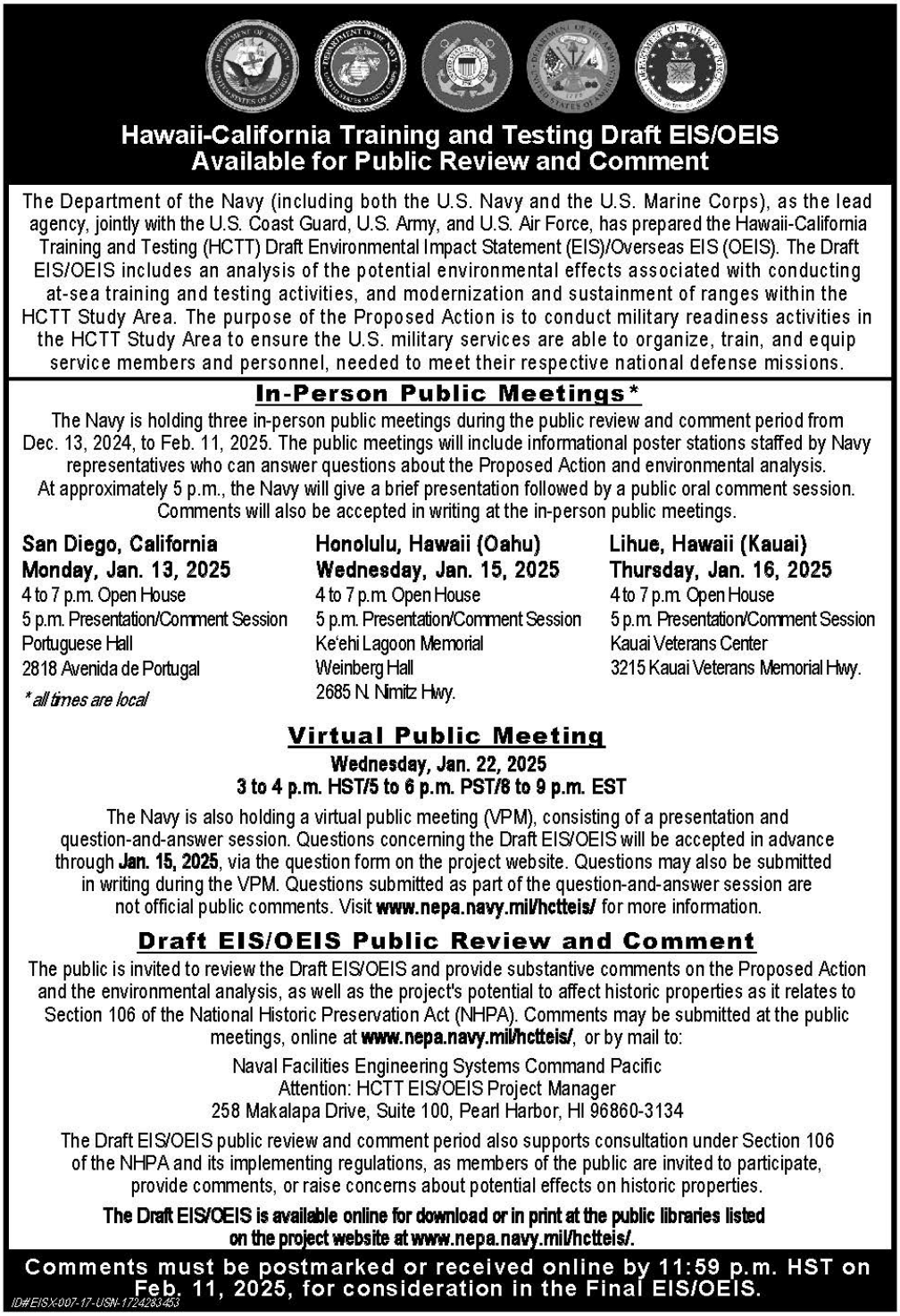

Figure L-7: Notice of Availability Newspaper Advertisement

COMMANDER, NAVY REGION HAWAII
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
850 TICONDEROGA STREET, SUITE 110
JBPHH, HAWAII 96860
PHONE: 808-473-2888 FAX: 808-473-2876
www.cnic.navy.mil/hawaii

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PA Cell: (808) 399-8329
Duty Cell: (808) 371-5189

December 13, 2024
Release # 24-10

U.S. NAVY ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF THE HAWAII-CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT; ANNOUNCES PUBLIC MEETINGS AND INVITES PUBLIC COMMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii – The Department of the Navy (Navy) (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), as the lead agency, jointly with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, has prepared the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS). The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of the potential environmental effects associated with conducting at-sea training and testing activities, and modernization and sustainment of ranges (collectively referred to as "military readiness activities") within the HCTT Study Area. In support of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in-person public meetings in California and Hawaii and a virtual public meeting will be held in January 2025 to provide an overview of the Draft EIS/OEIS and answer questions from the public. Each meeting will also provide an opportunity to learn about how the military services are complying with the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and to comment on potential effects on historic properties. Visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** to learn more about the Draft EIS/OEIS and public meetings, and to submit comments electronically.

Additional Information

The public is invited to review the Draft EIS/OEIS and provide substantive comments on the Proposed Action and the environmental analysis, as well as the project's potential to affect historic properties as it relates to Section 106 of the NHPA.

The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of military readiness activities using new information, including an updated acoustic analysis, updated marine mammal density data, and evolving and emergent best available science. Proposed military readiness activities are similar to those analyzed in the 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) EIS/OEIS and the at-sea activities in the 2022 Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR) EIS/OEIS and are consistent with activities conducted off Hawaii and California for more than 80 years. Training and testing activities that include the use of active sonar, explosives, or other sources of underwater sound would employ mitigation measures to potentially reduce or avoid adverse effects on

Figure L-8: Notice of Availability News Release

marine species. Range modernization and sustainment activities include new special use airspace in Southern California, installation and maintenance of underwater ranges in Southern California and Hawaii, deployment of seafloor cables and connected instrumentation south and west of San Clemente Island in California and northeast of Oahu and west of Kauai in Hawaii, installation and maintenance of mine warfare and other training areas offshore of Hawaii and Southern California, and installation and maintenance of underwater platforms in Hawaii and Southern California.

The HCTT Study Area consists primarily of the Hawaii Study Area, the California Study Area, and the transit corridor connecting the two. The HCTT Study Area includes the at-sea components of the range complexes (Hawaii Range Complex, Southern California [SOCAL] Range Complex, PMSR, Northern California [NOCAL] Range Complex), Navy pierside locations and port transit channels, bays, harbors, inshore waterways, amphibious approach lanes, and civilian ports where training and testing activities occur.

The HCTT Study Area differs from the 2018 HSTT Study Area in that it includes:

- An expanded SOCAL Range Complex
- Special use airspace (Proposed Warning Area [W]-293 and Proposed W-294) corresponding to the expanded SOCAL Range Complex
- New testing sea space between Proposed W-293 and PMSR
- Two existing training and testing at-sea ranges, the PMSR and NOCAL Range Complex
- Areas along the Southern California coastline from approximately Dana Point to Port Hueneme
- Four amphibious approach lanes providing land access from the NOCAL Range Complex and PMSR

While the overall boundaries of the Hawaii Study Area have not changed from the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS, nearshore areas, such as Kaneohe Bay or Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, are proposed to be used more frequently or for new training or testing activities, such as mine warfare training. Maps of the HCTT Study Area are available on the project website.

Potential effects on environmental resources resulting from activities included in a No Action Alternative and two action alternatives were evaluated in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Resources evaluated include biological (including marine mammals, reptiles, fishes, vegetation, invertebrates, habitats, birds, and other protected species), sediments and water quality, air quality, cultural, socioeconomics and environmental justice, and public health and safety. The analysis includes the marine environment around San Nicolas Island in Southern California and Pacific Missile Range Facility in Hawaii where marine mammals (e.g., California sea lion, harbor seal, northern elephant seal, Hawaiian monk seal) haul out on the shoreline. Noise from missile and target launches and artillery firing from these two locations are analyzed in the Draft EIS/OEIS to estimate potential effects on hauled-out pinnipeds. The Draft EIS/OEIS also includes an analysis of measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects potentially resulting from military readiness activities.

The development of the EIS/OEIS will help the Navy and other U.S. military services meet their environmental compliance requirements, which would ensure military readiness by supporting current and future training and testing requirements; allowing training and testing over greater distances, as larger areas are needed to train and test with new weapons required for countering new threats; supporting increased training with unmanned systems; increasing flexibility in conducting training and testing activities; supporting modernizing and sustaining range capabilities; updating environmental analyses using the best available science and analytical methods; and supporting Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act consultations for the reissuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations within the HCTT Study Area. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS/OEIS. In the rule-making process, NMFS will consider the potential effects of the

Figure L-8: Notice of Availability News Release (continued)

Proposed Action on the marine environment.

Public Participation

In-Person Public Meetings*

In support of NEPA requirements, the Navy is holding three in-person public meetings in California and Hawaii. In-person public meetings will consist of an open-house information session, a short presentation by the Navy, and a public oral comment session. Comments will also be accepted in writing at the in-person public meetings. Navy representatives will be available during the open-house information sessions to answer questions and clarify information related to the Draft EIS/OEIS.

San Diego, California
Monday, Jan. 13, 2025
4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/
Comment Session
Portuguese Hall
2818 Avenida de Portugal

Honolulu, Hawaii (Oahu)
Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2025
4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/
Comment Session
Ke'ehi Lagoon Memorial
Weinberg Hall
2685 N. Nimitz Hwy.

Lihue, Hawaii (Kauai)
Thursday, Jan. 16, 2025
4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/
Comment Session
Kauai Veterans Center
3215 Kauai Veterans
Memorial Hwy.

**all times are local*

Virtual Public Meeting
Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2025
3 to 4 p.m. HST/5 to 6 p.m. PST/8 to 9 p.m. EST

The Navy is also holding a virtual public meeting, consisting of a presentation and question-and-answer session. Questions concerning the Draft EIS/OEIS will be accepted in advance through **Jan. 15, 2025**, via the question form on the project website. Questions may also be submitted in writing during the virtual public meeting. Please note that questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session are not official public comments. Visit **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** for more information.

Virtual Open House Presentation

A virtual open house presentation is also available on the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period from Dec. 13, 2024, to Feb. 11, 2025. The presentation provides information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, potential effects on environmental resource areas from the Proposed Action, the NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, and public involvement opportunities. The public can view the virtual open house presentation at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** anytime during the public review and comment period.

In an effort to improve and strengthen the EIS/OEIS, the military services welcome and appreciate the public's participation during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. Comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. HST on **Feb. 11, 2025**, for consideration in the Final EIS/OEIS. Comments may be submitted at one of the in-person public meetings, electronically via the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/**, or via mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Figure L-8: Notice of Availability News Release (continued)

The Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period also supports consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations, as members of the public are invited to participate, provide comments, or raise concerns about potential effects on historic properties. Comments will be considered under NEPA and pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA.

Visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/** to learn more about the project, NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, and in-person and virtual public meetings; download an electronic version of the Draft EIS/OEIS; view the virtual open house presentation; and submit questions for the virtual public meeting and/or public comments on the environmental analysis. The website also includes locations where you can view a printed copy of the Draft EIS/OEIS.

Media seeking further information should contact the Hawaii Regional Public Affairs Officer at lydia.r.robertson.civ@us.navy.mil or 808-473-2875.

Please help inform your community by sharing the information in this news release.

ID# EISX-007-17-USN-1724283453

https://www.dvidshub.net/news/487447/us-navy-announces-availability-hawaii-california-training-and-testing-draft-environmental-impact-statement-overseas-environmental-impact-statement-announces

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Figure L-8: Notice of Availability News Release (continued)

Navy Region Southwest (California,Nevada,New Mexico,Arizona,Colorado,Utah)
December 13 at 1:09 PM ·

Draft EIS/OEIS for Hawaii-California Training and Testing is Available for Public Review; Public Meetings Scheduled for January 2025

The military services have prepared the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS). The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of the potential environmental effects associated with conducting at-sea training and testing activities, and modernization and sustainment of ranges offshore of Hawaii and California.

In-person public meetings, as well as a virtual public meeting, will be held to provide more information about the project and the environmental analysis. Visit www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/ for more information, including a virtual open house presentation; locations and dates of public meetings; and to submit comments electronically.

You, U.S. Navy Stewards of the Sea and 7 others

Like Comment Share

Figure L-9: Notice of Availability Social Media Post

L.3.1.6 Website Subscribers and Email Notifications

The military services emailed notifications December 13, 2024, to 511 website subscribers, and January 10, 2025, to 499 website subscribers. Website subscribers include those from the 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS, the 2022 Point Mugu Sea Range EIS/OEIS, and new subscribers who completed the form on the HCTT website prior to the release of the Draft EIS/OEIS. There were 502 website subscribers as of February 25, 2025.

L.3.2 Public Information

L.3.2.1 Stakeholder Briefings

Navy personnel briefed key stakeholders upon request to share information about the Proposed Action and findings in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Briefings were also offered upon request to recipients of the tribal and stakeholder letters. Table L-6 summarizes focused outreach efforts during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period.

Table L-6: Stakeholder Briefings

Stakeholders	Conducted By	Format of Outreach	Date
California Coastal Commission	U.S. Pacific Fleet	Virtual	December 10, 2024
Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council	Naval Air Systems Command	Regularly Scheduled Meeting	January 24, 2025
Kauai Port Allen Fishing Club	U.S. Pacific Fleet	In Person	February 5, 2025
Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources	U.S. Pacific Fleet	Virtual	February 7, 2025
State of Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development	U.S. Pacific Fleet	Virtual	March 25, 2025
California Coastal Commission	U.S. Pacific Fleet	In Person	April 11, 2025

L.3.2.2 Fact Sheet

The military services prepared a 12-page project fact sheet with detailed information about the Proposed Action and its purpose and need, alternatives analyzed, Study Area, a summary of the environmental analysis, marine resource protection and environmental protection at sea, the NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, public involvement opportunities, and commenting information. The fact sheet was made available at stakeholder briefings, on the project website, and during in-person public meetings.

L.3.2.3 Posters

The military services developed 17 posters for use during the in-person public meetings. Posters included various topics, such as information on the Proposed Action and alternatives, Study Area maps, findings of the environmental analysis, mitigation measures and resource protection, and the NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes.

L.3.2.4 Virtual Open House Presentation

The military services hosted a virtual open house presentation on the website to provide the public with comprehensive project information organized by topic. The public could view the presentation anytime during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. Audio narration and written transcripts were available for each topic.

L.3.2.5 In-Person Public Meetings

The military services held three public meetings from January 13, 2025, through January 16, 2025, to inform the public about the Proposed Action and environmental analysis, and to solicit public comments on the Draft EIS/OEIS. The in-person public meetings included informational poster stations staffed by military service representatives, a brief presentation by the Navy, and a formal public oral comment session. A stenographer was available during the oral comment session and the open house for one-on-one oral comments; written comments could be submitted at any time during the meetings.

Public meetings were held at the following locations:

Monday, January 13, 2025
4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/Oral Comments Session
Portuguese Hall
2818 Avenida de Portugal
San Diego, California

Wednesday, January 15, 2025
4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/Oral Comments
Ke'ehi Lagoon Memorial Weinberg Hall
2685 N. Nimitz Highway
Honolulu, Hawaii

Thursday, January 16, 2025
4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/Oral Comments
Kauai Veterans Center
3215 Kauai Veterans Memorial Highway
Lihue, Hawaii

L.3.2.6 Virtual Public Meeting

The Navy held a virtual public meeting on January 22, 2025, to expand the opportunity for the larger public to participate in the NEPA process. The HCTT Study Area is geographically broad, with population centers spread across Hawaii and California. The virtual public meeting format allowed for a dedicated opportunity for exchange of information between the public and project team members.

The virtual public meeting consisted of a live Navy presentation and public question-and-answer session to discuss the Proposed Action and environmental analysis. In total, 69 members of the public, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, contractors, and military service employees attended the virtual public meeting. Questions concerning the Draft EIS/OEIS were accepted in advance via the question form on the project website. Questions could also be submitted in writing during the virtual public meeting. Questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session were not considered official public comments.

L.4 Public Comments

The Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period was open from December 13, 2024, to February 11, 2025. The military services received 1,888 comments during the public review and comment period. Public comments were received at the in-person public meetings (written: 11, verbal: 32), via the project website's electronic comment form (1,526), via email (312), and by postal mail (7). Comments submitted by the same person or group more than once via different methods, e.g., the same comment was submitted by U.S. mail and via the website by the same person, was only counted once. Additionally, one comment submission may include comments on multiple resource areas or topics.

Comments received during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period are found in Appendix L.2 (Public Comments). All comments submitted through the appropriate channels are part of the public record, and relevant and substantive comments will be considered during the development of the Final EIS/OEIS. Table L-7 includes a summary of public comments to provide a brief overview of the general issues or concerns expressed during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period.

Table L-7: Summary of Draft EIS/OEIS Comments

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

Proposed Action and Alternatives	• Concerns about military readiness activities in fragile environments around the Hawaiian Islands.
	• Requests for military training and testing to be conducted away from the Hawaiian Islands, which are considered sacred lands.
	• Concerns about expanding training in the Hawaii Study Area on the Windward side (Kaneohe Bay, Bellows Beach, and Marine Corps Base Hawaii [Kailua]).
	• Concerns about expanding the training and testing areas within the California Study Area and whether the effects of those expanded areas were adequately assessed.
	• Concerns that the Proposed Action would have negative effects on coral reefs and other ocean wildlife, such as whales and dolphins.
	• Concerns about the perceived lack of cleanup of unexploded ordnance and other debris from military readiness activities.
	• Concerns about Rim of the Pacific – or RIMPAC – and international militaries training with the U.S. military.
	  ○ Concerns that the military services exclude harm potentially inflicted on marine mammals by foreign navies participating in military readiness activities.
	• Opposition to the Proposed Action, training and testing in Hawaii, and expanding the Hawaii Study Area.
	• Support for the No Action Alternative to stop military activities or support for the Proposed Action to allow for the continuation of military readiness activities to protect the United States of America.
	• Concerns that the overall environmental benefits, such as endangered species recovery, of proceeding with the No Action Alternative are not adequately analyzed in the Draft EIS/OEIS.
	  ○ Disagreements that proceeding with the No Action Alternative would leave the status of effected marine mammal populations/stocks “unchanged” or, at best, “slightly improved from baseline conditions.”
	• Concerns about the military services increasing activities already conducted in the Study Area, especially for mine warfare activities.
	• Concerns about using nearshore areas more frequently for new training and testing activities, such as mine warfare training.
	• Concerns that the use of active sonar, underwater explosives, and live-fire exercises would have devastating effects on marine life, including marine mammals, endangered birds, and coral reefs communities.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Questions about whether range modernization and sustainment activities would run across state submerged lands within the Hawaii Study Area. • Questions about how the Wave Energy Test Site was authorized and designated since it is on State-owned submerged lands in the Resource subzone of the Conservation District. • Questions about whether land-based activities are truly outside the scope of the EIS/OEIS, such as how onshore facilities receiving marine fiber optic cables are addressed. • Questions about amphibious landings and other nearshore activities and the general effect these activities would have on terrestrial, environmental, community, and cultural resources. • Questions about how the homebasing of P8A's and the V-22 Osprey are addressed in the Draft EIS/OEIS. • Requests to clarify the locations and types of military readiness activities that would increase, such as number of aircraft flights, amphibious maneuvers, etc. • Concerns about how "dummy mines" would be neutralized using non-explosive practice munitions and explosive munitions and the potential effects from these activities. • Requests for greater clarity on what modernization and sustainment of ranges would include. • Questions about whether historical shipwrecks would be used as targets. • Requests for clarity on where sinking exercises would take place and how often these exercises would occur. • Concerns that increased or expanded activities are not clearly explained in the Draft EIS/OEIS. ○ Requests for adequate descriptions of activity changes vice a general statement on what "percent more hours" an activity would increase. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS does not address increased use of unmanned systems across air, surface, and subsurface environments in Hawaii, and therefore, does not properly assess the potential effects on marine life, including sensitive habitats. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS does not fully address the installation of new cable and sensor infrastructure east of Kaneohe, and that the EIS/OEIS lacks descriptions of the scale, methods, and long-term monitoring plans associated with this installation. • Concerns about how the Draft EIS/OEIS addresses the Air Force's air-to-air gunnery training and the use of new vessels during amphibious landings. • Concerns about increasing the use of sonar in the waters around Hawaii and the potential effects on marine species. • Confusion about the discrepancies between the military services Preferred Alternative and the MMPA Letter of Authorization request, and ultimately, the extent of effects on marine species.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

	• Concerns that the military services do not take seriously proceeding with an alternative that has fewer environmental effects compared to the Preferred Alternative.
	  ○ Requests to reevaluate NEPA's command to evaluate "choices or alternatives that might be pursued with less environmental harm."
	  ○ Requests for the military services to consider alternatives that include temporal shifts in training and testing activities to reduce harm to marine mammals from vessel strikes since whales are present only seasonally, increasing the risk of vessel strikes.

Air Quality	• Concerns that the military services rely on emission estimates rather than using pollution concentrations and comparing them to National Ambient Air Quality Standards. • Concerns that the air quality assessment does not consider all relevant pollutants and does not adequately address effects across the entire affected area. • Concerns that the military services do not use the most current air quality modeling techniques or data sources recommended by regulatory agencies. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS analysis does not examine the effects on air quality in already overburdened communities and those most vulnerable to pollution, such as communities in Long Beach, Calif. • Clarification that Ventura County, Calif., is in attainment for ozone.
Sediments and Water Quality	• Concerns that Draft EIS/OEIS does not adequately assess the effect military readiness activities have on ocean pollution, particularly the effect on endangered species, and instead, places the blame for this pollution on municipalities and industry. • Requests to reassess effects on water quality, especially from wastewater and oil spills, and how endangered species, such as sea turtles, could be affected. • Concerns about whether a known DDT (a chemical used as an insecticide) dump site within the California Study Area would be disturbed by military readiness activities. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS does not include an in-depth evaluation of marine debris and the environmental threats that results from this hazard. • Concerns that missile and artillery firing from the Pacific Missile Range Facility would introduce risks related to unexploded ordnance, marine debris, and potential chemical contamination. • Concerns about nitrogen pollution from wastewater contributing to the proliferation of invasive algae.
Birds	• Concerns about the effects of military readiness activities on endangered birds, such as band-rumped storm petrel, Hawaiian petrel, and Newell's shearwater. • Concerns about military readiness activities startling birds and forcing birds to abandon eggs. • Requests for a more comprehensive analysis of the effects of military readiness activities on birds and their habitats.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Fishes	• Concerns about the effects the Proposed Action may have on subsistence fishing and fishing communities, even if closures are only temporary. • Concerns that it is inaccurate to claim that fishes would move away from sound, laser targets, and explosives. • Requests for clarity on whether takes of ESA-listed fishes would be requested. • Concerns that the military services do not use the best available science regarding the effects of sonar and other military readiness activities on sharks, especially the Oceanic whitetip sharks, and rays, especially giant manta rays. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS analysis inadequately explains the effects of electronic warfare systems, and that electromagnetic fields can have notable effects on sharks and rays, including oceanic whitetip, scalloped hammerhead, and tope sharks.

Marine Mammals/ Species	• Concerns about the effects of the Proposed Action on marine species at the individual-level, even if effects at the population-level are not anticipated.
	• Concerns that activities may kill, injure, disorient, or have long lasting effects on marine species and marine habitat.
	• Concerns about the increase in incidental takes (of marine species) requested by the military services for military readiness activities.
	  ○ Concerns that the reasoning for an increase in takes, and any filed complaint related to incidental takes, has not been adequately discussed in the Draft EIS/OEIS.
	• Requests for the National Marine Fisheries Service to not issue permits to the military services for any "takes."
	• Concerns that the military services do not treat marine species with respect, nor do they consider the marine species as relatives/closely connected to the Native Hawaiian community.
	• Concerns about the military services assessment in the Draft EIS/OEIS that effects on marine species would not be significant.
	  ○ Requests to reevaluate significance determinations to more accurately reflect the potential effects on marine species, particularly endangered species.
	• Concerns about the military services analyses (specifically for abundance/densities, seasonal distribution densities, seasonal in-water percentages, and regional distribution), and the references used for Guadalupe fur seas, Hawaiian monk seals, northern elephant fur seals, harbor seals and bottlenose dolphins, California sea lions and other pinnipeds, and cetaceans.
	  ○ Concerns that if densities are not accurate, the Navy Acoustic Effects Model (NAEMO), would not yield accurate modeling results.
	• Concerns about the current weighting function and associated thresholds for non-impulsive sources for very high-frequency cetaceans, including mysticetes.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

	• Concerns about the current usage of behavior thresholds for acoustic sources, including the Navy-developed Bayesian biphasic dose-response functions.
	• Concerns about NAEMO:
	  ○ Concerns about inefficiencies with NAEMO when criteria and thresholds for auditory and behavioral effects data is constantly changing.
	  ○ Requests for NAEMO to consider using varying avoidance swim speeds depending on the species.
	  ○ Concerns about using relative proportions or percentages of a stock to estimate effects on individuals from repeated exposures and population-level consequences, leading to negligible effects determinations.
	• Concerns about the analysis implementing cut-off distances beyond which it considered the potential for significant behavioral responses to be unlikely.
	• Concerns about behavior thresholds used for explosives, and maintaining in the analysis that marine mammals do not exhibit behavioral responses to single detonations.
	• Concerns about the models used to estimate sound propagation associated with underwater detonations.
	• Concerns about marine species exposure to pile-driving and inaccurate data used, and requests to revise the accumulation time, range to effects, and numbers of takes for marine species in the Final EIS/OEIS.
	• Requests to use alternative forms of probability analysis that are more reflective of vessels being used in the area for 7-year vessel strike probabilities.
	• Concerns about the possible effects of electromagnetic discharges or stray electricity (including without limitation, microwave communication electrical energy) that may result from military readiness activities on marine species and coral reefs.
	• Questions about what procedures are in place to assist marine species or sharks that may be entangled in military equipment, such as parachutes.
	• Questions about federal or state agency oversight tracking incidental takes of marine species.
	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS does not identify marine species effects by stocks and rather lumps together all the effects on an entire species from direct strikes (vessels, high-energy lasers, military expended materials) in the Hawaii Study Area and California Study Area.
	  ○ Concerns that the military services do not quantify the number of predicted vessel strikes on each marine species stock under either of the analyzed alternatives.
	• Request for the military services to use the most recent scientific research when analyzing effects and behavioral responses on all marine mammals, marine species, fishes, sea turtles, invertebrates, and seabirds.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

	• Requests to ensure migratory species and patterns are properly analyzed.
	• Concerns about the short- and long-term effects of sonar on all marine mammals.
	  ○ Concerns that the military services do not quantify and adequately consider the effects of multi-day sonar exposures on marine species.
	  ○ Requests to quantify the effects of consecutive day sonar exposures on feeding, reproduction, and displacement of marine mammals.
	  ○ Requests for the military services to consider new information on the sensitivity of marine species to sonar.
	• Concerns that the military services do not consider non-lethal (behavioral) takes significant, which generally minimizes the extent of the effects on marine species.
	  ○ Concerns with the claims that long-term harm to marine species populations are not anticipated.
	  ○ Concerns that the military services did not conduct the required analysis to determine if Level A and B takes would cause significant harm to affected marine mammal populations or stocks, such as the Eastern North Pacific stock of blue whales, the Central America/Southern Mexico-California-Oregon-Washington stock of humpback whales, and the Hawaiian monk seal.
	• Requests that the military services consider changes in species distribution resulting from marine heatwaves and other ecosystem changes that have become more frequent in the past decade to accurately evaluate potential effects on marine species and implement appropriate mitigation measures.
	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS analysis underestimates the potential harm to beaked whales off California because beaked whales are extremely sensitive to sonar and have experienced numerous mass strandings caused by military sonar.
	• Concerns that the military services did not analyze the effects of military readiness activities on critically endangered North Pacific right whales (recent observations demonstrate that North Pacific right whales overlap with the HCTT Study Area), and the military services must consider effects from vessel strikes, sonar, and explosives.
	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS analysis inadequately examines the effects of the Proposed Action on ESA-listed sea otters, especially since the expanded California Study Area includes northern areas, which are likely to have sea otter effects.
	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS analysis inadequately examines the effects of military activities on humpback whales, specifically the endangered Central America/Southern Mexico-California-Oregon-Washington stock of humpback whales and their critical habitat.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Concerns about the effects of sonar and other military readiness activities on blue whales, Southern resident killer whales, minke whales, and main Hawaiian Islands insular false killer whales. ○ Concerns about strandings of pygmy killer whales and dwarf sperm whales.
Reptiles	• Concerns that the military services do not adequately assess the effects of sea turtles in the Draft EIS/OEIS. • Concerns about the effects of sea turtles that may be foraging around or on seafloor devices. • Concerns that the military services do not quantify or analyze the extent of risk to sea turtles from vessel strikes. • Concerns about the decline of sea turtle populations and extinction risks.

Marine Sanctuaries/Marine Protected Areas	• Concerns about the effects of marine species in ecologically critical areas, such as the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and offshore at Kaula Island.
	• Concerns that the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was not evaluated as a traditional cultural property during the NHPA Section 106 process.
	  ○ Requests for the Navy to evaluate marine sanctuaries within the Study Area as traditional cultural properties.
	• Concerns that greater details were not provided to explain when the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument could be susceptible to sonic booms or utilized for emergency situations.
	  ○ Concerns that possible effects on cultural voyaging or wayfinding would only be temporary.
	• Requests for verification on whether all types of unmanned aerial systems are allowable within the Hawaiian Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.
	• Requests for clarification on the definition “limited activities” to be conducted in Marine Protected Areas and to clearly correlate those activities with appropriate regulatory controls to ensure the protection of natural and cultural resources within Marine Protected Areas.

Habitats/Coral Reefs	• Concerns about coral reefs from the effects of active sonar, explosives, or other sources of underwater sound during military readiness activities. ○ Concerns that these stressors would further harm critical coral reef ecosystems, which are essential for biodiversity, coastal protection, and cultural practices. • Concerns that military readiness activities, combined with the stresses of climate change, do not provide coral reefs the opportunity to recover, which effects overall ocean health. • Concerns that placing and moving targets for mine warfare training activities, such as exploding ordnance, laying and relaying cable, and other activities would disturb coral reef ecosystems that are already heavily disrupted by ongoing military use and other stressors.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

	• Concerns about the effects of military expended materials on the seafloor, and how an accumulation of non-recovered expended materials from past and current military use of the Study Area could affect marine life and environments.
	• Concerns about further impacting Puuloa, off Oahu, because seafloor and habitat disturbance caused by military readiness activities.
	• Concerns about how range modernization and sustainment activities (installation of seafloor cables and platforms) would affect coral reefs and other seafloor habitats, and questions about how these effects would be mitigated.
	• Concerns about the potential for unexploded ordnance to affect coral reefs and other seafloor habitats.
	• Questions about the proposal of critical habitat for green sea turtles around the Hawaiian Islands.
	• Concerns about the perceived lack of site-specific data on wildlife (marine species) and their preferred habitats within the newly expanded California Study Area.
	  ○ Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS relies heavily on outdated or generalized data, which may not accurately reflect the current distribution and density of sensitive species or environmental conditions and prey availability.
	• Concerns that the installation of new cable and sensor infrastructure east of Kaneohe could disrupt benthic (bottom) habitats and contribute to increased sedimentation, which can harm coral reefs and marine species.
	• Concerns about the installation and maintenance of mine training shapes in the Maui Basin, and that the Draft EIS/OEIS does not adequately analyze the ecological consequences of placing and retrieving these objects in this sensitive marine environment.
	  ○ Concerns that the potential for seabed disturbance, habitat degradation, and interference with local fisheries is insufficiently addressed.

Public Health and Safety	• Concerns about hazardous and chemical waste and effects spreading beyond a localized region. • Concerns that increasing or continuing to conduct military readiness activities around Hawaii would make it a target for future attacks. • Concerns about whether increases in military readiness activities would result in closing Kaneohe Bay and the Waimanalo coast from public recreation use. • Concerns about the possible effects of electromagnetic discharges or stray electricity that may result from military readiness activities on marine recreationists (e.g., SCUBA divers). • Concerns about the information available in the Draft EIS/OEIS about mines and underwater mine countermeasures, and how activities would affect recreationists.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Questions about the notices ocean users would receive when access to recreation areas within the Study Area would be temporarily closed. • Concerns about potential detonations in Kaneohe Bay and the public's safety.

Noise	• Concerns about noise effects, specifically from explosives, on people and local communities.
	• Concerns that the underwater noise analysis is inadequate, and therefore, effects on marine species, such as cetaceans and fish, may be underrepresented.
	  ○ Concerns that the effects of noise on adjacent communities are inadequately addressed.
	  ○ Questions about the analysis categorizing noise levels based on day-night average sound levels.
	  ○ Requesting more information on what level of increased activities would occur in the evening.
	  ○ Concerns that already disproportionately burdened communities would be affected by increased noise the most.
	• Concerns that inadequate consideration is given to the adoption or development of alternative, quieter technologies for training and testing activities that could reduce overall noise pollution.
	• Concerns about noise pollution due to increased use of unmanned systems.
	• Concerns about noise effects on marine mammals, fishes, and seabirds in the Study Area, including the expanded airspace.
	• Concerns about noise effects on submerged marine species, such as marine mammals and fishes, and that it is possible for noise that exceeds thresholds to trigger behavioral responses in marine mammals, fish, and sea birds.
	  ○ Concerns that the analysis of sonic booms under the sea surface is inadequate because studies show the sea surface does not serve as an acoustic barrier to military aircraft noise.
	• Concerns that the military services did not adequately analyze the effects of aircraft noise and requests to include a more in-depth analysis in the Final EIS/OEIS.
	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS analysis underestimates the effects of pile driving noise off Port Hueneme, and that it is inaccurate to claim marine species and fishes move away from pile driving.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

Cultural Resources/ National Historic Preservation Section (NHPA) 106 Process	• Concerns about the military services abilities to avoid cultural resources.
	• Concerns that military readiness activities intrude on cultural practices, such as fishing and traditional ceremonies, and lead to spiritual and community effects.
	• Concerns that the analysis in the Draft EIS/OEIS does not account for tribal sacred sites or for potential adverse effects on lower-income communities and communities with environmental equity concerns.
	• Concerns that the military services disrespect sacred spaces and the relationship the Native Hawaiian community has with the ocean environment.
	  ○ Concerns that the military services do not understand the significance of marine life to Native Hawaiian culture and values.
	  ○ Concerns that military readiness activities disrupt traditional practices, such as fishing, navigation, and ceremonies, and violate the rights of Native Hawaiians to care for and protect their ancestral waters.
	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS and in-person public meeting presentation demonstrated a lack of consultations with the Native Hawaiian community.
	  ○ Requests for the military services to engage in meaningful consultation with NHOs and incorporate this knowledge and values into the decision-making process.
	  ○ Requests to ensure military readiness activities do not infringe on Native Hawaiian rights.
	• Concerns that the NHPA Section 106 process and Draft EIS/OEIS sections that discuss effects on cultural resources are inadequate and incomplete:
	  ○ Concerns that a consultation timeline for Native Hawaiians was not presented in the Draft EIS/OEIS.
	  ○ Concerns that a NEPA public participation plan, as an optional tool pursuant to 32 Code of Federal Regulations 775.11, or inclusion of an “Indigenous Knowledge Plan” were not implemented as part of the NHPA Section 106 and NEPA processes.
	  ○ Concerns that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs was not consulted for assistance with engagement with NHOs.
	• Suggestions to include the Council on Environmental Quality’s guidance on Indigenous Knowledge.
	• Requests for the Navy to consult with Native Hawaiians and homestead communities to better understand traditional and customary practices that take place at sea and how best to mitigate potential effects on the constitutionally protected rights of Native Hawaiians.
	• Concerns with the assessment that the action alternatives would cause “less than significant effects” on cultural resources and harm to cultural practitioners that they inflict.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

Socioeconomics	• Concerns about the effects of the Proposed Action on lower-income communities and communities with environmental equity concerns, and concerns about the military services analyzing those effects.
	• Questions about the number of new service personnel and families that would be homeported at either Pearl Harbor or Marine Corps Base Hawaii as a result of the Proposed Action and the housing units needed for new personnel.
	  ○ Concerns about housing shortages on Oahu and how the military affects Oahu's housing supply, housing availability, and housing affordability.
	  ○ Requests for the military to build more on-base housing to alleviate housing shortages.

Mitigation Measures and Research	• Concerns about the effectiveness of the military services mitigation measures and standard operating procedures to minimize effects on marine species. • Concerns about inaccuracies with the biologically important areas used to create geographic mitigations, such as seasonal migration inaccuracies for gray whales and omissions of geographic mitigation areas for blue whales. • Concerns about the ineffectiveness of Navy Lookouts to inform visual observations. • Requests to increase the use of passive acoustic monitoring via range instrumentation and sonobuoys prior to and during activities involving explosive sonobuoys, explosive torpedoes, sinking exercises, ship shock trials, explosive bombing exercises, and air-to-surface and surface-to-surface explosive missile and rocket exercises. • Requests to include the requirement to delay, relocate, or cease activities if floating vegetation or jellyfish are observed in the mitigation zone during activities involving active acoustic sources, pile driving, airguns, and explosives, which would be consistent with Phase III mitigation measures. • Requests that the military services cease any active acoustic, explosive, pile driving, or airgun activities if a marine mammal is observed to be injured or killed during or immediately after the activity; not just conducting this action after an individual detonation for ship shock trials. • Requests for better transparency on what "Navy funded efforts" for marine species populations and migrations are and what effects these efforts had on predicting stressors to the marine mammal environment. • Concerns that the military services do not thoroughly explore or propose effective protection measures to reduce air quality effects. • Concerns about limited protections for humpback whales. • Concerns about insufficient protective measures in place to minimize effects on coral reefs. ○ Limiting training and testing activities to within 350 yards of coral reefs may not be sufficient to prevent damage from underwater sound and other activities.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern

	• Concerns that the current protections in place and proposed mitigation measures for marine species are inadequate.
	  ○ Concerns about the effectiveness of these mitigation measures and what evaluation methodologies would be used to measure effectiveness.
	  ○ Concerns about how the military services would ensure compliance with environmental regulations.
	• Questions about whether mitigation measures to minimize increases in noise, such as quiet hours, would be implemented.
	• Requests to consider additional mitigation methods, such as:
	  ○ Imposing a 10-knot ship speed limit in whale mitigation areas to reduce the risk of vessel strikes.
	  ○ Improving detection of marine mammals using alternative detection methods including thermal and acoustic methods.
	  ○ Restricting activities during times of low visibility.
	  ○ Capping the maximum level of activities each year.
	  ○ Avoiding training and testing exercises in key migration corridors and prime feeding areas.
	  ○ Avoiding training and testing exercises during key feeding times.
	  ○ Avoiding training and testing exercises in areas where the whale presence in the area is “High” or “Very High,” per WhaleSafe.
	  ○ Maintaining mitigation for the core feeding biologically important area for blue whales in the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area.
	  ○ Prohibiting sonar and explosives in all the whale mitigation areas off California from June through November.
	  ○ Removing exemptions for aircraft in mitigation areas.
	• Concerns that military services do no not consider updated science on biologically important areas, including “watch lists,” which are areas that cetacean experts believe are likely biologically important areas, but currently lack sufficient information to meet the criteria for a biologically important area.

Cumulative Effects	• Concerns about the cumulative effects on marine species from warming seas, increased pollution, climate change, and military activities. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS does not adequately address the cumulative and global effects of military activities, and that it is incorrect to claim that military readiness activities are insignificant on the scale of global issues, especially climate change and ocean effects. ○ Concerns about the military services’ cumulative effects on climate change and air quality, and on the ocean environment, which people rely on for food, livelihoods, and cultural practices. • Concerns about the cumulative effects from military readiness activities that would leave chemicals, hazardous materials, and debris in the ocean, and the concerns about bioaccumulation in marine life. • Concerns about the cumulative effects of military and non-military vessel strikes on marine species.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Concerns about the cumulative effects of military readiness activities, including Rim of the Pacific exercises, with deep-sea mining, long-liner fishing fleets (foreign and domestic), and the aquarium trade. • Concerns about how quantitative versus qualitative analyses were used in the determination of cumulative effects. • Concerns about the cumulative effects of ongoing and expanded military readiness activities on marine ecosystems over time. • Concerns that the military services evaluate noise effects from individual events rather than considering the cumulative effects of multiple training and testing activities over time, which underestimates the overall effect of noise pollution on marine and terrestrial life. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS inadequately assesses the effects on marine species from explosions, physical disturbances, and strikes from vessels, seafloor devices, and pile driving. • Concerns about in-water detonations and the cumulative effects on marine species from these ongoing activities. • Concerns about the cumulative effects on sea turtles, whales, and other endangered species because of fishing gear entanglement coupled with military readiness activities.
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process	• Concerns about the online comment form website functionality. • Concerns about the format of the in-person public meetings and not allowing a question-and-answer (town hall) style. • Concerns about the format of the virtual public meeting, and not accepting official comments during the question-and-answer session. ○ Concerns that it was not adequately stated that questions submitted or asked at the virtual public meeting would not be accepted as an official public comment. • Concerns that the public information materials, including the virtual open house presentation and in-person public meeting materials, were vague and not informative for comment facilitation. • Concerns about inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft EIS/OEIS. • Requests to include various updated scientific literature in the Final EIS/OEIS. • Concerns about various errors, inconsistencies, or missing information observed in tables and figures included in the Draft EIS/OEIS. • Concerns about the NEPA process and the timing of the release of project information prior to the holiday season. • Concerns that the public review and comment period was not adequate for such a complex and lengthy document. • Concerns about the accessibility of Draft EIS/OEIS and ability to conduct searches within the Draft EIS/OEIS, in addition to missing or broken links. • Concerns that statements made at the virtual public meeting (e.g., no explosives in Kaneohe Bay) contradict with information contained in the Draft EIS/OEIS.

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS is deficient and that the military services should prepare a revised Draft EIS/OEIS for public review and comment. ○ Concerns that environmental effects were not adequately analyzed. • Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS yields a description of environmental effects that is indistinguishable from prior analyses, despite the increase in training and testing. • Concerns that disaggregated data, in the form of multiple tables across the Draft EIS/OEIS, obscures the action alternatives' effects.
Other Regulations and Laws	• Concerns that the Draft EIS/OEIS exceeds the maximum page limits set forth by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA. • Requests for the military services to prepare consistency determinations in accordance with federal consistency determinations to be submitted to the California Coastal Commission and the Hawaii Office of Planning. • Concerns that military readiness activities violate federal polices of MMPA since it is unlikely that activities would have a "negligible impact" on an affected species or stock.

Other	• Requests to demilitarize the Hawaiian Islands, returning the land to the people of Hawaii with no trace of previous military activities.
	• Concerns about how the military is perceived to treat the Hawaiian Islands and the Native Hawaiian community.
	• Requests for the Hawaiian Islands to secede from the United States of America to become a Kingdom again.
	  ○ Concerns that the military services are illegally occupying the Hawaiian Kingdom and has no treaty from the Hawaiian Kingdom to use its waters for military readiness activities.
	  ○ Concerns that the military services are violating international law by conducting military activities in Hawaii.
	• Concerns about the state government releasing bacteria-infected mosquitoes in Maui and Kauai.
	• Concerns about conducting military readiness activities with other international militaries that are perceived to be conducting genocide.
	• Concerns that recurring pollution events (underground oil plume beneath Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, jet fuel leaks at Red Hill, recent wastewater spill into the ocean near Pearl Harbor) violate federal and state environmental standards and threaten Hawaii's fragile marine ecosystems, and that long-term effects of these spills are not adequately addressed in the Draft EIS/OEIS.
	• Requests for the military to immediately cease all activities around Hawaii and to provide reparations for any environmental and cultural harm caused by those activities.

L.5 Distribution of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

Parties notified of the availability of the Draft EIS/OEIS were directed to access the document electronically on the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/ or to access printed copies available at established information repositories.

L.5.1 Federal Agencies

This Draft EIS/OEIS was distributed to federal agencies upon request.

L.5.2 Information Repositories

A printed copy of the Draft EIS/OEIS was sent to the information repository locations shown in Table L-8. These copies are to be made available to the public for a minimum of one year.

Table L-8: Information Repositories

Hawaii State Library (Oahu) Honolulu, HI	**City of San Diego Central Library** San Diego, CA
Hilo Public Library (Hawaii Island) Hilo, HI	**Coast Community Branch of Mendocino County Library** Point Arena, CA
Wailuku Public Library (Maui) Wailuku, HI	**Coronado Public Library** Coronado, CA
Kailua-Kona Public Library (Hawaii Island) Kailua-Kona, HI	**E.P. Foster Library** Ventura, CA
Lihue Public Library (Kauai) Lihue, HI	**Los Angeles Central Library** Los Angeles, CA
Molokai Library Kaunakakai, HI	**Monterey Public Library** Monterey, CA
Billie Jean King Main Library Long Beach, CA	**San Luis Obispo Library** San Luis Obispo, CA

L.6 Final Environmental Impact Statement Notifications

The military services published a Notice of Availability of the Final EIS/OEIS in the *Federal Register* on October 3, 2025. Public notices, including newspaper advertisements, letters, postcards, and media releases, were disseminated to stakeholders, including NHOs, federally recognized tribes, and the public. All public notices included information about the availability of the Final EIS/OEIS and where it can be accessed, the Proposed Action and its purpose and need, the NEPA and NHPA public involvement processes, and the 30-day waiting period.

Appendix L.1 Public Scoping Comments

Environmental Impact Statement/
Overseas Environmental Impact Statement
Hawaii-California Training and Testing
TABLE OF CONTENTS

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List of Figures

There are no figures in this appendix.

List of Tables

There are no tables in this appendix.

L.1 Public Scoping Comments

The public scoping period began December 15, 2023, and ran through January 29, 2024. Thirty-six comments were received during the public scoping period. Comments were submitted via the project website's electronic comment form (22), email (9), and by postal mail (5).

L.1.1 Project Website Comments

Date/Time: 12-18-2023

Organization: Flatiron West

Name: Stacy Sinclair

City/State: Los Angeles/CA

Comment: Along the California coastline there are very sensitive ecosystem services, including the methane seeps off Pt. Magu. Some of the activities mentioned could impact these fragile systems. Please keep me informed of the mitigation measures under development to protect these areas both for the ecosystems in the area and the castcading impact, should the seeps be disrupted.

Attachments:

1

2

Date/Time:	12-21-2023
Organization:	Hawaii Coastal Zone Management Program
Name:	Debra Mendes
City/State:	Honolulu/HI
Comment:	Please see the attached.
Attachments:	! FC2302 HSTT EIS-NOI czm-fcrqd_12.20.23.pdf

2

STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
INTERIM DIRECTOR

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: https://planning.hawaii.gov/

Coastal Zone Management Program

Environmental Review Program

Land Use Commission

Land Use Division

Special Plans Branch

State Transit-Oriented Development

Statewide Geographic Information System

Statewide Sustainability Branch

DTS202312191034ME

December 20, 2023

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Dear Project Manager:

Subject: Hawaii Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program Federal Consistency Review Required for U.S. Navy Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Activities

According to Vol. 88 Federal Register 86885 (December 15, 2023), the Department of the Navy has published a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Hawaii-California Training and Testing Activities. The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, CZM Program, is notifying you that we believe HCTT activities will have reasonably foreseeable coastal effects, and therefore, a Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) federal consistency determination is required to be submitted for review.

Environmental issues that need to be addressed in the HCTT EIS/OEIS include biological resources (including marine mammals and threatened and endangered species); sediments and water quality; air quality; noise, cultural resources; socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety. All these issues will be evaluated during the CZMA federal consistency review.

If you have any questions, please contact Debra Mendes of our CZM Program at (808) 587-2840 or Debra.L.Mendes@hawaii.gov.

Mahalo,

Mary Alice Evans

Mary Alice Evans
Interim Director

c: Ms. Dawn N.S. Chang, Department of Land and Natural Resources

Date/Time: 12-22-2023

Organization: yak tityu tityu yak tihini Northern Chumash Tribe San Luis Obispo County and Region

Name: Mona Olivas Tucker

City/State: San Luis Obispo Countty/CA

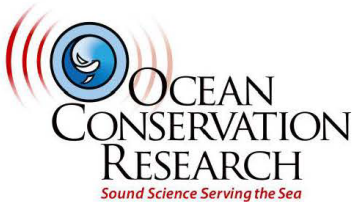
Comment: Regarding your letter dated December 7, 2023: We would like to know the specific processes that will be used to assess and protect marine life during the testing. We would like your assurance the the processes won't kill, injure, disorient or have long lasting impacts on marine life and marine habitat. Thank you.

Attachments:

3

Date/Time:	01-5-2024
Organization:	Ocean Conservation resarch
Name:	Michael Stocker
City/State:	Lagunitas/CA
Comment:	Comments with citations attached.
Attachments:	

4



Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Pacific,
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager,
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100,
Pearl Harbor,
HI 96860–3134.

December 28, 2023

Dear HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager,

We appreciate the opportunity to express our concerns about the Hawaii-California Testing and Training Range review. The bulk of our work is focused on marine bioacoustics, and given that the preponderance of environmental compromise and impacts associated with warfare testing and training involves noise - from explosions to sonar, and underwater acoustical communications, we could have a lot of work on our hands expressing our concerns. But I am going to assume that the forthcoming DEIS will be built on the 2012 and 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statements (HSTT EIS/OEIS), and informed by the NRDC *et al.* v. Pritzker settlement[1] and the resulting research that followed.

My expanded acoustical concerns are the new technologies in development that will likely be included in the Navy Testing and Training operations going forward. I have been tracking some of these technologies, such as JANUS protocol – accepted by NATO in 2017,[2] and DARPA's POSYDON underwater GPS system.[3] Undoubtedly other systems will be deployed that have not yet been reviewed in the literature, including military underwater acoustical communication systems that would not be revealed for security reasons.

These would include experimental communication systems that would fall under the rubric of the "Underwater Internet of Things," used for any remote operation and monitoring of submersibles, surveillance equipment, stationary equipment state polling and control, and perhaps torpedo guidance.

Given the intersections between required data density, spatial resolution, useful range, and frequency-dependent acoustical absorption of seawater,[4] the frequencies of these various

[1] NRDC *et al.* v. Pritzker. Case No. 3:12-cv-05380-EDL
[2] https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_143247.htm
[3] https://www.darpa.mil/program/positioning-system-for-deep-ocean-navigation
[4] Ainslie M.A, McColm J.G. (1998) A simplified formula for viscous and chemical absorption in seawater.

PO Box 559, Lagunitas, CA 94938 • 415.464.7220 • www.ocr.org

technologies would likely fall between 10kHz and 50kHz. This bandwidth unfortunately overlaps the communication and biosonar range of odontocetes. In the HCTT operations area, this would include dolphins (including orcas), porpoises, melon-headed whales, pilot whales, and beaked whales. It would also include seals, including the critically endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal, and sea lions.

So regardless of transmission levels of these various signals, they will run a high probability of masking or interfering with biologically important sounds for these protected marine mammals. Additionally, given the requirement of unambiguous state-announcement of these digital signals, they are characteristically modulated "square waves," and are thus streams of highly impulsive, high kurtosis signals found to be more damaging to hearing, and causing more "behavioral discomfort"[5] than equal energy low kurtosis signals.[6]

Furthermore, these signals are typically continuous in nature, thus from a regulatory perspective, they would fall under the 120dB "continuous noise exposure threshold" of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) acoustical exposure guidelines.[7]

And finally, in previous Environmental Impact Statements, these various communication technologies have been often considered independently from an entire operating system when assessing impact estimates for Incidental Harassment Authorizations (IHA),[8] or for Incidental Take Permits.[9] But as these systems operate simultaneously, and even in concert, the entire operational soundscape needs to be considered when evaluating the possible biological impacts, and authorizing their implementation.

There is an expanding use of ultrasonic anti-fouling gear on commercial ship hulls.[10] This is a rapidly growing technology world-wide that has largely escaped regulatory oversight. I am not yet aware if this technology is being used on US Naval vessels. But it is a strong point of concern. These systems operate in the 20kHz – 30kHz range – again overlapping the biosonar and communication range of protected marine mammals. If these systems are

Journal of the Acoustical Society of America 103(3):1671-1672.

[5] Kastelein, R.A., W.C. Verboom, M. Muijsers, N.V. Jennings, S. van der Heul. (2005) The influence of acoustic emissions for underwater data transmission on the behavior of harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) in a floating pen Marine Environmental Research 59 p.287–307

[6] Hamernik, R. P., Qiu, W., and Davis, B. 2003b . "The effects of the amplitude distribution of equal energy exposures on noise-induced hearing loss: The kurtosis metric," J. Acoust. Soc. Am. 114, 386–395.

[7] National Marine Fisheries Service. Revisions to: Technical Guidance for Assessing the Effects of Anthropogenic Sound on Marine Mammal Hearing Underwater Thresholds for Onset of Permanent and Temporary Threshold Shifts; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: Silver Spring, MD, USA, 2018; p. 167

[8] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act

[9] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/permits-incidental-taking-endangered-and-threatened-species

[10] Martin, S.B., MacGillivray, A.O., Wood, J.D., Trounce, K.B., Tollit, D.J., Angadi, K. (2023). Sound Emissions from Ultrasonic Antifouling Equipment. In: Popper, A.N., Sisneros, J., Hawkins, A.D., Thomsen, F. (eds) The Effects of Noise on Aquatic Life. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-10417-6_102-1

being deployed on the hulls of any US Naval vessels in the HCTT range, their noise contribution needs to be evaluated and included in any Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

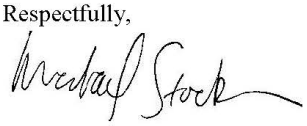
It has been common practice in Environmental Impact Statements, as well as applications for Incidental Harassment Authorizations and Incidental Take Permits to evaluate noise profiles of each technology in the context of regulatory thresholds, rather than the contribution of the particular noise to the entire soundscape of concern. But the digital technologies used in the "Underwater Internet of Things" work in concert – an underwater GPS or local positioning matrix anchors the location of the equipment controlling, being controlled, or reporting. So in fact a digital warfare soundscape is a complex cacophony of really unpleasant (high kurtosis) noises.

Determining the behavioral impacts of this hostile soundscape may need more than onboard Marine Mammal Observers. Given the rapid introduction of some of these new technologies when there is still no regulatory metric on sound quality impact of behavioral disruption, it might be wise to fund concurrent behavioral and metabolic observations of select marine mammals in the operations areas to determine how the proposed activities impact or disrupt normal behaviors.

This might include some baseline behavioral studies on coastal and pelagic odontocetes prior to the Testing and Training exercises to determine if there are noticeable behavioral changes in foraging routines, or measured cortisol levels in feces or exhalate prior to, during, and after the exercises.

Warfare Testing and Training is, by definition, hostile and messy, and the last thing any field commander wants to contend with is scientists and marine mammologists in the field during operations. But there have been so many advances in remote sensing through drones – both in terms of aerial behavioral observations and serum sampling[11] which could be coordinated, and reveal a lot of important data on marine mammal responses to the exercises.

Respectfully,



Michael Stocker
Director

[11] https://whale.org/snotbot/

Date/Time:	01-05-2024
Organization:	Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER) Office
Name:	Ms. Gracelda M. Simmons
City/State:	Pearl City/HI
Comment:	Good morning, Please see attached HDOH Comment Letter dated January 5, 2024 (ref. 205606 AH) regarding the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Hawaii-California Training and Testing dated December 7, 2023. Thank you, Allison Hutto Remedial Project Manager HDOH HEER Office 808-586-4249 / allison.hutto@doh.hawaii.gov
Attachments:	205606 AH HCTT Study Area Final - signed.pdf

6

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAI'I
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:
205606 AH

January 5, 2024

HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
285 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Facility/Site: Hawaii/California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area

Subject: Comments on Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Hawaii-California Training and Testing; dated December 7, 2023

Dear HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager,

The Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response (HEER) Office has reviewed the above-referenced document and the Virtual Open House Presentation available on-line at https://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/ and has the following comments:

1. In addition to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, the Navy must comply with the State of Hawaii Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) requirements managed under the Environmental Review Program (ERP). Please adhere to all HEPA and ERP requirements per Hawaii Administrative Rule (HAR) Chapter 11-200 which are administered by the Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (https://planning.hawaii.gov/erp/).

2. There are CERCLA, hazardous substance, and military munitions response sites under water and on land in the areas identified (including Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Oahu and Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai). The Navy should be aware of these sites and ensure that they are not disturbed. If disturbance of contaminated media and/or release(s) or spills of hazardous substances, including oil or other petroleum products, occur during the exercises, ensure proper notification and response actions are taken, including notification to the HDOH and other appropriate state and federal agencies. For information on HDOH HEER Office sites and regulations please visit our website, https://health.hawaii.gov/heer/.

   The HDOH notification procedures can be found in detail at https://health.hawaii.gov/heer/reporting/how-to-report-a-release-spill/#:~:text=The%20owner%20or%20operator%20of,equal%20to%20or%20exceeds%20the

January 5, 2024
Page 2 of 2

3. In addition to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Fisheries Service, the Navy should be in consultation with the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR, https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dar/), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and any other agencies regulating coasts, waterways, ports, etc.

If you have any questions or should you need a hardcopy of this letter, please contact me at 808-586-4249 or by email at allison.hutto@doh.hawaii.gov.

Sincerely,

Gracelda Simmons

Gracelda M. Simmons, Environmental Mgt Program Manager
Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response Office
Hawaii Department of Health

Date/Time: 01-07-2024

Organization: -

Name: Kristen Petroff

City/State: Honolulu/HI

Comment: Topic: The Environment. The environment is fragile on these islands and the Military has shown nothing but disregard to the land, animals, soil and water. I do not need to provide documentation, read the news. Yes, you need to train, but we are asking you to find somewhere else that is not considered sacred land. What were you thinking? First, you need to clean up your mistakes, leaving NO trace that you were here. Restore the land to it's natural beauty. Second: ho'ihi - Respect this island. Third: Give this island time to recover from your previous mistakes. Everything you do to train: Mines, shelling, etc., destroys this land which many of you are not a part of. Neither am I. I am a guest on this island and I treat it with respect. You, the military, have NOT treated this island with respect, therefore you should move your training elsewhere. Mahalo.

Attachments:

7

Date/Time: 01-09-2024

Organization: -

Name: Terry Lilley

City/State: Haleiwa/HI

Comment: I am a career marine biologist in Pupukea Oahu North Shore and Hanalei Kauai. I have over 1000 scuba dives showing the effects of the Navy operations on our coral reefs and marine life here in Hawaii and several documentary movies about the subject that have aired on TV, National Geographic and social media. I can prove that the discharge of an electrical current from Navy submarines kills our coral reefs. The electrical discharge grounds out into the reef causing the calcium carbonate bond in the coral to break down then the coral becomes diseased and dies. The electrical discharge from Navy ships, microwave towers and submarines is killing our coral reefs and the Navy has completely left out this problem from the EIS! The Navy needs to do a detailed study about its effects on our coral reefs due to electrical discharge into the sea. I can supply professional movies showing the process and I am also willing to testify in federal court using my many hours underwater. Please feel free to contact me to discuss this issue further at underwater2web@gmail.com.

Attachments:

8

Date/Time:	01-09-2024
Organization:	Bureau of Land Management - California
Name:	Leisyka Parrott
City/State:	Coastal California/CA
Comment:	The proposed activities lie within the California Coastal National Monument Corridor which is the geographic area in which the rocks and islands that make up the monument are located. This is the area, (delineated by Presidential Proclamation No. 7264 that established the CCNM on January 11, 2000), that extends 12 nautical miles off of the 1,100 mile shoreline of the State of California and encompasses more than 14,600 square nautical miles. The proposed activities may have measurable negative impacts on migratory bird populations, marine mammal populations and nearshore intertidal species that utilize the CCNM. The Navy is a Steward of the CCNM as referenced the attached MOU signed in 2007. Please include the CCNM as an interested party and/or cooperating agency. Sincerely, Leisyka Parrott California Coastal National Monument Manager U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management Mailing address: 1695 Heindon Road, Arcata, CA 95521 Mobile: 707-513-3891 Email: lparrott@blm.gov
Attachments:	ccnm_mou_steward_final dates_US Navy_CA939-08-02_11.05.2007.pdf

9

BLM MOU No. CA-939-08-02

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES NAVY
AND THE
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
REGARDING THE
CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT

I. PARTIES AND PURPOSE

The United States Navy, within the United States Department of Defense (DOD), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), within the United States Department of the Interior, enter into this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish an interim agreement whereby the Navy will serve as a Steward for the following areas of the California Coastal National Monument (CCNM): (1) the portions of the CCNM off the shoreline of San Clemente Island, (2) the portions of the CCNM off the shoreline of San Nicolas Island, (3) Begg Rock near San Nicolas Island, and (4) the portions of the CCNM off the western side of Naval Base Point Loma in San Diego, California.

II. INTRODUCTION

A. **BLM and the California Coastal National Monument.** By Presidential Proclamation on January 11, 2000, all unappropriated or unreserved lands and interest in lands owned or controlled by the United States in the form of islands, rocks, and pinnacles above mean high tide within 12 nautical miles of the shoreline of the State of California were designated as the CCNM. The CCNM was nationally recognized in the Presidential Proclamation as a biological and geological treasure, rich in biodiversity, and providing essential habitat for many species of scientific interest. The CCNM designation mandates the protection of historic and scientific objects, particularly wildlife species which normally inhabit the CCNM area, and limits management discretion that the Federal managers otherwise have. The Secretary of the Interior manages the CCNM through the BLM and under the BLM's existing authorities, subject to the overriding purpose of protecting the resources described in the Presidential Proclamation. The BLM is directed by Congress to administer the public lands so that all various land and resource uses and values are managed in combinations that will best meet the needs of the American people.

B. **Core-Managing Partners.** BLM, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) serve as the "core-managing partners" of the CCNM. Through an interim MOU signed in the spring of 2000, BLM extended its partnership with CDFG and added CDPR, the State agency that administers 25% of the California coast. Collectively, BLM, CDFG, and CDPR are responsible for the management of the CCNM.

C. **Stewardship.** With a national monument as extensive and connected to so many varied jurisdictions as the CCNM, the opportunities for partnerships are not only enormous, but also necessary. Although the Presidential Proclamation makes it very clear that the CCNM will remain under federal ownership and directs the Secretary of the Interior to manage the CCNM through the BLM, the BLM needs to continue existing partnerships and establish new ones with governmental agencies and others in order to effectively administer the CCNM. Consistent with appropriate authorities, stewardship agreements are being developed with select entities with management interests along the coast. CCNM "Stewards"[1] work in partnership with BLM to share information that assists the BLM in its management of a specific portion of the CCNM (See CCNM Stewardship Program Fact Sheet, Attachment A).

D. **San Clemente Island, San Nicolas Island, Begg Rock, and Naval Base Point Loma.** The Navy administers San Clemente Island (under jurisdiction of Naval Base Coronado) and manages the island as part of the San Clemente Island Range Complex, a major land, air, and sea training range complex. San Nicolas Island is also Navy administered (under jurisdiction of Naval Base Ventura County) and serves as the cornerstone for the Point Mugu Sea Range, primarily as an instrumentation site. Begg Rock is located approximately seven miles west northwest of San Nicolas Island. The western side of Naval Base Point Loma contains a variety of research and development facilities. The Navy has established integrated natural resources management plans for the three installations adjacent to the CCNM, and maintains an environmental staff to oversee the implementation and management of its plans and associated initiatives. Until jurisdiction of the rocks and exposed reefs associated with both islands and Naval Base Point Loma can be transferred to DOD, the Navy is agreeing to serve as a CCNM Steward for the BLM's management of the portion of the CCNM adjacent to San Clemente Island, San Nicolas Island, and Naval Base Point Loma, and Begg Rock. (See Map of Navy Stewardship Area of the CCNM, Attachment B).

III. AUTHORITIES

A. **BLM Authority;** The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Section 307(b) provides that the Secretary of the Interior may undertake programs of resource management through cooperative agreements.

B. **Navy Authority:** Executive Order 13352 of August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, requires the Secretaries of Defense and Interior to carry out activities of their respective agencies that relate to the environment and natural resources in a manner that facilitates cooperative conservation. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed or interpreted as preempting any otherwise applicable Federal, State, or local law or regulation relating to the management of natural and cultural resources on or off military installations.

IV. PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT

A. **The Navy Agrees To:**

[1] A "Steward" is defined as the local CCNM point of contact for the assigned portion of the CCNM.

1. Serve as a CCNM Steward and work closely with the Core-Managing Partners of CCNM and other CCNM partners, as appropriate, in accordance with the paragraphs below.

2. Designate a contact person to serve as the U.S. Navy liaison with the CCNM.

3. Cooperate with the BLM on defining the monitoring and research needs for the CCNM and developing a strategy for implementing the protection, monitoring, and research needs consistent with the Navy's integrated natural resource management plans.

4. Provide information on existing and future Navy missions, subject to national security concerns, which could impact the CCNM, in order to assist the BLM in developing guidance on managing the CCNM.

5. Implement Navy activities to avoid or minimize negative impacts to the CCNM as practicable and consistent with the Navy mission.

6. Provide the BLM reasonable access, if needed, to the CCNM from San Clemente and San Nicolas Islands, Begg Rock, and Naval Base Point Loma, in a manner that is compatible with the Navy's activities, actions, schedules, and security.

7. Report to BLM on an annual basis on known impacts to the CCNM, and activities and/or actions related to the CCNM undertaken by the Navy.

B. The BLM Agrees To:

1. Respect any valid existing Navy rights[2] to the use of or access to the CCNM and surrounding coastal waters.

2. Provide the Navy with guidance regarding the role of a CCNM Steward (See Attachment A).

3. Keep the Navy informed and updated on matters related to the CCNM.

4. Honor Navy policies and procedures related to protecting the safety and security of San Clemente Island, San Nicolas Island, and Naval Base Point Loma, and the role they play in national defense.

5. Honor all agreements and policies of the Navy that are more protective of the CCNM than those of the BLM.

C. The Navy and the BLM Mutually Agree:

1. To seek opportunities to share information to enable BLM to carry out its protection,

[2] A "valid existing right" is defined as a legally binding property right of a person or entity at a particular point in time.

monitoring, research, and/or public education initiatives associated with the CCNM and unique coastal habitats and resource values to the extent Navy resources are available.

2. To work together to ensure consistency and coordination in the protection and management of the CCNM.

V. **OTHER PROVISIONS**

A. Limits of Authority and Funding

1. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the respective authorities or legal responsibilities of the Parties.

2. Nothing in this MOU binds the Parties to perform beyond their respective authority of each.

3. Nothing in this MOU requires any Party to assume or expend any sum in advance of appropriations available nor does this agreement obligate the Parties to spend funds on any particular project or purpose, even if funds are available.

4. The mission requirements, funding, personnel, and other priorities of either Party may affect the ability of either Party to fully implement all the items and opportunities identified in this MOU.

5. This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Specific activities that involve the transfer of money, services, or property between the Parties shall require execution of separate agreement or contract.

6. Nothing in this MOU restricts the Parties from participating in similar activities or arrangements with other public or private agencies, organizations, or individuals.

7. BLM retains the sole decision-making authority for public lands and resources it administers.

8. Activities conducted under this MOU will be in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions as contained in Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (PL 100-259) and other nondiscrimination statues, namely Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and in accordance with the regulations of 7 CFR 15, Subparts A and B, which provide that no person in the United States stall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance.

B. Amendment of Agreement. Amendments or supplements to this MOU may be proposed by either Party and shall become effective upon written approval of both Parties.

C. **Dispute Resolution.** The Parties shall attempt to resolve controversies through alternative dispute resolution methods that are mutually acceptable to both Parties. Methods may include, but are not limited to, direct negotiation, facilitation or mediation, and non-binding arbitration.

D. **Termination of Agreement.** Either Party may terminate its participation in this MOU at any time through written notification to the other Party at least 90 days prior to termination.

E. **Effective Date of Agreement.** This MOU shall become effective upon signature by both Parties. This MOU may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which will be considered an original document.

VI. APPROVALS

The Parties hereto have executed this agreement as of the last date shown below.

/s/ Leendart R. Hering — 11/5/07

Rear Admiral Leendert R. Hering, Sr. — Date
United States Navy
Commander, Navy Region Southwest

/s/ Mike Pool — 11/5/07

Mike Pool — Date
State Director
Bureau of Land Management

2 ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – CCNM Stewardship Program Fact Sheet
Attachment B - Map of Navy's Stewardship Area of the CCNM

Attachment A

CALIFORNIA COASTAL NATIONAL MONUMENT
STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM
Fact Sheet

PURPOSE:

To establish a series of California Coastal National Monument (CCNM) "Stewards" to work with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), and other CCNM partners in the long-term protection and management of the CCNM and its various resources and resource values.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

- Increase protection and monitoring of the CCNM.
- Involve adjacent landowners and resource managers of properties with various coastal and marine protection programs, initiatives, or interests associated with specific portions of the CCNM in the long-term management of the CCNM.
- Increase the knowledge and understanding of the various resources and resource values of the CCNM.
- Enhance the cooperative and collaborative management of the fragile ecosystems of California's coastline.

BACKGROUND & ORGANIZATION:

- The CCNM was established by Presidential Proclamation on January 11, 2000, and the BLM, under the Secretary of the Interior, was directed to provide long-term management of the monument.
- Through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in the summer of 2000, CDFG and CDPR were brought in as managing partners to assist the BLM, who retains the ultimate legal responsibility for the CCNM, in "preserving the [CCNM's] objects of historic and scientific interest, … mapping and understanding resources within the Monument, [and]… working with the public to explain the values of the Monument."
- In order to effectively deal with the wide array of partnership opportunities associated with the CCNM, three basic partnership categories have been developed:
    - Core-Managing Partner - Each of the three "core" agencies- -BLM, CDFG, and CDPR- - responsible for collaborating in the overall management of the entire CCNM.
    - Collaborative Partner - An organization, governmental or private, that is interested in collaborating with the core managing partners in any of a variety of programs, actions, and management elements associated with the long-term management of the CCNM.
    - Steward - A select entity with ownership and/or management responsibility for a portion of the coast that adjoins part of the CCNM and that is interested in serving as the local CCNM BLM point of contact for the adjacent portion of CCNM.

- Each Steward will work with the BLM and other CCNM partners as appropriate, in a cooperative and collaborative management effort to ensure the long-term protection of their specific portion of the CCNM, a portion that is offshore of the Steward's onshore property.

METHODS:

BLM will invite various governmental, tribal, or private organizations that own or administer coastal lands and manage programs that provide for the protection and long-term management of a specific portion of the California coast adjacent to parts of the CCNM to be a CCNM Steward for that specific portion of the CCNM.

- A stewardship agreement will be developed with each approved Steward. Each agreement will identify the assigned portion of the CCNM for which the Steward will share information with the BLM to assist the BLM in its long-term management responsibilities, and outline the expected role and responsibilities in working with the BLM and its various CCNM partners.
- The Steward will serve as the local CCNM representative for the assigned portion of the CCNM by:
    - Designating a contact person to serve as the CCNM liaison.
    - Providing a local contact point for items and actions related to the CCNM.
    - Alerting BLM to known and potential problems.
    - Identifying specific management needs, including protection, monitoring, and research.
    - Reporting to BLM on at least an annual basis on any activity or action related to the CCNM.
- BLM will provide each Steward with guidance and direction regarding the role of a CCNM Steward and keep each Steward updated on the evolving protection and management needs and requirements related to the CCNM.

INTENDED OUTCOMES & BENEFITS:

- Increased monitoring and protection of the CCNM.
- Greater involvement of partners in the long-term management of the CCNM.
- Increased awareness and knowledge of the specific resources and resource values of the CCNM.
- Regular reports on the condition of the CCNM resources and on the activities in and around the CCNM.
- Identification of actions needed to enhance the long-term management of the CCNM.
- More effective use of limited funding and capabilities.

A Partnership in Protecting Unique California Coastal Resources

7

Date/Time: 01-12-2024

Organization: -

Name: Karie Wakat

City/State: Kailua Kona/HI

Comment: What you are proposing will kill our coral reefs and ocean wildlife, such as whales and dolphins. Take this activity elsewhere.

Attachments:

10

Date/Time:	01-22-2024
Organization:	State Dept. of Hawaiian Home Lands
Name:	Ku'upuamaeole Kiyuna
City/State:	Honolulu/HI
Comment:	Aloha, Attached are DHHL comments for the above-cited OEIS project. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.
Attachments:	PO-24-010 Navy OEIS Trng-Testing (part 1) - signed.pdf

11

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o Hawai'i

SYLVIA J. LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o Hawai'i

KALI WATSON
CHAIRMAN, HHC
Ka Luna Ho'okele

KATIE L. DUCATT
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN
Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawai'i
P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

January 18, 2024

DHHL ref: PO-24-010

Sent via email: www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attn: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Aloha:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) is in receipt of your letter dated December 7, 2023 providing notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement/overseas environmental impact statement (EIS/OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT).

The proposed action will continue military training and testing activities, modernize and sustain ranges in the Study Area, add new special use airspace in Southern California, expand Southern California underwater training range, and install and maintain mine training areas off Hawai'i and Southern California.

At this time, the Navy is seeking information from DHHL regarding the scope of the EIS/OEIS pursuant to 40 CFR §1501.9, §1506.6, and §1501.2, and the project's potential to affect historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA. Please see below for DHHL's comments:

1. Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) is one of the largest marine conservation areas in the world and the single largest in the United States. Important to Native Hawaiians, PMNM is an ancestral landscape wherein traditional cultural practices continue to take place and cultural resources exist. The Temporary Operation Area (TOA) encompasses the majority of PMNM and the Operating Boundary Area (OPAREA) includes the entirety of the main Hawaiian Islands and a portion of PMNM. Although not DHHL lands, PMNM is of critical importance to beneficiaries due to its role in Native Hawaiian culture, history, and on-going cultural practices. No information on PMNM has yet been provided on the project website nor in the virtual open house. DHHL recommends that the Navy include PMNM as a resource to be evaluated and analyzed to determine the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts the proposed action may have on PMNM. Additionally, DHHL recommends that the activity-based mitigation zones that the Navy proposes to employ regarding marine species protection be extended to PMNM to safeguard the marine species and cultural and environmental resources therein.

2. The OPAREA encompasses the entirety of the main Hawaiian Islands and its surrounding waters. Native Hawaiians have a rich history in natural and cultural marine resource management and stewardship of marine ecosystems, inclusive of deep-sea areas beyond coastal waters and shorelines. Traditional deep-sea practices that continue to be perpetuated by Native Hawaiians include but are not limited to fishing, long-distance paddling, performing burial ceremonies, and depositing piko (umbilical cord). These traditional and customary rights are acknowledged and protected under the Hawai'i Constitution. DHHL lands extend to coastal communities on Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawai'i Island. DHHL recommends that the Navy consult with Native Hawaiians and homestead communities to better understand traditional and customary practices that take place at sea and how best to mitigate project effects on those constitutionally protected rights of Native Hawaiians.

3. No historical or archaeological overview of the area has yet been provided. Included in the waters within PMNM are submerged maritime heritage resources including but not limited to aircrafts, shipwrecks, and archaeological sites. As previously discussed, the waters surrounding the main Hawaiian Islands are also home to burials and other cultural practices important to Native Hawaiians. DHHL recommends that the Navy consider conducting an archaeological literature review of the area to better understand any possible impacts on historic properties. Should the State Historic Preservation Division provide comments, please share those with DHHL as well.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments. We look forward to continued participation. Please feel free to contact DHHL should you have any questions.

Aloha,

Kali Watson

Kali Watson, Chairman
Hawaiian Homes Commission

Date/Time:	01-22-2024
Organization:	-
Name:	Nina & David Monasevitch
City/State:	Lihue/HI
Comment:	See attached.
Attachments:	EIS comments 2024.docx

12

Nina & David Monasevitch
4457 Laukini Rd.
Lihue, HI 96766
December 11, 2017

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific
HSTT EIS/OEIS
Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

RE: Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS 2024

To Project Manager,

The EIS is insufficient for the following reasons:

Missing comprehensive research on cetacean mass stranding deaths due to the following factors: panic, bubble formation and/or decompression sickness from Naval sonar:

1) Sonar caused panic reactions leading to strandings followed by death
2) Sonar caused decompression sickness (the bends) followed by death
3) The bends caused by sonar even in the absence of panic

Missing details on training activities, particularly RIMPAC activities—what are other countries are doing here in our waters during RIMPAC? Each RIMPAC should require it's own EIS including exactly what all other countries are doing.

Lack of process for truly independent observers.

Lack of information on Navy taking responsibility for cleaning up debris already left behind from previous activities including unexploded ordinance, cables etc.

Lumping of species and areas between Hawaii and California is highly unscientific. There are several marine mammal species that are endemic to Hawaii and only live in Hawaii.

1

Insufficient details on how high seas migratory species are impacted.

Insufficient monitoring techniques. Many species are deep divers and very elusive and cannot be seen from the surface.

Lack of transparency/species specificity on threshold monitoring.

Take limits are arbitrarily high.

Lack of discussion on alternatives to active sonar. In this day and age there must be other ways to detect submarines that are less destructive to marine mammals and all marine life. You have affirmative duty to protect under the MMPA, a failure to minimize impact to "the least practical adverse impact." MMPA- Section 1371(a)(5)(A)(i)(II)(aa).

In relation to the above mentioned marine mammal deaths caused by panic reactions, decompression sickness and the bends caused sonar, in June 2012 I requested you include the following scientific literature in the EIS. As far as I can see they have not been included. I am again stating the findings in the following papers MUST be included in the EIS:

D.S. Houser, R. Howard and S. Ridgway, 'Can Diving-Induced Tissue Nitrogen Supersaturation Increase the Chance of Acoustically Driven Bubble Growth in Marine Mammals?' 213 Journal of Theoretical Biology 183, 190 (2001).

L.A. Crum, M.R. Bailey, J. Guan, P.R. Hilmo, S.G. Kargl, T.J. Matula, and O.A. Sapozhnikov, 'Monitoring Bubble Growth in Supersaturated Blood and Tissue ex vivo and the Relevance to Marine Mammal Bioeffects.' 6(3) Acoustics Research Letters Online 214 (2005).

J. R. Potter, 'A Possible Mechanism for Acoustic Triggering of Decompression Sickness Symptoms in Deep-Diving Marine Mammals' Paper presented at the IEEE International Symposium on Underwater Technology 2004, Taipei Taiwan, April 2004.

Also include the following research in the EIS analysis;

PARSONS, E. C. M.; SARAH J. DOLMAN; ANDREW J. WRIGHT; NAOMI A. ROSE and W. C. G. BURNS. MARINE POLLUTION BULLETIN 56(7):1248-1257. 2008. Navy sonar and cetaceans: Just how much does the gun need to smoke

before we act?

TYACK, PETER L. JOURNAL OF MAMMALOGY 89(32):549-558. 2008. Implications for marine mammals of large-scale changes in the marine acoustic environment.

WRIGHT, A. J.; N. AGUILAR SOTO; A. BALDWIN; M. BATESON; C. BEALE; C. CLARK; T. DEAK; E. EDWARDS; A. FERNANDEZ; A. GODINHO; L. HATCH; A. KAKUSCHKE; D. LUSSEAU; D. MARTINEAU; L. ROMERO; L. WEILGART; B. WINTLE; G. NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA and V. MARTIN. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE PSYCHOLOGY 20(2-3):274-316. 2007. Do marine mammals experience stress related to anthropogenic noise?

Faerber, M .M., R. W. Baird. 2010. Does a lack of observed beaked whale strandings in military exercise areas mean no impacts have occurred? A comparison of stranding and detection probabilities in the Canary and main Hawaiian Islands. Marine Mammal Science DOI: 10.1111/j.1748-7692.2010.00370.x

The EIS needs to include comprehensive research on the short and long term effects of sonar to all marine mammals, even if sonar activity does not cause stranding or death, or any other “obvious” signs of effects.

Given the above lack of sufficient science and precautions, we support the No Action Alternative.

A few realities about the state of our oceans—they are literally in crisis:

All cetacean species are well below pre-whaling numbers, many are endangered and threatened. Ninety percent of all large fish species are gone. There are now only one percent of sharks left worldwide. Green sea turtle (the principle grazers of the reefs) numbers are a fraction of their previous numbers. Coral reefs are critically endangered and one of the most threatened ecosystems on the planet.

What are the consequences of business as usual? We are looking at slime as the future ocean. For documentation on this see research by Dr. Jeremy Jackson at Scripps Institute of Oceanography, UCLA

As America's only island state, Hawaii is uniquely vulnerable to the consequences of ocean degradation and biological loss of species.
Given that Hawaii is an isolated state with stewardship responsibility over the largest marine areas in the nation, the U.S. Navy should be a leader in protection of this marine ecosystem. You have the budget, let's see some stewardship. In addition to the health and survival of protected and endangered species, Hawaii's food supply, recreational activities, and economy are all dependent upon a healthy ocean.

The use of active sonar to protect the aircraft carriers of the US Navy makes the assumption that there are countries with submarine technology we are at war or are potentially at war with.

We are not at war with Russia or China. Unless we are mistaken, the USA hasn't been attacked by a submarine since the Nazi Regime used U- Boats as part of their arsenal in their attempt to take over the world by force.

The reality is that there is no foreign submarine threat to American forces patrolling the oceans of the world.

The United States hasn't been attacked since 1941. The result- Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The world has watched the USA destroy country after country for over 70 years. No one wants to attack the USA. No country wants to be provoked into attacking the US either.

Therefore, the wanton use of active sonar for US asset protection at the peril of marine life is a ruse.

There is a mass extinction happening now. The citizens and soldiers of United States have a responsibility to do every thing in their power to protect the remaining life on this planet great and small.

Find alternative technology. Abandon that which kills marine life. Learn to do more with less money like the rest of us have had to do since the lion's share of our taxes has been going to the military.

Sincerely,

4

Nina Monasevitch

David Monasevitch

5

Date/Time: 01-23-2024

Organization: self

Name: Robin Tierney

City/State: Daytona Beach/FL

Comment: Please do not engage in activities that harms whales and other sea life. They are thinking feeling beings just trying to live and they are good for the earth. Thank you.

Attachments:

13

Date/Time: 01-23-2024

Organization: Shoreline Preservation Coalition (a Hawaii non-profit Group)

Name: Richard D Sterman

City/State: Haleiwa/HI

Comment: Aloha... I'm one of four Directors of a Hawaii non-profit group called "Shoreline Preservation Coalition", dealing with preserving our shorelines and - of course - the reefs that protect our shorelines. Of late - there seems to be a problem with our Coral Reefs dying. If they don't make a come-back, our houses will be falling into the ocean by the dozens! One has already fallen in! Right in front of these homes (Sunset Beach Area of the North Shore of Oahu) is a Coral Reef that has died. A respected Marine Biologist from our island has made a claim that it is the NAVY discharging large amounts of electricity and other forms of electro-magnetic discharges as part of their testing of their technology and maybe even electro-magnetic weapon testings that have caused the reefs to die. It has already been proven (off the coast of Hanalei on the North Shore of Kauai) that these emissions were killing THEIR reefs and the NAVY has stopped their testing off THAT coast - and miraculously, the reefs started to come back to life! WE WANT THAT for our own coastlines! If there's even a 'chance' that your 'testing' is 'killing' our reefs (not to mention our other sea-life) then we need the Environmental Assessment to include a study of the possible deterioration of Calcium Carbonate in these reefs due to your activities off our coast! NOTICE: If it is proven that NAVY activities is killing our reefs and the deterioration of our reefs is causing our accelerated Sand-Erosion and our homes and properties fall partially or fully into the ocean and onto our beaches ... then - you are put on notice that we WILL sue the EPA, U.S. Government and whoever else allowed these activities to be done without full consideration of the environmental impacts on not only our Sea-Life, but also our Coral-Reefs! THANK YOU from our group, made up of Beachfront Owners on the island of Oahu with the law firm of Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher.

Attachments:

14

Date/Time: 01-23-2024

Organization: Property owner

Name: Tim Reed

City/State: Honolulu/HI

Comment: I have spoken to the marine biologist in depth and lived on the North shore of Oahu over the last 50 years. The reefs are dying and the erosion is a major concern. If the elimination or accommodation to move the testing further out to sea has proven positive on Kauai the absolutely the same adjustments need to be made for the North Shore of Oahu.

Attachments:

15

Date/Time: 01-23-2024

Organization: HAWAII RESIDENT 60 YRS

Name: Martin Hoffman

City/State: Honolulu/HI

Comment: I am strongly against the testing off the coast of OAHU & Kauai the reefs are suffering and the shoreline is having asst issues and i believe these tests and release of electromagnetic energy into the ocean is a very bad problem for the environment , whales are effected im sure? Grey whales are in decline and were not sure of all the negative effects b this may babe one of many negative results. Please discontinue these test in Hawaii state waters

Martin Hoffman 59-311 Ke-Nui Rd. Haleiwa Hi 96712.
949-547-8713 cell.

Attachments:

16

Date/Time: 01-24-2024

Organization: -

Name: Terri Armao

City/State: Arlington/VA

Comment: I oppose any and all training exercises/at-sea military readiness activities in whale migration, feeding, and calving areas within the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area. Your operations have been shown to stun, kill and or deafen whales and dolphins. Move your activities out of any sensitive areas. I also oppose any plans current or future by the Navy to modernize and sustain its ranges inane areas that harm marine mammals in any manner whether temporary or permanently.

Attachments:

17

Date/Time: 01-24-2024

Organization: Packs Consulting

Name: Earl

City/State: Waialua/HI

Comment: Our North Shore coral reefs face a critical threat, with decay endangering homes. In Helms Bay near Dillingham Airfield, reef deterioration is linked to such erosion. A local Marine Biologist attributes the issue to discharges of electricity and other forms of electromagnetic energy, possibly from testing new technologies and electromagnetic weapons. Evidence from protests off Hanalei's coast led the NAVY to halt testing, resulting in reef recovery. We advocate for a similar resolution to revive our own coastline, preventing further erosion and home risks.

Attachments:

18

Date/Time: 01-29-2024

Organization: Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous People (SPI)

Name: Tina Calderon

City/State: Marina Del Rey/CA

Comment: To whom it may concern; As a Culture Bearer of Chumash and Tongva decent, and as the Director of Ocean Protectors Program for SPI, I have deep concerns about the safety of all ocean life, including key plant species such as coral reefs and kelp as well as sea animals. I also want to be assured that the local Tribes have been consulted and heard, most especially the Kanaka Maoli of Hawaii, the 'Iipai-Tiipai Kumeyaay of San Diego County, the Payomkawichum of the southern California coast as well as the Ventureno Chumash and North Coast Chumash. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my concerns as public comment. 'Aweeshkone xaa ~ Thank you, Tina Calderon

Attachments:

19

Date/Time:	01-29-2024
Organization:	-
Name:	L. Osterer
City/State:	Koloa/HI
Comment:	See attached.
Attachments:	OEIS 2024.docx

20

After reading the NEPA virtual open house presentation, I'd like you to consider the following:

Both prior EIS for Point Magu in 2002 and 2022 did not include the use of sonar or in-water explosives. Southern California and Hawaii are most similarly in need of whale protection from acoustical damage. However, lumping of species and areas between Hawaii and California is of concern since there are several marine mammal species that are endemic to Hawaii and migratory patterns vary.

Surface observation is insufficient to detect whales in these areas. It seems the areas were chosen historically for the convenience of nearby navy bases. Whereas, to avoid marine mammal harm and prevent further environmental effects, it would be preferable by far to utilize areas away from both mammal and human populations. 71% of the earth is ocean. Come on, why can't the navy use a place that is less inhabited and safer for all! This should be a number one priority for mitigation of environmental effects.

The military has been immune to normal EIS considerations with unlimited TAKES (killings) for their activities. No other organization would be given such liberties. It's time to be treated the same to maintain humane practices to preserve all species, to minimize damage, as would be required for any research. Comprehensive research is available and should be included on cetacean mass stranding deaths due to the following factors: panic, bubble formation and/or decompression sickness from Naval sonar:
1. Sonar caused panic reactions leading to strandings followed by death.
2. Sonar caused decompression sickness (the bends) followed by death.

These recurring maneuvers, appropriately named RIMPAC WAR GAMES, are not so much for training as show. These ships are out to sea on maneuvers and training constantly. They don't need an excuse to play and compare with 23 other countries.

Countries which have been and are potential adversaries are included in these practices. One has to question the benefits of sharing close observation of our most advanced equipment, weapons, and strategies, all in the guise of proving "friendly alliances." It's more like a show, a parade of strength, as China does in celebrations. Plus, popularizing these "war games" in the news puts these populated areas more at risk for spying and terroristic attacks.

Each RIMPAC should require its own EIS including all training activities of all countries participating.

Independent observers should be included in the training activities and clean up.

Clean-up activities should be described, required for mitigation and documented, including sunken vessels, unexploded ordinances, and cables. These factors were not necessarily handled sufficiently in prior RIMPAC events.

There is insufficient data on migratory patterns which must be updated.

There are insufficient monitoring techniques, which need to be developed to detect deep diving species.

Further mitigation needs to be addressed with alternatives to active sonar. Sonar detection of submarines has proven insufficient in cases where ships run silently to avoid detection. Other technologies may be more useful.

Under MMPA- Section 1371(a)(5)(A)(i)(II)(aa), participants have a duty to protect and minimize impact. Kindly refer to the 2008 article, "Navy sonar and cetaceans: Just how much does the gun need to smoke before we act?" PARSONS, E. C. M.; SARAH J. DOLMAN; ANDREW J. WRIGHT; NAOMI A. ROSE and W. C. G. BURNS. MARINE POLLUTION BULLETIN 56(7):1248-1257. 2008

The following literature should be included in the EIS as minimal evidence of your intention to protect marine mammals:

"Implications for marine mammals of large-scale changes in the marine acoustic environment." TYACK, PETER L. JOURNAL OF MAMMALOGY 89(32):549-558. 2008.

"Does a lack of observed beaked whale strandings in military exercise areas mean no impacts have occurred? A comparison of stranding and detection probabilities in the Canary and main Hawaiian Islands." Faerber, M .M., R. W. Baird. 2010. Marine Mammal Science DOI: 10.1111/j.1748-7692.2010.00370.x

The EIS needs to be preceded by comprehensive research on the short and long-term effects of sonar to all marine mammals, especially since many may go undetected when their dead bodies sink to the ocean floor.

Given the above lack of sufficient science and precautions, an alternative of "No Action" should be considered.

Please understand, the oceans are literally in crisis. Whaling decimated the cetacean species, and none has recovered to prior levels. Many are endangered and threatened. Ninety percent of all large fish species are gone. Only one percent of sharks are left, mainly due to shark fin takes. The remaining green sea turtles need protection after mass hunting. And all of our coral reefs are critically endangered due to climate warming. These facts make RIMPAC more devastating if left unchecked.

Will Hawaii beaches be covered with slime? Will algae block out the sunlight for phytoplankton? Dr. Jeremy Jackson research at Scripps Institute of Oceanography, UCLA has documented that Hawaii is uniquely vulnerable to the consequences of ocean degradation and biological loss of species. Mass extinctions are underway. The U.S. Navy could be a leader in protection of our marine ecosystem. Think of our military budget shared with environment protection so we have something left to protect.

In addition to the health and survival of protected and endangered species, Hawaii's food supply, recreational activities, and economy are all dependent upon a healthy ocean.

In summary, with the advent of hypersonic missiles and nuclear-powered submarines, these RIMPAC practices are incidental and have not been shown to be a deterrent to war. Wars are adding to the destruction of habitable areas and genocide. It's time to put military funding into alternative technology that does not kill marine life and dismiss the mindset that practicing war with other nations provides security.

Thank you for your consideration, from a concerned Hawaii resident.

Date/Time:	01-29-2024
Organization:	Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Name:	Kamakana Ferreira
City/State:	Honolulu/HI
Comment:	See attached PDF.
Attachments:	01.22.24 OHA Comment_NEPA Public Scoping for Navy Training OEIS.pdf

21

PHONE (808) 594-1888 FAX (808) 594-1938

STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
560 N. NIMITZ HWY., SUITE 200
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96817

January 22, 2024

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
ATTN: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Re: Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS/Overseas EIS (NEPA)
Hawai'i-California Training and Testing Study Area

Aloha:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is in receipt of your Notice of Intent (NOI) December 7, 2024, letter seeking comments on the scope of the Department of the Navy (DON) Hawai'i-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) to assess potential environmental effects associated with the proposed action to conduct at-sea military readiness activities within the HCTT study area. The United States (U.S.) DON will be preparing this EIS/OEIS in accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). The NOI states that the current proposed activities are similar in scope to what was assessed in the 2018 HCTT EIS/OEIS. Thus, the new EIS/OEIS is characterized as a "follow on" NEPA analysis to support renewal of current Federal regulatory permits and authorizations that expire in December of 2025.

Proposed activities include training and research (i.e., sonar, explosives, and other underwater sounds), development, testing, and evaluation within the Hawaii Operating Area, the California Operating Area, and the Pacific Ocean transit corridor connecting the two. The DON further proposes to modernize and sustain its ranges in a manner to support these readiness activities. This will include new special use airspace in Southern California, an expansion of an underwater training range near San Clemente Island, and installation and maintenance of mine training areas off Hawai'i and Southern California.

The OHA is the constitutionally established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians.[1] OHA has substantive obligations to protect the cultural and natural resources of Hawai'i for its beneficiaries.[2] Accordingly, OHA is

[1] Haw. Const. Art. XII Sec. 5.
[2] See HRS § 10.

required to (1) serve as principal public agency in the State of Hawai'i responsible for the performance, development and coordination of programs and activities relating to native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; (2) assess the policies and practices of other agencies impacting native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; and (3) conduct advocacy efforts for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians.[3]

OHA provides the following comments pertaining updated studies, marine sanctuaries, incidental take, cumulative impacts, and consultation planning:

Updated Studies

In review of the 2018 EIS/OEIS, OHA observes that most of the studies pertaining to marine mammal populations and migratory patterns relied on studies that took place between 2011 to 2015. Section 3.7 details that the information was used to determine seasonal mitigation areas that were developed in coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service. The section further mentions that "Navy funded efforts" as being underway to further improve understanding and ability to predict how stressors ultimately effect marine mammal populations. OHA is further aware that the DON applied to increase the incidental take of large whales from 3 to 5 per year in 2021.

OHA would expect that the most up-to-date studies will be used in the forthcoming draft EIS/OEIS, with a clear discussion on how the DON's understanding of populations and migrations have changed (or not) since publication of the 2018 EIS/OEIS. With a projected publication of a draft EIS/OEIS in 2024, some of the studies referenced in the 2018 EIS/OEIS would be a decade old or more. The draft EIS/OEIS should further provide updates on the mentioned "Navy funded efforts" in the 2018 EIS/OEIS and share how such information has changed (or not) the DON's understanding and ability to predict how stressors effect marine mammal populations. While OHA specifically calls out examples pertaining to marine mammal population studies, our comment should be applicable to any study referenced as part of the assessment of impacts to all environmental components. In other words, the DON should always be using the most up to date information as possible and consistently provide discussion on how conditions and subsequent mitigation measures have changed (or not) or will change (or not).

Marine Sanctuaries

In the Culture Resources discussion, Section 3.10, of the 2018 EIS/OEIS, OHA observes that Papahānaumokuākea is actually discussed as a World Heritage Site within the context of National Historic Preservation Act Section (NHPA) 106 compliance. The monument was described as being within the Temporary Operating Area of the Hawai'i Range Complex and that it could be susceptible to sonic booms or utilized for emergency situations. However, an emphasis was placed on the fact that no actual physical activities

[3] HRS § 10-3.

would occur in the monument area (unless there was an emergency), and that any possible impacts to cultural voyaging or wayfinding would be temporary. OHA believes the DON should reasonably disclose what qualifies as an emergency and what actions could occur in Papahānaumokuākea or any marine sanctuary as part of the NEPA process.

OHA does appreciate inclusion of the Papahānaumokuākea monument within the discussion of NHPA Section 106 compliance given the area's cultural importance and presence of numerous historic properties. However, we do question why other marine sanctuaries with similar characteristics within both the Hawai'i operating area (HOA) and California operating area (COA) were omitted. For example, both the South Molokai Reef and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary are within the HOA. Notably, the South Molokai Reef has been described as a national treasure and is currently home to a number of historic fishponds. Further, it is believed to be sacred to Hina, the Hawaiian akua of the Moon. In regards to the COA, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary exists off the coast of Southern California, which also hosts a number of cultural resources that are important to the Chumash tribe.[4] If not already done so, the Chumash, Pomo, Ohlone, Makah, and any other Pacific Coast tribes should be invited to consult as part of NEPA and NHPA processes. These sanctuaries should be included as part of the NEPA analysis and NHPA discussion as they are comprised of historic and cultural resources.

OHA further advises that these sanctuaries be evaluated as traditional cultural properties (TCP). Per the National Park Service's National Register Bulletin No. 38, a TCP is defined as:

> "A property that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (a) are rooted in that community's history, and (b) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identify of the community."

In specific regards to Papahānaumokuākea, it is a sacred place to Native Hawaiians that supports a diversity of life, including hundreds of native species and the largest extent of coral reefs in the archipelago.[5] The ancient belief system of Hawai'i still exists and acknowledges the island of Mokumanamana[3] as the potent portal that presides at the boundary between pō and ao. This boundary is the northern limit of the sun's journey on the horizon, the Tropic of Cancer, reverently referred to as Ke Alanui Polohiwa a Kāne, the dark glistening path of Kāne, whose kinolau as Kānehoalani details the sun and its movements on the horizon. Nihoa and Mokumanamana collectively contain more than 140 archaeological sites that evince the unique agricultural, religious, and settlement efforts

[4] The Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary has a Chumash community working group informing its sanctuary advisory council.
[5] See Mai Ka Po Mai, A Native Hawaiian Guidance Document for the Management of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, prepared by OHA in 2021.

of Native Hawaiians in this region. There is no question that Papahānaumokuākea would qualify as a TCP.

Similarly, its OHA's understanding that the other sanctuaries within the HOA and COA are utilized by cultural practitioners and contain numerous historic and cultural resources; thus, we do not see why these sanctuaries would not at least be considered as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as TCPs as well.

Incidental Take

As mentioned above in our first comment, the DON had to increase their take of large whales due to incidences in 2021 in which two separate Navy vessels struck whales off the coast of Southern California in June and July. Separately, a foreign vessel struck two fin whales off the coast earlier in May 2021. Originally, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued a take of 3 large whales per year, but had to increase this authorization to 2 additional whales per year for DON activities spanning 2018 to 2025.

To Hawaiians, whales are the largest ocean manifestation of the Hawaiian akua (god), Kanaloa – akua of the ocean realm, voyaging, ocean animals, and fresh underground water.[6] Some of his other forms or kinolau are known to include the nihui (white shark), he'e (octopus), hihimanu (sting ray), honu (turtle), and nai'a (dolphin). Kanaloa is one of the four major akua kāne (male gods) – Kāne, Kanaloa, Kū, and Lono. He is arguably the most common deity across Oceania with various names (e.g., Tangaroa, Takaroa, Tagaloa, Ta'aroa). Kanaloa was the creator of the world and superior god in many parts of Polynesia (e.g., Marquesas, New Zealand) except Hawai'i.[7] While not viewed as prominent throughout all of Hawai'i, it is believed that Kanaloa's importance was more pronounced on Lanai, Molokai, Maui, and Kaho'olawe. Coincidentally, these islands are also the same islands in which whales were found in significant numbers during the mid to late 19th century.[8]

Further alarming to OHA is the current incidental take authorization issued by NOAA that allows a cumulative take in the thousands of marine mammal species. According to a complaint filed by Earth Justice in December 2013,[9] "National Marine

[6] See Libo, Susan A. 2010. *A Local Perspective of Hawaii's Whaling Economy: Whale Traditions and Government Regulation of the Kingdom's Native Seamen and Whale Fishery.* Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii.
[7] See McKinzie, edit. N.D. N *a Mo'i o Kaho'olawe:. The Administrators of Kaho'olawe.* Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, Consultant Report No. 15.
[8] See Herman, Louis. 1979. Humpback Whales in Hawaiian Waters: A Study in Historical Ecology. *Pacific Science, Vol 33, No 1.* University Press of Hawaii.
[9] Sese Conservation Council for Hawai'i, ä ñon-profit corporation Animal Welfare Institute, a non-profit corporation; Center for Biological Diversity, a non-profit corporation; and Ocean Mammal Institute, a non-profit corporation, v. National Marine Fisheries Service; United States Department of Commerce; Penny Prtizker, Secretary of Commerce.

Fisheries determined that, over the next five years, the Navy's use of sonar, other active acoustic sources and explosives for training and testing in the [Hawai'i-Southern California Training and Testing] HSTT Study Area will likely result in the deaths of up to 140 marine mammals, cause permanent injury to more than 2,000 additional marine mammals, and inflict additional harm to marine mammals nearly 9.6 million times by disrupting vital behaviors such as migration, nursing, breeding, feeding, and sheltering." The take of Kanaloa is overwhelming.

OHA expects the matter pertaining to the DON's request for an increase in incidental take to be fully discussed within the EIS/OEIS as well as resolution on any filed complaints related to incidental take. The most up to date studies should be used to provide the most accurate incidental take request going forward. All efforts should be made to minimize take as much as possible, with a clear indication in the EIS/OEIS of how this is demonstrated. While administratively another incidental take could be requested if projected numbers are off again, this is not a preferable outcome nor a means to instill trust in the DON's research and modeling. As the kinolau of one of our akua, the DON must take more care to honor their commitments to not take more than is needed from Kanaloa.

Cumulative Impacts

OHA recommends that the DON's consideration of the cumulative impacts at a minimum must consider activities that are of an extraction nature (i.e., deep-sea mining) and that would further frustrate any kind of recovery and protection such as the following: the longliner fishing fleets (foreign and domestic) that harbor in Honolulu; the Aquarium Trade as it is extractive and effects near shore ocean life; and, Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) and other related exercises that occur by any of the other armed forces operating in Hawaiian waters and or on land that impact our fresh water and ocean systems. By cumulative, OHA specifically means the cumulative impact on any and all lifeforms, sacred places and spaces, and the health and wellbeing of all natural and cultural resources that will be affected by the DON's proposed training activities and modernization efforts.

In review of the 2018 EIS/OEIS, Table 4.2-1, activities like the aquarium trade, foreseeable future deep-sea mining activities[10], and annual RIMPAC activities do not appear to be acknowledged as a source of possible cumulative impacts. While commercial fishing is discussed, a greater level of specificity should be included to directly address longliner fishing, both from foreign and domestic parties.

The 2018 EIS/OEIS further mentions that the "quality" of information on past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions varies and that quantifications were done where possible. In the absence of quantitative data, a "qualitative assessment" was made by "professional judgement and experience." The document appears to concede that given the large-scale study area, that "analysis of the incremental contribution of cumulative

[10] Canadian based "The Metals Company" planned operations in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone and Honolulu Harbor.

stress that the proposed action may have on a given resources is largely qualitative and speculative." OHA finds this situation unfortunate as essentially DON training activities are continuing without solid quantitative analysis and potentially without appropriate mitigations. Minimally, the DON should indicate in the document, especially in regards to cumulative impacts, where quantitative data is used versus qualitative. If findings and information are speculative, then the DON must call out where such speculation exists. The DON should then indicate ways in which quantitative and non-speculative data can be obtained through additional research or a means of appropriate monitoring actions.

Further, it should be made clear to the reader how follow up research data and monitoring mechanisms can or could trigger amendments to existing mitigation measures. OHA would expect this to include a statement on what Federal processes and respective timelines would be triggered to incorporate new data and proposed mitigation measures.

Consultation Planning

The DON may want to craft an actual NEPA public participation plan as an optional tool pursuant to 32 CFR 775.11 as a means to set protocols (i.e., meeting minutes/notes, comment periods, speaking time allocations, engagement with Indigenous Peoples). All prior consulting parties that participated in the 2018 EIS/OEIS should serve as the starting pointing for current outreach efforts. As the 2018 EIS/OEIS was a very long document (in excess of 2000 pages), a longer comment period should be allotted for the current EIS/OEIS. 40 CFR 1506(d) requires a minimum comment period of 45 days, but subsection (e) goes on to state that the minimum comment period may be shortened or extended. The DON should consider a 60-day comment period in this case.

In regards to public meetings and consultation events, OHA recommends that minimally 30-day's notice be provided. As a means to assist the DON, OHA could be provided with advance notice of any such meetings so that we can plan to disseminate information via our monthly newspaper, *Ka Wai Ola*, and online social media outlets. This may assist with outreach to the Native Hawaiian community. Any public engagement meetings or consultations should allow speakers to speak on topics for at least 5 to 10 minutes given the voluminous amount of information that the EIS/OEIS will cover. Previously, OHA received concerns about speakers allegedly being only allotted 3 minutes of time during consultations for the 2018 EIS/OEIS.

OHA further notes that in November 2022, a memorandum was issued by the Executive Office of the President, Council on Environmental Quality, providing guidance to Federal departments and agencies on Indigenous Knowledges. Notably, this includes guidance on inclusion of such knowledge in the NEPA and NHPA processes, encouragement of early and sustained engagement, maintaining trust, and even developing an "Indigenous Knowledge Plan". Indeed, a public participation plan could include a robust Indigenous Knowledge component that specifically incorporates guidance from the CEQ November 2022 memo.

Closing Remarks

OHA looks forward to seeing our comments taken into consideration as the HCTT EIS/OEIS is being prepared. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment. Should you have any questions, please contact OHA's Lead Compliance Specialist, Kamakana C. Ferreira at (808) 594-0227 or by email at kamakanaf@oha.org.

'O wau iho nō me ka 'oia 'i'o,

Stacy Ferreira
Ka Pouhana, Chief Executive Officer

SF:kf

CC: Carmen Hulu Lindsey, OHA Board of Trustees Chairperson

Date/Time:	01-29-2024
Organization:	Earthjustice
Name:	David Henkin
City/State:	Honolulu/HI
Comment:	See attached pdf.
Attachments:	

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January 29, 2024

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860–3134

Submitted via *http://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis*

Re: Scoping Comments on Hawaii-California Testing and Training Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement, 88 Fed. Reg. 86,885 (Dec. 15, 2023)

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity and Conservation Council for Hawai'i, we are responding to the U.S. Navy's request for comments on the scope of the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS). *See* 88 Fed. Reg. 86,885 (Dec. 15, 2023). As detailed below, to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Navy must consider important new scientific information and examine alternatives that safeguard marine wildlife and habitat.

The proposed activities include an expansion of training and testing activities off California and Hawai'i, including active sonar and explosives. The Navy's proposal seeks to ramp up training and testing to include new special use airspace in Southern California, an expansion of water-based activities off California, and installation of mine training areas of Hawai'i and California. These expanded areas and activities threaten to expose more marine mammals and other protected species to risks from high-intensity noise, explosions, and vessel strikes.

The Navy must consider alternatives that focus on reducing harm to marine mammals and other protected species. Past experience demonstrates that the Navy can accomplish its mission while minimizing, if not eliminating entirely, destructive testing and training activities in biologically important areas. We urge the Navy to fully evaluate mitigation and alternatives that ensure the conservation and recovery of whales, sea turtles, corals, and other vulnerable marine species.

We want to bring several new scientific studies to the Navy's attention that warrant consideration. These concern the impacts of military activities on wildlife, new science on biologically important areas, and the status of wildlife that the proposed activities may adversely affect.

1. **The Navy Must Prepare a Robust Environmental Impact Statement under NEPA**

NEPA is our "basic national charter for protection of the environment."[1] Congress enacted NEPA to "promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment."[2] To that end, NEPA requires federal agencies to take a "hard look" at the environmental consequences of their actions before taking action.[3] In this way, NEPA ensures that federal agencies "will have available, and will carefully consider, detailed information concerning significant environmental impacts" and that such information "will be made available to the larger [public] audience that may play a role in both the decisionmaking process and the implementation of the decision."[4]

To this end, NEPA requires federal agencies to prepare a detailed environmental impact statement for any "major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment."[5] An EIS must examine both the direct impacts of an agency action, as well as potential cumulative impacts.[6] Direct impacts are those "caused by the action and occur at the same time and place," while indirect impacts are those "caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable" and include growth inducing effects.[7] Cumulative impacts "are effects on the environment that result from the incremental effects of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable [future] actions."[8]

In addition, NEPA requires that an EIS "[e]valuate reasonable alternatives to the proposed action," discussing each alternative "in detail, … so that reviewers may evaluate their comparative merits."[9] This requirement ensures agencies do not undertake projects "without intense consideration of other more ecologically sound courses of action, including shelving the entire project, or of accomplishing the same result by entirely different means."[10] Importantly, this evaluation extends to considering more environmentally protective alternatives and mitigation measures.[11]

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[1] *Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. Bernhardt*, 982 F.3d 723, 734 (9th Cir. 2020) (citation omitted).

[2] 42 U.S.C. § 4321.

[3] *Kleppe v. Sierra Club*, 427 U.S. 390, 410, n. 21 (1976); 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1(a).

[4] *Robertson v. Methow Valley Citizens Council*, 490 U.S. 332, 349 (1989).

[5] 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C).

[6] *Id.*; 40 C.F.R. § 1508.1(g).

[7] 40 C.F.R. § 1508.8.

[8] *Id.* § 1508.1(g)(3).

[9] *Id.* § 1502.14(a), (b).

[10] *Envt'l Def. Fund., Inc. v. U.S. Army Corps. of Eng'rs*, 492 F.2d 1123, 1135 (5th Cir. 1974); *see also City of New York v. U.S. Dept. of Transp.*, 715 F.2d 732, 743 (2d Cir. 1983) (NEPA's requirement for consideration of a range of alternatives is intended to prevent the EIS from becoming "a foreordained formality.").

[11] *See, e.g., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho v. Veneman*, 313 F.3d 1094, 1122-1123 (9th Cir. 2002) (and cases cited therein); *see also* 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14(e).

The public must be given adequate information about the project and its environmental effects to be able to provide meaningful input before the Navy makes a final decision regarding the course of action to adopt. "NEPA's public comment procedures are at the heart of the NEPA review process."[12] "This reflects the paramount Congressional desire to internalize opposing viewpoints into the decision-making process to ensure that an agency is cognizant of all the environmental trade-offs that are implicit in a decision."[13]

a. The Navy Must Consider New Information (Including New, Peer-Reviewed Studies) Regarding the Environmental Effects of Military Activities

The Navy must consider new, peer-reviewed scientific information on the adverse effects of active sonar on marine mammals and other wildlife.

Especially notable are the new recommendations by Southall et al. that describe a framework for determining the behavioral responses of marine mammals to sonar.[14] It also provides a severity scale for behavioral responses among other important developments that will assist the Navy in analyzing behavioral responses to sonar and other noise sources.[15] In addition, recent science raises serious concerns that using all-or-nothing thresholds may grossly underestimate effects.[16] The Navy's environmental review must contain a robust and meaningful analysis of not only the auditory injury that may result from sonar, but also of the behavioral responses that interfere with essential life functions like foraging, communication, and reproduction.

Blue Whales

Recent scientific research confirms that blue whales are extremely sensitive to military sonar.[17] A model of energetic costs from sonar disturbance found that lost feeding opportunities have a significant energetic cost, and, for example, blue whales with a mild response may suffer greater energetic costs than other species because of lost foraging opportunities.[18] A new study highlights that the adverse effects depend on the context, not just the intensity or duration of

[12] *State of Cal. v. Block*, 690 F.2d 753, 770-71 (9th Cir. 1982).

[13] *Id.* at 771.

[14] Southall, Brandon L. et al., Marine Mammal Noise Exposure Criteria: Assessing the Severity of Marine Mammal Behavioral Responses to Human Noise, 47 *Aquatic Mammals* 5 (2021). Please note that the scientific papers referenced in this letter are attached hereto. Given the 20MB limit on uploaded files, we will provide the referenced papers in several installments.

[15] Southall et al., 2021, *see* Table 3.

[16] Tyack, Peter L. and Len Thomas, Using Dose–Response Functions to Improve Calculations of the Impact of Anthropogenic Noise, 29 *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems* S1 (2019).

[17] Southall, Brandon L. et al., Behavioral Responses of Individual Blue Whales (*Balaenoptera Musculus*) to Mid-Frequency Military Sonar, 222 *Journal of Experimental Biology* 5 (2019).

[18] Czapanskiy, Max F. et al., Modelling Short-term Energetic Costs of Sonar Disturbance to Cetaceans Using High-resolution Foraging Data, 58 *Journal of Applied Ecology* 8 (2021); Southall, Brandon L. et al., Behavioural Responses of Fin Whales to Military Mid-Frequency Active Sonar, 10 *Royal Society Open Science* 12 (2023).

sonar exposure; some blue whales exposed to brief or even weak sonar can lose an entire day of foraging.[19]

Beaked Whales

Beaked whales, which are highly sensitive to sonar, occur in the action area. Beaked whale strandings have a highly significant co-occurrence with military active sonar use.[20] A recent study indicated that displacement of beaked whales from good foraging habitat could have detrimental population consequences, and researchers recommended locating sonar exercises outside of key foraging habitat and avoiding activities that disperse beaked whales into sub-optimal foraging areas.[21] Blainesville's beaked whales exposed to active sonar in the Bahamas fled the area and avoided it for up to three days after exposure, and such displacement can impair foraging activities and have energetic costs.[22]

Minke Whales

Minke whales occur in the action area and are extremely sensitive to sonar exposure. Researchers found significant behavioral changes in the movement and calling behavior of minke whales in response to sonar activities during U.S. Navy training at the Pacific Missile Range Facility in the waters off Kaua'i, Hawai'i. [23] This is particularly concerning as the behavior being disrupted was most likely related to breeding as it is believed that the calling of minke whales in the Hawai'i region from October through April relates to males calling to attract mates.[24] The cessation of calling as a result of sonar activities could ultimately lead to reduced reproductive output for this population.[25]

[19] Pirotta, E. et al., Context-dependent variability in the predicted daily energetic costs of disturbance for blue whales, 00 *Conservation Physiology* 1 (2021).

[20] Simonis AE, et al., Co-occurrence of beaked whale strandings and naval sonar in the Mariana Islands, Western Pacific, 287 *Proc. R. Soc. B*: 20200070 (2020).

[21] Benoit-Bird KJ, et al., Critical threshold identified in the functional relationship between beaked whales and their prey, 654 *Mar. Ecol. Prog.* Ser. 1-16 (2020).

[22] Jones-Todd, Charlotte M. et al., Discrete-space Continuous-time Models of Marine Mammal Exposure to Navy Sonar, 32 *Ecological Applications* 1 (2022).

[23] Durbach, Ian N. et al., Changes in the Movement and Calling Behavior of Minke Whales (*Balaenoptera Acutorostrata*) in Response to Navy Training, 8 *Frontiers in Marine Science* (2021).

[24] *Id.*

[25] Kratofil, Michaela A. et al., Biologically Important Areas II for Cetaceans within U.S. and Adjacent Waters – Hawai'i Region, 10 *Frontiers in Marine Science* (2023).

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Pygmy Killer Whales

Pygmy sperm whales have been involved in stranding events associated with high-intensity mid-frequency sonar.[26] Recent research suggests that the rarity of pygmy sperm whales around Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, relative to the amount of survey effort off those islands, may be related to the regular Navy testing and training activities that occur there.[27] Additionally, because "pygmy killer whales are rarely encountered around Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, they are likely to be naïve animals that may be more susceptible to disturbance or mass strandings. Although no pygmy killer whale strandings have been documented on Kaua'i or Ni'ihau, the likelihood of stranded animals being detected in Hawai'i is low."[28]

Dwarf Sperm Whales

Dwarf sperm whales have also been involved in stranding events associated with high-intensity naval mid-frequency active sonar use.[29] While only a single stock of dwarf sperm whales previously was recognized in Hawaiian waters, new research indicates that there is also a small resident population.[30] Due to this species' susceptibility to strand in response to the use of military sonars, this population warrants not only recognition, but separate management from the much larger offshore population.[31]

Gray Whales

Gray whales have been observed to deflect from their normal migration path in response to high-frequency sonar signal ranging between 21 and 25 kHz at a received level of approximately 148 dB re 1 μPa^2 as far as 2 kilometers from the source.[32]

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[26] Baird, R. W., The lives of Hawai'i's dolphins and whales: natural history and conservation, University of Hawai'i Press (2016); Hohn, et al., Report on marine mammal unusual mortality event UMESE0501Sp: Multispecies mass stranding of pilot whales (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*), and dwarf sperm whales (*Kogia sima*) in North Carolina on 15–16 January 2005 (NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-SEFSC-537) U.S. Department of Commerce (2006); *and* Simmonds, M. P., & Lopez-Jurado, L. F., Whales and the military. *Nature*, 351, 448 (1991).

[27] Baird RW et al., Long-term strategies for studying rare species: results and lessons from a multi-species study of odontocetes around the main Hawaiian Islands, 30 *Pacific Conservation Biology* PC23027 (2024).

[28] *Id.* at 18.

[29] Baird, et al., Site Fidelity, Spatial Use, and Behavior of Dwarf Sperm Whales in Hawaiian Waters: Using Small-Boat Surveys, Photo-Identification, and Unmanned Aerial Systems to Study a Difficult-to-Study Species. 38 *Marine Mammal Science* 326-348 (2021).

[30] *Id.*

[31] *Id.*

[32] Frankel, Adam S. and Peter J. Stein, Gray Whales Hear and Respond to Signals from a 21–25 kHz Active Sonar, 36 *Marine Mammal Science* 4 (2020).

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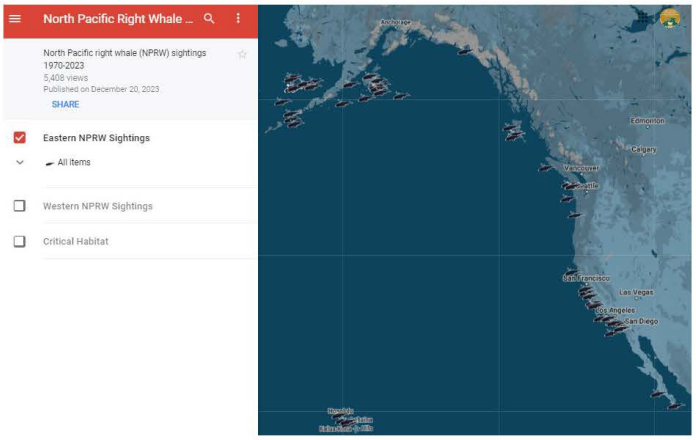
Sperm Whales

Active sonar continuously masks the echolocation of sperm whales at 160 dB re 1 μPa^2 and intermittently masks it at 120 dB re 1 μPa^2.[33] Such masking can disrupt sperm whales' ability to locate prey, with corresponding potential impacts on their foraging success.

North Pacific Right Whales

Recent observations demonstrate that North Pacific right whales overlap with the action area. *See map below.* In March 2023, a North Pacific right whale was spotted in Monterey Bay.[34] The North Pacific right whale is one of the most critically endangered whales in the world, with a total population hovering around only 26–31 individuals.[35] The serious injury or death of even one whale from this population—particularly if it is a reproductive-aged female—would have catastrophic consequences for this species' survival and recovery.[36]



Sightings of North Pacific Right Whale (Source: https://www.northpacificrightwhale.org/recent-sightings)

[33] Von Benda-Beckmann, A. M. et al., Modeling Potential Masking of Echolocating Sperm Whales Exposed to Continuous 1–2 kHz Naval Sonar, 149 *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 4 (2021).

[34] Duggan, Tara, One of the rarest whales in the world was just spotted in Monterey Bay, San Francisco Chronicle (Mar. 6, 2023).

[35] Muto, M. et al., Alaska Marine Mammal Stock Assessments, 2019: NORTH PACIFIC RIGHT WHALE, NOAA-TM-AFSC-404 (2020).

[36] Wright, Dana L. et al. Acoustic detection of the critically endangered North Pacific right whale in the northern Bering Sea. 35 *Marine Mammal Science* 311 (2019). ("A single death of a NPRW (especially a reproductive female) from ship strike would be a major blow to this small population.").

Humpback whales

Humpback whales have newly designated critical habitat off California.[37] Additionally, new science signals that the Hawai'i DPS population is declining.[38] Researchers report that mother-calf encounter rates dropped by more than 76 percent between 2013 and 2018.[39] Acoustic monitoring similarly indicates that vocalizations off Maui declined 50 percent between 2014 and 2019.[40] This is particularly concerning as empirical evidence has demonstrated the importance of song within the humpback whale mating system.[41]

Southern resident killer whales

Southern Resident killer whales have critical habitat in the area that should be protected from noise pollution to ensure habitat suitable for echolocation when they are present.[42] Killer whales are believed to be particularly sensitive to sonar with severe flight responses.[43]

Seabirds

The Navy must analyze the impacts of proposed training and testing activities on seabirds and their prey. For example, the Navy should consider recent science that has found adverse seabird behavioral responses, such as startle and cessation of feeding, to underwater sonar.[44] A study of mid-frequency sonar demonstrated that murres had behavioral responses to received levels from 110 to 137 dB re 1 µPa.[45]

Invertebrates, Fish, and Sea Turtles

A recent review study determined that 81 and 82 percent of relevant studies have found significant impacts of noise on invertebrates and fish.[46] The Navy must also fully examine the impacts of its activities on sea turtles.

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[37] 86 Fed. Reg. 21,082 (Apr. 21, 2021).

[38] Cartwright R., et al., Fluctuating reproductive rates in Hawaii's humpback whales, Megaptera novaeangliae, reflect recent climate anomalies in the North Pacific, 6 *R. Soc. Open Sci.* 181463 (2019).

[39] *Id.*

[40] Kügler, A, et al. Fluctuations in Hawaii's humpback whale Megaptera novaeangliae population inferred from male song chorusing off Maui, 43 *Endangered Species Research* 421 (2020).

[41] Kügler A, et al. Diel spatiotemporal patterns of humpback whale singing on a high-density breeding ground, 11 *R. Soc. Open Sci.* 230279 (2024).

[42] 86 Fed. Reg. 41,668 (Aug. 2, 2021).

[43] Chouinard, Maya and Carolyn Binder, Effects of Military Sonar on Free-Ranging Cetaceans, 2023.

[44] Hansen, K.A., et al., The common murre (*Uria aalge*), an auk seabird, reacts to underwater sound, 147 *J. Acoust. Soc. Am.* 4069 (2020).

[45] *Id.*

[46] Duarte CM, et al., The soundscape of the Anthropocene ocean. 371 *Science* 6529 (2021).

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Vessel Strikes

In 2021, a military destroyer pulled into a Naval Base in San Diego with two dead endangered fin whales stuck to its hull.[47] The whales—likely a mother and her calf—were apparently killed by a collision with an Australian navy vessel that came to California to conduct military training exercises with the U.S. Navy.[48] For Santa Barbara Channel alone, scientists estimate that, in the summer and fall months (June–November), ship strikes kill an average of 8.9 blue whales, 4.6 humpback whales, and 9.7 fin whales each year, with an average of another 5.7 humpback whales dying annually due to ship strikes during winter and spring (January–April) .[49]

Redfern et al. (2020) found that vessel strike risk is highest for blue, humpback, and fin whales in the central region of California when vessel traffic occurs nearshore.[50] If vessel traffic instead follows an offshore route similar to those used by ships from 2009-2011 (to avoid California Air Resources Board regulations that applied within 24 nm of shore), mean risk for all three species can be reduced up to 35%. The Navy must consider alternatives that require its vessels to avoid nearshore areas where vessel strike risk is highest.

Additionally, the National Marine Fisheries Service reported that one of the most common causes of sea turtle stranding is due to vessel strikes, and it estimates that annually hundreds of sea turtles are struck by vessels in the United States.[51]

Aircraft Noise

A recent study that monitored military aircraft noise for 28 days in Washington State detected concerning noise levels 30 meters below the sea surface.[52] The researchers noted that the noise exceeded thresholds that can trigger behavioral responses in marine mammals, fish and sea birds. The study demonstrates that the sea surface does not serve as an acoustic barrier to military aircraft noise. The Navy must analyze the adverse impacts on marine life associated with the proposed expanded airspace activities.

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[47] Michael Chen, Two fin whales found dead under hull of Australian ship at Naval Base San Diego, ABC 10: San Diego, May 11, 2021, https://www.10news.com/news/local-news/two-fin-whales-found-dead-under-hull-ofaustralian-ship-at-naval-base-san-diego.

[48] *Id.*; 88 Fed. Reg. 68,290, 68,291, 68,294 (Oct. 3, 2023)

[49] Rockwood, R. Cotton et al., Modeling Whale Deaths From Vessel Strikes to Reduce the Risk of Fatality to Endangered Whales, 8 *Frontiers in Marine Science* (2021).

[50] Redfern, Jessica V., Elizabeth A. Becker, and Thomas J. Moore, Effects of Variability in Ship Traffic and Whale Distributions on the Risk of Ships Striking Whales, 6 *Frontiers in Marine Science* (2020).

[51] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/insight/understanding-vessel-strikes#:~:text=It%20is%20estimated%20that%20hundreds,stranding%20in%20the%20United%20States.

[52] Kuehne, Lauren, et al. Above and below: Military Aircraft Noise in Air and under Water at Whidbey Island, Washington, 8 *J. Mar. Sci. Eng.* 923 (2020).

Biologically Important Areas Identified in Hawai'i

Biologically Important Areas (BIAs) include areas where cetaceans are known to congregate (either year-round or at certain times of the year) for vital activities such as feeding, mating, and migration, as well as known ranges of small and resident populations. BIAs play a crucial role in enhancing our comprehension and anticipation of how marine mammals might react to or be influenced by disturbances. Additionally, they help identify areas where populations could be more vulnerable to specific types of impacts.

For the Hawai'i region, thirty-five BIAs were recently outlined or updated from the original 2015 initiative, with thirty-three focusing on small and resident odontocete populations and two targeting humpback whale reproductive areas (BIA II).[53] Cetacean experts assigned an overall "Importance Score" to each BIA, considering both "Intensity" (the characteristics and intensity underlying an area's BIA designation) and "Data Support" (the quantity, quality, and type of information, along with associated uncertainties). Importance Scores, ranging from 1 to 3, reflect both the intensity of the area and the strength of data support, with higher scores indicating greater importance. There are four types of BIAs: 1) Reproductive Areas (R-BIA); 2) Feeding Areas (F-BIA); 3) Migratory Routes (M-BIA); and 4) Small and Resident Population (S-BIA). Hierarchical BIAs were established to represent core areas of use or population-specific ranges for nine species. Additionally, two reproductive watch list areas were identified for minke whales and humpback whales. "Watch lists" are areas that cetacean experts believe are likely BIAs, but currently lack sufficient information to meet the criteria for a BIA.

The Navy's EIS must take into account these recent BIAs and watch lists, both in evaluating potential impacts and in evaluating environmentally preferred alternatives. For example, the only hierarchical BIA with an Importance Score of 3 for both child and parent was the Hawai'i Island dwarf sperm whale S-BIA. Cetacean experts found that, due to "the small abundance and range size leading to the Importance score of 3, coupled with the apparent susceptibility of this species at large to a number of anthropogenic activities (e.g., high intensity military sonars, interactions with fisheries; Simmonds and Lopez-Juardo, 1991; Hohn et al., 2006; Baird, 2016; Baird et al., 2021c), there are clear conservation concerns for this island associated population."[54]

Notably, both the rough-toothed dolphin Kaua'i/Ni'ihau-O'ahu S-BIA and the Common bottlenose dolphin Kaua'i/Ni'ihau-O'ahu-Maui Nui S-BIA overlap with the action area around Kaua'i and Ni'ihau.[55] The Navy must take a hard look at the impacts and behavioral responses of

[53] Kratofil, Michaela A. et al., 2023.

[54] *Id.* at 20.

[55] *Id.*; *and* Baird, Robin W, Odontocete Studies on the Pacific Missile Range Facility in February 2020, 2021; Oedekoven, C., Effectiveness of Navy Lookout Teams in Detecting Cetaceans. Report Number CREEM-24289-1 (2022).

these small and resident populations of delphinids to sonar, given their propensity for frequent exposure within their S-BIAs.[56]

Additionally, the minke whale reproductive watch list area, which is supported by acoustic detection rates during the minke whale breeding season (period spanning October through April), overlaps with the action area around Kaua'i and Ni'ihau.[57] A reproductive watch list area was delineated rather than a BIA due to the lack of available information on minke whale occurrence in Hawaiian waters for reproductive purposes. Regardless, documented acoustic detections, which appear to be concentrated around Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, coupled with minke whales' sensitivity to sonar exposure exhibited across different behavioral contexts including reproduction, raise concerns about the potential for significant impacts, which the Navy must analyze.

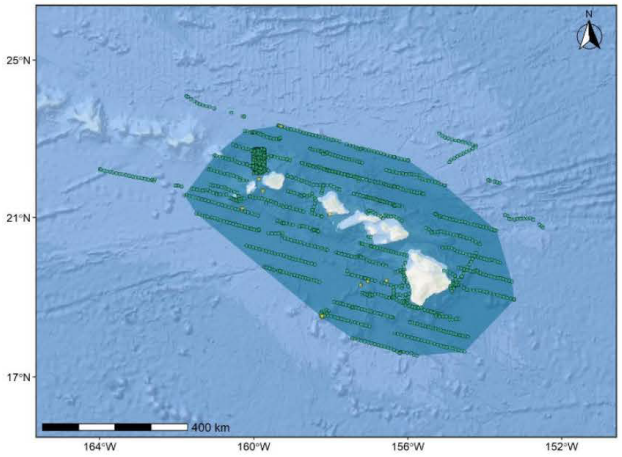

Figure 3. Watch list area boundary (blue polygon) for minke whales spanning October through April encompassing the majority of acoustic detection locations (green circles) and all sighting locations (yellow circles). Kratofil. et al., (2023), Supplementary File A: Detailed summaries of all Hawai'i BIAs at 219.

b. Alternatives and Mitigation That Should Be Evaluated

One of the most effective means to protect marine mammals from noise and disturbance associated with Navy training and testing activities is to impose time and area restrictions. The Navy should consider mitigation and time and area restrictions, including but not limited to:

[56] Durban, J.W. et al., Integrating Remote Sensing Methods During Controlled Exposure Experiments to Quantify Group Responses of Dolphins to Navy Sonar. 174 *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 113194 (2022).

[57] Kratofil, Michaela A. et al., 2023.

- Extending mitigation areas to include a buffer zone to adequately protect biologically important areas from received levels that are above the take threshold.
- Prohibiting active sonar and explosives training in biologically important areas.
- Capping the maximum level of activities each year.
- Installing passive acoustic monitoring to alert Navy personnel regarding the presence of marine mammals.
- Increasing the size of exclusion zones to protect animals that are sensitive to sonar at low levels of exposure.
- Imposing a10-knot ship speed limit in Mitigation Areas to reduce vessel strikes.
- Minimizing Navy vessel traffic in nearshore areas where vessel strike risk is highest.
- Improving detection of marine mammals with restrictions on low-visibility activities and alternative detection such as thermal or acoustic methods.
- Adding mitigation for other marine mammal stressors such as dipping sonar and contaminants.

2. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Navy must undertake a comprehensive and meaningful environmental review of its proposed testing and training activities and evaluate a range of alternatives that incorporate effective steps to mitigate the harm of its activities on marine mammals, fish, birds, and other marine life.

Sincerely,

Miyoko Sakashita, Oceans Program Director, Center for Biological Diversity
Maxx Phillips, Hawai'i and Pacific Islands Director, Center for Biological Diversity
David Henkin, Senior Attorney, Earthjustice

Date/Time:	01-30-2024
Organization:	NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Name:	DANETTE WOO/DAVID SZYMANSKI
City/State:	SAN FRANCISCO/CA
Comment:	See attached PDF.
Attachments:	Navy HI-CA Training and Testing EIS NOI-NPS comments.pdf

23

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Interior Regions 8, 9, 10, and 12
555 Battery Street, Suite 122
San Francisco, CA 94111

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1.D (PW-P)

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager or Mr. Sean Gano, Environmental Public Affairs Specialist
(Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS (navy.mil))
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Dear HCTT EIS Project Manager:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department of the Navy's Notice of Intent to Prepare the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS).

The HCCT includes activities on the Island of Hawai'i over Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park, Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau National Historical Park, and Pu'ukoholā Heiau National Historic Site. The National Park Service (NPS) manages these parks for purposes identified in their enabling legislation, including providing a high-quality visitor experience, and preserving cultural resources and traditional uses, congressionally designated wilderness, natural sounds, and threatened and endangered wildlife. Although the Notice of Intent does not address any land-based activities, the map for the Hawai'i Operating Area indicates an area that traverses multiple park units labeled "Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace."

Low level military flights have the potential to impact the purposes for which these units were established. We look forward to working with the Navy to identify actions or mitigations that allow both the Navy and the NPS to meet our respective objectives. Some of these measures could include:

- An orientation to park resources and values to be included in pilot briefings, which the NPS would be happy to provide.
- Avoiding flight paths over national park sites, when feasible.
- When necessary to transit over or adjacent to a national park unit, maintaining a minimum elevation, such as 5,000 feet Above Ground Level (AGL).

Resources and values specific to the four national park units on the Island of Hawai'i are described below, for consideration in the EIS/OEIS analysis.

Biological Resources, Physical Resources, and Wilderness
The parks' biological resources include an extraordinary assemblage of native plants and animals – more than 90% of which are endemic to the Hawaiian Islands and many of which are rare, endangered, and threatened with extinction. Physical resources that affect the biological resources and visitor experience include natural soundscapes which are dominated by the sounds of wind, ocean, native species, and natural process. Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park includes designated wilderness and is mandated to preserve wilderness character and values.

Cultural Resources and Traditional Uses
The recommended measures would also protect cultural resources and traditional uses. Native Hawaiian traditional uses in the parks perpetuate traditional practices, knowledge, and the cultural importance of these areas. These practices, including chants and dances, depend upon natural sounds, unobstructed views of mountain summits, and an environment that has not been greatly altered by human-caused changes. The entire parks' landscapes and all their inhabitants and features, including the sky as a layered extension of the landscape, are sacred to Native Hawaiians.

Historic Properties
Pu'ukoholā Heiau National Historic Site is home to historically significant temples of the Hawaiian Kingdom. The temples are vulnerable to vibrations from low helicopter overflights that could cause shifts in their dry stacked rocks.

Thank you for inviting us to comment on the development of this EIS. For questions or additional information, please contact Danielle Foster (danielle_foster@nps.gov).

Sincerely,

David M. Szymanski
Regional Director

L.1.2 Emailed Comments

1

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

VIRGINIA PRESSLER, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
EMD/CWB

05023PDCL.18

May 10, 2018

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Clean Water Branch Standard Project Comments

TO: Agencies and Project Owners

FROM: ALEC WONG, P.E., CHIEF
Clean Water Branch

This memo is provided for your information and sharing. You are encouraged to share this memo with your project partners, team members, and appropriate personnel.

The Department of Health (DOH), Clean Water Branch (CWB) will no longer be responding directly to requests for comments on the following documents (Pre-consultation, Early Consultation, Preparation Notice, Draft, Final, Addendums, and/or Supplements):

- Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)
- Environmental Assessments (EA)
- Stream Channel Alteration Permits (SCAP)
- Stream Diversion Works Permits (SDWP)
- Well Construction/Pump Installation Permits
- Conservation District Use Applications (CDUA)
- Special Management Area Permits (SMAP)
- Shoreline Setback Areas (SSA)

For agencies or project owners requiring DOH-CWB comments for one or more of these documents, please utilize the DOH-CWB Standard Comments below regarding your project's responsibilities to maintain water quality and any necessary permitting. DOH-CWB Standard Comments are also available on the DOH-CWB website located at: http://health.hawaii.gov/cwb/.

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DOH-CWB Standard Comments

The following information is for agencies and/or project owners who are seeking comments regarding environmental compliance for their projects with the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), Chapters 11-54 and 11-55. You may be responsible for fulfilling additional requirements related to our program.

1. Any project and its potential impacts to State waters must meet the following criteria:

   a. Antidegradation policy (HAR, Section 11-54-1.1), which requires that the existing uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect the existing uses of the receiving State water be maintained and protected.

   b. Designated uses (HAR, Section 11-54-3), as determined by the classification of the receiving State waters.

   c. Water quality criteria (HAR, Sections 11-54-4 through 11-54-8).

2. You may be required to obtain National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit coverage for point source water pollutant discharges into State surface waters (HAR, Chapter 11-55). Point source means any discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance from which pollutants are or may be discharged.

   For NPDES general permit coverage, a Notice of Intent (NOI) form must be submitted at least 30 calendar days before the commencement of the discharge. An application for a NPDES individual permit must be submitted at least 180 calendar days before the commencement of the discharge. To request NPDES permit coverage, you must submit the applicable form ("CWB Individual NPDES Form" or "CWB NOI Form") through the e-Permitting Portal and the hard copy certification statement with the respective filing fee ($1,000 for an individual NPDES permit or $500 for a Notice of General Permit Coverage). Please open the e-Permitting Portal website located at: https://eha-cloud.doh.hawaii.gov/epermit/. You will be asked to do a one-time registration to obtain your login and password. After you register, click on the Application Finder tool and locate the appropriate form. Follow the instructions to complete and submit the form.

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Some of the activities requiring NPDES permit coverage include, but, are not limited to:

a. Discharges of Storm Water

   i. For Construction Activities Disturbing One (1) or More Acres of Total Land Area.

      By HAR Chapter 11-55, an NPDES permit is required before the start of the construction activities that result in the disturbance of one (1) or more acres of total land area, including clearing, grading, and excavation. The total land area includes a contiguous area where multiple separate and distinct construction activities may be taking place at different times on different schedules under a larger common plan of development or sale.

   ii. For Industrial Activities for facilities with primary Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Codes regulated in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 40 CFR 122.26(b)(14)(i) through (ix) and (xi). If a facility has more than one SIC code, the activity that generates the greatest revenue is the primary SIC code. If revenue information is unavailable, use the SIC code for the activity with the most employees. If employee information is also unavailable, use the SIC code for the activity with the greatest production.

   iii. From a small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (along with certain non-storm water discharges).

b. Discharges to State surface waters from construction activity hydrotesting or dewatering

c. Discharges to State surface waters from cooling water applications

d. Discharges to State surface waters from the application of pesticides (including insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides, and various other substances to control pest) to State waters

e. Well-Drilling Activities

   Any discharge to State surface waters of treated process wastewater effluent associated with well drilling activities is regulated by HAR Chapter 11-55. Discharges of treated process wastewater effluent (including well drilling slurries,

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lubricating fluids wastewater, and well purge wastewater) to State surface waters requires NPDES permit coverage.

NPDES permit coverage is not required for well pump testing. For well pump testing, the discharger shall take all measures necessary to prevent the discharge of pollutants from entering State waters. Such measures shall include, if necessary, containment of initial discharge until the discharge is essentially free of pollutants. If the discharge is entering a stream or river bed, best management practices (BMPs) shall be implemented to prevent the discharge from disturbing the clarity of the receiving water. If the discharge is entering a storm drain, the discharger must obtain written permission from the owner of the storm drain prior to discharge. Furthermore, BMPs shall be implemented to prevent the discharge from collecting sediments and other pollutants prior to entering the storm drain.

3. A Section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) is required if your project/activity:

   a. Requires a federal permit, license, certificate, approval, registration, or statutory exemption; and

   b. May result in a discharge into State waters. The term "discharge" is defined in Clean Water Act, Subsections 502(16), 502(12), and 502(6).

   Examples of "discharge" include, but are not limited to, allowing the following pollutants to enter State waters from the surface or in-water: solid waste, rock/sand/dirt, heat, sewage, construction debris, any underwater work, chemicals, fugitive dust/spray paint, agricultural wastes, biological materials, industrial wastes, concrete/sealant/epoxy, and washing/cleaning effluent.

   Determine if your project/activity requires a federal permit, license, certificate, approval, registration, or statutory exemption by contacting the appropriate federal agencies (e.g. Department of the Army (DA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), Pacific Ocean Division Honolulu District Office (POH) Tel: (808) 835-4303; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9 Tel: (415) 947-8021; Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Tel: (866) 208-3372; U.S. Coast Guard Office of Bridge Programs Tel: (202) 372-1511). If your project involves work in, over, or under waters of the United States, it is highly recommended that you contact the Army Corp of Engineers, Regulatory Branch regarding their permitting requirements.

   To request a Section 401 WQC, you must complete and submit the Section 401 WQC application. This application is available on the e-Permitting Portal website located at: https://eha-cloud.doh.hawaii.gov/epermit/.

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Please see HAR, Chapter 11-54 for the State's Water Quality Standards and for more information on the Section 401 WQC. HAR, Chapter 11-54 is available on the CWB website at: http://health.hawaii.gov/cwb/.

4. Please note that all discharges related to the project construction or operation activities, whether or not NPDES permit coverage and/or Section 401 WQC are required, must comply with the State's Water Quality Standards. Noncompliance with water quality requirements contained in HAR, Chapter 11-54, and/or permitting requirements, specified in HAR, Chapter 11-55, may be subject to penalties of $25,000 per day per violation and up to two (2) years in jail.

5. It is the State's position that all projects must reduce, reuse, and recycle to protect, restore, and sustain water quality and beneficial uses of State waters. Project planning should:

   a. Treat storm water as a resource to be protected by integrating it into project planning and permitting. Storm water has long been recognized as a source of irrigation that will not deplete potable water resources. What is often overlooked is that storm water recharges ground water supplies and feeds streams and estuaries; to ensure that these water cycles are not disrupted, storm water cannot be relegated as a waste product of impervious surfaces. Any project planning must recognize storm water as an asset that sustains and protects natural ecosystems and traditional beneficial uses of State waters, like community beautification, beach going, swimming, and fishing. The approaches necessary to do so, including low impact development methods or ecological bio-engineering of drainage ways must be identified in the planning stages to allow designers opportunity to include those approaches up front, prior to seeking zoning, construction, or building permits.

   b. Clearly articulate the State's position on water quality and the beneficial uses of State waters. The plan should include statements regarding the implementation of methods to conserve natural resources (e.g. minimizing potable water for irrigation, gray water re-use options, energy conservation through smart design) and improve water quality.

   c. Consider storm water Best Management Practice (BMP) approaches that minimize the use of potable water for irrigation through storm water storage and reuse, percolate storm water to recharge groundwater to revitalize natural hydrology, and treat storm water which is to be discharged.

d. Consider the use of green building practices, such as pervious pavement and landscaping with native vegetation, to improve water quality by reducing excessive runoff and the need for excessive fertilization, respectively.

e. Identify opportunities for retrofitting or bio-engineering existing storm water infrastructure to restore ecological function while maintaining, or even enhancing, hydraulic capacity. Consideration should be given to areas prone to flooding, or where the infrastructure is aged and will need to be rehabilitated.

Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians
CULTURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

One Government Center Lane | Valley Center | CA 92082
(760) 749-1092 | Fax: (760) 749-8901 | rincon-nsn.gov

January 16, 2024

Sent via email: Richard.G.Bark.civ@us.navy.mil
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention : HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Re: Request Consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) on the Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Hawaii-California Training and Testing

Dear Mr. Bark:

This letter is written on behalf of the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians ("Rincon Band" or "Tribe"), a federally recognized Indian Tribe and sovereign government. We have received your notification regarding the **Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Hawaii-California Training and Testing (EIS),** and we request to engage in early consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the proposed undertaking, the definition of the area of potential effects (APE), and the identification of historic properties. The identified location is in part within the Traditional Use Area (TUA) of the Luiseño people. As such, the Rincon Band is traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area.

The Rincon Band would like to consult on the undertaking to learn more about any potential impacts to historic properties, as we encourage the development of the EIS to be guided through tribal consultation to allow for active participation and input on the technical studies considered for the EIS. Please also include the Tribe on all distribution lists for environmental document reviews, consultations, circulation of public documents, and notices for public hearings and scheduled approvals.

We are looking forward to working with you. If you have additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our office at your convenience at (760) 749 1092 ext. 323 or via electronic mail at cmadrigal@rincon-nsn.gov. Thank you for the opportunity to protect and preserve our cultural assets.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Madrigal
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Cultural Resources Manager

Bo Mazzetti, Chairman | Tishmall Turner, Vice Chair | Laurie E. Gonzalez, Council Member | John Constantino, Council Member | Joseph Linton, Council Member

COUNTY of VENTURA
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY
CHARLES R. GENKEL
Environmental Health Director

January 10, 2024

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attn: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Hawaii - California Training and Testing, Notice of Intent to Adopt an Environmental Impact Statement, RMA REF #23-025

Ventura County Environmental Health Division (Division) staff reviewed the information submitted for the subject project.

The Division provides the following comments:

1. The project includes training and testing activities which may include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of underwater sound. Hazardous wastes shall be properly disposed of and reported to the Ventura County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA). Improper storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials could result in the creation of adverse impacts to the environment. Compliance with applicable State and local regulations will reduce potential project-specific and cumulative impacts to a level considered less than significant.

   https://vcrma.org/en/cupa

If you have any questions, please contact me at (805) 654-2830 or Roxy.Cabral@ventura.org.

Roxy Cabral, R.E.H.S.
Land Use Section
Environmental Health Division

CC G:\Admin\TECH SERVICES\FINALED Letters\Land Use\ SR0021595ODR RMA REF 23-025- Hawaii- California Training and Testing

Page 1

HALL OF ADMINISTRATION #1730
805-654-2813 • FAX 805-654-2480 • 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 • vcrma.org

Ventura County
Air Pollution
Control District

4567 Telephone Rd
Ventura, California 93003

tel 805/303-4005
fax 805/456-7797
www.vcapcd.org

Ali Reza Ghasemi, PE
Air Pollution Control Officer

VENTURA COUNTY
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT
Memorandum

TO: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager DATE: January 29, 2024

FROM: Nicole Collazo, Air Quality Specialist, Planning Division NC

SUBJECT: Request for Review of Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Project (RMA #23-025)

Air Pollution Control District staff has reviewed the subject Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which is a proposal of conducting at-sea military readiness activities within the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area. The Navy also proposed to modernize and sustain its ranges in a manger necessary to support these readiness activities. The Lead Agency for this project is the Department of the Navy.

District staff recommends the EIS evaluate all potential air quality impacts that may result from the project, both short-term and long-term. Specifically, the air quality assessment should consider reactive organic compound, nitrogen oxide emissions and particulate matter from all proposed sea range operations (aircrafts, vessels, etc.) as well as any potential stationary source emissions located in VCAPCD Channel Islands.

In addition, a NEPA Air Quality Analysis, if applicable, must be conducted to assess the impact of air pollutant emissions from proposed sea range operations for those effects occurring within *and* outside U.S. Territory. The NEPA analysis includes a Clean Air Act (CAA) General Conformity Analysis to make an applicability determination pursuant to the General Conformity Rule (40 C.F.R. § 93[B]). The NEPA analysis also includes an evaluation of potential exposures to toxic air pollutant emissions.

The EIS should also include analysis of any stationary engines and equipment that may be subject to APCD permitting requirements. An APCD Authority to Construct shall be obtained for all equipment subject to permit, prior to construction and an APCD Permit to Operate shall be obtained for all equipment or regulated processes subject to permit, prior to operation. To determine if proposed new equipment is subject to APCD Permitting, the applicant should s contact District Staff at 805-303-3688.

Finally, APCD would like to inform the applicant that it participates in the Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) Program or Protecting Blue Whales and Blues Skies. The VSR

Program is a partnership which provides public relations incentives to the operators of certain ocean-going vessels (OGV), cargo container ships and roll-on/roll-off (Ro-Ro) vessels, to reduce speeds in specified areas off the California coast. Reducing ship speeds cuts emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx), toxic diesel particulate matter (DPM), sulfur compounds, and greenhouse gases (GHGs); reduces the risk of fatal ship strikes on whales; and reduces underwater acoustic impacts. The 2023 voluntary incentive program, where companies were asked to reduce speeds to 10 knots or less in both the Southern California Region and in the San Francisco Bay Area, started on May 1, 2023 and ended on December 15, 2023. For the 2023 season, the VSR zones were greatly expanded by including more navigable waters in Southern California and adding the area within the boundaries of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Please consider providing funding to the VSR Program as possible mitigation for reducing air pollutants from the project if approved, as the project description states 'For this EIS/OEIS, "at-sea components" include the marine environment around San Nicolas Island where marine mammals haul out on the shoreline. Missile and target firings from San Nicolas Island that could disturb the marine mammals are included in this analysis.'

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. Should you have any questions, you may reach me via email at nicole@vcapcd.org.

From: Sean Hanser - NOAA Federal <sean.hanser@noaa.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2024 2:40 PM
To: Bostwick, Angela S CIV USN NAVFAC PAC PEARL HI (USA) <angela.s.bostwick.civ@us.navy.mil>; Scheimer, Elizabeth A CIV USN NAVFAC PAC PEARL HI (USA) <elizabeth.a.scheimer.civ@us.navy.mil>
Cc: Chow, Marguerite M CIV (USA) <malia.chow@noaa.gov>; Delaney, David G CIV (USA) <david.delaney@noaa.gov>; Bejder, Michelle M CIV USN NAVFAC PAC PEARL HI (USA) <michelle.m.bejder.civ@us.navy.mil>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] NMFS PIRO Habitat Conservation Division public comments on the HCTT EIS NOI

Hi Angela and Liz,

We wanted to submit public comments for the HCTT EIS NOI and ended up trying to submit around 14:00 HST, after the comment period had apparently ended. We found that It says on the "Submit Comments" page "Comments must be postmarked or received online no later than 11:59 p.m. PST on Jan. 29, 2024, for consideration in the Draft EIS/OEIS." We had prepared comments from reading the Federal Register announcement and looking at the Fact Sheet, however we had not gone to the submit comments page because we were not prepared to submit until today. As you may recall, it states on the front web page "The Navy is accepting public comments through Jan. 29,. 2024." We had interpreted that to mean at least the entire business day in Hawaii would be included on Jan 29. However, it is clear that was not the case. With that understanding, we are providing the comments below to provide our input on the HCTT EIS NOI.

Comments:
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO), Habitat Conservation Division (HCD) is anticipating the Navy will conduct an EFH consultation for Phase IV of the HCTT EIS. We will be interested in understanding the location of planned underwater detonation training (UNDET) and testing. For the EIS and the EFH consultation, the current condition and community composition of the benthic and fish resources at UNDET and bombing ranges that are used regularly should be provided.

Also, in the Hawaiian Islands, PIRO HCD recommends that the footprint, timing, and tempo of training and testing be clearly presented for locations that occur in waters shallower than 400 m. These waters are EFH for bottomfish management unit species (BMUS) and could need closer analysis for potential impacts. Pay special attention to the overlap of testing and training with Penguin Bank and other habitat areas of particular concern (HAPCs); maps that show the footprint of activities with respect to HAPCs would be a useful tool for understanding the interaction of the planned activities and that key habitat.

PIRO HCD is happy to participate in early coordination with the Navy for an EFH consultation. Please feel free to contact our division at EFHESAconsult@noaa.gov for commencing early coordination.

Please feel free to contact me or our office at the above email if you have any questions about the above comments or wish to start early coordination.

Sincerely,
Sean
--

Sean F. Hanser, PhD.
Resource Management Specialist, Habitat Conservation Division
Pacific Islands Regional Office
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NOAA FISHERIES

COUNTY of VENTURA
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY
DAVE WARD
Planning Director

SUSAN CURTIS
Assistant Planning Director

December 26, 2023

Anthony Ciuffetelli
RMA/Planning/EDR Coordinator

Sent via email: anthony.ciuffetelli@ventura.org

SUBJECT: Hawaii-California Training and Testing Project
RMA Ref# 23-025

To Whom It May Concern,

Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) staff is in receipt of the invitation to comment on the above-referenced project and provides the following comments:

- The Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area contains known historic resources and may contain as-yet undiscovered resources that have not yet been documented. For example, the SS WINFIELD SCOTT (Steamship) site is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and currently rests underwater as part of the Channel Islands National Park and Marine Sanctuary. An expanded Study Area with additional or modified training activities could lead to direct and indirect impacts on known and as-yet undiscovered historic and cultural resources.
- The United States Department of the Navy should set forth goals, policies, and programs regarding the treatment of historic and cultural resources within the Study Area and evaluating the historical significance of sites that contain objects that are fifty years of age or older. Fifty years of age is a general estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. It is recommended that these sites be avoided to the greatest extent feasible to avoid potential direct and indirect impacts.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed project. If you require anything further or have any questions, please contact Dillan Murray at (805) 654-5042 or at Dillan.Murray@ventura.org.

Sincerely,

Dillan Murray
Cultural Heritage Program Planner
Ventura County Planning Division

HALL OF ADMINISTRATION #1740
(805) 654-2481 • FAX (805) 654-2509 • 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 • vcrma.org

REGION 9
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

January 29, 2024

Alex Stone, HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Pacific
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii 96860–3134

Subject: Scoping comments for Hawaii-California Training and Testing Activities Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Dear Alex Stone:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Notice of Intent (NOI) published on December 15, 2023, regarding the Department of the Navy's decision to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the subject project. Our comments are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The CAA Section 309 role is unique to EPA. It requires EPA to review and comment publicly on any proposed federal action subject to NEPA's environmental impact statement requirement.

The Department of the Navy is again renewing its authorizations under the Marne Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and Endangered Species Act for the take of whales and other marine mammals during military training. Again the Navy is expanding its training areas and will evaluate a maximum training scenario as an alternative. We appreciate the briefing the Navy provided at our request since the scoping materials were vague and not sufficient to inform the preparation of scoping comments. We note that there are some areas where the Navy was not clear on its proposed actions. For example, the NOI indicates that the Northern California Range is an existing range; however, we have not seen this range in any previous EISs and during the briefing we learned that this range is largely not used except for limited aviation training, yet the NOI presents it as an active range suggesting there are no changes to current conditions under the proposed action. Additionally, the corridors being planned for amphibious landing areas in central California were mapped at such a large scale that it was not clear which areas the Navy is considering. Further, no live scoping meetings were offered, instead the website was to contain a virtual scoping meeting however, this consisted of slides that presented information similar to the scoping notice and was not informative. While EPA was afforded the opportunity to ask questions in our briefing, the public was denied this opportunity to learn more about the proposal. As such, the public will be learning about the specifics of the project at the draft EIS stage and should be afforded ample time to review the document and prepare comments.

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We have the following suggestions for your consideration when preparing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS):

Project Description, Scope, and Impact Assessment Methodology

The DEIS should include a clear project description that accurately presents the changes being proposed under the new MMPA authorization period. This includes accurately representing the current use of the Northern California range, as mentioned, as well as detailed maps of each proposed amphibious landing areas. During the EPA briefing, we learned that the amphibious landing corridors would be defined in this EIS, but the Marine Corps would prepare a separate NEPA document for the actions taking place on land once the amphibious vehicles are fully ashore. As we noted then, the designation of corridors in this EIS enables the future actions; thus, the impacts of using the corridors including approach of vehicles and their landings on shore, should be included in this EIS. Include maps of the landing areas at sufficient scale so the reader understands the precise locations.

The Navy frequently describes its proposed action as actions that have been taking place for decades;[1] however, as any toxicologist knows "the dose makes the poison", so this statement that actions are essentially the same as what has been occuring for decades is not informative and should not be used as part of the impact assessment methodology. The stressors that environmental resources can experience have a limit; because some resources have absorbed stressors without apparent significant impact does not mean they could continue to do so under a higher training tempo under the proposal. It is important that the EIS make clear the amount of increase in stressors the Navy is proposing, and to evaluate the existing conditions, along with cumulative stressors, especially those from climate change which are pervasive in the oceans, in predicting project-related impacts.

As the Navy expands its ranges to larger and larger sizes that cover thousands of miles, it is important that the Navy ensure the impact assessment is addressing impacts to specific training and testing locales. Past NEPA practice for range EISs has been to average impacts over very large areas of ocean and/or stating that impacts would occur only locally and therefore were not significant. Such averaging is not a meaningful way to assess the impacts to local resources such as coral reefs, sea mounts, and nearshore areas that might be utilized by fish and wildlife, and it does not assist in identifying potential measures to mitigate such localized effects. Further, simply stating that impacts are localized does not support a less-than-significant impact conclusion without additional support.

Alternatives

The NOI and project website indicate that the Navy plans to evaluate two alternatives and the required No Action alternative. According to the NOI, Alternative 1 reflects a representative year of training and Alternative 2 reflects the maximum number of training and testing activities that could occur within a given year for the seven-year period. Considering the importance of the alternatives analysis in environmental impact statements under NEPA, this is a very limited range and would offer no substantial differences in impacts if assessed in the manner that past range EISs have been, where the higher tempo alternative's impacts are described as being "slightly higher" than those under the other

[1] From project website: "Proposed training and testing activities are similar to those analyzed in previous environmental impact analyses and are representative of activities that have been conducted off Hawaii and California for more than 80 years "

alternative but no substantial difference in impacts is predicted.[2] This is not a meaningful alternatives analysis. We note that the recent changes to the National Environmental Policy Act under the Fiscal Responsibility Act include additional references to alternatives – see Section 102 (C)(iii), and Section 102 (F) in addition to existing Section 102 (H). Consistent with this new focus on alternatives in the National Environmental Policy Act, a more robust alternatives analysis is needed for the DEIS.

We strongly recommend the Navy evaluate at least one additional action alternative that incorporates mitigation, consistent with 40 CFR 1502.14 (e) which states that agencies shall evaluate appropriate mitigation measures not already included in the proposed action or alternatives. We recommend evaluating an alternative with additional temporal and geographic mitigation protections from sonar and other wildlife impacts than what was authorized in the last EIS and MMPA rulemaking. The impact assessment informs the decision but is not the decision-making document; therefore, if the inclusion of some additional geographic and temporal exclusion areas for the protection of marine life could even partially meet the purpose and need, it should be considered in the alternatives analysis. The 2007 Marine Mammal Commission Report to Congress on Noise stated that experts in their workshop agreed that the "habitat avoidance" strategy of restricting sound generation geographically or seasonally offered the most benefits and fewest negative side effects of all the ocean noise mitigation options considered.[3]

Another option for a mitigated alternative is to hold mid-frequency active (MFA) sonar use at existing levels amid any training increases. The Navy utilized this approach under a previous Hawaii Range Complex EIS.

Include Monitoring Results

Because this is an ongoing action, the assessment of impacts need not be speculative as is the case for some project impact assessments that have not yet occurred; monitoring results from past and current training should inform the impact assessment. We recommend including a section in the DEIS, or in each resource section, that summarizes monitoring results and discusses any adaptive responses that have occurred. Monitoring results must be integrated into any analyses that would be considered best available science.

Impacts on Marine Mammals

Acoustic impacts from MFA sonar

The Proposed Action would continue or increase the use of MFA sonar in its training. The inclusion of the Northern California Range and the use of MFA sonar in that range is an entirely new activity compared to current conditions per the Navy's briefing to EPA (January 10, 2024). This was not made clear in the NOI; it should be clearly communicated that any sonar-related impacts to species in this area would be new impacts.

[2] See Mariana Islands Testing and Training Supplemental EIS; Hawaii-Southern California Testing and Training EIS etc.
[3] https://www.mmc.gov/wp-content/uploads/fullsoundreport.pdf, page 34

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It is known, and the Navy has acknowledged in the past, that MFA sonar can be a source of acoustic or impulse trauma to marine mammals.[4] We recommend the DEIS summarize the latest scientific information regarding impacts from MFA sonar on marine mammals. After-action and monitoring reports from past training should be summarized in the DEIS. We also recommend that a history of strandings and mortalities coincident in space and time with the deployment of military sonar be disclosed, regardless of whether they occurred in the study area, with acknowledgment that severely injured animals rarely make it to shore.

The last MMPA permit authorization period (2018 through 2025) included geographic mitigation measures in the HSTT Study Area and stated that depending on the area, mitigation would be implemented year-round or seasonally during applicable activities involving active sonar, explosives, and physical disturbance and strike stressors. The Navy was to implement mitigation measures within certain mitigation areas and/or times where they are known to engage in biologically important behaviors (i.e., for foraging, migration, reproduction) where the disruption of those behaviors would be more likely to result in population-level impacts. Additional mitigation areas that were not evaluated, per the HSTT ROD, were included as a result of negotiations from a lawsuit. Despite these additional mitigations, more whales and marine mammals were killed than expected under the authorization. In 2021, two separate U.S. Navy vessels struck unidentified large whales on two separate occasions, one whale in June 2021 and one whale in July 2021, in waters off Southern California and then killed another large whale by ship strike in May 2023 – reaching its maximum allowable kill for the permit period with two additional years to go. As a result, the Navy has asked NMFS permission to kill 2 additional whales.[5] This doesn't count the two dead fin whales, a mother and her calf, that had to be dislodged from the hull of a Royal Australian Navy ship in San Diego after it was participating in joint exercises with the U.S. Navy in Southern California. More can be assumed to have died at sea.

This indicates that either mitigation measures are not effective or not being implemented, or that the impact assessment methodology is underrepresenting the number of whales and other marine mammals that would be killed during training. The DEIS for the updated term should incorporate this information and adjust its training and/or mitigation, as possible, instead of just adjusting its allowable take. The addition of new MFA sonar training off the Northern California at approximately Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties, and Marin and Sonoma Counties is of concern as these areas include the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, all of which are rich with whale and other marine mammal activity.

Because these sections of the DEIS are highly technical, efforts should be made to present the information in a manner that is understandable to the general public (40 CFR 1502.8), with the more technical reports included as appendices to the DEIS.

[4] Joint Interim Report, Bahamas Marine Mammal Stranding, Event of 15-16 March 2000, page ii. Available: https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/16198

[5] https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/03/2023-21499/taking-and-importing-marine-mammals-taking-marine-mammals-incidental-to-the-us-navy-training-and

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Mitigation for marine mammal impacts

Mitigation measures to reduce MFA impacts should be identified in the DEIS. NEPA also requires that the effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures be discussed[6]. Mitigation measures that are untested should not be assumed to be effective. We recommend referencing monitoring and after-action reports, and other sources as appropriate, in this discussion of mitigation effectiveness. Incorporate the information gains from the recent ship strikes, including the assumption, now disproven by the Royal Australian Navy incident, that sailors aboard a ship would know if they had fatally struck a whale.

Since posting lookouts on vessels is the primary mitigation method the Navy uses, the DEIS should distinguish the effectiveness of mitigation measures for marine mammals with a low probability of visual observation (e.g., beaked whales) versus other easily observed marine mammals. Include the likely percentage of effectiveness when claiming mitigation measures would reduce impacts. For example, according to the study by Oedekoven and Thomas (2022), military personnel effectiveness of observing marine mammals ranged from 2 to 13%, and experienced marine mammal observers detected somewhat higher depending on the species but was never more than 54% effective. It is not enough to simply state in the impact assessment that impacts would not be significant due to mitigation measures without considering the limited effectiveness of certain mitigations.

Additionally, the DEIS should make clear the limitation of lookout mitigation in weather conditions with poor visibility. Based on the information in the NMFS Federal Register notice dated 10/3/23, it is clear that in conditions of poor visibility, lookout mitigation is largely ineffective. The DEIS should discuss and evaluate the addition of passive acoustic monitoring. Include data on when and where it has been used by other navies or entities. NEPA requires the discussion of mitigation measures, even if they are not adopted.

Impacts to marine ecosystems

Impacts to deep-sea coral and sponge (DSCS) habitat off southern California should be mapped and discussed. According to NOAA, vibrant deep-sea coral and sponge communities are present across a diversity of seafloor features throughout the West Coast, such as seamounts, basins, oil and methane seeps and submarine canyons. Deep-sea corals and sponges "provide a number of ecosystem services that are critical to the health of surrounding ecological communities." [7] These areas should be avoided for underwater detonations, mine neutralization activities, and other training that could impact the living sea floor. Provide maps of all the areas protected or proposed for protection, not just marine sanctuaries, in the DEIS.

Mitigation for cumulative DoD and ocean impacts

As mentioned above, NEPA requires that mitigation be discussed, even if not adopted, in the EIS. The Navy generally does not propose any innovative mitigations for these projects, but instead posits that permit/authorization compliance is sufficient. While compliance with the MMPA is obviously important, the only mitigation in the authorizations are attempts to minimize harm. Since recent

[6] The Supreme Court has required a mitigation discussion precisely for the purpose of evaluating whether anticipated environmental impacts can be avoided. Methow Valley, 490 U.S. at 351-52, 109 S.Ct. 1835 (citing 42 U.S.C. § 4332(C)(ii)). A mitigation discussion without at least some evaluation of effectiveness is useless in making that determination.

[7] See https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/50942

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evidence suggests these attempts are not effective as previously assumed, the Navy should include mitigation that helps restore or enhance the species and/or ecosystems it is incidentally harming. We have never seen such innovation in EISs in Region 9, nor are aware of it elsewhere; however, NEPA is clear: the Federal Government is to use all practicable means, consistent with other essential considerations of national policy, to improve and coordinate Federal plans, functions, programs, and resources to the end that the Nation may fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations (42 U.S.C. 4331 (section 101) (b)). With increasing impacts from Navy and other training, coupled with the potentially devastating impacts of climate change on the oceans, more is needed if future generations would enjoy even a fraction of what the oceans have historically provided. We recommend discussing possible efforts that could help mitigate (enhance and restore) some of the ocean resource damages. For example, including proactive methods of seagrass or other restoration in the proposed action. Such "blue carbon" efforts can help store and sequester carbon, helping to mitigate climate change, support biodiversity, and provide valuable ecosystem services to coastal communities. Again, NEPA requires the discussion of mitigation, and the definition of mitigation under NEPA is broad and includes "Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment" (40 CFR 1508 (s)(3).

Clear Water Act, Section 404

EPA learned, during our December 10, 2023, briefing, that a small part of the proposed action off San Clemente Island involves laying a grid of cable on the sea floor to expand the hydrophone network. We learned that in the past, this activity was authorized under a CWA Section 404 Nationwide Permit. The DEIS should discuss how CWA Section 404 applies to the project and its expected permitting strategy. If the Corps of Engineers would require an individual CWA Section 404 permit, EPA will review the project for compliance with Federal Guidelines for Specification of Disposal Sites for Dredged or Fill Materials (40 CFR 230), promulgated pursuant to Section 404(b)(1) of the CWA ("404(b)(1) Guidelines"). Pursuant to 40 CFR 230, any permitted discharge into waters of the U.S. must be the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative available to achieve the project purpose so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences.

Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases

Greenhouse gas emissions

The Council of Environmental Quality's "Interim National Environmental Policy Act Guidance on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change" (88 FR 1196, January 9, 2023) is in effect, and we recommend it be referenced in the DEIS. The CEQ Guidance states that to ensure that Federal agencies consider the incremental contribution of their actions to climate change, agencies should quantify the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect GHG emissions of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives (as well as the no-action alternative) and could discuss significance by including a discussion of how the proposed action would help meet or detract from achieving relevant climate action goals and commitments, including Federal goals and international agreements[8] or by providing other measures of context to describe the effects associated with those projected

[8] Per CEQ Guidance, "Agencies also should discuss whether and to what extent the proposal's reasonably foreseeable GHG emissions are consistent with GHG reduction goals, such as those reflected in the U.S. nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement. US commitments in the Paris Climate Agreement may be found at: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/United%20States%20NDC%20April%2021%202021%20Final.pdf.

emissions in the NEPA analysis. Regarding the additional context, CEQ states that "In most circumstances, once agencies have quantified GHG emissions, they should apply the best available estimates of the social cost of GHGs (SC-GHG) to the incremental metric tons of each individual type of GHG emissions. [9] CEQ guidance indicates that "SC-GHG can assist agencies and the public in assessing the significance of climate impacts. This is a simple and straightforward calculation that should not require additional time or resources" (CEQ Guidance Section IV, B). CEQ indicates that other techniques can be used to provide context such as communicating a proposed action's GHG emissions in more familiar metrics such as household emissions per year, annual average emissions from a certain number of cars on the road, or gallons of gasoline burned.

When assessing the impacts of GHG emissions, CEQ dissuades agencies form comparing project emissions to global emissions, stating: "NEPA requires more than a statement that emissions from a proposed Federal action or its alternatives represent only a small fraction of global or domestic emissions. Such comparisons and fractions are not an appropriate method for characterizing the extent of a proposed action's and its alternatives' contributions to climate change."

We understand it might be difficult to account for all emissions from training exercises, but an accounting may already exist that could be utilized for creating estimates. We note that the CEQ regulations provide for when there is insufficient information available - see 40 CFR 1502.21 - *Incomplete or unavailable information*. Specific direction is provided in 40 CFR 1502.21 (c) 1 through 4.

Climate change effects

When discussing climate change effects, the DEIS should identify that there are unique impacts of aviation emissions released at altitude. The impact of burning fossil fuels high in the atmosphere is approximately double that of burning the same fuels at ground level.[10] In addition to carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions, other factors increase the climate change impacts of aircraft emissions; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimated aviation's total climate change impact could be from two to four times that of its CO_2 emissions alone. A research study found that two-thirds of the impact from aviation is attributed to contrails, NOx, water vapor, sulfate aerosol gases, soot, and other aerosols.[11] The remainder is due to the cumulative heat-trapping effects of long-lived CO_2 emissions.

Cumulative effects

As mentioned, climate change is having large effects on oceans. When evaluating project impacts to specific resources, include the cumulative stressors that are now playing on all ocean resources. This provides the context for the impacts and helps clarify the ability of the existing condition of the resource to absorb additional impacts from the project. We find that an effective presentation of cumulative effects is when the discussion occurs in each resource section following the description of project impacts, as opposed to a separate cumulative impacts section. The list of cumulative projects can be presented at the end of Chapter 2 or elsewhere.

[9] According to CEQ guidance, "SC-GHG estimates allow monetization (presented in U.S. dollars) of the climate change effects from the marginal or incremental emission of GHG emissions, including carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide."

[10] See http://web.mit.edu/aeroastro/sites/waitz/publications/Mil.paper.pdf

[11] See https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1352231020305689?via%3Dihub
https://research.noaa.gov/2020/09/03/aviation-is-responsible-for-35-percent-of-climate-change-study-finds/

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Environmental Justice

The DEIS should discuss environmental justice in the context of the project areas, including impacts to subsistence fishers in all locations and for all effects impacting Native Hawaiian populations. We note that environmental justice is now evaluated based simply on disproportionate and adverse impacts per Executive Order 14096 - *Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*. The Fact Sheet that accompanied the E.O. indicates that "The Executive Order uses the term "disproportionate and adverse" as a simpler, modernized version of the phrase "disproportionately high and adverse" used in Executive Order 12898. Those phrases have the same meaning but removing the word "high" eliminates potential misunderstanding that agencies should only be considering large disproportionate effects."

We recommend discussing the Administrations' recently released *Ocean Justice Strategy.*[12] According to the Strategy, ocean justice derives from environmental justice, with a specific focus on the ocean, and seeks to address environmental justice concerns related to the use of the ocean for economic, cultural, spiritual, and recreational purposes, and food security. Ocean justice provides the opportunity to work towards repairing past harms and a lens through which to think through past, current, or future impacts to the ocean. It also provides a framework with which to improve the well-being of people in coastal communities and other communities connected to and dependent on the ocean.

Sea mounts are often preferred fishing locations in the broad ocean areas. Identify the approximate number of days per year that subsistence fishing would be affected for each subsistence fishing population. Avoiding these areas for training exercises will reduce some EJ-related subsistence fishing impacts, as well as impacts to other fishers and to fish and wildlife. Identify other modifications that could ease the burden of project impacts on vulnerable populations. Assess all EJ impacts in consultation with the affected community and identify in the DEIS the feedback the Navy received. Conclusions regarding EJ impacts must consider the input of the affected community (See Ocean Justice Strategy, Section 1.1). Local communities are often best equipped to understand their own unique needs, dynamics, and goals and to recommend appropriate solutions. We recommend against an EJ methodology that evaluates all resources for significance and then simply transfers conclusions of less than significant to the EJ impact discussion. Impacts to EJ-affected communities must be seen through a different lens; one that considers the preexisting vulnerabilities that affect how impacts are experienced.

The Navy may want to utilize the information in the EPA tool EJ Screen. EJScreen is EPA's nationally consistent environmental justice screening and mapping tool that offers a variety of powerful data and mapping capabilities that enable users to understand details about the population of an area and its environmental conditions. The tool provides information on environmental and socioeconomic indicators as well as pollution sources, health disparities, critical service gaps, and climate change data.

[12]Ocean Justice Strategy, December 2023. See https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Ocean-Justice-Strategy.pdf

Tribal/Native Hawaiian Sacred Sites and Traditional Ecological Knowledge

The Bureau of Indian Affairs recently developed a Best Practices Guide[13] for Federal agencies regarding tribal and Native Hawaiian sacred sites. This guide addresses indigenous knowledge and consultation requirements. We recommend the Navy include the feedback it has received from tribal and native Hawaiian populations in the DEIS and indicate how the Navy will be utilizing any indigenous knowledge shared or addressing any concerns identified.

Noise impacts to people

The utilization of the largely dormant Northern California Range will introduce new noise sources into the project area that have not been experienced previously. Assess noise impacts along expected flight paths and corridors, including from both aviation/aircraft, as well as surface vessels and the new amphibious landing areas. Present noise impacts in a manner that comports with how humans experience noise, and include maximum noise levels as well as averaging metrics. We note that the Government Accountability Office found that providing information on potential noise impacts grounded in average Day Night Level (DNL) was not clear enough for communities to understand planned changes.[14] Ensure noise is not averaged over long quiet periods but represents sound as closely to what would be experienced by individuals as possible. Identify whether children would experience new noise and if so, assess impacts on children's schools and learning.

The EPA appreciates the opportunity to comment on preparation of the DEIS. When the Draft EIS is released for public review, please send an electronic copy to me at vitulano.karen@epa.gov. If you have questions, please contact me at (415) 947-4178 or by email.

Sincerely,

KAREN VITULANO Digitally signed by KAREN VITULANO Date: 2024.01.29 17:48:42 -08'00'

Karen Vitulano
Environmental Scientist
Environmental Review Branch

cc: Leah Davis, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service
Cassidy Teufel, California Coastal Commission

[13] BEST PRACTICES GUIDE For Federal Agencies Regarding Tribal and Native Hawaiian Sacred Sites. Available: https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/media_document/sacred_sites_guide_508_2023-1205.pdf

[14] See https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-105844.pdf

COUNTY of VENTURA
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY
DAVE WARD
Planning Director

SUSAN CURTIS
Assistant Planning Director

January 29, 2024

Attention: HCTT EIS/ OEIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860

SUBJECT: Response to Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Hawaii- California Training and Testing

Dear HCTT EIS/ OEIS Project Manager,

Thank you for providing the Ventura County Planning Division (Planning Division) with the opportunity to comment regarding the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Activity (Proposed Activity). The Planning Division coordinates with neighboring jurisdictions and provides review and comment on environmental documents prepared for projects that could affect the unincorporated area.

The EIS will assess the potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Activity, which is a plan to conduct at-sea military readiness activities within the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area. The Navy also proposes to modernize and sustain its ranges in a manner necessary to support these readiness activities. The Proposed Activity is needed to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions. Modernization and sustainment proposals include new special use airspace in Southern California, an expansion of an underwater training range near San Clemente Island, and installation and maintenance of mine training areas off Hawaii and Southern California. The HCTT Study Area includes only at-sea components of the range complexes, Navy pierside locations and port transit channels. Bays, harbors, inshore waterways, and civilian ports where training and testing activities occur, as well as transits between homeports and operating areas.

Naval Base Ventura County Operations

Compatibility between military installations, adjacent land uses, and local communities is essential to protect military missions, the health of local economies and industries, and the quality of life for county residents. Ventura County General Plan Policy LU-21.4, as shown below, supports coordination with local jurisdictions to ensure military compatibility:

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General Plan Policy LU-21.4 – *The County shall work to enhance communication and coordination with Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) and other jurisdictions in the county to enhance public knowledge and access to information regarding military operations and compatibility challenges while adhering to operational security requirements.*

The Proposed Activity may include actions at Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC), and the Broad Ocean Area off the coast of Southern California. If the Proposed Activity would increase noise effects on the local community, such as an increased frequency of flights to the NBVC military installations, particularly if the flights will emit sonic booms or fly low over residential areas, please provide advanced notification to local residents through multiple communication methods and languages. The County's Public Information Officer may also be able to assist with some types of communications.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft Environmental Assessment. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Joel Hayes at Joel.Hayes@ventura.org or 805.654.2834.

Sincerely,

Dave Ward, AICP I Planning Director
County of Ventura, Planning Division

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES
1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 330
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Date: 1/29/2024
DAR # AR 6538

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
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OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brian J. Neilson
DAR Administrator

FROM: Catherine Gewecke, Aquatic Biologist Catherine Gewecke

SUBJECT: Request for Comments - Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) / Overseas EIS for Hawaii-California Training & Testing / Ref #: 5090 Ser N46/0939

Request Submitted by: Department of the Navy
Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area

Location of Project: _____

Brief Description of Project:

The Department of the Navy (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, is preparing an EIS/OEIS to assess potential effects from conducting at-sea military readiness activities within the Study Area. The Proposed Action (consisting of sonar, missile/ artillery firing, mine training, etc.) is needed to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions in accordance with their Congressionally mandated requirements; realistic training and testing are crucial for military readiness, personnel safety, and national defense.

Comments:

☐ No Comments ☒ Comments Attached

Thank you for providing DAR the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. Should there be any changes to the project plan, DAR requests the opportunity to review and comment on those changes.

Comments Approved: _____ Date: Jan 30, 2024
Brian J. Neilson
DAR Administrator

DAR# AR 6538

Brief Description of Project

The Department of the Navy (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, is preparing an EIS/OEIS to assess potential effects from conducting at-sea military readiness activities within the Study Area. The Proposed Action is needed to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions in accordance with their Congressionally mandated requirements; realistic training and testing are crucial for military readiness, personnel safety, and national defense.

These military readiness activities (as previously described in the EIS conducted in 2017) include the use of active sonar and explosives at sea off the coasts of Hawaii and Southern California, on the high seas during vessel transit between these areas. The newly proposed actions include the following (note: some actions do not apply to Hawaii):

1) Continuing military training and testing activities
2) Modernizing and sustaining ranges in the Study Area
3) Adding a new special use airspace in Southern California
4) Expanding the Southern California underwater training range
5) Installing and maintaining mine training areas off Hawaii and Southern California

See attachment for maps of proposed training and testing areas in Hawaii.

Specific New Activities for Hawaii include the following:

1) Increased use of unmanned systems –air, surface, subsurface
2) Cable/sensor installation east of Kaneohe
3) Installation and maintenance of mine training shapes in Maui Basin
4) Missile/Artillery firing from PMRF
4) U.S. Air Force Air-to-Air Gunnery
5) Use of new vessels during amphibious landings

DAR# AR 6538

Comments

DAR requests that any previous or updated information relevant to the potential biological impacts to marine organisms (including marine mammals, sea turtles, fish, corals and other invertebrates, algae and live rock), resulting from continued or newly proposed training and testing activities be provided in the Draft EIS for review by DAR biologists (including biologists from Hawaii, Maui/Molokai/Lanai/Kahoolawe, Oahu and Kauai and Protected Species Program biologists). Updated information could include information from newly published studies, results of monitoring / biological reporting from past training/testing or any observations relevant to potential impacts to marine organisms/resources during past training/testing.

DAR also requests information on the range (min / max distances from land out to sea) of proposed missile / artillery firing from PMRF (Kauai) and information on the material type and disposition of ocean debris that may result from any type of missile / artillery firing, information on materials used for mine training and information on coral or live rock benthic cover in areas where mine training, amphibious landings or cable placement will be conducted.

DAR requests that the Department of the Navy pre-consult with local marine mammal researchers / organizations, which currently conduct research (or have conducted research in recent years) on marine mammals or sea turtles in Hawaii, and DAR biologists (including biologists from Hawaii, Maui/Molokai/Lanai/Kahoolawe, Oahu and Kauai, and Protected Species Program biologists), while preparing the draft EIS, to discuss and evaluate potential areas to conduct certain kinds of training, in order to attain lower potential behavioral, TTS and PTS takes for marine mammals and sea turtles or other potential impacts to marine organisms/resources.

The following researchers / organizations may have the most current information related to the status and distribution of select marine mammal species. These researchers / organizations include but are not limited to the following: Robin Baird (Cascadia Research Collective), Ed Lyman (Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary), Adam Pack (University of Hawaii at Hilo), Rachel Cartwright (Keiki Kohola Project), Jens Currie (Pacific Whale Foundation), Jim Darling (Whale Trust), Joseph Mobley (University of Hawaii), Lars Bejder or Paul Nachitgall (Marine Mammal Research Program - UH), Ann Zoidis (Cetos Research Organization), Christine Gabriele (Hawaii Marine Mammal Consortium), Jason Turner (University of Hawaii - Hilo), Bruce Mate (Oregon State University-Marine Mammal Institute).

DAR# AR 6538

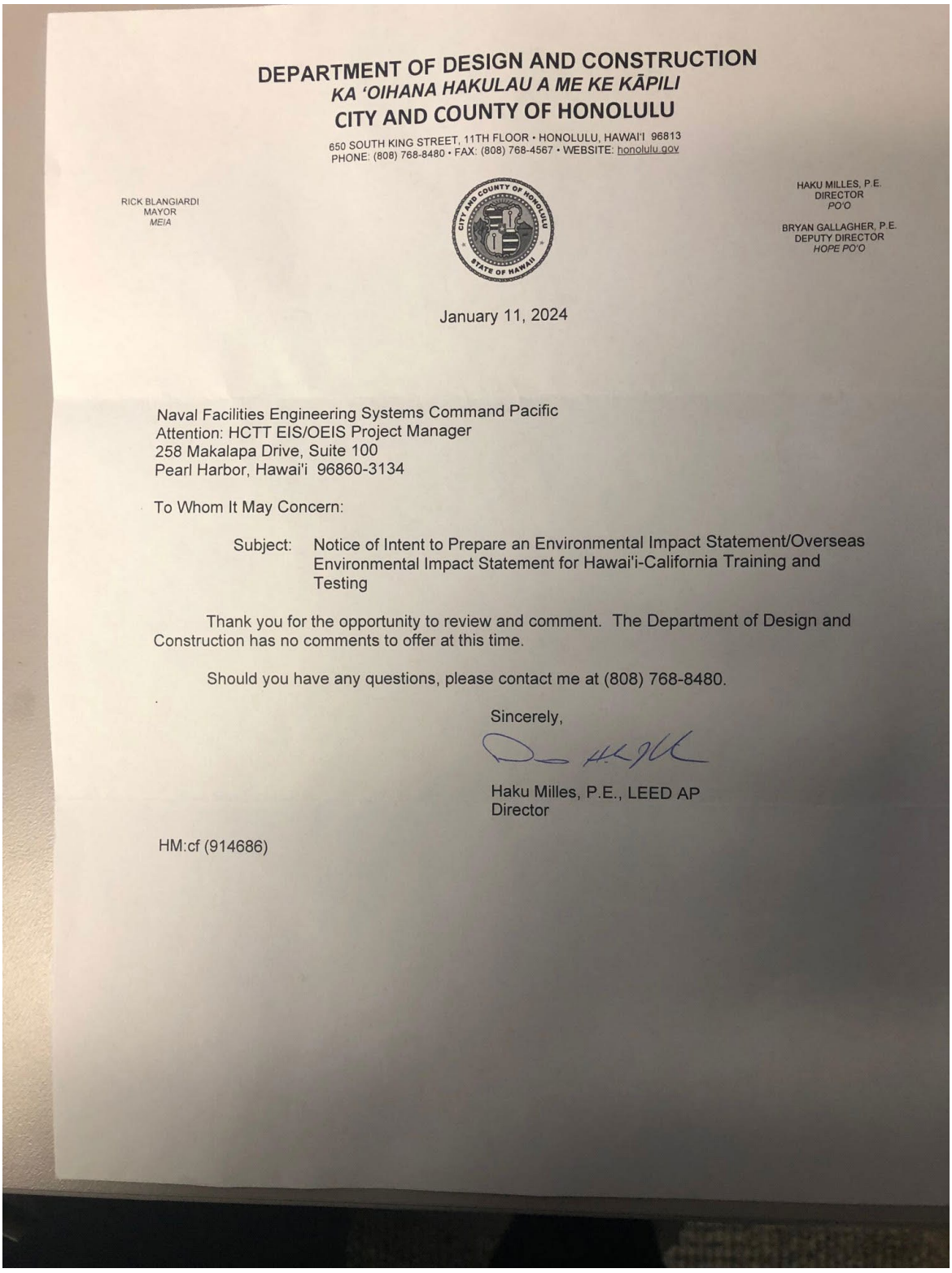
Comments

Note: Principle Investigators (PI) for each program / organization may have changed over time - please consult organizations directly for updated PI contact info.

DAR requests that the Navy integrate consideration of the vulnerable state of some cetacean populations in the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) (as discussed in the 2017 Draft EIS comments from DAR) including the MHI Insular Stock False Killer Whales (FKW), Kohala Resident Melon Headed Whales and potentially other species, while planning certain exercises and logistics.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to review and comment on the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) / Overseas EIS for Hawaii-California Training & Testing. Should there be any changes, amendments or modifications to the current plans, DAR requests the opportunity to review and comment on those changes. DAR also requests the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) / Overseas DEIS for Hawaii-California Training & Testing, when completed.

L.1.3 Postal Mailed Comments



DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
KA 'OIHANA HAKULAU A ME KE KĀPILI
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 11TH FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-8480 • FAX: (808) 768-4567 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

HAKU MILLES, P.E.
DIRECTOR
PO'O

BRYAN GALLAGHER, P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

January 11, 2024

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i 96860-3134

To Whom It May Concern:

Subject: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Hawai'i-California Training and Testing

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment. The Department of Design and Construction has no comments to offer at this time.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (808) 768-8480.

Sincerely,

Haku Milles, P.E., LEED AP
Director

HM:cf (914686)

Scoping comments by Kenneth A. Martyn
January 29, 2024

Hawaii-California Training and Testing ("HCTT")

I reside on the North Shore of the Island of Oahu. I am primarily concerned with the possible effects of the proposed continuation of the HCTT in Hawaii, and the need for careful study of the possible adverse effects of the HCTT on marine mammals, coral reefs, and other aquatic life in Hawaii.

In particular, I think it is important for the Draft EIS to give careful and detailed consideration of the possible effects on marine mammals, coral reefs, and other aquatic life from the active sonar, explosives and other sources of underwater sound, and to the possible effects of any electromagnetic discharges or stray electricity (including without limitation, microwave communication electrical energy), that may result from the proposed and continued HCTT "training and testing" that will be the subject of the Draft EIS/OEIS.

This should include careful consideration of the work by marine biologist Terry Lilley on the possible negative effects of the past military activities similar to the proposed HCTT on coral reefs in Hawaii, which also then may have possible adverse effects on the sandy beaches in Hawaii. Some of this work by Terry Lilley, which should be considered, is described in the following two URL sites:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCOVciuYjg8 (especially the portions of this video from minutes 2:30 to 7:45).

https://yourpositiveimprint.com/episodes/electromagnetic-energy-killing-hawaii-coral-reefs-marine-biologist-terry-lilley/ (especially the portions of this interview from minutes 19:54 to about 24:17).

The extensive data that that marine biologist has collected via underwater photography in Hawaii over many years should also be given careful consideration, along with any other available scientific data or analysis by other scientists, including marine scientists from the University of Hawaii.

The Draft EIS/OEIS should also consider various possible ways to mitigate possible adverse effects, and risks of possible adverse effects of the HCTT, including possibly restricting the HCTT (or some particular HCTT "training and testing" activities) to areas greater than 30 nautical miles and/or greater than 50 nautical miles from the island of Oahu.

Given the very large economic value, and cultural value, of Hawaii's coral reefs and sandy beaches, it is important to error on the side of caution before conducting any activities that may have any significant adverse effects on Hawaii's coral reefs and sandy beaches.

This should include the careful consideration in the Draft EIS/OEIS of the possible cumulative effects of the combination of the HCTT plus other likely stressors on Hawaii's coral reefs, such as warming ocean water, and ocean water pollution from various sources.

I also request that I receive notification of the Draft EIS/OEIS (and access to a copy of it) as soon as it is available. My e-mail address for sending me that notification is: kmhawhome-NEPA@yahoo.com

I attempted to submit these scoping comments via the website www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/ at about 8:45 pm PST time (6:45 pm HAST) on January 29, 2024, but that website said the scoping comment period had ended, and it would not accept my comments, even though the public announcement said the scoping comment period would end at 11:59 pm PST. So I will attempt to get this paper copy post marked at the Honolulu Airport Post Office before they close at 8 pm HST (10 pm PST).

NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE
RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Non-Government (Voting)
Douglas Fetterly
Citizen-At-Large
Linda Paul
Conservation
Robin Baird
Conservation
Samuel M. 'Ohukani'ōhi'a Gon, III
Conservation
Bonnie Kahapea-Tanner
Education
Solomon Pili Kaho'ohalahala
Native Hawaiian Elder
Pelika Andrade
Native Hawaiian
Kainalu Steward
Native Hawaiian
Thorne Abbott
Ocean Related Tourism
Rick Hoo
Recreational Fishing
Mark Hixon
Research
Don Schug
Research
Haunani Kane
Research

Government (Non-Voting)
Eric Roberts
Papahānaumokuākea MNM
Kim Hum
HIHW National Marine Sanctuary
Malia Chow
NMFS - PIRO
Brandon Jim ON
NMFS - OLE
Kealoha Pisciotta
Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Jared Underwood
USFWS - Refuges
Dan Polhemus
USFWS- Ecological Services
Brian Neilson
DLNR - DAR
Cynthia Vanderlip
DLNR - DOFAW
Joshua DeMello
WESPAC
Emily Hauck
US Navy
Maile Norman
US Coast Guard
Peter Thomas
Marine Mammal Commission

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

January 29, 2024

RE: SCOPING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY'S HAWAII CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING

To Whom it May Concern:

We write to you as the Northwestern Hawaiian Island Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council (RAC) to provide comments regarding scoping for the United States Department of the Navy's Draft Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement. The RAC is an advisory group to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries consisting of representatives from various stakeholder groups, governmental agencies, and Native Hawaiian representatives. It includes fishing, business, conservation, science, education, and Kupuna interests.

On January 29, 2024, the RAC had a meeting at which time the preparation of the HCTT Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) was discussed.

Full compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq., is vital to ensuring that marine mammals and other marine life are protected from unnecessary harm. As Congress intended when it passed NEPA, the U.S. Navy is required to employ rigorous standards of environmental review, including a comprehensive analysis of all practical alternatives, a full explanation of potential impacts, a reasonable and objective accounting of cumulative impacts, and a thorough description of mitigation measures that will significantly lessen environmental impacts.

The RAC requests the following to be included in a Cumulative Impact Analysis:

- Assessment of the impacts of deep sea mining
- Take of marine mammals by foreign vessels involved in military training
- Assessment of areas where impacts have occurred in the past or are likely to occur to help inform future potential impacts
- Impacts on Native Hawaiian cultural resources and connection to the ocean
- NHPA Section 106 Consultation with Native Hawaiians, see 36 CFR §800.4(c)(1)
- Discussion on marine debris and related impacts such as increased entanglement, and unexploded ordnance removal, including that of all participants included in the exercise

NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE
RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Douglas Fetterly
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Kealoha Pisciotta
Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Jared Underwood
USFWS - Refuges
Dan Polhemus
USFWS- Ecological Services
Brian Neilson
DLNR - DAR
Cynthia Vanderlip
DLNR - DOFAW
Joshua DeMello
WESPAC
Emily Hauck
US Navy
Maile Norman
US Coast Guard
Peter Thomas
Marine Mammal Commission

The RAC requests a review of these proposed areas as smaller subdivisions for evaluation. For example, the Southern California area differs from the Hawaiian archipelago in terms of impact and mitigation needed.

These are just a few examples of issues for consideration and reassessment, and are in no way comprehensive.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to receiving detailed information on the EIS.

Sincerely,

Linda Paul
Chair, Reserve Advisory Council

The Council is an advisory body to the Reserve/NOAA Monument superintendent. The opinions and findings of this document do not necessarily reflect the position of the Reserve, the Monument, or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Marine Region
1933 Cliff Drive, Suite 9
Santa Barbara, CA 93109
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director

January 29, 2024

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134
www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/

HAWAII-CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING ACTIVITIES NOTICE OF INTENT OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Dear HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) received a Notice of Intent (NOI) of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) from the Department of the Navy (Navy) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Activities (Project).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that the Department, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

DEPARTMENT ROLE

The Department is California's Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the state (Fish and Game Code, Section 711.7, subd. [a] & 1802; Public Resources Code, Section 21070; CEQA Guidelines Section 15386, subd. [a]). The Department, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (Id., Section 1802). Similarly for purposes of NEPA, the Department, under its Trustee authority, provides, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources. The Department is also responsible for marine biodiversity protection under the Marine Life Protection Act in coastal marine waters of California and ensuring fisheries are sustainably managed

under the Marine Life Management Act. Pursuant to our jurisdiction, the Department has the following comments and recommendations regarding the Project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: Department of the Navy

Objective: The primary objective of the proposed Project is to ensure that U.S. miliary services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions in accordance with their Congressionally mandated requirements, and advance joint interoperability in Navy led exercises with other military service. The Navy plans to address environmental impacts associated with ongoing military readiness activities, which include training and research, development, testing and evaluation activities within the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area (Study Area). Proposed training and testing activities may include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of underwater sound. Modernization and sustainment proposals include new special use airspace in Southern California, an expansion of an underwater training range near San Clemente Island, and installation and maintenance of mine training areas off Hawaii and Southern California.

Location: The Study Area consists of the at-sea components of the Hawaii Operating Area (OPAREA) and Temporary OPAREA, the California OPAREA, and the transit corridor connecting the two. This includes areas along the Southern and Central California coastline, including the marine environment around San Nicolas Island, and the Northern California Range Complex. The Study Area also includes in-water areas of San Diego Bay, Port Hueneme, and Pearl Harbor, including select pier side facilities associated with Navy ports and naval shipyards, as well as four amphibious approach lanes along the central coast, providing land access from the Northern California Range Complex and Point Mugu Sea Range.

Timeframe: The NOI did not note when implementation of the Project would go into effect, however, the record for decision on the Final EIS/OEIS is anticipated to occur late 2025.

BIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Discussion and Comment: California waters support many resident and migratory fish and special status wildlife, such as seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles. The marine and coastal habitats include the sandy seafloor, beaches, kelp forests, estuaries, seagrass meadows, and rocky reef. This variety of habitats provide fish and wildlife with nursery grounds, shelter, and areas to forage and reproduce, supporting the state's coastal economy, including numerous commercial and recreational fisheries.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the Navy in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct, and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife resources.

Biological Resources within the Area of Potential Effect

1. Include the following discussions from the standpoint of the protection of marine plants and animals:
   a) A complete discussion along with maps and diagrams of the proposed testing areas including all staging areas and access routes.

   b) A range of feasible alternatives to ensure that the proposed testing areas are fully considered and evaluated; the alternatives should avoid or otherwise minimize impacts to sensitive species and their essential habitats and any state or federally listed species. Specific alternative locations should be evaluated in areas with lower biological species or habitat sensitivity compared with the preferred or existing locations.

2. Provide a complete assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the Study Area, with particular emphasis upon identifying endangered, threatened, sensitive, and locally unique species and their habitats. The Draft EIS/OEIS should include the following information:

   a) Information on the regional setting is critical to an assessment of environmental impacts, with special emphasis placed on resources that are rare or unique to the region. Examples include:
      i) Green sea turtles are resident foragers in San Diego Bay (unique to the region).
      ii) California grunion (*Leuresthes tenuis)* spawning grounds and Pismo clam (*Tivela stultorum*) beds are locally and/or regionally unique on central and southern California beaches.
      iii) Southern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) are endemic to California's central coast from San Mateo County to Santa Barbara County and San Nicholas Island.

   b) An updated inventory of the biological resources associated with each habitat type on site and within the area of potential explosion or sonar effects. The Department's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) at https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB and Marine BIOS at https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/GIS/MarineBIOS have publicly available data on previously reported listed, rare or sensitive species or habitats

including sensitive marine fish, invertebrates, seabirds, sea turtles, and marine mammal species. The Department is available for any questions on California marine resources and recommends reaching out to other state and federal agencies to obtain additional current information on important California marine resources.

c) Focused species-specific surveys, conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when the species are active or otherwise identifiable, are recommended. Acceptable species-specific survey procedures should be developed in consultation with the Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. These surveys should include endangered, threatened, sensitive, and locally unique species, including but not limited to the examples stated in 2a.

d) Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA): The Study Area may potentially conflict with the MLPA (Title 14 Section 632), which resulted in the creation of California's existing network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) MPAs are named, discrete geographic marine or estuarine areas designed to protect and conserve marine life, habitats, and ecosystems. The Study Area should be searched to determine if it overlaps any MPAs, including State Marine Reserves (SMR), State Marine Conservation Areas (SMCA), State Marine Recreational Management Areas (SMRMA), and State Marine Parks (SMP). A Special Closure (SC) is a unique designation used by the Fish and Game Commission under Title 14 Section 632 and is also part of the MPA network. The Draft EIS/OEIS should include a detailed discussion of what activities are proposed in MPAs.

e) Fully Protected Species: The Department has jurisdiction over fully protected species pursuant to Fish and Game Code Sections 3511,505, 4700, and 5515. Fully protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except for collecting these species for necessary scientific research and certain relocation situations. Therefore "take" of any fully protected animal species is prohibited and must be avoided where take is likely. Fully protected marine species that may occur in the testing areas include: the southern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris nereis*), northern elephant seal (*Miroinga angustirostris*), Guadalupe fur seal (*Arctocephalus townsendi*), North Pacific right whale (*Eubalaena japonica*), and the California least tern (*Sterna antillarum browni*). The Department maintains a list of fully protected species that can be found on the Department's web site: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Fully-Protected

f) Endangered Species: The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) is a California environmental law that conserves and protects plant and animal species at risk of extinction (Fish and Game Code Section 2050 et seq.). A CESA-listed species, or any part or product of the plant or animal, may not be

imported into the state, exported out of the state, "taken" (i.e., killed), possessed, purchased, or sold without proper authorization. If the Project may impact CESA listed species, early consultation with the Department is recommended, as modification to the Project and mitigation measures should be incorporated into the Draft EIS/OEIS. Additional information on CESA and CESA-listed species can be found at: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/CESA.

Analyses of Potential Impacts on Marine Biological Resources

3. Provide a thorough discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts expected to adversely affect biological resources, with specific measures and monitoring programs to offset such impacts. The following should be fully evaluated in the Draft EIS/OEIS:

   a) An analysis and discussion of potential adverse impacts from sonar, explosions, lighting, noise, human activity, exotic species, and oil spills should be included. Mitigation measures and best management practices proposed to alleviate such impacts should be included.

   b) An analysis of potential indirect impacts on biological resources, nearby MPAs, adjacent natural habitats and ecosystems, and wildlife movement/migration areas, including access to undisturbed habitats in adjacent areas.

   c) Testing areas that are within or nearby MPAs may inadvertently contribute to wildlife-human interactions. A discussion of possible conflicts and mitigation measures to reduce these conflicts should be included in the Draft EIS/OEIS.

   d) A cumulative sonar and explosive effects analysis should be developed for local populations of marine fish communities, invertebrates, seabirds, sea turtles, and mammals where appropriate. General and specific plans, as well as past, present, and anticipated future plans for testing, should be analyzed relative to their impacts on marine life communities, habitats, and ecosystems.

   e) Long-term fish assemblage monitoring in the nearshore and other marine life communities monitoring are appropriate to detect long term cumulative effects from sonar or detonation testing. An adequate monitoring frequency should be developed to detect changes or trends over time within and adjacent to the testing areas.

   f) A commercial and recreational fisheries analysis that focuses on impacts to both federally and state-managed species and associated habitats should be included. The analysis should include anticipated changes to the fishing fleets' ability to access fishing grounds due to the Project. The Department recommends that the Navy consult the Department, commercial and recreational

fishermen, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Pacific Fishery Management Council, and relevant data sources such as the California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations (CalCOFI) larval fish data sets regarding potential impacts to fisheries from the Project.

Mitigation for Marine Biological Impacts

4. Canopy kelp (*Macrocystis pyrifera*), eelgrass (*Zostera* spp.) beds, and rocky reefs are sensitive marine habitats that occur or may occur in the Project area. These habitats have been designated as habitat areas of particular concern (HAPC) within the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. HAPC, a subset of Essential Fish Habitat, are habitats of special importance to fish populations due to their rarity, vulnerability to development and anthropogenic degradation, and/or ability to provide key ecological functions. Canopy kelp and eelgrass have some of the highest primary productivity in the marine environment and provide a significant contribution to the marine and estuarine food webs. Native eelgrass species create large beds beneficial for fish habitat and have been identified as special aquatic sites and given protections by the Clean Water Act. Additionally, the importance of eelgrass protection and restoration, as well as the marine ecological benefits of eelgrass, is identified in the California Public Resources Code (PRC §35630). The Department uses the California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy (CEMP) (NOAA 2014), developed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), for guidance on identifying eelgrass impacts, eelgrass mitigation measures and compensation, and for identifying appropriate eelgrass mitigation and donor sites. The proposed Project's plans and activities should avoid and minimize potential impacts to sensitive marine habitats, including canopy kelp, eelgrass beds, and rocky reefs, to the greatest extent possible. The Draft EIS/OEIS should include measures to fully avoid and otherwise protect regionally rare marine life communities and their habitats and MPAs from testing related impacts. The Department considers these habitats as having both regional and local importance.

5. The Draft EIS/OEIS should include mitigation measures for adverse impacts to sensitive marine plants, animals, and habitats. Mitigation measures should emphasize avoidance and minimization (reduced frequencies) of testing impacts. For unavoidable impacts, on-site habitat restoration or enhancement should be discussed in detail. If compensation is not feasible or would not be biologically viable, and therefore not adequately mitigate the loss of biological functions and values, off-site mitigation through habitat creation and/or acquisition and preservation in perpetuity should be considered and discussed.

6. For proposed preservation and/or restoration, the Draft EIS/OEIS should include measures to perpetually protect the targeted habitat values from direct and indirect negative impacts. The objective should be to offset the habitat's qualitative or

quantitative losses of marine water or bottom habitat values. Issues that should be addressed include restrictions on access, monitoring and management programs, control of illegal dumping, water pollution, increased human intrusion, etc.

CONCLUSION

The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOI to assist the Navy in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Leslie Hart and Amanda Canepa, Environmental Scientists at R7CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Becky Ota

Becky Ota
Habitat Conservation Program Manager
Marine Region

ec: Becky Ota, Program Manager
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Eric Wilkins, Senior Environmental Scientist
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse
State.Clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

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STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
560 N. NIMITZ HWY., SUITE 200
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January 22, 2024

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
ATTN: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Re: Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS/Overseas EIS (NEPA)
Hawai'i-California Training and Testing Study Area

Aloha:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is in receipt of your Notice of Intent (NOI) December 7, 2024, letter seeking comments on the scope of the Department of the Navy (DON) Hawai'i-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) to assess potential environmental effects associated with the proposed action to conduct at-sea military readiness activities within the HCTT study area. The United States (U.S.) DON will be preparing this EIS/OEIS in accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). The NOI states that the current proposed activities are similar in scope to what was assessed in the 2018 HCTT EIS/OEIS. Thus, the new EIS/OEIS is characterized as a "follow on" NEPA analysis to support renewal of current Federal regulatory permits and authorizations that expire in December of 2025.

Proposed activities include training and research (i.e., sonar, explosives, and other underwater sounds), development, testing, and evaluation within the Hawaii Operating Area, the California Operating Area, and the Pacific Ocean transit corridor connecting the two. The DON further proposes to modernize and sustain its ranges in a manner to support these readiness activities. This will include new special use airspace in Southern California, an expansion of an underwater training range near San Clemente Island, and installation and maintenance of mine training areas off Hawai'i and Southern California.

The OHA is the constitutionally established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians.[1] OHA has substantive obligations to protect the cultural and natural resources of Hawai'i for its beneficiaries.[2] Accordingly, OHA is

[1] Haw. Const. Art. XII Sec. 5.
[2] See HRS § 10.

required to (1) serve as principal public agency in the State of Hawai'i responsible for the performance, development and coordination of programs and activities relating to native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; (2) assess the policies and practices of other agencies impacting native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; and (3) conduct advocacy efforts for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians.[3]

OHA provides the following comments pertaining updated studies, marine sanctuaries, incidental take, cumulative impacts, and consultation planning:

Updated Studies

In review of the 2018 EIS/OEIS, OHA observes that most of the studies pertaining to marine mammal populations and migratory patterns relied on studies that took place between 2011 to 2015. Section 3.7 details that the information was used to determine seasonal mitigation areas that were developed in coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service. The section further mentions that "Navy funded efforts" as being underway to further improve understanding and ability to predict how stressors ultimately effect marine mammal populations. OHA is further aware that the DON applied to increase the incidental take of large whales from 3 to 5 per year in 2021.

OHA would expect that the most up-to-date studies will be used in the forthcoming draft EIS/OEIS, with a clear discussion on how the DON's understanding of populations and migrations have changed (or not) since publication of the 2018 EIS/OEIS. With a projected publication of a draft EIS/OEIS in 2024, some of the studies referenced in the 2018 EIS/OEIS would be a decade old or more. The draft EIS/OEIS should further provide updates on the mentioned "Navy funded efforts" in the 2018 EIS/OEIS and share how such information has changed (or not) the DON's understanding and ability to predict how stressors effect marine mammal populations. While OHA specifically calls out examples pertaining to marine mammal population studies, our comment should be applicable to any study referenced as part of the assessment of impacts to all environmental components. In other words, the DON should always be using the most up to date information as possible and consistently provide discussion on how conditions and subsequent mitigation measures have changed (or not) or will change (or not).

Marine Sanctuaries

In the Culture Resources discussion, Section 3.10, of the 2018 EIS/OEIS, OHA observes that Papahānaumokuākea is actually discussed as a World Heritage Site within the context of National Historic Preservation Act Section (NHPA) 106 compliance. The monument was described as being within the Temporary Operating Area of the Hawai'i Range Complex and that it could be susceptible to sonic booms or utilized for emergency situations. However, an emphasis was placed on the fact that no actual physical activities

[3] HRS § 10-3.

would occur in the monument area (unless there was an emergency), and that any possible impacts to cultural voyaging or wayfinding would be temporary. OHA believes the DON should reasonably disclose what qualifies as an emergency and what actions could occur in Papahānaumokuākea or any marine sanctuary as part of the NEPA process.

OHA does appreciate inclusion of the Papahānaumokuākea monument within the discussion of NHPA Section 106 compliance given the area's cultural importance and presence of numerous historic properties. However, we do question why other marine sanctuaries with similar characteristics within both the Hawai'i operating area (HOA) and California operating area (COA) were omitted. For example, both the South Molokai Reef and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary are within the HOA. Notably, the South Molokai Reef has been described as a national treasure and is currently home to a number of historic fishponds. Further, it is believed to be sacred to Hina, the Hawaiian akua of the Moon. In regards to the COA, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary exists off the coast of Southern California, which also hosts a number of cultural resources that are important to the Chumash tribe.[4] If not already done so, the Chumash, Pomo, Ohlone, Makah, and any other Pacific Coast tribes should be invited to consult as part of NEPA and NHPA processes. These sanctuaries should be included as part of the NEPA analysis and NHPA discussion as they are comprised of historic and cultural resources.

OHA further advises that these sanctuaries be evaluated as traditional cultural properties (TCP). Per the National Park Service's National Register Bulletin No. 38, a TCP is defined as:

> "A property that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (a) are rooted in that community's history, and (b) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identify of the community."

In specific regards to Papahānaumokuākea, it is a sacred place to Native Hawaiians that supports a diversity of life, including hundreds of native species and the largest extent of coral reefs in the archipelago.[5] The ancient belief system of Hawai'i still exists and acknowledges the island of Mokumanamana[3] as the potent portal that presides at the boundary between pō and ao. This boundary is the northern limit of the sun's journey on the horizon, the Tropic of Cancer, reverently referred to as Ke Alanui Polohiwa a Kāne, the dark glistening path of Kāne, whose kinolau as Kānehoalani details the sun and its movements on the horizon. Nihoa and Mokumanamana collectively contain more than 140 archaeological sites that evince the unique agricultural, religious, and settlement efforts

[4] The Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary has a Chumash community working group informing its sanctuary advisory council.
[5] See Mai Ka Po Mai, A Native Hawaiian Guidance Document for the Management of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, prepared by OHA in 2021.

of Native Hawaiians in this region. There is no question that Papahānaumokuākea would qualify as a TCP.

Similarly, its OHA's understanding that the other sanctuaries within the HOA and COA are utilized by cultural practitioners and contain numerous historic and cultural resources; thus, we do not see why these sanctuaries would not at least be considered as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as TCPs as well.

Incidental Take

As mentioned above in our first comment, the DON had to increase their take of large whales due to incidences in 2021 in which two separate Navy vessels struck whales off the coast of Southern California in June and July. Separately, a foreign vessel struck two fin whales off the coast earlier in May 2021. Originally, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued a take of 3 large whales per year, but had to increase this authorization to 2 additional whales per year for DON activities spanning 2018 to 2025.

To Hawaiians, whales are the largest ocean manifestation of the Hawaiian akua (god), Kanaloa – akua of the ocean realm, voyaging, ocean animals, and fresh underground water.[6] Some of his other forms or kinolau are known to include the nihui (white shark), he'e (octopus), hihimanu (sting ray), honu (turtle), and nai'a (dolphin). Kanaloa is one of the four major akua kāne (male gods) – Kāne, Kanaloa, Kū, and Lono. He is arguably the most common deity across Oceania with various names (e.g., Tangaroa, Takaroa, Tagaloa, Ta'aroa). Kanaloa was the creator of the world and superior god in many parts of Polynesia (e.g., Marquesas, New Zealand) except Hawai'i.[7] While not viewed as prominent throughout all of Hawai'i, it is believed that Kanaloa's importance was more pronounced on Lanai, Molokai, Maui, and Kaho'olawe. Coincidentally, these islands are also the same islands in which whales were found in significant numbers during the mid to late 19th century.[8]

Further alarming to OHA is the current incidental take authorization issued by NOAA that allows a cumulative take in the thousands of marine mammal species. According to a complaint filed by Earth Justice in December 2013,[9] "National Marine

[6] See Libo, Susan A. 2010. *A Local Perspective of Hawaii's Whaling Economy: Whale Traditions and Government Regulation of the Kingdom's Native Seamen and Whale Fishery.* Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii.

[7] See McKinzie, edit. N.D. N *a Mo'i o Kaho'olawe:. The Administrators of Kaho'olawe.* Kaho'olawe Island Conveyance Commission, Consultant Report No. 15.

[8] See Herman, Louis. 1979. Humpback Whales in Hawaiian Waters: A Study in Historical Ecology. *Pacific Science, Vol 33, No 1.* University Press of Hawaii.

[9] Sese Conservation Council for Hawai'i, ä ñon-profit corporation Animal Welfare Institute, a non-profit corporation; Center for Biological Diversity, a non-profit corporation; and Ocean Mammal Institute, a non-profit corporation, v. National Marine Fisheries Service; United States Department of Commerce; Penny Prtizker, Secretary of Commerce.

Fisheries determined that, over the next five years, the Navy's use of sonar, other active acoustic sources and explosives for training and testing in the [Hawai'i-Southern California Training and Testing] HSTT Study Area will likely result in the deaths of up to 140 marine mammals, cause permanent injury to more than 2,000 additional marine mammals, and inflict additional harm to marine mammals nearly 9.6 million times by disrupting vital behaviors such as migration, nursing, breeding, feeding, and sheltering." The take of Kanaloa is overwhelming.

OHA expects the matter pertaining to the DON's request for an increase in incidental take to be fully discussed within the EIS/OEIS as well as resolution on any filed complaints related to incidental take. The most up to date studies should be used to provide the most accurate incidental take request going forward. All efforts should be made to minimize take as much as possible, with a clear indication in the EIS/OEIS of how this is demonstrated. While administratively another incidental take could be requested if projected numbers are off again, this is not a preferable outcome nor a means to instill trust in the DON's research and modeling. As the kinolau of one of our akua, the DON must take more care to honor their commitments to not take more than is needed from Kanaloa.

Cumulative Impacts

OHA recommends that the DON's consideration of the cumulative impacts at a minimum must consider activities that are of an extraction nature (i.e., deep-sea mining) and that would further frustrate any kind of recovery and protection such as the following: the longliner fishing fleets (foreign and domestic) that harbor in Honolulu; the Aquarium Trade as it is extractive and effects near shore ocean life; and, Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) and other related exercises that occur by any of the other armed forces operating in Hawaiian waters and or on land that impact our fresh water and ocean systems. By cumulative, OHA specifically means the cumulative impact on any and all lifeforms, sacred places and spaces, and the health and wellbeing of all natural and cultural resources that will be affected by the DON's proposed training activities and modernization efforts.

In review of the 2018 EIS/OEIS, Table 4.2-1, activities like the aquarium trade, foreseeable future deep-sea mining activities[10], and annual RIMPAC activities do not appear to be acknowledged as a source of possible cumulative impacts. While commercial fishing is discussed, a greater level of specificity should be included to directly address longliner fishing, both from foreign and domestic parties.

The 2018 EIS/OEIS further mentions that the "quality" of information on past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions varies and that quantifications were done where possible. In the absence of quantitative data, a "qualitative assessment" was made by "professional judgement and experience." The document appears to concede that given the large-scale study area, that "analysis of the incremental contribution of cumulative

[10] Canadian based "The Metals Company" planned operations in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone and Honolulu Harbor.

stress that the proposed action may have on a given resources is largely qualitative and speculative." OHA finds this situation unfortunate as essentially DON training activities are continuing without solid quantitative analysis and potentially without appropriate mitigations. Minimally, the DON should indicate in the document, especially in regards to cumulative impacts, where quantitative data is used versus qualitative. If findings and information are speculative, then the DON must call out where such speculation exists. The DON should then indicate ways in which quantitative and non-speculative data can be obtained through additional research or a means of appropriate monitoring actions.

Further, it should be made clear to the reader how follow up research data and monitoring mechanisms can or could trigger amendments to existing mitigation measures. OHA would expect this to include a statement on what Federal processes and respective timelines would be triggered to incorporate new data and proposed mitigation measures.

Consultation Planning

The DON may want to craft an actual NEPA public participation plan as an optional tool pursuant to 32 CFR 775.11 as a means to set protocols (i.e., meeting minutes/notes, comment periods, speaking time allocations, engagement with Indigenous Peoples). All prior consulting parties that participated in the 2018 EIS/OEIS should serve as the starting pointing for current outreach efforts. As the 2018 EIS/OEIS was a very long document (in excess of 2000 pages), a longer comment period should be allotted for the current EIS/OEIS. 40 CFR 1506(d) requires a minimum comment period of 45 days, but subsection (e) goes on to state that the minimum comment period may be shortened or extended. The DON should consider a 60-day comment period in this case.

In regards to public meetings and consultation events, OHA recommends that minimally 30-day's notice be provided. As a means to assist the DON, OHA could be provided with advance notice of any such meetings so that we can plan to disseminate information via our monthly newspaper, *Ka Wai Ola*, and online social media outlets. This may assist with outreach to the Native Hawaiian community. Any public engagement meetings or consultations should allow speakers to speak on topics for at least 5 to 10 minutes given the voluminous amount of information that the EIS/OEIS will cover. Previously, OHA received concerns about speakers allegedly being only allotted 3 minutes of time during consultations for the 2018 EIS/OEIS.

OHA further notes that in November 2022, a memorandum was issued by the Executive Office of the President, Council on Environmental Quality, providing guidance to Federal departments and agencies on Indigenous Knowledges. Notably, this includes guidance on inclusion of such knowledge in the NEPA and NHPA processes, encouragement of early and sustained engagement, maintaining trust, and even developing an "Indigenous Knowledge Plan". Indeed, a public participation plan could include a robust Indigenous Knowledge component that specifically incorporates guidance from the CEQ November 2022 memo.

Closing Remarks

OHA looks forward to seeing our comments taken into consideration as the HCTT EIS/OEIS is being prepared. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment. Should you have any questions, please contact OHA's Lead Compliance Specialist, Kamakana C. Ferreira at (808) 594-0227 or by email at kamakanaf@oha.org.

'O wau iho nō me ka 'oia 'i'o,

Stacy Ferreira
Ka Pouhana, Chief Executive Officer

SF:kf

CC: Carmen Hulu Lindsey, OHA Board of Trustees Chairperson

Appendix L.2 Public Comments and Responses

Environmental Impact Statement/

Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

Hawaii-California Training and Testing

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L.2 Public Comments and Responses on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

Tables L.2-1, L.2-2, L.2-3, L.2-4, L.2-6, and L.2-7 provide a listing of all comments received on the HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS and the Action Proponents' responses. Each row in these tables presents the identification of the commenter, the comment, and the Navy's response to the comment. Because many commenters touched on more than one topic, some of the comments were separated into individual comments, assigned a number, and responded to separately. Organization and government agency names are abbreviated when the comment is broken into more than one topic.

Responses to all comments were prepared and reviewed for scientific and technical accuracy and completeness. Comments appear as they were submitted and have not been altered with the exception that expletives and personal information were removed, as necessary.

Some individual members of the public submitted as their comment one of three form letters, a portion of a form letter, or issues and concerns aligned with those in one of the form letters. To consolidate responses, the complete form letter comments and responses are found in Table L.2-4, Table L.2-6, and Table L.2-7. Because the first form letter (Table L.2-4) was associated with over 1,000 individuals, a separate table is included (Table L.2-5) that contains the names of all commenters who submitted as their comment this form letter, a portion of the letter, or issues and concerns aligned with the letter.

L.2.1 Government Agency Comments

Table L.2-1 contains comments from federal, state, and local agencies received during the public comment period and the Action Proponent responses.

Table L.2-1: Comments Received from Government Agencies

Comment ID	Comment	Response
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CADFW)		
CADFW-00	See attachment	Thank you for your review of the Draft EIS/OEIS. Responses to your specific comments and recommendations follow.
CADFW-01	**I. State Fully Protected and CESA-Listed Species** Comments: Several fully protected species and species listed under CESA are present in the Study Area and may be impacted by Project activities. The proposed Project may result in "take," as defined by state law, of species protected under CESA (Fish and Game Code section 2050 et seq.). Fully protected (FP) species are defined in Fish and Game Code sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515. FP and CESA- listed species known to be present in the Study Area include: Marine Mammals North Pacific Right Whale (Eubalaena japonica) Endangered, FP Southern sea otter (Enhydra lutris nereis) FP Guadalupe fur seal (Arctocephalus townsendi) Threatened, FP Sea Turtles Green Sea Turtle (Chelonia mydas) Threatened Leatherback Sea Turtle (Dermochelys coriacea) Endangered Loggerhead Sea Turtle (Caretta caretta) Endangered (North Pacific distinct population segment) Olive Ridley Sea Turtle (Lepidochelys olivacea) Threatened Fish and Birds Southern California steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss) Endangered White Sturgeon (Acipenser transmontanus) Threatened, candidate California least tern (Sterna antillarum browni) Endangered, FP The DEIS/OEIS did not include an analysis of the Project's impacts on White Sturgeon, which are currently a candidate species for listing as threatened under CESA.	The Draft EIS/OEIS analyzed impacts on all marine mammal, sea turtle, fish, and bird species within the Study Area, including those not federally listed, such as white sturgeon. Although the EIS/OEIS cannot look at every species individually, species families and taxonomic groups with similar physiological characteristics and habitat use were analyzed. White sturgeon share similar life histories and migrations with green sturgeon, and stressors analyzed would be similar for both species. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) imposes stringent requirements for evaluating impact to federally listed species. While states can be more stringent and establish state listed species, Congress has not waived sovereign immunity to impose state regulatory requirements for state listed species upon federal agencies. However, many of the species identified are also federally listed. As a result, the Navy consulted with both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding federal endangered species in compliance with Section 7 of the ESA.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	Recommendations: CDFW recommends that the proposed Project not disrupt fully protected or CESA-listed species and that the FEIS/OEIS includes the following analyses for these species within the Study Area: seasonal abundance, migration routes, known breeding and feeding areas, and how climate impacts may impact seasonal abundance, migration, and breeding and feeding areas. The DEIS/OEIS identified minimization measures for federally listed species, however, the FEIS/OEIS should include protection and mitigation measures for state listed species.	
CADFW-02	**II. Commercially and Recreationally Important Marine Species** Comments: Numerous species with important commercial and recreational fisheries value, and others that are locally and/or regionally unique, exist within the Study Area and could potentially be impacted by the proposed Project, including but not limited to: California grunion (*Leuresthes tenuis*), Dungeness crab (*Cancer magister*), Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii*), Pismo clam (*Tivela stultorum*), Rockfish (Sebastes spp.), California Spiny Lobster (*Panulirus interruptus*), California Halibut (*Paralichthys californicus*), California scorpionfish (*Scorpaena guttata*), and highly migratory species such as Tunas (Thunnus spp.). California grunion leave the water at night to spawn on beaches during the spring and summer months. For four consecutive nights, beginning on the nights of the full and new moons, spawning occurs after high tides and continues for several hours. Spawning occurs from March 1st through August 31st, and occasionally in February and September, with peak spawning in late March through June. Eggs are deposited during the highest tides of the month and incubate in the sand during the lower tides where they are kept moist by residual water in the sand. Eggs hatch after approximately 10-14 days, during the next hide tide series, when they are inundated by water and agitated by surf; however, eggs can remain viable for over a month in the sand. CDFW is concerned that the Project's mine training activities on beaches such as Ocean Beach, Camp Pendleton, and Imperial Beach may impact grunion spawning and hatching. Recommendations: CDFW recommends all beach Project activities, including mine training activities, occur outside of the grunion spawning season (March 1st through August 31st). If avoiding the grunion spawning season is not feasible during training, CFDW recommends that all training	In this EIS/OEIS, the military services do not analyze activities that occur on land. As analyzed in Sections 3.4 and 3.6, proposed military readiness activities would not have significant effects on any fish or invertebrate species, including grunion. Because of the potential for grunion spawning at the Silver Strand Training Complex (SSTC), the Navy conducted mitigation that included pre-event surveys. After 2 years of surveys, the Navy determined that due to the small scale of the activities and lack of observed spawning, the surveys were not beneficial.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	activity be restricted to above the kelp wrack line or the Higher High Water line from March 1st to August 31st. CDFW also recommends that grunion monitoring should be conducted in the Study Area where mine training activities may occur during spawning and hatching events. Furthermore, the locations of the spawning run should be marked physically and/or by Global Positioning System (GPS) locations. The density of the grunion throughout the area should be noted using the Walker Scale. The Project should ensure that personnel avoid the spawning and hatching area and that a 50-foot buffer is used to avoid impacting any areas adjacent to the sediment placement sites. If grunion spawning occurs within the Study Area, training activities in that area should cease and not be conducted until after the grunion eggs have hatched (2 weeks). The expected run schedule and further information about grunion can be found on the Department's website: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Ocean/Grunion. Additionally, CDFW recommends further analysis of both species impacts and potential mitigation measures for all state and federally managed recreationally and commercially important species. The FEIS/OEIS should include protection and mitigation measures for state and federally listed species.	
CADFW-03	**III. Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Monitoring** Comments: Harbor seals (Phoca vitulina), California sea lions (Zalophus californianus), other species of marine mammals, and sea turtles may be present or occur within the Study Area. Project activities, particularly noise from pile driving, explosive ordinances and use of sonar could adversely impact these animals if they are present within the Study Area. Repeated exposure to these stressors has been linked to physical injuries, including tissue damage, embolism, strandings, and mortality. While the DEIS/OEIS concludes the impacts to marine mammals and sea turtles are "less than significant," CDFW has additional recommendations for the FEIS/OEIS. Recommendations: CDFW recommends the Project avoids and minimizes impacts to these species to the maximum extent feasible and the Navy consults with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding mitigation measures. Additionally, CDFW recommends the FEIS/OEIS discuss in detail the cumulative effects of adding the proposed NOCAL Range and expansion	The military services are committed to avoiding, reducing, or minimizing effects on the marine environment from at-sea activities. Mitigation measures are established and adhered to with the aim of reducing effects on resources. The Navy has consulted with NMFS as part of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and ESA processes. NMFS, as a cooperating agency on this EIS/OEIS, has worked with the Navy to develop mitigation measures. These measures would be implemented as practicable and would minimize effects on marine species such as harbor seals and California sea lions. The analysis does consider the totality of the action on species throughout the entire Study Area, just as NMFS will do during their MMPA authorization process. The cumulative effects analyzed in Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS also included the entire Study Area.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	areas in the SOCAL Range complex, to the current testing areas (Point Mugu Sea Range and SOCAL Range) since many of the same marine mammal and sea turtle species and populations move freely between the testing areas.	
CADFW-04	**IV. Sensitive Marine Habitats** Comments: The DEIS/OEIS includes avoidance measures to reduce the potential impact of explosive ordinances on sensitive marine habitats. Testing of explosive ordinances, poses significant risks to sensitive marine habitats, such as habitats found within Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) under various West Coast Fishery Management Plans which include a subset of EFH, Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC), in the California OPAREA. Habitats in the California Study Area include rocky reefs, 'cold-water' coral reefs, kelp forests, and seagrass beds necessary for the reproduction, development, feeding and growth of many CESA and ESA species and many others that are of recreational and commercial value. Explosions in the marine environment create shockwaves, pressure changes, and resuspended sediments that can adversely affect these benthic biotic environments biota. The Project activities include the modernization of the existing Southern California Offshore Anti-Submarine Warfare Range (SOAR) underwater tracking and communication range, the installation, use, and maintenance of two Shallow Water Training Ranges as extensions to the SOAR, deployment of seafloor cables and instrumentation, installation and maintenance of mine warfare and other training areas, and installation and maintenance of underwater platforms. According to the DEIS/OEIS, most seafloor devices, including the training mine shapes and anchors, seafloor cables, and underwater platforms, would be placed in areas that would result in minor and temporary bottom substrate effects. However, where hard bottom habitat cannot be avoided, the DEIS/OEIS further states that seafloor devices would not change the substrates' ability to function as a habitat. While CDFW appreciates that the DEIS/OEIS has mitigation measures to avoid hard bottom habitat, CDFW is concerned that the seafloor devices may be placed in sensitive marine habitats including EFH and/or HAPC.	The Draft EIS/OEIS analysis and supporting science show there is not a significant effect on sensitive marine habitats. Potential effects from military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. The combined impact area of explosive stressors, physical disturbances, and strike stressors would have a minimal effect on habitat or its effective function. As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements the most practical mitigation measures with the aim of achieving the least practicable adverse effects on the marine environment, including sensitive habitat (see Section 5.7.1 and Section 5.7.2). Based on the analysis in the EIS/OEIS, the proposed activities would not pose a risk to sensitive marine habitats given that these activities have been conducted for many years in the same locations and in other range complexes with no indications of broad-scale effects that are either injurious or of significant biological impact at those locations. No damage or loss to seagrass beds are expected, and no eelgrass harvest or transplanting would occur. The Navy submitted an essential fish habitat (EFH) assessment to the NMFS West Coast Region (WCR) to analyze any proposed actions that may adversely affect EFH. NMFS WCR reviewed the assessment and provided four conservation recommendations to avoid, minimize, or otherwise offset any adverse effects on essential fish habitat. The Navy generally concurred with three of the four recommendations, particularly related to eelgrass and kelp surveys. Please see Appendix J (Agency Correspondence). Navy Region Southwest San Diego Bay Eelgrass Mitigation Bank (Bank) was established to offset unavoidable eelgrass and other habitat impacts from infrastructure projects and testing and training activities in San Diego Bay. The Navy proposes to add to

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	In addition, eelgrass (Zostera spp.) is present within the Study Area, including in San Diego Bay, and may be impacted by various Project activities such as submarine and Unmanned Underwater Vehicle subsea and seabed warfare exercises, pile driving, including testing of explosive missiles and rockets, and mine warfare including explosive mine countermeasure and neutralization. Native eelgrass species create large beds beneficial for fish habitat and have been identified as special aquatic sites and given protections by the Clean Water Act. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act identifies eelgrass as a HAPC. CDFW uses the National Marine Fisheries Service's California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy for guidance on identifying eelgrass impacts, eelgrass mitigation measures and compensation, and for identifying appropriate eelgrass mitigation and donor sites. Recommendations: CDFW recommends the DEIS/OEIS include measures to avoid or minimize adverse effects on sensitive marine habitats that provide critical ecosystem functions in the California OPAREA including rocky reefs, kelp forests and eelgrass and seagrass beds to the maximum extent feasible and by implementing the following: •Prior to conducting Project activities coordinate with National Marine Fisheries Service and United States Geological Survey's mapping efforts to identify sensitive marine habitats and where feasible, avoid placing seafloor devices in sensitive marine habitats and test explosive ordinance away from sensitive marine habitats and beyond 3 nautical miles. •Avoid and minimize disturbance and damage or losses of seagrass beds including eelgrass. Where Project activities may impact eelgrass, CDFW recommends the Navy conduct comprehensive surveys for eelgrass beds or patches should be conducted consistent with the National Marine Fisheries Service's California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy. If any unavoidable eelgrass impacts occur due to Project activities, they should be identified and compensated using guidance described within the CEMP. •If eelgrass harvest and transplanting is required for mitigation, a Scientific Collecting Permit (SCP) from CDFW will be required prior to harvest and transplanting activities. The SCP may include permit conditions such as donor eelgrass surveys, submittal of an eelgrass harvest and transplant plan, limits on number of turions collected, methods for collection and	the existing Bank by expanding eelgrass habitat at four sites in San Diego Bay. Of the four sites, three would support common eelgrass (*Zostera marina*), and one site would support Pacific eelgrass (*Z. pacifica*).

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	transplanting, notification of activities, and reporting requirements. Please visit CDFW's SCP webpage for more information: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Scientific-Collecting.	
CADFW-05	**V. California Marine Protected Area Network** Comments: The Department is responsible for the management of the state's network of marine protected areas (MPAs), established by the Marine Life Protection Act to protect marine biodiversity in California's coastal marine waters. Numerous MPAs including State Marine Reserves and State Marine Conservation Areas are found within the Project's proposed California testing complexes (cdfw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c00c82e1f32a49e99c747e2411e3439e). These MPAs protect unique ecosystems in California's coastal and offshore waters, including kelp forests, rocky reefs and coral reefs and the associated marine life. California's MPA network is designed to function synergistically, meaning the protection of one area enhances the effectiveness of others. Disturbing any part of this network can weaken its overall effectiveness, diminishing its ability to achieve statewide conservation goals. Recommendations: Avoid testing explosive ordinances within California's MPAs, as the success of these areas depends on minimizing human disturbances. Should testing be required within or in a vicinity that may cause disturbance, the CDFW recommends consulting with CDFW.	Explosives would not occur in any of the California Marine Protected Areas. As shown on Table 6-2 in the EIS/OEIS, nearly all Marine Protected Areas are avoided during proposed military readiness activities. For those Marine Protected Areas where activities could occur, Table 6-2 describes the potential effects on protected resources in that area, but none of the proposed activities include explosives.
CADFW-06	**VI. Pile Driving and Sound Criteria** Comments: The DEIS/OEIS states that impact pile driving and vibratory pile removal would occur at Port Hueneme Harbor during training for Port Damage Repair, which is an activity that trains forces to repair critical port facilities. Use of an impact hammer increases the risk of temporary or permanent impacts to fish, marine mammals and sea turtles such as movement out of the Study Area, barotrauma injury, or mortality. Use of an impact hammer may also impact water quality, releasing contaminants from sediments into the water and/or creating turbidity, or impacts to eelgrass beds from settling sediments. CDFW relies on guidance from the Fisheries Hydroacoustic Working Group to set safe sound pressure level (SPL) criteria for pile driving and pulling activities (Fisheries Hydroacoustic	Training exercises must have the flexibility to use pile driving/removal tools that enhance the realism of the training and provide trainees with the required skillset. The Action Proponents have evaluated acoustic impacts of these activities in Section 3.7.3.2.3 and have consulted with NMFS on these issues under the MMPA and ESA. Mitigation measures collaboratively developed during these consultations would be implemented as part of the training. Activities outlined in the EIS/OEIS and consultation documents are periodic, short-term training exercises. Implementing a full suite of acoustic monitoring protocols would hinder the ability of trainees to train in realistic environments. An acoustic

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	Working Group 2008, Attachment 1). The SPL dual criteria include a peak level of 206 dB and a cumulative sound exposure level (SEL) of 187 dB for fish 2 grams and heavier or a cumulative SEL of 183 dB for fish less than 2 grams. Recommendations: CDFW recommends using a vibratory hammer for pile driving to the greatest extent feasible, or an alternative technology that results in the least amount of in water sound level impacts. If an impact hammer must be used (e.g., due to pile material, refusal at bedrock), multiple minimization measures should be used to reduce sound levels. CDFW recommends the following: • A sound attenuation monitoring plan should be developed and included in the DEIS/OEIS. This plan should include underwater sound monitoring methods, work windows, and mitigation measures to avoid injurious sound pressure levels to fish, marine mammals and sea turtles.	monitoring program would also require a highly specialized skillset that is not readily available. Therefore, an acoustic monitoring program is impractical from a logistical perspective, but also would require acquisition, obligation, and use of additional resources (i.e., funding, personnel, and equipment) in excess of what is available. Training events are scheduled throughout the year, but the times/duration of exercises depend on the specific metric needed, when military personnel are available, or when they are scheduled to be deployed. Therefore, having "work windows" would not allow the flexibility needed for military personnel.
CADFW-07	• Establishment of underwater exclusion zones to ensure safe distances from marine mammals and sea turtles. Pile driving should not occur when marine mammals and sea turtles are within the exclusion zone. • A cushion block of wood or similar material should be used between the pile and hammer during all pile driving using an impact hammer.	No sea turtles are expected to occur in the pile driving/removal training area within Port Hueneme Harbor. As described in Table 5-2 in Chapter 5 (Mitigation) of the Final EIS/OEIS, a 5-yard mitigation zone must be clear for 15 minutes prior to the start of the training. In order to maintain realism, a cushion block would not be used for the proposed training activities.
CADFW-08	• A bubble curtain may be used during all impact pile driving to reduce sound below levels that have been shown to cause injury and/or mortality to fish and marine mammals. • Underwater sound level monitoring should be conducted during pile driving. If SPLs and SELs exceed agreed upon levels as per the Interim Criteria for Injury to Fish, additional steps should be taken to reduce the underwater noise to acceptable levels. • A silt curtain to control turbidity during high turbidity generating activities. Additionally, high turbidity generating activities should be conducted when there are no strong outgoing tides since this could exacerbate turbid conditions and negatively impact marine life and sensitive marine habitats.	The MMPA/ESA consultation documents issued by NMFS will address acoustic issues related to the pile driving/removal exercises and impacts on marine species. Because the activities outlined in the EIS/OEIS and consultation documents are periodic, short-term training exercises, implementing a full suite of acoustic monitoring or adding bubble curtains or silt curtains would hinder the ability of the trainees to train in as realistic an environment as possible. These changes would also be impractical from a logistical perspective, requiring acquisition, obligation, and use of additional resources (i.e., funding, personnel, and equipment) in excess of what is available. Mitigation measures identified during MMPA and ESA

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		consultation with NMFS will be implemented as part of the training.
CADFW-09	**VII. Invasive Species Impacts** Comments: Disturbance of the bottom sediments from dredging may redistribute non-native species that compete with native species. This could cause widespread adverse impacts to eelgrass and marine ecology. The invasive alga Caulerpa taxifolia is listed as a federal noxious weed under the U.S. Plant Protection Act and while deemed eradicated in 2006 is monitored for potential future emergence. Another invasive alga species found recently in Newport Bay and San Diego Bay is Caulerpa prolifera, which is also a potential threat to growth and expansion of native eelgrass beds and other native algae. Caulerpa prolifera can grow as deep as 50 meters and appears to be more tolerant of low light environments than most other macroalgae. Additionally, since all Caulerpa species pose a serious risk in harming native marine life, Fish and Game Code Section 2300 was amended in 2023 so that no person shall sell, possess, import, transport, transfer, release alive in the state, or give away without consideration all species of the genus Caulerpa, with the exception of bona fide scientific research upon authorization by the Department. While the DEIS/OEIS analyzed cumulative effects of testing in relation to marine invasive species, it did not consider the invasive alga species found recently in San Diego Bay, Caulerpa prolifera. Recommendations: CDFW recommends conducting Caulerpa spp. surveys to identify potential existence of invasive Caulerpa spp. in the San Diego Bay Study Area in accordance with the Caulerpa Control Protocol https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2021-12/caulerpa-control-protocol-v5.pdf (October 2021). Any sightings of Caulerpa spp. should be reported within 24 hours to CDFW (Caulerpa@wildlife.ca.gov), and NMFS at 562-980-4037 (nmfs.wcr.caulerpa@noaa.gov).	Dredging is not proposed in this action. The Navy practices Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as described in Table 3.0-27 in the EIS/OEIS, including SOPs that prevent or minimize the risk of invasive species introductions and spread from Navy activities. Where the potential for spread of Caulerpa would be reasonably foreseeable, the Navy conducts pre-activity Caulerpa surveys in accordance with the Caulerpa Control Protocol.
California Coastal Commission (CCC)		
CCC-01	Given the significant expansion of the geographical area proposed for training and testing activities, as well as the combination of previously considered activities into one larger project, we recommend that the Navy address the expansion of scope clearly in its CD submission for the larger	The extent of the new HCTT Study Area is discussed in detail in the Consistency Determination (CD) and the EIS/OEIS, and has been presented to the Commission during briefings. The Navy also cooperated with the Commission following the submission

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	project. It would be most valuable if this comparison were not limited to geographic scope but also included changes to the proposed scope of activities for each of these areas from previous years to the current project description (in types of and temporal extent/quantity of activities and impacts, as well as any changes to standard operating procedures and mitigation measures proposed now compared to previous years).	of the CD by briefing the Commission and ensuring all questions were answered.
CCC-02	We also respectfully request that in both the EIS and CD, the Navy clearly communicate how the avoidance, minimization, mitigation and monitoring measures and reporting commitments incorporated into previous projects (including those included in the CDs for the most recent HSTT and PMSR) would be carried forward into this new HCTT phase, and to what extent the Commission's recommendations from its review of previous CDs are proposed to be incorporated or addressed in this new phase. Along these lines, we welcome the opportunity to further discuss with the Navy the various measures and issues that were key elements of recent Navy at-sea training and testing activity federal consistency reviews by the Commission, including potential effects to sensitive marine species and habitats, as well as an update on implementation of the various avoidance, minimization, and reporting commitments made by the Navy as part of those reviews (in particular, CD Nos. CD-0003-20 and CD-0001-18). We also recommend that the Navy inform and coordinate with all the native American tribes listed by the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as interested in activities in Mendocino through San Diego Counties. The NAHC can provide the Navy with up-to date contact lists. Please include descriptions and statuses of any Navy's tribal consultation efforts in the CD submittal for this project.	The Action Proponents included all mitigation measures in the submitted CD. In the EIS/OEIS, mitigation measures are included in Chapter 5, and additional detail on geographic mitigation assessments found in Appendix K. The Action Proponents submitted a Sacred Lands File (SLF) and Native American Contacts List request to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in order to identify tribes, tribal groups, or individuals that have an interest in the cultural resources within the California Study Area, to include Mendocino through San Diego Counties. The NAHC responded to the request with results of the SLF record search. The SLF included 39 federally recognized and 39 non-federally recognized tribes and tribal groups. The Action Proponents invited all 39 federally recognized tribes to Government-to-Government Consultation. Status of the Navy's tribal consultation efforts was provided as supplemental information to the CD submittal.
Honolulu Board of Water Supply (HBWS)		
HBWS-01	The Board of Water Supply has no comment on the Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement at this time. We understand that the impact of the land-based training and testing activities are analyzed in a separate National Environmental Policy Act analysis.	Thank you for your review of the Draft EIS/OEIS.

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Honolulu Department of Design and Construction (HDDC)		
HDDC-01	The Department of Design and Construction has no comments to offer at this time.	Thank you for your review of the Draft EIS/OEIS.
Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources (HIDAR)		
HIDAR-01	Please see the comments from Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) / Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) attached.	Thank you for your review of the Draft EIS/OEIS. Responses to your specific comments and recommendations follow.
HIDAR-02	Will there be any monitoring after the use of acoustic substressors, explosives, and in-water electromagnetic devices to record impacts seen in the area? Is there a record of mortality (marine mammals, fish, invertebrates) seen in previous years of training and testing after the use of these devices? If we (DAR) see a mortality event within the time frame of the proposed Naval exercises, are we able to work with the Navy to discern if it was a result of these trainings?	As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, monitoring is conducted prior to and during activities involving acoustic and explosive sources, as well as post-event monitoring for explosive activities. If a dead or injured marine mammal or sea turtle is observed following a detonation, the required incident reporting procedures are followed, which includes notifying the appropriate agency. See Section 5.4 for additional details. The Navy recommends DAR follow their established reporting requirements or notify NMFS (see https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/report for contact information) if a mortality is observed. The Navy will then work with NMFS to determine if the stranding/mortality was related to Navy activities.
HIDAR-03	Why isn't Kauai included in Figure 3.5-2: Substrate Type Within the Hawaii Range Complex? Is it included in the calculations of the percent coverage of abiotic substrate types in the study area?	Thank you for identifying that discrepancy in Figure 3.5-2; it has been corrected in the Final EIS/OEIS. Yes, the area around Kauai is within the Hawaii Range Complex and was included in the abiotic substrate calculations.
HIDAR-04	Marine Mammal Impact Questions in reference to the following sections: 5.7.3 Hawaii Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area / Table 5-9 (Details geographic mitigation related to the use of active sonar and explosives off Hawaii Island) 5.7.4 Hawaii 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area / Table 5-10 (Details geographic mitigation related to the use of active sonar and explosives off Molokai, Maui, Lanai, and Kahoolawe Islands) 5.7.5 Hawaii Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area / Table 5-11(Details special reporting requirements related to the use of active sonar	All of the Hawaii Phase III mitigation areas outlined in the 2018 HSTT Phase III EIS/OEIS have been carried forward into this analysis. Table 5-19 summarizes new or modified mitigation measures and areas since Phase III. For the Hawaii Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area, the table states: “This EIS/OEIS expands the geographic extent and extends the date range of the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS Hawaii Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area based on best available science. The mitigation area continues the requirements related to reporting the total hours of MF1, and adds the reporting of

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	off all eight main Hawaiian Islands as well as some submerged features [e.g., Middle Bank]) 5.7.6 Hawaii Humpback Whale Awareness Messages / Table 5-12 (Details awareness message requirements for the Hawaii Range Complex) For each of the above sections on Marine Mammal and Humpback Whale Mitigation Areas and corresponding tables of Mitigation Area Requirements for each type of activity it states at the start of each section that "The mitigation is a continuation from the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS". Does the corresponding map (Figure 5-2: Mitigation Areas in the Hawaii Portion of the Study Area) which delineates each Marine Mammal and Humpback Whale Mitigation Area, also represent mitigation areas which are a continuation from the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS - i.e. were any changes made to these mitigation areas from the previous EIS/OEIS? If no changes were made, was the Navy able to consult with researchers who conduct cetacean research in Hawaii to determine if existing mitigation areas should be expanded or modified or if more mitigation areas around certain islands should be added?	total hours of MF1C, surface ship hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar to NMFS." The Action Proponents consulted with NMFS on all mitigation areas, and any changes will be documented in the Navy's Record of Decision (ROD) and the NMFS Final Rule. Section 3.0.1.1 (Marine Species Monitoring and Research Programs) details the Navy's consultation with NMFS and other scientists on a routine basis, including scientists from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In addition, the Navy continues to be one of the largest funders of marine species research worldwide and consults with numerous marine mammal experts, organizations, and researchers and uses the best available science in its analysis.
HIDAR-05	Were the results of any studies conducted between 2018 – 2024 utilized to add onto or change existing geographic or utilization information about areas for marine mammal foraging, reproduction, migration, and critical habitat which were identified in the 2018 EIS/OEIS – or were any new areas identified based on new information from any 2018 – 2024 studies?	Yes, see Appendix K for a complete assessment of recent scientific studies used to determine mitigation areas. Studies by Krotofil et al. for biologically important areas (BIAs) in Hawaii and Calambokidis et al. for BIAs off California were assessed. These BIAs included areas important for reproduction, feeding, and migrating. As described in Section 3.0.1.1 (Marine Species Monitoring and Research Programs), the Navy continues to sponsor research that benefits the marine environment and uses that information to make informed decisions.
HIDAR-06	When comparing the NOAA Main Hawaiian Islands False Insular Killer Whales (MHI FIKW) critical habitat maps with Figure 5-2: Mitigation Areas in the Hawaii Portion of the Study Area (from section 5. Mitigation), it looks like the mitigation areas only cover a portion of the MHI FIKW critical habitat – i.e. some MHI FIKW critical habitat will not have overlapping restrictions or mitigation measures implemented. Have mitigation areas for the East and West side of Oahu ever been discussed or considered?	Yes, see the analysis in Appendix K, Section K.3.3. The approach taken for each mitigation area assessment, including the False Killer Whale Small and Resident Population Area, is described in Section K.2.1. Final mitigation measures, including mitigation areas, resulting from consultation will be documented in the Navy ROD.

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	Have researchers who conduct studies in these areas been consulted since the 2018 EIS/OEIS to provide input on whether this area may have recent documentations or developments of MHI FIKW or other marine mammal foraging, reproduction, migration activities?	
HIDAR-07	In terms of the final determination from the Appendix E Explosive and Acoustic Analysis Report (under section 2.4.2.9.1 ESA-listed False Killer Whales [Main Hawaiian Islands Insular DPS]), which states that the use of sonars and explosives during training activities may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect, designated critical habitats for the Hawaiian Islands Insular DPS false killer whales – was this determination based on new information from new studies conducted between 2018-2024 or any modifications to mitigation areas or was the same information from the 2018 EIS/OEIS utilized to make this determination?	Please see Appendix E, pages 5-1 through 5-8. The references listed on those pages list the studies that were cited in the analysis described in Appendix E, most of which are from 2019 or later. These references are the best available science on the effects of explosives and sonar at the time of the analysis, as required under the MMPA and ESA. Also, please see the background information and related references used in Appendix C, Section C.6.2.7, for consideration in the analysis. Final mitigation measures, including mitigation areas, resulting from consultation will be documented in the Navy ROD.
HIDAR-08	In Table 3.7-4: Summary of Standard Operating Procedures and Mitigation for Marine Mammals (continued) Applicable Stressor Requirements Summary and Protection Focus Section, it states that for Acoustics the Requirements Summary and Protection Focus will be the following: • Conduct visual observations for events involving active acoustic sources, air guns, pile driving, and weapons firing noise. • Restrictions on use of active acoustic stressors within mitigation areas, marine mammal foraging, reproduction, migration, and critical habitat. Can the Navy provide information on how the Lookouts who conduct visual observations for events involving active acoustic sources, air guns, pile driving, and weapons firing noise (as described above), are able to adjust their methods for detections based on the potential incidence of each different species in each different area where the activities are being conducted? I.e. Is the Lookout able take into consideration that they may be looking out for a species that may utilize a specific area, which may not surface as frequently as others or may differ in size compared to other species in other areas – or is one standardized method used for all species of cetacean in all areas?	Section 5.3 of Chapter 5 details the training of Navy personnel as Lookouts, including environmental compliance, mitigation, and marine species awareness.

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Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands (HIOCCL)		
HIOCCL-01	Attached are our comments that will also be mailed. Thank you.	Thank you for your review of the Draft EIS/OEIS. Responses to your specific comments and recommendations follow.
HIOCCL-02	Pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) §4-1 Districts, generally;(5) (A), the island of Ka'ula is in the Waimea District. As OCCL previously noted in our comments for the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) Land-Based Training and Testing Draft Environmental Assessment, Ka'ula Island appears to be State owned, and all activities there should be compliant with HRS Chapter 343, the Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act; as well as with any other relevant State law. At the briefing it was clarified that all training and testing shall be done offshore. Therefore, while Ka'ula is identified in the EIS, it is expected that no land disturbing training and testing shall be conducted on the island.	The United States lawfully manages Kaula under federal jurisdiction based on conveyance from the Territorial Governor's conveyance in 1924 and Sections 5(c) and 5(e) of the Hawaii Admissions Act of 1959. Land disturbing activities on the island of Kaula are not proposed in this EIS/OEIS. The Pacific Missile Range Facility Land-Based Training and Testing Environmental Assessment analyzed land training on Kaula.
HIOCCL-03	Regarding State Submerged Lands It is unclear if there will be any land uses, such as new cables, that will run across State submerged lands within the Hawai'i Study Area sites.	There are no land activities in Hawaii proposed in this EIS/OEIS. Cable installations for two actions would occur in the water space. The Hawaii Cable Project - Phase I, would include maintenance or replacement of seafloor cables northeast of Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH) as depicted in Figure A-6 in Appendix A of the EIS/OEIS. The cables connect to the existing Wave Energy Test Site (WETS) junction box. The Hawaii Cable Project - Phase II would involve installing a seafloor cable due west of the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai, that would (potentially) connect from an existing submerged junction box situated approximately within 3NM of PMRF shoreline. It should be noted that several Navy training and testing activities do involve placement of devices on the seafloor. Some of those seafloor placements may occur in areas within 3 nm of the shoreline within the Hawaii Study Area. For example, mine warfare training activities (mine shapes without explosives) occur in the near shore area around Kaneohe Bay or Marine Corps Training Area Bellows. No activities occur in the Kailua Bay area. See Figure A-11 from the EIS/OEIS. In addition, there may be testing of marine energy harvesting devices that power charging stations for unmanned systems at the WETS.

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HIOCCL-04	Regarding the Wave Energy Test Site The EIS document includes a cable project at the Wave Energy Test Site (WETS) offshore of the Kane'ohe Marine Base. The draft EIS states: The U.S. Navy's Wave Energy Test Site (WETS), the United States' first grid connected wave energy test site, was expanded to three test berths in 2015. Through a cooperative effort between the Navy and the U.S. Department of Energy, with the support of Hawaii Natural Energy Institute and the Hawaii National Marine Renewable Energy Center, WETS hosts companies seeking to test their pre-commercial wave energy convertor devices in an operational setting, enabling them to advance their device transition readiness level. Hawaii Natural Energy Institute provides performance analysis, numerical modeling of devices and moorings, wave measurement and forecasting, environmental monitoring (primarily acoustics), and logistics support to the Navy and the companies deploying at WETS. and At WETS, the Navy tests marine energy devices such as wave energy converters and conducts environmental monitoring of systems under test. The area has been expanded to test distribution of power to allow for autonomous system charging and testing. The WETS is on State-owned submerged lands in the Resource subzone of the Conservation District. The OCCL is aware that at least one of the wave energy converters at the site has experienced a major structural failure, and that it has not been able to secure permits for either land or ocean disposal. OCCL does not have any record of how this decade-old site was authorized or designated, the components of the site, nor of how many are operational. Please explain how the Wave Energy Test Site was authorized and designated.	The WETS project was developed within MCBH lands and within submerged lands of Naval Defensive Sea Area (promulgated through Executive Order 8681). It was initially evaluated through an Environmental Assessment in January 2003 with a finding of no significant impact signed by the Navy and the Marine Corps Base Hawaii on April 18, 2003 and consisted of one test berth and cable to shore. Coordination and consultations under applicable laws such as the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), ESA, and Magnuson-Stevens were completed at that time. Communications with Hawaii DLNR Division of Aquatic Resources resulted in a Navy letter dated December 11, 2002 in response to several questions about the proposed wave energy test site, to include a discussion of submerged lands. Subsequently, two more test berths were analyzed and installed through an Environmental Assessment in January 2014 with a finding of no significant impact signed by the Navy and Marine Corps Base Hawaii on February 4, 2014. Similarly, coordination and consultations under applicable laws such as CZMA, NHPA, ESA, and Magnuson-Stevens were completed at that time. For CZMA, the Navy concluded the action fit one of the categories in the Hawaii de minimis established between Navy and Hawaii Office of Planning and provided electronic notification to the cognizant Hawaii CZM office.
Marine Mammal Commission (MMC)		
MMC-01	***Guadalupe fur seals***—Department of the Navy (2024c) [*U.S. Navy Marine Species Density Database Phase IV for the HCTT Study Area*] used an unpublished upper bound estimate of Guadalupe fur seal abundance from Norris (2022) rather than the peer-reviewed abundance estimate from	As alluded to in the comment, the cited publication and revised abundance estimate only became available after the Navy's densities were derived. The Navy worked with Tenaya Norris at

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	Juárez-Ruiz et al. (2022) that published just six months later (48,780 vs. 72,631 fur seals[2], respectively). The Navy indicated that it chose to use the greater of the two abundance estimates provided by Norris (2022; 37,940 and 48,780 fur seals) instead of the mean estimate (43,360 fur seals) to calculate the various densities in Table 9-1 and that the greater density also accounted for any pups missed during counts (Department of the Navy 2024c). That is a reasonable approach. However, the published abundance estimates should have been used in that manner, as they have been available for 2.5 years, rather than the unpublished abundance estimates. The Navy also indicated that it had used the mean abundance estimate of 43,360 to account for the lower in-water abundance expected from July–March to account for pups remaining on land or outside of the Study Area. Again, this is a reasonable approach, but the mean abundance estimate of 63,850 fur seals from Juárez-Ruiz et al. (2022) should have been used. In addition, the Navy estimated that 50 to 100 percent of Guadalupe fur seals occur in the core area and 10 to 50 percent occur in the geographic area, depending on seasonal fluctuations in distribution. The Navy used the mid-points of each area (i.e., 75 and 30 percent) to estimate the number of fur seals in each area—the mid-points effectively increased the abundance estimates used by 5 percent (for a total of 105 percent; Department of the Navy 2024c). Since the abundance estimates from Juárez-Ruiz et al. (2022) are from the 2019 dataset and the researchers estimated the annual growth rate to be 8.4 percent for the 1991–2019 period, the higher end of the abundance estimates and the mid-points of each area would yield lower density estimates than the Navy using the mean abundance estimate and the 8.4 percent growth rate projected to 2025, when the FEIS and final rule are expected to be issued. As such, the Commission recommends that at the very least the Navy should use an abundance estimate of 72,631 rather than 48,780 for April–June and 63,850 rather than 43,360 for July–March, along with the 75 percent assumption for the core area and 30 percent assumption for the geographic area to revise the density estimates and resulting numbers of takes for Guadalupe fur seals in the FEIS and LOA application. [2] Both of which are based on the higher end of the abundance range.	The Marine Mammal Center (TMMC), one of the co-authors on the paper by Juárez-Ruiz et al. (2022), to develop the density estimates used in the analysis, which included identifying the most appropriate abundance estimate for Guadalupe fur seal. During the process of calculating pinniped densities for the pending Northwest Training and Testing Phase IV Supplemental EIS/OEIS Study Area, TMMC reported to the Navy a revised unpublished abundance for Guadalupe fur seals of 96,468. Considering that this is a two-fold increase in the abundance estimate used to derive densities, the Navy decided that the Guadalupe fur seal densities should be revised and take estimates recalculated based on the adjusted densities. Since there are only two uniform density strata for Guadalupe fur seal, the Navy determined that remodeling to estimate takes would not be necessary and that the increase in takes can be estimated by calculating a multiplier equal to the ratio between the initial and recalculated densities. Two multipliers were calculated and used to revise take estimates: 1) a warm season multiplier of 2.07945 and 2) a cold season multiplier of 2.05908. This was a reasonable approach given that remodeling is not feasible at this point because exposure estimates from previous analyses in at-sea study areas have shown that changes in densities result in approximately proportional changes in predicted exposures. This approach has been approved by NMFS in previous similar circumstances. The U.S. Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024) was amended with the revised densities.

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MMC-02	*Hawaiian monk seals*—Department of the Navy (2024c) used the island-specific monk seal abundance estimates from the 2021 stock assessment report rather than the 2022 stock assessment report (compare Table 9-17 in Department of the Navy (2024c) to Table 1 in the 2022 stock assessment report[3]) to derive its monk seal densities. The estimated number of monk seals increased from 1,437 to 1,465 between the 2021 and 2022 stock assessment reports. The Commission pointed out a similar issue for HSTT Phase III activities. The Commission again recommends that the Navy use the most current monk seal abundance estimates from the 2022 stock assessment report to derive its density estimates and re-estimate numbers of takes in the FEIS and LOA application. [3] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2023-08/Monk-Seal-2022.pdf.	The abundance of 1,437 monk seals published in the 2021 stock assessment report (Carretta et al, 2022) was the latest abundance estimate available when the Navy calculated densities. The 2022 stock assessment report (Carretta et al., 2023) was published in August 2023, over 1 year after densities were finalized. The Navy revised the density estimates for Hawaiian monk seal using the latest abundance estimates reported in the 2024 draft Stock Assessment Report (SAR) (Carretta et al., 2025) for each island where separate abundances were reported. The total abundance reported by Carretta et al. (2025) is 1,605 monk seals. In order to account for the increase in total abundance, the Navy calculated multipliers for each island by taking the ratio of the revised and initial densities. An analysis of the acoustic effects modeling results showed that all predicted exposures of Hawaiian monk seals occurred in the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) and no exposures occurred in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Therefore, the Navy used the highest multiplier derived for the MHI of 1.2919 to increase the predicted takes in waters both greater than and less than 200 m. This approach has been approved by NMFS in previous similar circumstances. The U.S. Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report was amended with the revised densities.
MMC-03	*Northern elephant seals*—For elephant seals, the Navy appears to have assumed that due to the molt no females would be in the ocean from May–June[4] and that males would not be present off California from April–June (see Table 9-14 in Department of the Navy 2024c). These assumptions resulted in zero densities for elephant seals in nearshore waters from April–June and in offshore waters from May–June. The Navy indicated that it used kernel density distributions from Robinson et al. (2012) to estimate in-water occurrence of females in the HCTT study area (Department of the Navy 2024c). However, Figure 4 in Robinson et al. (2012) clearly shows that from May–June female elephant seals are concentrated in the waters of the HCTT study area, apparently in higher	The Navy used the kernel density distribution areas shown in Figure 4 in Robinson et al. (2012) to approximate the spatial strata to use in density calculations. The Navy recognized that the data in Figure 4 indicated a higher relative density of female elephant seals off California in May and June; however, that is the time during which females return to natal rookeries and are hauled out molting and fasting and not expected to spend much if any time in the water. The sex and age class haulout behavior of northern elephant seals is complex and difficult to represent in this type of calculation where some portion of seals of each age and sex class is hauled out at different but

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	distributed densities than at any other time of year. The Commission notes that Robinson et al. (2012) included tagging data only from females instrumented at Año Nuevo Island. If females had been tagged at Pt. Reyes, Piedras Blancas, and the Channel Islands as well, the proportion of instrumented females in the water would have been even higher throughout the HCTT study area. While the Navy assumed that no females and males would be in the water during the molt, it assumed that 25 percent of them would be in the water during the breeding season (see Table 9-14 in Department of the Navy 2024c). Seals come and go from the beach at different times during both the breeding and molting seasons and may spend more time in the water during the overall molting season[5]. All of the seals do not remain on the beach for the entire molting season. Further, the Navy's assumptions in Table 9-14 appear to be based on adult males and females rather than pups or juveniles. The Navy did not use age tables to differentiate the various densities, as it did for multiple species of otariids (Department of the Navy 2024c). As such, the Navy's assumptions that only 5 percent of females and 0–10 percent of males occur off California in September and October (Table 9-14 in Department of the Navy 2024c) underestimate the actual proportions at sea because the Navy did not appear to account for yearlings and juveniles that are present along the California beaches in those months[6]. Moreover, the Navy assumed that 100 percent of the males would be off California from January–February but that only 80 percent of the females would be off California during that same timeframe[7]. The entire California stock of elephant seals is expected to be off California during the breeding season[8], with the highest concentration of female elephant seals occurring off the California beaches in January and February, similar to the molt in May (Robinson et al. 2012). [4] Resulting in an in-water percentage of 0. The Navy estimated elephant seal densities based on sex, in-water percentages, off-California percentages, and nearshore vs. offshore strata (and a Baja stratum). [5] See Charlanne et al. (2024) as an example for southern elephant seals. This has yet to be studied and published for northern elephant seals.	overlapping time periods that span partial months. For 7 months (males) or 8 months (females) out of the year, the Navy assumes 100% of seals are in the water, which is undoubtedly an overestimate considering that seals are known to haulout during foraging periods. While the Navy strives to improve density estimates to accurately represent pinniped haulout behavior, the level of precision is limited by both the available and sometimes conflicting data on species' behavior and the large scale of the study area over which behavior may vary. The assumptions made for the purposes of calculating monthly densities at this scale were reasonable and generally representative of the species behavior. While the majority of tagged elephant seals reported by Robinson et al. (2012) were from Año Nuevo Island, a few were tagged on Islas San Benito, Mexico and followed similar migration patterns. Seals from all other breeding and haulout sites are expected to follow similar migration patterns (i.e., move north or northwest after breeding and molting periods) and to follow similar annual breeding and molting haulout cycles. For females, this means hauling out to molt in May and June and spending little to no time in the water. Again, the information in Robinson et al. (2012) was primarily used to define strata for calculating densities. It's clear from Robinson et al. (2012) Figure 4 that 100% of females do not occur off CA in January, February, and May; the Navy considers 80% to be a reasonable estimate. It's not clear how the Marine Mammal Commission (MMC) determined that 10% instead of 5% of females would be off California in September and October. While the density estimates do not distinguish abundance by age class, the entire population abundance is used in the calculations, which includes all age classes. Furthermore, the analyzed abundance of elephant seals includes 22,000 seals from the Mexico breeding population (a likely overestimate for that declining population as noted in the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024) and exceeds the abundance of

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	[6] Nor did it account for juvenile males that are on shore to molt. i.e., https://visitsansimeonca.com/what-to-do/elephant-seals-san-simeon/#:~:text=Starting %20in%20April%2C%20females%20and,arrive%20to%20begin%20their%20molt, https://www.nps.gov/pore/planyourvisit/wildlife_viewing_elephantseals.htm#:~:text=By%20mid%2DApril%2C%20most%20of,and%20beach%20on%20the%20left. [7] The Navy similarly assumed that 100 percent of the males would be off California in August for the molt but only 80 percent of the females were assumed to be off California in May for the molt. [8] As well as the molting season. For all of these reasons, the Commission recommends that the Navy (1) revise its elephant seal density estimates by increasing the (a) in-water percentage of females from 0 to 25 percent for May and June, (b) percentage of females off California from 80 to 100 percent for January, February, and May, (c) in-water percentage of males from 0 to 25 percent for August, and (d) percentage of females off California in September and October from 5 percent and males off California in April, May, June, and October from 0–10 percent based on the percentage of the population expected to be comprised of yearlings and juveniles and the sex-based ratios provided in Table 9-12 of Department of the Navy (2024c) and (2) re-estimate the numbers of takes accordingly in the FEIS and LOA application. These revisions are particularly important, because NMFS relies on the Navy's density estimates for authorizing the taking associated with many other activities off California and will do so for at least the next 7 years until the Phase V densities are available.	the California breeding stock managed by NMFS. This conservative abundance estimate puts more seals in the water during the majority of the year and likely inflates predicted exposure estimates. Lastly, the majority of sonar and explosive use occurs in the Southern California (SOCAL) Range Complex located south of the elephant seal at-sea distribution following both the post-breeding and post-molting migrations, which extend north and northwest of the Channel Islands and into the North Pacific.
MMC-04	*Harbor seals and bottlenose dolphins*—The Navy used various seasonal in-water percentages in Table 9-20 of Department of the Navy (2024c) to estimate in-water abundances of harbor seals. First, the Navy used just the San Nicolas Island correction factor of 2.44[9] from Stewart and Yochem (1983) to estimate the total abundance of seals for all of the Channel Islands in Table 9-21 of Department of the Navy (2024c). Harvey and Goley (2011) provide a more reliable correction factor of 2.86 for all of Southern California, including four Channel Islands and Pt. Mugu, not just a single	The correction factor for San Nicolas Island from Stewart and Yochem (1983) of 59% in-water is the most appropriate haulout factor (i.e., with one exception it is highest percentage of seals in the water) compared with other available haulout factors. Harvey and Goley (2011) recommend a factor of 1.54 (or 35% in water) for all of CA. A factor of 2.86 (65% in-water) for Southern CA was also reported by the authors, but was based only on one survey, so the authors recommended using the mean of

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	island and include a much greater sample size than Stewart and Yochem (1983; n=60 vs 10). The Navy also provided no justification for assuming that 87 percent of the harbor seals were estimated to be onshore at Pt. Mugu and La Jolla, resulting in a correction factor of 1.15 (Department of the Navy 2024c). Both correction factors are less than the 2.86 correction factor from Harvey and Goley (2011). Additional in-water percentages from Table 9-20 in Department of the Navy (2024c) were used to estimate in-water abundances from the total abundance estimate at each location in Table 9-21. An in-water percentage was not provided for September–February for San Nicolas Island, so it is unclear what percentage was used. However, the Navy did assume that the 59 percent in-water from San Nicolas Island (Stewart and Yochem 1983) applied to all of the Channel Islands rather than the 65 percent from Harvey and Goley (2011) that was derived from data from multiple Channel Islands and Pt. Mugu. The Navy also used the lower in-water percentage of 17 percent from Huber et al. (2001) for Southern California for March–August rather than the 65 percent from Harvey and Goley (2011). This too is puzzling since Huber et al. (2001) is applicable only to Santa Barbara County, while Harvey and Goley (2011) is based on data throughout Southern California. All such assumptions result in underestimated harbor seal densities. In addition, the Navy assumed that harbor seals only occur up to 20 km from shore or within the 120-m isobath. None of the references cited in Department of the Navy (2024c) substantiate either the distance from shore or the isobath delineation. Calambokidis (2004) has shown that harbor seals have been observed much farther than 20 km from shore (see Figure 7), which appears to coincide with the 40-km offshore stratum used for harbor seals in the Northwest Training and Testing Range (NWTT) Phase II documents (Department of the Navy 2014b). Stewart and Yochem (1994) has shown that harbor seals can forage at depths of up to 446 m and at a modal depth of 280 m in the Channel Islands. Moreover, the Navy assumed in Figures 9-27 and 9-28 that harbor seals do not occur on or near Santa Catalina Island, from La Jolla to Pt. Mugu, and from Pt. Mugu around past Pt. Conception (Department of the Navy 2024c). Those assumptions are refuted by Lowry et al. (2021)[10] and (2008), Huber et al. (2001), Hanan (1986), and monitoring reports for numerous	1.54 (35% in-water) for CA over the 2.86 factor. Note that the authors describe the single survey from southern California as "a poor sample estimate of the proportion ashore." The Navy used 2.44 (59% in-water), which is higher than most other factors including all three of the mean haulout factors derived by Harvey and Goley (2011) (see Table 2 in the paper), which would also have been reasonable alternatives. Haulout factors were also chosen to be specific to season (breeding/molting vs. non-breeding/molting) as well as location where data were available. The survey data reported by Lowry et al. (2021) that were used to estimate abundances and densities were conducted in summer, so the most conservative haulout factor for summer (59% in-water) from Stewart and Yochem (1983) was used for the in-water abundance estimate. The 87% ashore estimate was a typo in the report. It should have been 83% ashore equating to 17% in-water, as shown in Table 9-20 in the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024). The factor of 1.2 or 17% in-water is from Table 1 in Huber et al. (2001) which cites the source as Hanan (1996), a Ph.D. dissertation. A revised version of the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024) will correct the typo. The Navy selected the 1.2 haulout factor for the two mainland locations in Southern California because several of the sites used in the research were located along the mainland coast and the Navy sought out correction factors specific to seals along the mainland. Below Table 9-21 of the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024) the following text states which correction factor was used for the September – February time period, "For the September through February time period, the in-water abundance was estimated as 86 percent of the total abundance, based on data from San Miguel Island reported by Yochem et al. (1987) and included in a summary by Huber et al. (2001)." Table 9-20

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	construction activities that have occurred along the Southern California coast (one such example is ManTech-AECOM Joint Venture (2022))[11]. The Commission therefore recommends that the Navy (1) revise its harbor seal density estimates by using (a) the 2.86 correction factor from Harvey and Goley (2011) rather than 2.44 for the Channel Islands and 1.15 for Pt. Mugu and La Jolla to estimate the total abundances at the various locations in Table 9-21 of Department of the Navy (2024c), (b) the 65 percent in-water percentage from Harvey and Goley (2011) for Pt. Mugu, La Jolla, and all of the Channel Islands except for San Nicolas and San Miguel Islands for the entire year[12], and (c) 40 km from shore from Calambokidis (2004) and the 200-m isobath based on Stewart and Yochem (1994) rather than 20 km from shore and the 120-m isobath as strata demarcations for areas where harbor seals could occur, and (2) re-estimate the numbers of takes accordingly in the FEIS and LOA application. The Commission further recommends that the Navy (1) contact the Southwest Fisheries Science Center to obtain the maximum harbor seal abundance estimate from Santa Catalina Island during which the relevant haul-out sites were surveyed and use the 2.86 correction factor to estimate the total abundance at Santa Catalina Island, (2) estimate the total abundance of harbor seals from La Jolla to Pt. Mugu and from Pt. Mugu around past Pt. Conception based on the number of harbor seals of the 30,968 abundance estimate for the California stock from Harvey and Goley 2011 that remain after subtracting the Channel Islands, Pt. Mugu, and La Jolla abundance estimates, (3) use the 65 percent in-water percentage from Harvey and Goley (2011), 40 km from shore from Calambokidis (2004), and the 200-m isobath based on Stewart and Yochem (1994) to estimate the harbor seal density for Santa Catalina Island, from La Jolla to Pt. Mugu, and from Pt. Mugu around past Pt. Conception, and (4) re-estimate the numbers of takes accordingly in the FEIS and LOA application. [9] Which equates to 41 percent onshore and 59 percent in water from Table 9-20 in Department of the Navy (2024c). [10] The Commission further notes that Lowry et al. (2017) clarified that not all of the Channel Islands are surveyed for each of the pinniped species. No harbor seals observed would mean that the harbor seals beaches may not have	shows an in-water percentage range of 81–86%; the Navy selected 86% in-water as a more conservative approach. The 59% in-water factor for March – August was used for all Channel Islands except for San Miguel Island, which used 23% based on a tagging study conducted with seals on the island. As a conservative measure, the Navy used the highest counts from 2016 to 2019 by Lowry et al. (2021) to estimate in-water abundances instead of using a multi-year average or counts from the most recent year (i.e., 2019) (refer to Table 9-21 in the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024)). Both alternative options would have been reasonable to select, but instead the Navy chose to use the maximum count over the four year survey period. Note that the maximum counts for six of the eight islands occurred in 2016 (the other two occurred in 2019), suggesting that the overall harbor seal abundance in the Channel Islands may be declining and that the Navy's density estimates may be high for predicting takes beyond the year 2019. Strata: Harbor seals are well known for remaining close to haulouts and foraging in relatively shallow waters, as documented in the half dozen sources cited on page by 228 of the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024). The sources also demonstrate that while habitat use is generally similar in multiple regions, there is variability in the depth and distance from shore characteristics of harbor seal distribution in various studies. The Navy reviewed the sources and attempted to define strata that captured the general and expected distribution of the species. Expanding strata farther offshore into deeper waters to capture extralimital and infrequent excursions by individual seals (as recommended by the MMC) would have the effect of reducing the density in the nearshore habitat where harbor seals predominantly occur. Stewart and Yochem (1994) reported the 20 km distance-from-shore metric used in the analysis. The 120 m depth contour used to define

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	been surveyed during the various overflights rather than zero harbor seals are expected to occur on Santa Catalina Island. [11] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-construction- activities. [12] Both the March–August and September–February timeframes.	strata encompassed the vast majority of reported foraging depths without expanding the strata farther offshore (e.g., to the 200 m depth contour representing the shelf break as the MMC recommended) and reducing the densities. The density estimates are intended to represent the predominant occurrence and distribution of the population rather than capture all possible areas where wide-ranging individuals have been sighted. The Channel Islands are part of the Continental Borderland region in the Southern California Bight which exhibits a complex bathymetry without a clearly distinct shelf break. While the shelf break (often represented by the 200 m depth contour) is a reasonable boundary to choose in more conventional continental margins, it does not accurately demarcate the shelf break in the Southern California Bight. As noted above, the harbor seal abundances were based on counts reported by Lowry et al. (2021), which reported eight harbor seals off Santa Catalina island in 2019 only; no counts were reported for 2016–2018. Using a haulout factor of 59% results in a total abundance of 20 seals associated with the island and in-water abundance estimates of 12 seals (Mar–Aug) and 17 seals (Sep–Feb). The area around Santa Catalina Island extending from shore to the 120 m isobath is approximately 42,205 km^2, which results in densities of 0.0003 to 0.0004 seals/km^2 for Mar–Aug and Sep–Feb, respectively. The densities are about three orders of magnitude lower than densities around the other islands where the Navy conducts more activities (e.g., San Nicolas, San Miguel, San Clemente). Based on these factors, the Navy has determined that adding a density for Santa Catalina Island and remodeling would not contribute substantively, if at all, to the current take estimates. The Navy worked with scientists from the NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center to derive the pinniped density estimates, including estimates for harbor seals. There is a lack of survey data between La Jolla and Point Mugu along the mainland coast, which is why densities are not provided along that part of the coast. It is also noteworthy that the majority of

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		training and testing activities using sonar and other transducers or explosives would occur beyond 12 NM from shore along the mainland coast. The adjacent warning area (W-291) begins approximately 12 NM from shore along the coast between La Jolla and Point Mugu. Therefore, any harbor seals occurring along the coast in this area are unlikely to be affected. Calambokidis et al. (2004) reported harbor seal sightings off the Washington coast from 1995-2002. While not as relevant to more recently reported harbor seal behavior off California, the authors reported a mean depth for the 15 sightings of 102 m and a mean distance from shore of 15.5 km, which further supports the Navy's decision to use the 120 m depth contour and a distance of 20 km from shore to define the strata used in the Navy's HCTT density estimates rather than greater depths and distances from shore, as the MMC recommended.
MMC-05	Lastly for harbor seals, Department of the Navy (2024c) did not derive a density for San Diego Bay or the Silver Strand Training Complex (SSTC) Area as it did for California sea lions. Figures 9-27 and 9-28 in Department of the Navy (2024c) appear to show zero densities for these areas. Department of the Navy (2024c) indicated that the California sea lion is the only pinniped that occurs regularly within San Diego Bay. That statement is simply untrue. The Navy has been conducting construction activities, as well as underwater detonation activities in and around San Diego Bay for many years. In fact, the Navy has had 15 incidental taking authorizations involving just construction activities issued for San Diego Bay in the last decade[13]. The Navy has been authorized to take and has reported harbor seal takes in and around San Diego Bay for more than a decade (see as a recent example, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest (NAVFAC SW; 2024b)). The Commission therefore recommends that the Navy derive harbor seal density estimates for both within San Diego Bay and the SSTC area based on sightings data from the numerous monitoring reports, while also considering the area beyond the Coronado Bridge[14] in San Diego Bay. [13] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-construction-activities.	The Navy has derived densities for bottlenose dolphin for the SSTC, located south of the entrance to San Diego Bay (see Figure 6-53 in Department of the Navy, 2024c). The Navy recognizes that in addition to the regularly occurring California sea lion, other marine mammal species such as harbor seal and common bottlenose dolphin occasionally enter San Diego Bay; however, both species tend to remain near the mouth of the bay, with only a few moving farther into the bay. The proposed activities involving in-water sound sources within San Diego Bay occur well into the bay, typically south of the Coronado Bay Bridge. The Navy reviewed the two monitoring reports cited by the MMC (Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest, 2024a;, 2024b). The Naval Base Point Loma (NBPL) Pier 302 Replacement Project reported seeing 1 bottlenose dolphin and 13 harbor seals over 181 observer hours. Considering the proximity of NBPL to the mouth of San Diego Bay, it would not be unusual for a few individuals of both species with occurrence in nearshore waters to be sighted at the mouth of the bay near Point Loma. The NBSD Pier 6 Replacement Project monitoring report recorded species during two Incidental Take

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	[14] Department of the Navy (2024c) specified that the density of California sea lions south of the Coronado Bridge was zero, even though numerous monitoring reports refute this (as one example see, NAVFAC SW 2024a). The report also specified that 86 bottlenose dolphins and 2 harbor seals were observed in this area south of the bridge, while both species were even more abundant north of the bridge. Bottlenose dolphins occur in San Diego Bay and the SSTC area as well (as two examples, see NAVFAC SW (2024a, b)), but separate densities were not provided in Department of the Navy (2024c). The Commission recommends that the Navy derive density estimates in the same manner for bottlenose dolphins as recommended for harbor seals within San Diego Bay and the SSTC area. Similar to the elephant seal densities, the Navy and other action proponents will use the density estimates from Department of the Navy (2024c) for compliance documents until the Phase V densities are provided in 2031. Thus, it is imperative that the harbor seal and bottlenose dolphin density estimates be accurate and reflective of where they are known and expected to occur.	Authorization (IHA) periods over approximately 15 months (October 2021–January 2023). Just 2 harbor seals were observed over 450 monitoring days under IHA #1 and 0 harbor seals over 88 monitoring days under IHA #2. These few observations are not indicative of regular occurrence in the central or southern part of the bay and do not support the need for a density estimate in San Diego Bay. The report also shows 86 bottlenose dolphin observations under IHA#1 and 0 under IHA#2 (Table 3-3). The report qualifies the total number of observations by quantifying resights in Table 3-5 (i.e., sightings of the same individual multiple times). The data indicate approximately 72 percent of individuals observed were resights. Table 3-12 in the report shows that bottlenose dolphins were only sighted in January, February, and March of 2022 and not during any other month. Monitoring also occurred in January 2023 with zero observations; however, no monitoring occurred in February or March of 2023. It's possible occurrence in the bay in January–March of 2022 was an anomaly; the report noted that bottlenose dolphins were not expected to occur in the bay at all. Observer bias may have also contributed to the increased sightings, as noted in Section 3.2.2, which discussed a similar trend in observations of California sea lions. These non-systematic observations reported in both monitoring reports do not support robust density estimates for San Diego Bay. Additional data would be required to better quantify abundance and seasonal occurrence in the bay to support a density estimate. Furthermore, the proposed military readiness activities in San Diego Bay do not include pile driving or other sound-producing activities that would require a density for analysis. It is not clear which 15 IHAs are being referenced in the comment, so the Navy has not sought out and reviewed them individually. While the Navy has requested and received incidental takes for construction-related activities in San Diego

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		Bay in the past, some Navy action proponents have been overly conservative in their analysis of impacts on marine mammals and used density estimates extrapolated from elsewhere, including offshore. While it's not clear this is the case for any of the 15 projects noted by the MMC, it highlights that different approaches to analysis may be used by Navy action proponents. Therefore, given their occasional presence and the limitations of the observational data, density estimates for harbor seal and bottlenose dolphin specific to San Diego Bay were not developed for the HCTT EIS/OEIS.
MMC-06	*California sea lions*—Although Department of the Navy (2024c) indicated that the density for California sea lions south of the Coronado Bridge was zero (see Figures 9-29 and 9-30), NAVFAC SW (2024a) specified that 237 individual sightings of California sea lions occurred south of the Coronado Bridge. The Navy relied on surveys conducted by Graham and Saunders (2015) to derive the sea lion density estimate and to support the supposition that sea lions do not occur south of the Coronado Bridge. However, Graham and Saunders (2015) did not conduct any survey transects south of the Coronado Bridge (Figure 3. Lack of observation effort does not equate to lack of species occurrence. The Commission recommends that the Navy derive the California sea lion density estimates south of the Coronado Bridge based on sightings data from the numerous monitoring reports rather than Graham and Saunders (2015).	While the observations of California sea lions during pier replacement activities at NBSD confirm the presence of sea lions south of the Coronado Bridge, the observations were not based on line transect surveys as the data reported by Graham and Saunders (2015) were. Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest (2024a) reported 237 observations over 493 monitor days, or 0.48 animals per day, and also acknowledged that the observations included repeat sightings (approximately 26 percent of individuals), making the data less useful for estimating densities. As with the bottlenose dolphin sightings, the report noted that sightings of California sea lions increased substantially in January, February, and March of 2022, and the increase was likely due to the presence of additional observers. This suggests a bias in the data that limits its usefulness for deriving densities representative of species distribution and occurrence. These non-systematic observations reported in both in the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest (2024a) monitoring report do not support robust density estimates for south and central San Diego Bay. Additional data would be required to better quantify abundance and seasonal occurrence in the bay to support a density estimate. Furthermore, the proposed military readiness activities in San Diego Bay do not include pile driving or other sound-producing activities that would require a density for analysis.

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MMC-07	*Other pinniped density issues*—The Commission notes the following outstanding issues with the pinniped densities provided in Department of the Navy (2024c)— • The Navy stated that, on average, post-partum female northern fur seals spent 180 hours in the water for every 40 hours on land, equating to 78 percent of time in the water, which equated to 78 percent of adult females being in the water from June through November. The in-water percentage would be 82[15] rather than 78 percent. • The Navy specified that the various in-water percentages for California sea lions in Table 9- 25 were haul-out correction factors in the table heading and underlying text. The various percentages provided are indeed in-water percentages, similar to Table 9-20 for harbor seals and should denoted as such. • The Navy did not include the California sea lion juveniles and pups specified in Table 9-25 in the non-breeding season abundance estimate for the California breeding strata. Juveniles and pups should be included in the abundance estimate as was done for the breeding season density. • The Navy specified that the in-water percentages for Steller sea lions were correction factors for estimation of the in-water abundances. The percentages should be specified as in-water percentages rather than correction factors, similar to harbor seals. The Commission recommends that the Navy revise Department of the Navy (2024c) to clarify and address these issues. [15] 180/220=82 percent.	Antonelis et al. (1990) states that the average foraging trip was 180.6 hours (SD=37 hours) and the average time on land was 39.6 hours (SD=10 hours). The Navy interpreted that as a ratio of 40 hours on land to 180 hours in water or 40:180 = 40/180 = 22% on land (78% in water). The Navy acknowledges a different interpretation of the source is reasonable, but notes that any difference in the resulting percentages (78% vs. 82%) is within the range of the SD in both measurements. The Navy changed the heading on Table 9-25 in the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024) and adjusted related text on correction factors in the sections on California sea lions and Steller sea lions and published an amended density in the Navy Marine Species Density Database Technical Report (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2024). The abundance estimate used to calculate densities for the non-breeding season was based on the total stock abundance and therefore considered all lifestages even though they were not specifically called out in the calculation. The in-water percentages reported in Table 9-25 were based on data on haulout behavior for each lifestage, but not all percentages were used to calculate densities. For example, for the non-breeding season female pups were effectively assigned the in-water percentage of 75% characteristic of adult females, but used for all females, rather than the 34% in-water percentage representing pup haulout behavior. Using this approach helped to simplify the calculation somewhat but also resulted in a more conservate density estimate. The abundance used was based on data reported by Hernández-Camacho et al. (2021) and exceeded the current abundance for the California Stock reported in the SAR.
MMC-08	Baja California Peninsula, Mexico (BCPM) cetacean densities—Generally, for areas off BCPM, the Navy recalculated cetacean density estimates and coefficients of variation from Ferguson and Barlow (2003) based on the extent of the HCTT acoustic modeling footprint. That is, the Ferguson and	Ferguson and Barlow (2003) provide density estimates for multiple geographic strata (>85) that span a latitude range of 65 degrees (15 degrees S to 50 degrees N) and a longitude range from shore out to -155 degrees. Each stratum encompasses an

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	Barlow (2003) abundances were used along with the modeling area to estimate densities. The Commission has specified in its 13 November 2017 letter on HSTT Phase III activities, as well as other Navy letters, that modeling areas should not be used to inform densities since none of the underlying abundance data are related to those areas. A bit more concerning is the fact that in some instances the recalculated BCPM densities are adjacent to habitat-based densities that are orders of magnitude greater. For example, the BCPM density of 0.00003 whales/km^2 abuts the habitat-based density estimate that ranges to 0.0385 whales/km^2 for Baird's beaked whales (Figure 8-1 in Department of the Navy 2024c). Similarly for Cuvier's beaked whales, the BCPM density of 0.00703 whales/km^2 is adjacent to the habitat-based density estimate that ranges to 0.00880 whales/km^2 (Figure 8-5 in Department of the Navy 2024c). The Cuvier's beaked whale example is not as extreme as the Baird's beaked whale example, because the Cuvier's beaked whale habitat-based densities were themselves extrapolated beyond the California Current Ecosystem where the data originated (Department of the Navy 2024c). These examples highlight the need for the Navy to invest in improving extrapolation methods for density data. This requires a concerted effort to further develop extrapolation techniques, as well as a commitment to collect the additional data required to ground-truth them[16]. These efforts would involve additional funding and time, as they cannot be conducted contemporaneously with the Navy's typical contract for updating densities for other Phase IV and Phase V activities. Therefore, the Commission recommends that the Navy provide funding for contractors to investigate and develop density extrapolation methods for other Phase IV activities[17] and future HCTT Phase V activities—such funding should be additional to the funding provided to update the density estimates and include efforts to collect supplemental data to ground-truth the methods, as needed. [16] Much of the HCTT study area is beyond the survey extent and jurisdiction of NMFS (see Figure 2-2 in Department of the Navy 2024c). [17] i.e., activities in the NWTT, Mariana Islands Training and Testing, and Gulf of Alaska study areas.	approximate 5-degree x 5-degree area for which a single density/abundance estimate is provided. The density and distribution of cetaceans varies substantially throughout this large area; hence, density estimates for those strata that encompass the Navy's modeling areas were used to provide the most representative values. Further, since the Ferguson and Barlow (2003) estimates were only used for areas south of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and most cetacean stock abundance estimates are specific to the U.S. EEZ, for most species the only "underlying abundance data" for these areas south of the EEZ would be the stratum-specific data provided by Ferguson and Barlow. The exception to this would be the more recent species distribution model (SDM)-based density estimates provided by Becker et al. (2022), which were used for all the species addressed in this study. The Navy has continued to fund marine mammal research including, but not limited to, marine mammal surveys that improve abundance estimates and the development of species distribution models to update density estimates. The models are used to estimate and refine densities in areas with sufficient survey data and to predict densities in areas where survey data are limited or lacking or during seasons when the data are limited or lacking. The Navy will continue to fund the development and refinement of predictive models and support the publication of the results in peer-reviewed journals and technical reports available to the public.

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MMC-09	*Modeling implications involving densities*—The Navy currently implements densities at the animat stage within the Navy Acoustic Effects MOdel (NAEMO; Department of the Navy 2024b) rather than at a post-processing stage after the sound propagation and animat modeling has been conducted. This means that the Navy cannot change the densities should there be errors as noted herein. Instead, it must rerun the animat portion of NAEMO using the new densities. This is not only inefficient, but it also has caused the Navy and NMFS to rely on erroneous densities or to scale the take estimates by the relative changes in the densities, which is not necessarily an accurate fix. Densities usually are developed at least three years before a DEIS[18] and proposed rule are finalized, and a final rule is valid for seven years. Therefore, any errors are not rectified for nearly a decade from when the densities were derived. This is problematic for the Navy's training and testing activities and its construction activities that rely on the same densities, as well as for other action proponents that use the densities to inform their compliance documents. The Commission recommends that the Navy revise its density data and underlying documents (i.e., Department of the Navy 2024c) when errors are noted and reprogram NAEMO to implement densities at a post-processing stage so that densities can be easily revised rather than needing to remodel the animat-portion of NAEMO when density estimates change. [18] See the 2022 dates of the density figures in Department of the Navy (2024c).	The Navy is continually looking at ways to improve the Navy Acoustic Effects Model (NAEMO) and reduce data and computational requirements. As technologies and computational efficiencies improve, the Navy will evaluate these advances and incorporate them where appropriate.
MMC-10	As the Commission has noted in letters related to NMFS's Technical guidance for assessing the effects of anthropogenic sound on marine mammal hearing: Underwater and in-air criteria for onset of auditory injury and temporary threshold shifts (AINJ and TTS, respectively; NMFS 2024)[19], the Commission supports the weighting functions and associated thresholds as stipulated in Finneran (2024), which are the same as were used for Navy Phase IV activities (Department of Navy 2024a). However, new data have become available since the Navy updated the weighting functions and thresholds. For example, Kastelein et al. (2024a) provided additional TTS data for harbor porpoises exposed to one-sixth octave band sound at 8 kHz. Although the Kastelein et al. (2024a) manuscript likely was 'in prep' at the time Finneran (2024) was drafted, it is unclear why the data were not included, as other data that were and still are part of 'in prep'	Sharing of data before peer-reviewed publication is at the discretion of the authors and funding agencies involved in each study. While some pre-publication data were shared with Navy for timely inclusion in the Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds, some were not. The temporary threshold shift (TTS) onset value of 169 decibels (dB) sound exposure level (SEL) reported by Kastelein et al. (2024a) is similar to but above the Phase IV non-impulsive TTS exposure function for very high frequency (VHF) cetaceans at 8 kilohertz (kHz) (see Figure 26 in Department of Navy, 2024a). Inclusion of these data would raise the VHF non-impulse exposure function and TTS onset by 4 dB, making the function

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	manuscripts (i.e., Reichmuth et al. in prep) were incorporated in Finneran (2024)[20]. The Commission recommends that the Navy review the data in Kastelein et al. (2024a) and determine whether inclusion of those data would alter the weighting function and/or thresholds for very high-frequency cetaceans and if so, whether those modifications are sufficient to warrant revision of the current weighting function and associated thresholds for non-impulsive sources as stipulated in Department of the Navy (2024a). [19] The Commission appreciates that the Navy, and in turn NMFS, incorporated its recommendations from the Commission's 26 June 2023 letter to (1) include the California sea lion hearing threshold data from Kastelein et al. (2021, 2022a and b, and 2024b) in the derivation of the otariid composite audiogram and revise the weighting function accordingly and (2) fix the rounding issues for *K* to ensure that the impulsive AINJ thresholds were 15 dB greater than the TTS thresholds. [20] As well as NMFS (2024) and Department of the Navy (2024a).	less conservative. Effects on other impulsive and non-impulsive exposure functions are small (i.e., 1 dB or less), therefore changes to Phase IV criteria and thresholds are not warranted.
MMC-11	For mysticetes, more recent data were incorporated into the weighting function for Phase IV activities. The first hearing tests were conducted on minke whales in 2023 and showed that the whales were sensitive to frequencies much higher than expected—at least 45 kHz and potentially as high as 90 kHz (National Marine Mammal Foundation (NMMF) 2023, Houser et al. 2024a, b). As such, the Navy split the low-frequency (LF cetacean) functional hearing group into very low- frequency (VLF) and LF cetaceans[21], with the LF cetacean weighting function shifted to encompass higher frequencies. Since 2023, additional hearing data have been collected that showed minke whales were the most sensitive at 32 kHz for the frequencies that were tested in 2024[22]. Department of the Navy (2024a) based various VLF and LF parameters that inform the composite audiograms, weighting functions, and thresholds on the mean or median parameters of the other functional hearing groups. In its 31 August 2015 letter on NMFS's technical guidance and the Navy's original Phase III criteria and thresholds, the Commission recommended that the phocid	There is no scientific evidence to support the exclusive use of the phocid carnivores in water (PCW) composite audiogram and weighting function parameters for the low frequency (LF) and very low frequency (VLF) groups. The conference presentation cited as evidence "that mysticete hearing appears to be more similar to that of phocids" is preliminary (i.e., not peer-reviewed). Adolescent minke whales were tested by Houser et al. (2024) specifically because of their small size compared to other baleen whales. Smaller head size generally facilitates hearing at higher frequencies, so a shift of the entire LF curve to a center frequency of 32 kHz is not likely representative of most baleen whales, which are larger in size compared to adolescent minke whales.

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	(PCW) weighting and exposure function parameters be used to inform the LF weighting and exposure functions[23]. Recently, others[24] also have suggested that mysticete hearing appears to be more similar to that of phocids. Therefore, the Commission recommends that the Navy specify whether the LF weighting function has been shifted far enough to the higher frequencies to reflect that 32 kHz was the most sensitive frequency tested in minke whales, determine whether use of the PCW composite audiogram, weighting function, and threshold parameters are more representative of VLF and LF cetaceans than medians and means of the five other functional hearing groups, and revise the VLF and LF composite audiograms, weighting functions, and thresholds as needed for impulsive and non-impulsive sources for the FEIS and LOA application. [21] VLF cetaceans include right, bowhead, fin, and blue whales; whereas, LF cetaceans include minke, sei, Bryde's, Rice's, Omura's, humpback, gray, and pygmy right whales. [22] Which is part of another in prep manuscript. [23] Which incorporate the weighting functions and associated weighted thresholds. [24] D. Houser during his presentation of minke whale hearing results at the Effects of Sound on Marine Mammals meeting.	
MMC-12	To further define its behavior thresholds for acoustic sources (i.e., sonars and other transducers), the Navy developed multiple[25] Bayesian biphasic dose-response functions[26] (Bayesian BRFs) for Phase IV activities. The Bayesian BRFs were a generalization of the monophasic functions previously developed[27] and applied to behavioral response data[28] (see Department of the Navy 2024a for specifics). The biphasic portions of the functions are intended to describe both level- and context-based responses as proposed in Ellison et al. (2011). At higher amplitudes, a level- based response relates the received sound level to the probability of a behavioral response; whereas, at lower amplitudes, sound can cue the presence, proximity, and approach of a sound source and stimulate a context-based response based on factors other than received sound level[29]. The Commission agrees that the general method by which Bayesian BRFs are derived is reasonable. The Commission, however, questions whether best available data were used to inform them.	Upper bounds: The upper bound of the BRFs was raised to 200 dB to account for exposures at higher levels that did not have responses, since the upper point of the curve assumes that all animals will respond at that level. For example, in the 3S2 exposures for humpbacks, received levels ranged from 170.4 to 182.3 dB without responses. Similarly, there were exposures to sperm whales in 3S3 at higher levels (e.g. 174.9, 179, 191.3, 186 dB) with no responses. When there are more responses at lower received levels the curves are close to 100% response at 185 dB (e.g., the pinniped curve), so this change only reflected the uncertainty at higher received levels in odontocetes and mysticetes rather than driving the functions to the right arbitrarily. It should also be noted that the curve was also extended to 90 dB vs the 100 dB lower point used in Phase III. Finally, the flat curve in Figure 42 from 185 to 200 is only a

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	In its review of Department of the Navy (2024a), the Commission notes the following in regard to the BRFs— [see the actual comment file for numerous examples given on pages 9-11] The Commission recommends that the Navy revise Department of the Navy (2024a) to clarify and address these points. The Commission further recommends that the Navy use the dose-response functions that were developed from all of the raw data rather than those that were regenerated for only moderate and severe responses and refrain from extrapolating beyond the bounds of the underlying data when revising the BRFs. [25] For sensitive species (beaked whales and harbor porpoises), odontocetes, mysticetes, and pinnipeds. [26] Comprising two truncated cumulative normal distribution functions with separate mean and standard deviation values, as well as upper and lower bounds. The model was fitted to data using the Markov Chain Monte Carlo algorithm. [27] By Antunes et al. (2014) and Miller et al. (2014). [28] From both wild and captive animals. [29] e.g., the animal's previous experience, separation distance between the sound source and the animal, sound source speed and heading, and behavioral state of the animal including feeding, traveling, etc.	result of plotting the curves that were anchored at 185 all the way to 200, and is not a reflection of the curve fit itself. Regarding the point about the upper level of the mysticete curve being above TTS onset, it should be noted that auditory and behavioral criteria are not directly linked. As the science continues to evolve, the Navy will continue to refine effects criteria. Southall papers: The Atlantic BRS data were not available for use in the development of the behavioral risk functions for Phase IV. These functions are always developed in close consultation with scientists conducting BRS/CEE studies, but when the data are not yet published, it is up to the researchers whether or not they are ready to share their raw data with the Navy. The Atlantic BRS scientists were working on their analysis methodologies and did not feel that their behavioral response results were ready to be shared in time for the development of the Navy risk thresholds. Odontocete BRF: All of the data from Houser et al. (2013a, 2013b) were included in the modified risk functions developed for the purposes of subsampling for the Navy behavioral response functions. However, the low severity responses were included as non-responses rather than responses that may rise to the level of harassment under the MMPA for military readiness activities. This is identical to how these data were utilized in the Phase III Navy risk functions; the low severity scored data were considered non-responses, while the moderate and high level responses were considered responses that may rise to the level of harassment under the MMPA for military readiness activities. The change to how the Houser data were utilized in Phase IV was the development of modified risk functions using these new scoring values at the different received levels. These new risk functions were then subsampled, in the same manner as the two Navy range risk functions for beaked whales in both Phase III and Phase IV, to be more consistent in the Navy's use of these aggregated data. This allows all the exposures and responses to be considered

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		for each species, rather than picking a single response level for each individual as was done in Phase III. Thirty points were subsampled from the Bottlenose Dolphin curve to give equal weighting to each individual from the captive study to be more similar to the equal weighting for individuals from the field studies. This approach is clarified in the revised Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025). Sensitive Species BRF: While the GAM published in Jacobson et al. (2022) only extended to 165 dB, the authors were asked to rerun their model to 200 dB to create a new curve that could be subsampled for the Navy Phase IV risk function; the same was done for the Moretti et al. (2014) data. Therefore, the two beaked whale range-based risk functions extended to the same bandwidth as the Navy BRF and the subsampling matched the rest of the data. The Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025) has been updated to reflect that the published GAMs were rerun with the broader bandwidth. A risk function has not yet been fit to SOAR data for beaked whales, nor has one been fit for minke whales at PMRF. The BRFs in Phase IV utilized only individual response-RL data outside of the four pre-existing risk functions that were subsampled. No individual response-RL data was available for beaked whales at SOAR nor for minke whales at PMRF, therefore those data were not used in the Phase IV BRFs. As the science continues to evolve, the Navy will continue to refine its effects criteria. As requested in the footnote to this comment, the statement in the Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025) regarding the use of harbor porpoise data in behavioral response function development has been clarified. Multiple RL Harbor Porpoise: Only one (the lowest) response level was used for the Kastelein data when the same individuals were tested at multiple levels for the same source in the same

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		study. However, in some studies Kastelein tested the same sources using different parameters, such as an upsweep versus a downsweep signal (e.g., Kastelein et al. 2014b, where both low frequency and mid frequency active sonar signals were tested as both a downsweep and upsweep), or as a continuous versus pulsed active sonar signal (e.g. Kastelein et al. 2018b). In that case, the response to both signal parameters would have been used in the BRF as those would be considered different signals. The references for the Kastelein work were referenced in Table 19 and Table 20 and have been added to Table E-1 in the revised Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025). Pinniped BRF: All data from the Houser et al. (2013) sea lion controlled exposure experiment were used to develop a modified risk function for subsampling, but the low-severity responses were included as non-responses rather than responses that may rise to the level of harassment under the MMPA for military readiness activities. The original curves developed by Houser et al. (2013a) were not used because they included the low-severity responses as responses. This approach is clarified in the revised Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025). Contradictory info in tables, figures, and Table E-1: Individual discrepancies identified in the addendum provided by the MMC have been addressed in the revisions to the Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025). Table E-1 did not include the Moretti et al. (2014) and Jacobson et al. (2022) data as those were aggregated and modeled data, not individual animals and responses. Those data were subsampled randomly while creating the behavioral response functions, as was described in the Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025). The revised Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report (Department of Navy 2025) now includes the data for the Blainville's beaked whale from Tyack et al. (2011).

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		All the Houser et al. (2013a, 2013b) data were utilized in the modified risk functions, but the low severity responses were scored as non-responses, as reflected in table E-1. These new risk functions were then subsampled, in the same manner as the two Navy range risk functions for beaked whales in both Phase III and Phase IV, to be more consistent in the Navy's use of these aggregated data.
MMC-13	To derive criteria and thresholds for auditory and behavioral impacts, new data are being collected and new methods to analyze existing data are continually being developed. Similar to density data, the Navy currently implements the thresholds at the animat stage within NAEMO (Department of the Navy 2024b) rather than at a true post-processing stage after the sound propagation and animat modeling has been conducted. This means that the Navy cannot re-query the animat dosimeters using different thresholds when thresholds change, instead it must rerun the animat portion of NAEMO using the new thresholds. This is not only inefficient, but it has caused the Navy and NMFS to rely on the same outdated thresholds for more than a decade. Criteria and thresholds usually are developed at least three years before a DEIS and proposed rule are finalized, and a final rule is valid for seven years[37]. When Navy-funded projects (e.g., Southall et al. 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023) are not able to provide the data to the Navy by a specific deadline, those data then are not able to be incorporated until the next Phase based on the current paradigm. Thus, the Navy is not able to benefit from the data that it has funded to be collected, sometimes for at least 15 years, by which time the thresholds are not considered best available. The Commission recommends that the Navy make a concerted effort to incorporate data that support criteria and threshold development more often than on a decadal cycle and revise NAEMO to implement the relevant criteria and thresholds at a true post-processing stage so that animat dosimeter data can be re-queried if thresholds change, rather than needing to remodel the animat-portion of NAEMO. [37] The same criteria and thresholds also have been used for all DEISs and rulemakings under a given Phase, meaning that the Phase IV thresholds	The Navy is continually looking at ways to improve NAEMO and reduce data and computational requirements. As technologies and computational efficiencies improve, the Navy will evaluate these advances and incorporate them where appropriate.

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	will be used for Navy activities until the Phase IV Gulf of Alaska rulemaking would expire in 2037.	
MMC-14	The Commission remains concerned that, following the development of the BRFs and consistent with Phase III, the Navy implemented various cut-off distances beyond which it considered the potential for significant behavioral responses to be unlikely (Table 4 in Department of the Navy 2024a). The Navy previously indicated that the context of the exposure is likely more important than the amplitude at large distances (Department of the Navy 2017a)—that is, the context-based response dominates the level-based response. The Commission agrees with that notion but notes that the Bayesian BRFs specifically are intended to incorporate those factors. Thus, including additional cut-off distances would contradict the data underlying the Bayesian BRFs, negate the intent of the functions, and ultimately underestimate the numbers of takes. For Phase IV activities, the Navy did add a condition that if a take were to occur beyond the relevant cut-off distance but above the 50 percent probability for a given BRF (e.g., a bottlenose dolphin exposed at 18 km and at a received level where the probability of response was 65 percent), it would be considered a significant response. That condition was further qualified based on the Navy assuming that animats would avoid a sound source between the response probabilities of 50 to 90 percent (avoidance is discussed further herein). Regardless of how the cut-off distances were qualified, they remain unsubstantiated and are less than what the Navy used for Phase III activities[38].	To clarify, Section 3.1.4 (Dose and Contextual Responses) of the Phase 4 Criteria and Thresholds report explains that at low received levels, distance to the sound source or platform likely mediates the likelihood of a behavioral response. Although distance was investigated as a covariate in the Bayesian behavioral response function model, most behavioral response studies to date have used similar source levels making received level and source-receiver distance tightly correlated (see Section 3.1.9 [Behavioral Cut-off Conditions] of the Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report). Therefore, including distance in the model using the available response- received level data did not improve the behavioral response functions. Still, the Navy agrees that distance is an important contextual factor. Since it was not possible to directly account for distance in the Bayesian model at this time, the Navy incorporated the behavioral cut-off conditions, beyond which significant behavioral reactions are assumed to be unlikely. As described in Section 3.1.9 [Behavioral Cut-off Conditions] of the Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report, the distance cut-off conditions were conservatively estimated based on observations from multiple cited studies. Applying the distance cut-off condition is appropriate to reasonably estimate significant impacts. In addition, high source level exposures are addressed using a probability of response condition rather than the dual distance cut-off applied in Phase 3. This method was devised in part to address public comments, including those from the MMC, received in Phase 3 that were concerned with cutting off behavioral responses, in some cases, where the probability of response was still above 50 percent. The concurrent application of this probability of response condition in Phase 4 increases the prediction of significant impacts beyond the distance cut-off in some instances. Thus, the Phase 3 distance cut-offs should not be directly compared to the combined distance and

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		probability cut-off conditions applied in Phase 4. These cut-off conditions are not further qualified by any aspect of the avoidance analysis, which only assesses the reduction in SEL accumulation pertinent to auditory effects. Thus, the application of cut-off conditions is substantiated, and applying the combined cut-off conditions does not underestimate significant behavioral responses.
MMC-15	Department of the Navy (2024a) indicated that the models did not select range as a factor in the final BRFs, as it was too confounded with received level. The Navy also indicated that it was not surprising given that only 21 of 196 exposures that informed the four BRFs occurred at 10 km or greater from the sound source—19 animals had no response at all, one had a minor vocal response, and one had a strong avoidance response but it did not last for the full duration of the exposure. Delving into Department of the Navy (2024a), Table E-1 specified only 18 exposures occurred at 10 km or more from the sound source. Of those 18 exposures, one animal had minor vocal response, one had a strong avoidance response that lasted less time than the exposure, one stopped singing for as long as or longer than the duration of exposure, one had a strong avoidance response that was considered significant and lasted longer than the exposure, and another animal ceased its feeding, changed its dive and vocal behavior, and exhibited prolonged avoidance behavior. Thirteen animals exhibited no response at ranges of approximately 17 to 232 km from the source (Table E-1). Further, Figures 43–45 in Department of the Navy (2024a) are missing certain data that were specified in Table E-1 and in some instances have depicted the data incorrectly in terms of response, range, received level, and/or sample size relative to Table E-1. These inconsistencies make it difficult to assess the Navy's assumptions regarding cut-off distances similar to the BRFs.	Appendix E in the Navy's Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Report has been revised to correct these discrepancies.
MMC-16	Department of the Navy (2024a) however is correct in its statement that the probability of reaction at distances of 10 km and farther is not well represented. As such, it is unclear how the Navy can assert that those few data points provide support that beyond a certain distance, significant responses are unlikely to occur or that the source-receiver range must be	As described in Section 3.19 (Behavioral Cut-off Conditions), the cut-off conditions are applied to predict significant behavioral responses. As the Commission points out, data to support distant cut-offs is not absent. The data used to inform the behavioral response functions includes observations beyond 10

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	included as a separate consideration to estimate likely significant behavioral reactions. Absence of data means just that, there are no data to support including such cut-off distances or assumptions that a significant response is unlikely to occur beyond a certain distance. The Navy specified that the probability of significant behavioral responses occurring beyond the cut-off distances at received levels above the 50 percent probability of response is unknown, but was included as a conservative assumption due to the paucity of data (Department of the Navy 2024a). Even with the scant data available it is clear that the cut-off distances do not encompass the significant behavioral responses that have been observed to occur and that inform the revised BRFs. Further, significant behavioral responses are occurring at received levels below the 50-percent probability of response. For example, the cut-off distance for mysticetes is 10 km and the received level for the 50-percent probability of response is 185 dB re 1 µPa (Table 4 in Department of the Navy 2024a). However, a humpback whale exhibited a significant behavioral response in which it stopped foraging, changed its dive and vocal behavior, and conducted prolonged avoidance behavior at a distance of 16.8 km from the source and a received level of 128 dB re 1 µPa (Table E-1 in Department of the Navy 2024a). This example calls into question the appropriateness of both the received level estimated to equate to the 50-percent probability of response and the cut-off distance. As another example, a sperm whale stopped resting and had a moderate change in its dive profile that occurred for a shorter duration than the exposure. It is unclear how long the response lasted but it did occur nearly 38 km from the sound source and at a received level of approximately 114 dB re 1 µPa (Table E-1 in Department of the Navy 2024a)—the cut-off distance for odontocetes is 15 km and the received level for the 50-percent probability of response is 168 dB re 1 µPa. Although this animal was incorrectly denoted as having a significant behavioral response in Table E-1 of Department of the Navy (2024a) due to the length of response, it highlights that responses do occur at larger distances and lower received levels than the cut-off distances and 50- percent probability of response portray. For harbor porpoises and pinnipeds, there currently are no data on a wild animal's response and relative distance to Navy acoustic sound sources.	km, as do other studies cited in Section 3.1.9 (Behavioral Cut-Off Conditions) in the Navy's Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report. This includes data on exposures to other sound sources which is informative when data on exposure to sonars is limited. The cut-off conditions encompass the data (where distance and received level are known) used to develop the behavioral response functions. Although behavioral responses are predicted beyond the cut-off conditions, these are not expected to rise to the level of harassment under the MMPA as defined for military readiness activities. The Commission disputes the probability of response cut-off condition with a mysticete example; however, its supporting example is in error. A bottlenose whale (Sensitive Species [including beaked whales]), not a humpback whale, had a prolonged behavioral response at 16.8km and a received level of 128 dB re 1 µPa. This bottlenose whale response falls within the cut-off conditions for the Sensitive behavioral group. The error in the entry for the sperm whale in Table E-1 has been corrected.

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MMC-17	Tyack and Thomas (2019) previously highlighted that the number of animals that are predicted to have a low probability of response may represent the dominant impact from a given sound source, as well as the shortcomings associated with assuming only a portion of the animals respond[39]. In addition to the Commission's ongoing concerns, use of cut-off distances has been criticized in public comments as an attempt to reduce the numbers of takes (85 Fed. Reg. 72326). Given the lack of data for certain behavioral groups in general and the fact that best available science was not used when data were available, the Commission again recommends that the Navy refrain from using cut-off distances in conjunction with the Bayesian BRFs and re-estimate the numbers of marine mammal takes based solely on the Bayesian BRFs for the FEIS and LOA application. [38] For Phase III, two different cut-off distances were used per behavioral group (one for moderate source level, single platform events and one for high source level or multiple platform events). For Phase IV, a single distance was used for all platforms and source levels for each behavioral group, but each of the four distances is less than the cut-off distance for high source level or multiple platform events from Phase III (see Table 4 in Department of the Navy 2024a). [39] Which corresponds to using various arbitrary cut-off distances.	Tyack and Thomas (2019) pointed out that the use of a step function anchored at the 50 percent response of a dose function underestimates the number of animals potentially affected compared to applying the original dose function. The Navy, however, did not develop step functions based on its behavioral response functions to predict behavioral response. Rather, the Navy applies the combined cutoff conditions to reasonably estimate behavioral responses that may rise to the level of harassment under the MMPA as defined for military readiness activities. Beyond these cut-offs, significant behavioral reactions are assumed unlikely based on the best available science. Distance cutoff conditions for each behavioral response group are informed by the farthest distances at which significant behavioral reactions have been observed in the best available science and are not arbitrary. The Navy does not believe that the application of cutoff conditions underestimates behavioral reactions that would be considered MMPA Level B takes during military readiness activities. As the science related to marine mammal behavior advances, the Navy will continue to work with NMFS to refine consideration of contextual factors, such as distance, in its assessment of behavioral responses. Currently, the Navy's behavioral response functions with the cut-off conditions provide the public and regulators with a more realistic (but still conservative where uncertainties exist) estimate of impacts and potential takes under military readiness for the Proposed Action. Because the Navy's estimations were realistic and conservative where uncertainties exist, it is not necessary for the Navy to re-estimate marine mammal takes.
MMC-18	The Navy assumed a behavior threshold for explosives that was 5 dB less than the TTS threshold for each functional hearing group (Department of the Navy 2024a). The 5-dB value was derived from observed onset behavioral responses of captive bottlenose dolphins during non- impulsive TTS testing[41] (Schlundt et al. 2000). Aside from the issues associated with conducting behavioral response studies on trained animals and using a	There is limited information upon which to estimate behavioral response thresholds specific to explosives. Therefore, the behaviors exhibited by animals exposed to brief intense tones in the Schlundt et. al (2000) study continue to inform the behavioral response threshold for explosives. Some of the observed behaviors in that study would be considered

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	different metric than all other BRFs or behavior thresholds[42], there is no scientific basis for using data from 1-sec tones to replicate or be comparable to an animal's behavioral response to underwater detonations. The Navy itself in Department of the Navy (2017a) stated that, although data from Schlundt et al. (2000) were used to derive the TAP I/Phase II BRFs for acoustic sources, they were not used in the quantitative derivation of the Phase III BRFs (or Phase IV BRFs) because the study was a hearing study where animals were conditioned and reinforced to tolerate high noise levels. It is illogical that the Navy removed such data from the estimation of BRFs for acoustic sources, which are similar to the 1-sec tones used in Schlundt et al. (2000), but then continued to use the same inappropriate data—that underestimate impacts—for a completely different sound source. Another concerning assumption is that the Navy continues to maintain that marine mammals do not exhibit behavioral responses to single detonations (Department of the Navy 2024a)[43]. The Navy has asserted that the most likely behavioral response would be a brief alerting or orienting response and significant behavioral reactions would not be expected to occur due to no further detonations following the initial detonation based on reasoning that it historically has applied to shock trials (Department of the Navy 2024a). Historical reasoning, which dates back 27 years to 1998, is irrelevant. There were no data then, and there are no data now to support the assumption that animals would not respond behaviorally to a single detonation that could have been up to 58,000 lbs in net explosive weight (NEW)[44]. Larger single detonations (such as explosive torpedo testing or ship shock trials[45]) are expected to elicit 'significant behavioral responses' as described in Department of the Navy (2024a). The Navy has yet to justify why it believes that an animal would exhibit a significant behavioral response to two 5-lb charges detonated within a few minutes of each other but would not exhibit a similar response for a single detonation of 50 lbs, let alone detonations of up to 14,500 lbs. In response to Commission comments on the HSTT Phase III DEIS, the Navy indicated that there is no evidence to support that animals have significant behavioral reactions to temporally and spatially isolated explosions and that it has been monitoring detonations since the 1990s and has not observed those types	moderate severity for captive animals with trained behaviors and thus may be potentially significant. Appropriate threshold metrics are applied for this criterion given the supporting data. There is no compelling reason to make metrics match across different stressors or effects. Additionally, root-mean-square sound pressure levels are not a preferred metric for explosives due to the challenge of identifying the appropriate time window. The Navy supports a wide range of research to inform the development of criteria. The Navy is supporting new research into marine mammal behavioral responses to detonations through its Living Marine Resources program (https://exwc.navfac.navy.mil/Products-and-Services/Environmental-Security/LMR/). The findings of this research will be incorporated into the behavioral response criteria when available. Currently, however, there is no evidence to support the assertion that animals have significant behavioral responses (rising to the level of "harassment" under the MMPA definition for military readiness activities) to temporally and spatially isolated explosions. Per Section 2.2.4 in Appendix E, the most likely behavioral response is a brief alerting or orienting response to single explosions at received sound levels below hearing loss thresholds. Since no further sounds follow the initial brief impulses, significant behavioral reactions would not be expected to occur. While the Phase 4 Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report did not state that large single detonations are expected to elicit significant behavioral responses, the analysis in Appendix E assumed that any significant behavioral responses would be within the range of auditory impacts (AINJ and TTS). This has been clarified in the Phase 4 Criteria and Thresholds Report. Even for events with a limited number of explosives, such as the example of two five-pound explosives in the comment, the Navy conservatively assumes that significant behavioral reactions may occur to 5dB below the TTS threshold. To clarify, the Navy has monitored shock trial detonations since the 1990s.

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	of reactions. Due to human safety concerns, the Navy has never stationed personnel at the target site to monitor marine mammal responses during large single detonations. In other instances (i.e., bombs dropped from aircraft), lookouts are tasked with clearing the mitigation zone, not documenting an animal's behavioral response to the activity. Although neither the Navy nor NMFS is aware of evidence to support the assertion that animals will have significant behavioral responses to temporally or spatially isolated explosions at received levels below the TTS threshold (85 Fed. Reg. 72325), a lack of evidence, particularly when concerted monitoring has not occurred in the Level B harassment zones during detonations, does not mean that takes have not occurred. Behavior takes from numerous types of activities have not been documented, but the Navy, and in turn NMFS, presumes that they could occur—essentially for all Navy acoustic sources except low- and mid-frequency active sonar. Given the lack of justification for continuing to ascribe validity to assumptions that clearly are not based on best available science, the Commission recommends that the Navy include behavior takes of marine mammals during all explosive activities, including those that involve single detonations and gunnery exercises that have several detonations occurring within a few seconds, in the FEIS and its LOA application and invest additional resources in conducting behavioral response studies on marine mammals' responses[46], including pinniped responses, to underwater detonations for the derivation of explosive BRFs. [40] The Commission appreciates that the Navy incorporated the Commission's previous recommendations and used only the onset mortality, slight lung injury, and slight gastrointestinal tract injury thresholds for estimating the numbers of takes of marine mammals rather than the 50 percent thresholds that were used in Phase III. [41] Based on 1-sec tones. [42] Department of the Navy (2024a) used the cumulative sound exposure level (SEL_{cum}) metric for behavior thresholds for explosives rather than the root-mean-square sound pressure level (SPL_{rms}), which is used for behavior thresholds for all other sources. NMFS's behavior thresholds also are based on SPL_{rms} for all other sources.	Lookouts observe the mitigation zone after completion of explosive activities, when practical. Activity-based requirements are listed in Chapter 5. Additional platforms supporting explosive activities (e.g., providing range clearance) support observing the mitigation zone for applicable biological resources while performing their regular duties and assist post-event visual observation of the area where detonations occurred. The Navy has always and will continue to follow incident reporting procedures, as outlined in Section 5.4 of this EIS/OEIS, if an incident is detected at any time during an event, including during the post-activity observations.

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	[43] Including certain gunnery exercises that have several detonations of small munitions occurring within a few seconds. [44] Takes for which were authorized under Phase III compliance documents, and ship shock trial activities for which the Navy conducted in the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing (AFTT) study area. [45] With net explosive weights of 500 to 650 lbs (Bin E11) and 7,250 to 14,500 lbs (Bin E16), respectively, for Phase IV activities. [46] Living Marine Resources has provided funding for a few opportunistic studies involving behavioral response of cetaceans exposed to underwater detonations (Falcone et al. 2024).	
MMC-19	*Avoidance*—NAEMO does not use moving animats for estimating avoidance, as it does moving sound sources for the propagation model (Department of the Navy 2024b). NAEMO simply simulates an animat moving away from a sound source by mathematically reducing the received SPLs of individual exposures based on a spherical spreading calculation for the source(s) present on each unique platform. Avoidance speeds and durations were informed by a review of available exposure and baseline data (Department of the Navy 2024b). In prior Phases, avoidance was not modeled in NAEMO. Instead, 95 percent of the takes for permanent threshold shift (PTS), now referred to as AINJ, predicted by NAEMO were assumed to be reduced to TTS due to avoidance (Department of the Navy 2017b). This reduction was based on the assumption that an animal avoided the AINJ zone of a moving MF1 source (i.e., a hull-mounted surface ship sonar as defined in NAEMO). Department of the Navy (2024b) did not justify why spherical spreading was used rather than the propagation loss resulting from NAEMO modeling for each individual event. The Navy did however specify swim speeds that were used for the various groups for avoidance (see Table 5 in Department of the Navy 2024b). Some of the assumed avoidance speeds are greater than were noted in the underlying references (see Table 8 in Department of the Navy 2024b). For example, Table 8 specified that Kastelein et al. (2018) was one of the references for harbor porpoise avoidance speeds. Even though Table 8 did not specify the speed, Kastelein et al. (2018) indicated that the highest sustainable swim speed for a harbor	The avoidance method was newly integrated into the existing NAEMO software framework for Phase 4 and was built into the post-processor stage. The post processor stage does not have access to the propagation loss data. Using a generalized spherical spreading propagation loss was most appropriate given the data available within the post processor and the design of the avoidance methods. The avoidance analysis assesses the ability to reduce a high intensity sound exposure that may result in auditory injury. Baseline swim speeds are informative when information on swim behavior during sound exposures is lacking; however, swim speeds observed near and during anthropogenic disturbance are assumed to better reflect behavior that may reduce the potential for injury if an avoidance response is initiated. The commenter incorrectly states that Kastelein et al. (2018) indicated that 7.1 km/hr was the maximum sustainable swim speed for harbor porpoises. Rather, this was the sustained average speed of a single captive harbor porpoise in a relatively small pool during a pile driving playback study at exposures below those which could cause auditory injury. Table 8 in the Quantitative Analysis Technical Report (Department of Navy 2024b) cites additional data that informed the avoidance assumptions in this analysis, including data for free swimming harbor porpoises that indicated swim speeds up to and greater

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	porpoise responding to pile-driving activities was 7.1 km/hr (or 1.97 m/s). The other harbor porpoise swim speeds mentioned were not sustainable for the duration of a Navy acoustic activity, while the baseline speed specified was 1.5 m/s (Table 8 in Department of the Navy 2024b). As such, it is unclear how a sustained swim speed of 3 m/s can be justified for harbor porpoises. Further, the baseline swim speed in Table 8 for otariids was 0.8 m/s, 0.4 m/s for harbor seals, and less than 1.7 m/s for northern elephant seals. No swim speeds were available for avoiding sound sources. Given that harbor seals comprise the vast majority of the phocid takes and swim speeds for a given group should be based on the slower species, pinniped swim speeds should have been no more than 1 m/s. For these reasons, the Commission recommends that the Navy use an avoidance swim speed of no more than 2 m/s for harbor porpoises and 1 m/s for pinnipeds and revise the NAEMO modeling and take estimates appropriately for the FEIS and LOA application.	than 3 m/s. Table 8 only includes baseline swim behavior for pinnipeds; thus, a reasonable swim speed of 2 m/s for a limited period (10 min.) was assumed for injury avoidance.
MMC-20	Moving animats, as well as animat-based avoidance behavior, have been modeled for quite some time. The Navy funded the development of the publicly-available Marine Mammal Movement and Behavior (3MB)[47] model 25 years ago (Houser and Cross 1999, Houser 2006) that incorporated moving animats and avoidance behavior. Although never included in NAEMO, 3MB has been modified over the years to be used for geophysical surveys (Zeddies 2015) and is currently used as the basis for animat modeling that is conducted for offshore wind activities (e.g., Denes et al. 2020, Küsel et al. 2022). Since NAEMO's current animat modeling and avoidance processes are not considered best available science, the Commission recommends that the Navy incorporate into NAEMO moving animats that can actively avoid sound sources based on species-specific dive profiles and swim speeds for Phase V activities and, if that is not feasible, incorporate into NAEMO species-specific swim speeds and the actual modeled sound propagation to simulate avoidance for a given event. [47] http://oalib.hlsresearch.com/Sound%20and%20Marine%20Mammals/3MB%20HTML.htm.	The Navy's approach to modeling impacts is described in a technical report (Quantifying Acoustic Impacts on Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles: Methods and Analytical Approach for Phase IV Training and Testing) and is based on the best available science. In early NAEMO development, the Navy compared the number of exposures (i.e., >120 dB) using the 3MB model vs. horizontally stationary animats and concluded that there was no significant difference in behavioral exposures between the two distribution methods. Thus, horizontally stationary animats were selected for computational efficiency. Navy will consider refinements to horizontal animat movement models in future updates to NAEMO software. The Navy will consider species-specific avoidance swim parameters as sufficient data becomes available; however, due to the lack of detailed avoidance data for most species, reliance on surrogate data is necessary, similar to the dive profiles.

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MMC-21	*Repeated exposures*—For Phase IV activities, the Navy has again used relative proportions or percentages of the stock to estimate impacts on individuals from repeated exposures and population-level consequences, which ultimately inform negligible impact determinations[48] under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (Department of the Navy 2024b and Appendix E in the DEIS). It is unclear why the Navy has not used NAEMO to model multi-day events or multiple single-day events that would provide information regarding repeated exposures of individuals by querying the animat dosimeters. This seems fairly basic, with something similar having been conducted for geophysical and geological activities in the Gulf of Mexico in 2015 (Zeddies et al. 2015 and 2017). To better assess repeated exposures of individuals and population-level consequences, the Commission recommends that the Navy use NAEMO to conduct modeling of both multi-day events and multiple single-day events to estimate the number of repeated exposures an individual is expected to incur. [48] As well as small numbers determinations for construction activities conducted by the Navy.	While the assessment of the distribution of repeated takes amongst individuals may appear basic, calculating repeated takes is challenging to do at the scale required for the major Navy study areas. A credible assessment of the repeated takes due to the Navy's Proposed Action per the approach suggested in the comment would require treating animats as unique individuals over the course of a year's activity and across a large study area, while incorporating migration patterns and nomadic movement. Such an effort would be computationally intensive and likely infeasible given reasonable resources. In contrast, the action analyzed by Zeddies et al. was less complex than the Navy action. Thus, Zeddies et al. could assess repeated takes within spatially and temporally limited areas with undirected animal ingress/egress. Still, the Navy's analysis provides sufficient information to assess impacts to marine mammal populations. In addition to the ratio of takes to abundance presented in Appendix E, the Navy has presented other information in its assessment that can inform the potential for repeated takes of individuals and impacts to each stock. This includes the geographic region in which impacts are predicted, whether impacts occur in cold or warm seasons, stock vulnerability factors (defined in Section 2.3.4 of Appendix E), and relevant information related to the population consequences of disturbance themes identified in Keen et al. (2021). The Navy will review the best available science and consider additional methods to assess repeated exposures in future updates to NAEMO software.
MMC-22	Explosive propagation modeling—For Phase II activities, the Navy used its Refraction in Multilayered Ocean/Ocean Bottoms with Shear Wave Effects (REFMS) model to estimate sound propagation associated with underwater detonations. However, the Navy has since used Comprehensive Acoustic Simulation System/Gaussian Ray Bundle (CASS/GRAB) and a similitude equation to model underwater detonations for Phase III and IV activities (Department of the Navy 2017b, Department of the Navy 2024b). The Navy indicated that CASS/GRAB was approved by	NAEMO's impulsive modeling methods (Department of the Navy, 2024b) require arrival times, sound levels, and phases from the propagation model. However, RAM/PE doesn't output the necessary time information, making it unsuitable for this purpose. While the similitude equation has limitations (Department of the Navy, 2024b, Section 4.1.3.2), comparisons of modeled peak pressures at various ranges against theoretical values derived from this equation showed good agreement.

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	the Ocean and Atmospheric Master Library (OAML)[49], could vary environmental parameters with range, had a built-in absorption model, and was more numerically stable than REFMS (Department of the Navy 2017b). Although those assertions may be correct, the Navy also has used its Range- Dependent Acoustic Model (RAM) and the Navy's Standard Parabolic Equation (PE) model for non-impulsive sources with frequencies of less than 100 Hz[50] and for water depths of less than 50 m (Department of the Navy 2024b). It is unclear why RAM/PE was not used for underwater detonations that would occur in waters 50 m or less, where CASS/GRAB generally is not used. Further, Department of the Navy (2024b) specified that the similitude equation is valid only over a range of pressures equating to a NEW of up to 28.8 lbs. [49] The Commission notes that CASS/GRAB is OAML-approved only for frequencies higher than 100 Hz per Department of the Navy (2017b). The Navy just uses it down to 25 Hz for impulsive sources. [50] The main portion of an underwater detonation's energy occurs at frequencies less than 100 Hz. Department of the Navy (2017b and 2024b) did indicate that the CASS/GRAB modeling process compared favorably with in-situ data, but the data were for small explosives at short ranges (i.e., no larger than 15-lb charges in less than 5 m of water at a range of hundreds of meters[51]; Deavenport and Gilchrest 2015). Department of the Navy (2017b) specified that data for large explosions and at long ranges were needed to fully validate the model. During the most recent ship shock trials off the east coast of Florida in 2021, some such data were collected. Seger et al. (2023) collected in-situ measurements of the three individual shots of a NEW of up to 58,000 lbs fired near the USS Gerald R. Ford for the purpose of validating NAEMO propagation models. The researchers conducted their own modeling using the Peregrine version of RAM/PE for optimal placement of the hydrophones and to compare with the in-situ measurements.	Thus, the use of the similitude equation within NAEMO is appropriate.

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	The measured sound levels exceeded what the Navy had estimated for Phase III modeling for the ship shock trials (Bin E17 in Tables 9-15 to 9-22 in Department of the Navy 2017b) by orders of magnitude[52]. For example, the maximum volume modeled out to a radius of 201 km was exceeded for both the SPLpeak and SELcum metrics for PTS and TTS for LF cetaceans[53] (Table 12 in Seger et al. 2023), the largest range of which was estimated by NAEMO to be 47 km. Since the Navy has yet to conduct a rigorous comparison between the radii provided by NAEMO and those measured in-situ, the total amount NAEMO had underestimated the zones is unknown. However, Seger et al. (2023) noted in Table 12 that the impact volumes for PTS and TTS were 16.5 times as large as the Grand Canyon and 1/40th the size of the Gulf of Mexico[54]. The researchers also noted that the sound energy from the 2016 ship shock trial of only 10–11,000 lbs reached Ascension Island[55] nearly 8,200 km away at received levels of 135 dB re 1 µPa, thus the far field was a relatively very far distance in that context. For the USS Ford ship shock trial, the maximum received level at the Ascension Island hydrophones was 157 dB re 1 µPa (Seger et al. 2023). The Commission recommends that the Navy conduct a rigorous comparison of CASS/GRAB and the similitude equation and the in situ measurements of the USS Ford ship shock trial from Seger et al. (2023) to fulfill the intent of the project. Given the comparability of the modeled zones from the Peregrine version of RAM/PE to the measured values and that RAM/PE is already used by the Navy for modeling non-impulsive sources that operate at less than 100 Hz and in shallow water, the Commission further recommends that the Navy use RAM/PE to model all underwater detonations for Phase IV activities for which modeling has not been completed and for all Phase V activities, until such time that CASS/GRAB and the similitude equation have been validated for the range of detonation sizes and environmental parameters (water depth and receiver range) in which it would be used. [51] Parameters which are exceeded by modeled scenarios for even the smallest detonations, Bin E1 (i.e., see Table 2.5-9 in Appendix E of the DEIS). [52] The Peregrine modeled received levels at the various monitoring device locations were comparable to measured values (Seger et al. 2023).	

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	[53] For unknown reasons, Seger et al. (2023) used the 160 dB re 1 µPa threshold as the behavior threshold. The Navy has never used that threshold to estimate the range to behavioral response for underwater detonations. [54] For reference, Department of Navy (2017b) estimated that the TTS zone for the SEL_{cum} threshold was 3.7 km for MF cetaceans. [55] Where Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization hydrophones are installed.	
MMC-23	Seger et al. (2023) also were tasked with determining whether vocal activity of odontocetes and mysticetes differed before and after each shot of the ship shock trial. Odontocete vocal activity decreased at four hydrophones, increased at two hydrophones, and remained the same at seven hydrophones. Mysticete vocal activity decreased at eight hydrophones, increased at one hydrophone, and remained the same at four hydrophones. Certain vocal activity changes were statistically significant. Although Seger et al. (2023) did not provide ranges from each of the detonations to the hydrophones, some hydrophones were very likely beyond the range of TTS for LF cetaceans and most definitely beyond the range of TTS for MF cetaceans (47.4 km and 6 km, respectively; Department of the Navy 2017b). Thus, contrary to the Navy and NMFS's continued presumption, behavioral responses do in fact occur at ranges beyond TTS for single detonations.	The Navy has not presumed that behavioral responses do not occur beyond the range to TTS for single detonations. Rather, the Navy assumes that any significant behavioral responses rising to the level of harassment under the MMPA for military readiness activities are unlikely to occur beyond the range to TTS. For most locations and animal classes, acoustic presence was not significantly different after the detonation compared to before the detonation. The researchers note that decreases in acoustic presence following the detonations could have been affected by natural diel or crepuscular cycles.
MMC-24	*Pile-driving calculations*—The Navy indicated that, based on the best available science regarding animal reactions to sound, selecting a reasonable accumulation period was necessary to accurately reflect the period that an animal is likely to be exposed to the sound (Department of the Navy 2024b). The Navy chose a 5-minute accumulation time for the SELcum thresholds for AINJ and TTS, because most marine mammals should be able to easily move away from the expanding AINJ and TTS zones within that timeframe, especially considering that soft-start procedures may warn the animals. The Navy also suggested that the animal could avoid the zone altogether if it is outside the immediate area when pile driving begins. Those assumptions may hold if an animal avoids pile-driving activities, but many times, certain species such as pinnipeds and bottlenose dolphins do not avoid the activities. As such, the assumed	The Navy's monitoring procedures for shoreline construction activities are often not able to ascertain residence time due to several factors. Although there are some cases where animals are reported near pile driving activities during monitoring efforts, this is often during pre- and post- monitoring periods or after a pile driving activity has been shut down (i.e., no sound). These instances are also reported while the animals are beyond any predicted AINJ or TTS range to effect. Time frames from these efforts therefore are not always indicative of typical sound exposure durations. The Navy's assumption is that most animals would avoid areas with higher sound levels that could cause injury over periods of time shorter than 5 minutes. Furthermore, criteria for AINJ and TTS are conservative in that

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	5-min accumulation time would be insufficient. Since the Navy currently has 13 active incidental take authorizations for construction activities and has had at least 35 incidental take authorizations issued in the last 10 years, it should be able to review its monitoring data to determine whether a 5-minute accumulation time is sufficient for species that are known to remain near pile-driving activities. The Commission recommends that the Navy review its previous monitoring reports for both construction activities and any pile-driving activities associated with TAP I or Phase II and III FEISs to estimate the mean time an animal is expected to remain near a pile-driving activity and revise the accumulation time, range to effects, and numbers of takes accordingly for the Phase IV FEIS and LOA application.	they do not account for recovery of hearing effects during breaks in sound exposure (e.g., silent periods as the hammer is repositioned, when pinnipeds lift their heads out of the water or haul out, etc.). This likely results in an over estimation of take under the current analysis.
MMC-25	Mitigation Areas—Various geographical mitigation areas in the HCTT study area were informed by biologically important areas (BIAs), critical habitat, etc. BIAs in particular are of known importance for reproduction, feeding, or migration or are areas where small and resident populations are known to occur (see Harrison et al. 2023 for details)[56]. Appendix K of the DEIS provided extensive information on the various BIA IIs and whether and how they overlap with the HCTT study area. For the California-based BIAs, the Commission notes three clarifications that should be made in any final EIS. First, Table K-8 specified that the parent migratory BIA for gray whales was applicable from June–November rather than November–June (Calambokidis et al. (2024). Second, the Navy termed the Southern Resident killer whale small and resident BIA merely a killer whale BIA. Calambokidis et al. (2024) was explicit that the BIA applied only to Southern Resident killer whales. Third, the Navy inadvertently omitted the Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Area from its explanation of limiting MF1 hull-mounted surface ship sonar hours to no more than 300 hours combined for the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area[57] in Table K-9. The Commission recommends that the Navy (1) revise the parent migratory BIA timeframe for gray whales to be November–June in Table K-8 of the FEIS, (2) use the term "Southern Resident killer whale small and resident BIA" in the FEIS, and (3) include the Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Area, along with the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area, in its explanation of limiting sonar hours for the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area in Table K-9 of the FEIS.	Appendix K in the Final EIS/OEIS has been changed as follows: 1) Table K-8 has been corrected to show that the parent migratory BIA is applicable November – June. 2) The title for Figure K-25 has been revised for clarity to: "Southern Resident Killer Whale Small and Resident BIA Off California" Because it is a new proposed mitigation area, the appropriate table to include the Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Area was Table K-11 (Proposed New Mitigation Areas for Marine Mammals in the California Study Area) in the Draft EIS/OEIS (now Table K-12 in the Final EIS/OEIS).

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	[56] The original BIAs from 2015 (i.e., Calambokidis et al. 2015) have been modified and supplemented and are known as BIA IIs (i.e., Calambokidis et al. 2024). [57] The Navy proposed to limit the MF1 hull-mounted surface ship sonar hours to no more than 300 hours combined for the Southern California Blue Whale, Northern California Large Whale, and Central California Large Whale Mitigation Areas in Appendix K of the DEIS.	
MMC-26	Because of revisions made to the BIA IIs (i.e., shift in the blue whale feeding BIA), the Navy decided to not carry forward the San Nicolas Island, Santa Monica/Long Beach, and Santa Barbara Island Mitigation Areas that originally were meant to protect blue whales. That is logical for the Santa Monica/Long Beach and Santa Barbara Island Mitigation Areas, as they do not overlap with the current core feeding BIA for blue whales. However, the current core[58] feeding BIA for blue whales (Figure K-19 in the DEIS and Figure 2 in Calambokidis et al. 2024) does overlap with the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area that was part of the litigation settlement agreement in 2015 for Conservation Council for Hawaii v. National Marine Fisheries Service, as well as the Phase III HSTT FEIS and associated rulemaking. Specifically, MF1 hull-mounted surface ship sonar hours were limited and explosives (i.e., mine warfare, large-caliber gunnery rounds, torpedoes, bombs, and missiles) were prohibited from 1 June through 31 October in the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area (50 C.F.R. § 218.74(b)(2)(i)(A)). The Navy did not provide justification regarding why the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area neither was retained nor why it was now, nearly 10 years later, considered impracticable to implement. Further, Calambokidis et al. (2024) specified that the core feeding BIA for blue whales was applicable through November, similar to the feeding BIAs for fin and humpback whales. It is unclear why the Southern California Blue Whale, Central California Large Whale, and Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Areas are not applicable through November, as they all are intended to minimize impacts on blue, fin, and humpback whales (Table K-9 and K-11 in the DEIS). Therefore, the Commission recommends that the Navy include the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area in the FEIS and LOA application, limit the number of sonar hours combined to no more than 300 hours of MF1 hull-mounted surface ship sonar combined for this mitigation area and the Southern California Blue Whale, the Central	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Continuing the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area designated in the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS is not sufficiently beneficial given it overlaps a relatively small portion of the core BIA areas compared to the new mitigation areas in this EIS/OEIS (see section 5.7.7 and 5.7.8). Furthermore, due to the inclusion of Point Mugu Sea Ranges activities in the Proposed Action, continuing mitigation in the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area and extending the temporal restrictions beyond the five months already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.

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	California Large Whale, and Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Areas from 1 June through 30 November, and prohibit explosives (i.e., mine warfare, large-caliber gunnery rounds, torpedoes, bombs, and missiles) from 1 June through 30 November. [58] Termed child BIAs.	
MMC-27	For Hawaii, the various geographical mitigation areas remain seemingly unchanged from the Phase III FEIS and rulemaking. The Hawaii Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area would limit MF1 hull-mounted surface ship sonar to no more than 300 hours and prohibit the use of in-water explosives[59]; while the Hawaii 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area would prohibit the use of MF1 hull-mounted surface ship sonar from 15 November–15 April and prohibit the use of in-water explosives year-round. Since Phase III, the core small and resident BIA for the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) insular stock of false killer whales has been refined with additional areas noted off the west coast of Oahu and Lanai and an extension around the southwest side of Molokai (see Figure 4 in Kratofil et al. 2023). For unknown reasons, those BIA areas off Oahu and the southwest side of Molokai are not depicted in Figure K-9 of the DEIS. In addition, the Navy has explained in Appendix K why various other areas are important for conducting training and testing activities, but none of those training and testing areas overlap with the core BIA areas off Oahu, Lanai, and Molokai. As such, it is unclear why the core BIAs were not included in the Hawaii 4-Islands Mitigation Area, particularly since some of the BIA areas off Lanai and Molokai are already part of the Hawaii 4-Islands Mitigation Area. Given the critically endangered status of the MHI insular stock of false killer whales and the lack of overlap with important training and testing areas per the DEIS, the Commission recommends that the Navy include in the FEIS and LOA application the core small and resident BIA areas off Oahu, Lanai, and Molokai in the Hawaii 4-Islands Mitigation Area, which prohibits use of MF1 hull-mounted surface ship sonar from 15 November–15 April and in-water explosives year-round. [59] Those that detonate underwater and those that are deployed at surface targets.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Final mitigation measures resulting from consultation will be documented in the Navy ROD.
MMC-28	*Passive acoustic monitoring*—The Navy proposed to use information from passive acoustic detections (presumably from instrumented ranges,	Navy's instrumented ranges do not have the capabilities to be used effectively for mitigation. Most notably, there is not a real-

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	sonobuoys, etc.) to inform visual observations of lookouts when passive acoustic devices are already being used in events involving active acoustic sources (Table 5-2 in the DEIS). Given that visual observations by Navy lookouts have proven to be ineffective (Oedekoven and Thomas 2022)—such that the Navy has removed any 'credit' for mitigation implementation from the Phase IV DEIS and other compliance documents—the Navy's currently proposed mitigation measure that still relies on a lookout's visual observations is insufficient. Passive acoustic monitoring via range instrumentation and sonobuoys has reached the level of performance needed for use during military readiness activities (e.g., Department of the Navy 2013 and 2014a, U.S. Air Force (USAF) 2016), contrary to the Navy's stance that they have not. The Navy's mitigation measures have yet to be supplemented from a technology standpoint[60] beyond those measures proposed for TAP I activities more than 15 years ago. Although the DEIS indicated that many of the technologies have yet to reach the level of performance needed for deployment during military readiness activities, many are and have been used by the Department of National Defence (DND) in Canada[61] to supplement detections when there are visual monitoring limitations (Binder et al. 2021, Thomson and Binder 2021, Binder et al. 2024). Therefore, the Commission remains skeptical of the Navy's insistence in the DEIS that use of passive acoustic monitoring is impractical as a precise real-time indicator of a marine mammal's location for mitigation implementation absent a confirmed visual sighting. The Commission recommends that the Navy use its instrumented ranges and sonobuoys to localize marine mammals and implement the relevant mitigation measures during active acoustic events for Phase IV activities, take a harder look at the technologies that the Canadian DND uses during its at-sea activities, and incorporate those technologies accordingly for other Phase IV DEISs. [60] In fact, over the years some mitigation measures have been removed (i.e., visual observations for surface-to-surface missiles/rockets, passive acoustic monitoring requirements for certain explosive activities) and some of the mitigation zones have been reduced in size (i.e., explosive mine neutralization exercises not involving positive control).	time feed of hydrophone data to vessel and aircraft operators. See Section 5.5.3 (ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ACOUSTIC MONITORING DEVICES) of the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS for further details. Navy assets with passive acoustic monitoring capabilities (such as sonobuoys) that are already participating in an activity will continue to monitor for marine mammals, as described in Section 5.6). However, the fluidity and nature of military readiness activities (e.g., fast-paced and mobile readiness evolutions), as well as the limitations of these monitoring capabilities (e.g. inability to determine the location of a vocalizing animal) make it impractical for passive acoustic devices to be used as precise real-time indicators of marine mammal location for mitigation (e.g., active sonar power downs or shutdowns, ceasing use of explosives) without an accompanying visual sighting. The Canadian DND's project seeking real-time detection of marine mammals during sonar operations is in development. The Action Proponents are following progress and lessons learned.

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	[61] i.e., automated passive acoustic monitoring via fixed hydrophones, mobile autonomous systems, and sonobuoys; detection and tracking capabilities using bottom-mounted hydrophones on instrumented ranges; electro-optical, infrared, and space-based detection methods to supplement naked-eye monitoring.	
MMC-29	The Navy also proposed to use passive acoustic detections to inform lookouts prior to initiating detonations only if the passive acoustic devices are already being used during the event. Passive acoustic monitoring was required for explosive sonobuoys, explosive torpedoes, and sinking exercises for Phase III and prior activities, including in NMFS's final rules. The effectiveness of passive acoustic devices has not diminished nor has use of the devices become impracticable. Thus, requirements to use passive acoustic devices should be included for Phase IV explosive sonobuoys, explosive torpedoes, and sinking exercises as well. It is unclear why passive acoustic monitoring, particularly the use of expendable sonobuoys, has not been a requirement before for ship shock trials. The Commission recommends that the Navy include the use of passive acoustic monitoring prior to and during activities involving explosive sonobuoys, explosive torpedoes, sinking exercises, and ship shock trials for Phase IV activities in the FEIS and its LOA application. Further, since passive acoustic monitoring is not required for surface detonations[62] (i.e., air- to-surface explosive bombs, missiles, rockets), multiple sonobuoys could be deployed with a surface target prior to an activity to better determine whether the target area is clear and remains clear until the munition is launched. This would supplement any pre-activity visual observations for air-to- surface exercises and would serve as the only mitigation measure for surface-to-surface detonations[63]. Specifically, Directional Frequency Analysis and Recording (DIFAR) sonobuoys[64] provide both range and bearing to vocalizing animals, can determine an animal's location and confirm its presence in a mitigation zone, and are routinely used by the Navy. [62] Mitigation is not required to be implemented at all for surface-to-surface detonations. [63] The Navy indicated in the DEIS that mitigation would not be effective for vessel-deployed missiles and rockets because of the distance between the firing platform and target location and it	The Action Proponents do intend to continue to utilize passive acoustic monitoring prior to activities involving explosive sonobuoys and explosive torpedoes, and during sinking exercises, as required in Phase III. A change in terminology caused an omission of these requirements in the Draft EIS/OEIS and a correction has been made for the Final EIS/OEIS. However, passive acoustic monitoring for ship shock trials were not required in Phase III because the passive acoustics for the Churchill FSST in 2001 were considered ineffective (Clarke, 2005) and will not be a requirement in Phase IV.

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	would not be possible for vessels to conduct close-range observations due to the length of time (and associated operational costs and exercise delays) it would take to complete observations and then transit back to the firing position (typically 28 to 139 km each way). [64] And other types of passive (e.g., Vertical Line Array Directional Frequency Analysis and Recording (VLAD)) and active (Directional Command Active Sonobuoy System (DICASS) and the Multistatic Active Coherent (MAC) system and Air Deployed Active Receiver (ADAR)) sonobuoys.	
MMC-30	The Navy itself has drawn attention to the success of using sonobuoys to detect bottlenose dolphins in real-time during mine exercises, provides sonobuoys to researchers for the same purpose of detecting and localizing marine mammals[65], and has highlighted numerous instances of various types of sonobuoys being used to detect and localize baleen whales, delphinids, and beaked whales[66]. A broadband repertoire of frequencies, as well as narrow-band frequencies, can be monitored by sonobuoys. For these reasons, the Commission again recommends that the Navy include the use of passive acoustic devices (i.e., DIFAR and other types of passive sonobuoys, operational hydrophones) prior to explosive bombing exercises and air-to-surface and surface-to-surface explosive missile and rocket exercises to detect marine mammals and implement the necessary mitigation measures in the FEIS and LOA application and, when sonobuoys are used, deploy them at the same time as the surface target. [65] Including DIFAR sonobuoys, which have an upper frequency cutoff of 2.4 kHz, and other types of sonobuoys, including omnidirectional sonobuoys that have a higher frequency cutoff. https://www.navymarinespeciesmonitoring.us/files/4714/0069/6940/Spr14_Sonobuoys_Reasearch_Monitoring.pdf. 66 e.g., https://exwc.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/88/Documents/EXWC/Environmental_Security/Living%20Marine%20 Resources/LMRAnnualReport2018v2.pdf.	Unlike explosive torpedo and explosive sonobuoy activities, the platforms deploying air-to-surface missiles & rockets and explosive bombs, as well as their surface targets, do not have the capability to deploy nor receive data from DIFAR or other types of passive sonobuoys or operational hydrophones. Adding additional platforms to these exercises that would deploy and monitor data from passive sonobuoys or operational hydrophones would not be practicable to implement because it would decrease the ability to de-conflict air and sea space and require the expenditure of additional funding for increased operational costs associated with higher fuel consumption and additional maintenance of existing equipment. Mitigation would not be effective for vessel- or shore-deployed missiles and rockets (without requiring additional observation platforms) because of the distance between the firing platform and target location. It would not be possible for vessels to conduct close-range observations due to the length of time (and associated operational costs and event delays) it would take to complete observations and then transit back to the firing position (typically around 15 or 75 NM each way, depending on the event).
MMC-31	*Other mitigation measures*—For Phase III and previous activities, the Navy would delay and/or move activities if floating vegetation or jellyfish[67] were observed in the relevant mitigation zone for active acoustic sources, pile	Similar to the explanation provided in Section 5.3 of the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS, Section 5.6 of the 2024 HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS states that the Navy will delay or relocate acoustic,

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	driving, airguns, and explosive activities. Chapter 5 in the DEIS makes note of floating vegetation and jellyfish but does not specify what measures, if any, would be implemented if either were to be observed during a given activity. The Commission recommends that the Navy include the requirement to delay, relocate, or cease activities if floating vegetation or jellyfish are observed in the mitigation zone during activities involving active acoustic sources, pile driving, airguns, and explosives consistent with Phase III mitigation measures in the FEIS and LOA application. [67] That the Navy has historically used as a proxy for the potential presence of marine mammals.	explosive, and non-explosive (e.g., practice munitions) activities if floating vegetation is observed prior to their start. As noted in Section 5.2.1.3 of the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS, there is no requirement to cease activities if vegetation is observed within the mitigation zone after activities commence (e.g., drifts into the mitigation zone) which is why this requirement was not included in the 2024 HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS. However, floating vegetation is noted as an indicator of marine mammal presence in the Lookout Training Handbook and Marine Species Awareness Training. If seen, Lookouts are trained to examine the area closely for marine mammals that maybe feeding or sheltering nearby. There are additional mitigation requirements to observe for jellyfish aggregations as an indicator species for sea turtles.
MMC-32	For ship shock trials, the Navy indicated that, if an incident involving a marine mammal is observed after an individual detonation, it would follow established incident reporting procedures and halt any remaining detonations until the Navy can consult with NMFS and review or adapt the mitigation plan (see Table 5-3 in the DEIS). It is unclear why such a measure would not apply to all activities. The Commission recommends that the Navy cease any active acoustic, explosive, pile driving, or airgun activity if a marine mammal is observed to be injured or killed during or immediately after the activity and consult with NMFS to review or adapt the mitigation measures, as necessary.	If any marine mammal is observed in the mitigation zone, the activity is ceased in accordance with Tables 5-2 through 5-4. Furthermore, as noted in Section 5.4, the Navy will "notify the appropriate regulatory agency, which may include NMFS or the USFWS, immediately (or as soon as operational security considerations allow) if a vessel strike, injury, or mortality of a marine mammal or sea turtle occurs that is (or may be) attributable to activities conducted under the Proposed Action."
MMC-33	Given that visual observations by Navy lookouts have proven to be ineffective (Oedekoven and Thomas 2022)—such that the Navy has removed any 'credit' for mitigation implementation from the Phase IV DEIS and other compliance documents—the Navy's currently proposed mitigation measure that still relies on a lookout's visual observations is insufficient.	While the study results indicated that the effectiveness of Navy Lookout Teams was generally less than that of trained biologist observer teams, it did not conclude they were "ineffective". Lookouts will continue to conduct visual observations as part of the suite of mitigation measures. The decision was made not to include 'credit' for mitigation in the Phase IV analysis because there appeared to be a false perception that the credit taken in the Phase III analysis was much larger than it actually was. This decision was not due to the effectiveness of visual observations by Navy lookouts.

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OHA-01	Marine Protected Areas • Papahānaumokuākea Within Section 3.10 (Cultural Resources) of the DEIS/OEIS, Papahānaumokuākea is noted as a World Heritage Site and for its significance to the cultural heritage of Native Hawaiians. OHA did emphasize the cultural importance and sanctity of Papahānaumokuākea in our comments on the NOI, further advising that it be evaluated as a traditional cultural property (TCP) during National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process and integrating any such findings with the NEPA process. As Papahānaumokuākea continues to be utilized by cultural practitioners and contains numerous historic and cultural resources, OHA believed that the area could be considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as a TCP. However, the idea of a TCP is nowhere to be found within the DEIS/OEIS and the matter seems to have been dismissed with a statement in Section 3.10.2.5 of the DEIS/OEIS that states "such [traditional cultural] practices are not defined or protected under the NRHP". While standalone cultural practices themselves are not be eligible for the NRHP, OHA argues that Papahānaumokuākea can serve as a physical place that would be eligible for inclusion on the NRHP as a TCP where cultural practices contribute to the property's historical significance. As noted in our NOI comments, the National Park Service's National Register Bulletin No. 38, a TCP is defined as: "A property that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (a) are rooted in that community's history, and (b) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community." OHA specifically quoted this Bulletin so that the DON could proactively plan to evaluate Papahānaumokuākea as a TCP and take into account the cultural practices occurring within its boundaries. In turn, this would allow for NHPA mitigations if Papahānaumokuākea and the cultural practices	Under the National Historic Preservation Act, federal agencies are required to establish a program to locate, inventory and nominate to the Secretary of the Interior all properties under the agency's ownership or control that appear to qualify for inclusion on the National Register. Consistent with correspondence the Navy has provided through the NHPA process, the OHA and Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) provided comments that also spoke to the cultural importance of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) and associated cultural practices. They suggested the monument should be evaluated as a possible historic property and Traditional Cultural Place (TCP). The DON acknowledges the cultural importance of PMNM but is not proposing new activity within the monument that has potential to affect historic properties. The presence of TCP(s) has not been formally assessed, and boundaries have not been determined. However, for the purpose of Section 106 review for the PMN Sanctuary designation, NOAA ONMS considered the area to be potentially eligible for the NRHP. The Action Proponents acknowledge the cultural importance of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) but are not proposing new activity within the Monument that has potential to affect historic properties. Vessel and aircraft usage is limited in the Monument, particularly in the Temporary Operating Area (TOA) portion, although it would be conducted in a manner consistent with designation proclamations. The proposed activities would be generally limited to vessels conducting training while transiting through the southeastern portion of the Monument boundary on route to and from the Western Pacific in an area of open water. This proposed activity would not have the potential to affect historic property. Therefore, in accordance with NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 800), the

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	occurring within it were adversely affected by the proposed military activities. When NHPA is specifically discussed in Section 3.10.4.3, the DEIS/OEIS only notes possible impacts to "submerged historic properties". This myopic approach ignores consideration of Papahānaumokuākea as a TCP and the myriad of cultural practices (i.e., wayfinding, fishing) occurring within its boundaries. With the possibility of Papahānaumokuākea qualifying as a TCP for its association with cultural practices, OHA does not understand how it would not at least warrant an attempt by the DON to evaluate it as one. As such, OHA believes the NHPA Section 106 process and section of the DEIS/OEIS that discusses impacts to cultural resources are grossly inadequate and incomplete. Lastly, in the NOI that was previously released, Papahānaumokuākea was described as being within the Temporary Operating Area of the Hawai'i Range Complex and that it could be susceptible to sonic booms or utilized for emergency situations. However, an emphasis was placed on the fact that no actual physical activities would occur in the monument area (unless there was an emergency), and that any possible impacts to cultural voyaging or wayfinding would be temporary. OHA commented that the DON should reasonably disclose what could/can qualify as an emergency and what actions (if any) could occur in Papahānaumokuākea as part of the NEPA process. The DEIS/OEIS has failed to discuss this despite OHA's request. There is also no further exploration of "possible impacts" to cultural voyaging and wayfinding as the DON has failed to consider Papahānaumokuākea as a TCP and thus disregarded documenting any cultural practices occurring within it. As a co-trustee of the Papahānaumokuākea monument, indeed OHA has a concern about any activities and possible impacts that occur within the monument and believes the DON must fully disclose this information in the DEIS/OEIS.	Action Proponents find the magnitude and nature of the undertaking and the nature and extent of potential effects on historic properties within the Monument would not warrant additional survey. The designation of Papahanaumokuakea National Marine Sanctuary became effective on March 3, 2025. The Action Proponents are consulting with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) to ensure the HCTT EIS/OEIS adequately evaluates the effects of military activities on sanctuary resources under Section 304(d) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. After thorough review, the Action Proponents are not familiar with any language in the HCTT EIS/OEIS nor the Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary Final EIS regarding limited military use of the Monument/Sanctuary only during emergencies. The scope of the HCTT EIS/OEIS is testing and training. Responding to emergencies is not within the Proposed action of the EIS/OEIS. We do acknowledge that an emergency response is an activity exempted by the Sanctuary regulations about the prohibitions within those sanctuary regulations (15 CFR 922.243). Regarding the testing and training activities within the NMS addressed by the HCTT EIS/OEIS, a portion of the Monument/Sanctuary overlaps with the Navy's temporary operating area (TOA) within the Hawaii Range Complex. Training and testing activities that could occur within that area include training by individual ships transiting to and from the Western Pacific on deployment or occasional positioning of ships supporting testing or other events outside of the Monument. Some missile defense testing activities by launches from PMRF could occur over or within the TOA portion of the study area as well, but that activity is covered by other past analysis conducted by Missile Defense Agency. Very few military activities have historically occurred within the Monument/Sanctuary, and that is expected to continue. No new activities are proposed to occur there, and all activities

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		conducted in this area are performed in compliance with applicable federal laws.
OHA-02	Hawaiian Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Within the Hawaiian Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, the DEIS/OEIS states that military activities will include: air, surface, and subsurface actions; weapons activities; use of explosives; mine warfare activities; and unmanned underwater vehicles and unmanned aerial systems. These activities are said to fall into classes covered in the 1997 Final EIS for sanctuary designation. However, in OHA's review of the 1997 FEIS, unmanned aerial systems are not specifically listed within the classes provided on page 98 and Appendix F. There is only a mention of a "target drone" under air operations. As unmanned aerial systems have greatly advanced in the last 20 years, it is unclear if all types of new unmanned systems were actually covered under the "target drone" classification. Thus, OHA recommends explicit verification on whether or not all types of unmanned aerial systems are allowable within the Hawaiian Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.	Under the sanctuary regulations, military activities proposed after the effective date of the regulations are included as allowed activities, if they do not fall under any of the prohibited activities listed in 15 CFR section 922.184. The proposed unmanned systems would not operate in a manner that would fall within those prohibited activities. Moreover, the Action Proponents are consulting with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) under Section 304(d) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act to evaluate the effects of military activities on sanctuary resources.
OHA-03	Other Marine Protected Areas Within Section 6 of the DEIS/OEIS, marine protected areas are listed within tables that detail what specific activity will occur and a respective summary of applicable regulations regarding the protection of natural and cultural resources. A majority of the marine areas detail specific activities to properly tie the activity to regulatory controls. However, there are a few locations (i.e., Kure Atoll, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine Refuge, and Midway Atoll) that only detail "limited activities" without further specificity. OHA recommends that "limited activities" be fully detailed as to clearly correlate them with appropriate regulatory controls that ensure the protection of natural and cultural resources within marine protected areas.	The Final EIS/OEIS has been revised to clarify that no activities are proposed to be conducted at the Kure Atoll Wildlife Sanctuary or the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge. The description of proposed activities within or near the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine Refuge has been expanded to include vessel transits and aircraft or missile overflight.
OHA-04	Marine Mammals • Strike Stressors Table 3.7-18 of the DEIS/OEIS appears to place an emphasis on military vessels only accounting for 4% of total vessel traffic in the study area. A detailed analysis of military only vessel strikes is provided in Appendix I, which includes probability calculations for the next 7-year period. The	Based on discussions with NMFS after the Draft EIS/OEIS release, the Navy modified its ship strike probability calculations for the HCTT MMPA and ESA consultations. The time period of the analysis expanded, and two recent ship strikes were included. As discussed in Appendix I, Section I.4 of the HCTT Final EIS/OEIS, the quantitative risks increased and

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	probability for whale strikes was calculated based on analysis of past military strike data and anticipated future training and testing vessel use at sea. Appendix I indicates that 3 large whale strikes occurred between 2017 and 2023 for the Navy, and 4 strikes for the Coast Guard. The analysis is specific to larger size class vessels (over 150 m) as no strikes have occurred with smaller vessels and boat classes for the Navy. There is also no tracking data for smaller boats. For the Coast Guard, all strikes are from small craft (between 40 to 100ft), but there is no tracking data for them either. Strike rates for large vessels were then calculated by the total number of days in a 7-year period divided by the number of known strikes. In conclusion, 3 strikes are anticipated for the Navy in the next 7-year period (17,940 days), with a 3% chance of zero strikes and 11% chance of 1 strike. For the Coast Guard (1659 days), there is an estimated 2.571 strikes in the next 7-year period, with a 7% chance of zero strikes and 20% chance of 1 strike. The method of calculation seems un-holistic as there is no consideration for the whale population density within the study area and no mention of strikes that have occurred for non-military vessels. While the military's presence may be small at 4% of total vessel traffic, it is still a presence that contributes to a cumulative whole of vessels moving around in an area. Thus, even if a whale misses a military vessel, that doesn't mean that the military's presence has no effect on whether whales strike other vessels. Further, as the cumulative effect portion of the DEIS/OEIS states that while the Navy may contribute to incremental stressors of past, present, and other reasonably foreseeable future actions, these incremental stressors are not anticipated to be significant. Yet, there is no quantitative data to back up these conclusions regarding cumulative effects as the DON has limited their probability calculation analysis to only military vessels. Available through Science Direct, the journal Biological Conservation predicts whale strikes through: vessel speed; vessel transit distance; and, whale distributions.4 Indeed, the speed factor, which the DON has overlooked, is crucial in determining how lethal a strike may be. Given the limited data used to calculate the DON's strike probability, there is arguably limited utility in its actual meaning. The results produced in Appendix I seems questionable in that it predicts a smaller chance of Coast	the Navy increased its take request from 5 to 6 large whales over the 7-year period from 2025 to 2032. For consultation with NMFS, the Navy and Coast Guard are required to quantify the probability of strikes for their respective branches per the requirement for Action Proponents to analyze their impacts. Civilian non-military vessel movements are not part of the Proposed Action. The Navy and Coast Guard are also required to report to NMFS each ship strike after it occurs. There is no such requirement for civilian whale strikes. While scientific literature acknowledges ship strike risk from commercial shipping is significant, since these commercial ships do not self-report, there is no quantifiable data on the actual number of strikes. During previous consultations (e.g., HSTT 2018), NMFS and the Navy agreed to using a Poisson distribution as the most appropriate statistical approach for calculating future strike probabilities. A Poisson distribution is a discrete probability distribution that expresses the probability of a given number of events occurring in a fixed interval of time. It is often used to describe random occurrences when the probability of an occurrence is small; for example, count data, such as cetacean sighting data, or in this case, vessel strike data, often described as a Poisson or over-dispersed Poisson distribution. For example, in looking at a longer period from 2009 to 2024, the incidences of Navy or Coast Guard strikes contains long periods of time without any strikes. Therefore, strikes are a small number of random events. The longest period without any strike was 12 years for California, and there were no Navy strikes in Hawaii between 2009 and 2024. This statistical probability calculation has been relatively accurate over MMPA authorization periods at predicting risk from infrequent events such as Navy ship strikes. Recent literature discusses modeled strike risks, but often uses assumptions of movement and areas not related to how Navy and Coast Guard vessels operate. Even considering changes to whale distributions, most Navy and Coast Guard strikes occur in

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	Guard strikes, when in reality, it was the Coast Guard that had more strikes in the last 7-year period. This could be in part due to small vessels not being tracked, even though it is the smaller vessels that have exclusively had strikes. Again, this is a DON methodology issue that should be better examined. All this to say that OHA believes an alternate form of probability analysis should be considered for 7-year strike probabilities that is more holistic and reflective of vessels being utilized. On a final note regarding strike stressors, in OHA's NOI comments, we recommended that the most up-to-date studies be used in the forthcoming draft EIS/OEIS, with a clear discussion on how the DON's understanding of populations and migrations have changed (or not) since publication of the 2018 EIS/OEIS and what these effects would be on calculating strike probabilities. The NOI specifically mentioned "Navy funded efforts" were underway to improve prediction capabilities for marine mammal strikes. Since the current method of probability calculation doesn't even consider whale population density in the study area, our request seems to have been easily disregarded. OHA additionally asked that the DEIS/OIES include updates on the "Navy funded efforts" and to share how such information has changed (or not changed) the DON's understanding and ability to predict how stressors effect marine mammal populations. Again, OHA maintains that the Navy should explain within the DEIS/OEIS what these "Navy funded efforts" mentioned in the 2018 EIS/OEIS are/were and what effects such efforts has had on predicting stressors to the marine mammal environment.	critical subareas designated for high use due to training requirements vice throughout the entire Study Area. Unlike published risk models that may contain unverified assumptions, the HCTT Poisson calculation is based on known, quantified data: number of actual strikes and validated estimates of past and future at sea days. NMFS has agreed with this approach for the 2014 and 2018 HSTT EIS/OEISs and associated consultations. Since 2018, the Navy has reviewed the issue of ship strike calculations with NMFS. Both groups agreed that the current Poisson probability calculation series is the simplest and most realistic tool available given it is based on real-world data. The Navy's HCTT NOI (88FR86885 15 Dec 2023) does not mention Navy-funded efforts for ship strike changes. The interval following the HSTT EIS/OEIS was used to discuss possible options for changes to ship strike probability calculated based on feasibility and added value. Nothing significant was found that addressed how Navy vessels operated or that would provide better fidelity compared to the Poisson probability. Therefore, NMFS and Navy both agreed during HSTT and now for HCTT consultations that retaining the existing Poisson probability was still valid statistically, especially for small number, random events such as ship strikes. Given use of strike data specific to the HCTT Study Area, the probabilities are tied to real-world data vice extrapolated model estimates.
OHA-05	Incidental Take As captured in OHA's NOI comments, the DON had to increase their take of large whales due to incidences in 2021 in which two separate Navy vessels struck whales off the coast of Southern California in June and July. Separately, a foreign vessel struck two fin whales off the coast earlier in May 2021. Originally, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued a take of 3 large whales per year, but had to increase this authorization to 2 additional whales per year for DON activities spanning 2018 to 2025. Further concerning, according to a complaint filed by Earth Justice in December 2013, "National Marine Fisheries determined that, over the	The Final EIS/OEIS has been revised to include the number of whales the Navy and Coast Guard are requesting to take incidental to training and testing in the Study Area. The new information can be found in Section 3.7.3.5.1.1 and in Appendix I, Section I.4. The Navy, in cooperation with NMFS, has taken a hard look at the potential impacts of this Proposed Action. The combined effects of all stressors on marine mammals are addressed in Section 3.7, and cumulative impacts to marine mammals are assessed in Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS. The Navy concludes that training and testing activities proposed in the Study Area would

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	next five years, the Navy's use of sonar, other active acoustic sources and explosives for training and testing in the [Hawai'i-Southern California Training and Testing] HSTT Study Area will likely result in the deaths of up to 140 marine mammals, cause permanent injury to more than 2,000 additional marine mammals, and inflict additional harm to marine mammals nearly 9.6 million times by disrupting vital behaviors such as migration, nursing, breeding, feeding, and sheltering." Yet, there is no discussion on the taking of any of these marine mammals within the DEIS/OEIS. OHA's NOI comment letter went on to share the cultural importance of whales specifically, and requested that the matter pertaining to the DON's request for an increase in incidental take be fully discussed within the DEIS/OEIS as well as resolution on any filed complaints related to incidental take (i.e., Earth Justice 2013 complaint). OHA maintains this request for a proper discussion within the DEIS/OEIS regarding incidental take and resolution of past filed complaints. Within Section 3.7.3 of the DEIS/OEIS in which environmental consequences to marine mammals are discussed, it states that "stressors are not likely to result in incidental takes of marine mammals… and are likely to have only discountable, less than significant, or negligible effects…". As the reader is redirected to Appendix I for the detailed analysis on ship strike effects, the prior strikes from 2021 are discussed as part of the probability calculation. However, there is still no discussion on incidental take permits (ITP). OHA finds it troubling that the DON has elected to overlook prior marine mammal take counts that proved to be incorrect. As expressed in our prior comments, OHA has concerns about the probability calculation methodology. OHA believes that part of a more holistic approach to the strike probability calculation, the DON must acknowledge the failure to accurately predict take counts in the past so that the reader is aware of these past failures and can thus better evaluate whether the current methods for strike probability calculations are any better or worse.	result primarily in Level B takes, which equate to harassment, not harm. The majority of Level A takes are due to auditory injury including permanent threshold shift which equates to a reduction in hearing sensitivity over a range of frequencies. It is unlikely these impacts due to acoustic and explosive stressors would result in population-level effects, as discussed in Appendix E of the EIS/OEIS. Additionally, the estimated number of takes is conservative as it does not account for procedural mitigation that may reduce the potential for injury and mortality. As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species as described in Appendix C. Efforts are underway to better understand the potential consequences of acoustic impacts. These efforts are not limited solely to long-term monitoring on ranges and include development of Population Consequences of Disturbance models (see Appendix D). The Navy's research and monitoring programs, described in Section 3.0.1.1 in Section 3.0, are focused on filling data gaps and obtaining the most up-to-date science to inform impact assessment. Until there are sufficient data to inform such models, the best assessment of long-term consequences from Navy training and testing activities will be to monitor the populations over time on Navy ranges. The Action Proponents have conducted military readiness activities in the Study Area for decades, and there is no evidence that routine training and testing has negatively impacted marine mammal populations in the Study Area or at any Navy Range Complex. In terms of ship strike, the Navy has not exceeded the NMFS permitted number of whale ship strikes authorized for the

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		original 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS as modified in 2024. Marine mammal strikes are an inadvertent, limited, sporadic, and incidental result of Navy and Coast Guard vessel movement within the Study Area. Based on discussions with NMFS after the Draft EIS/OEIS release, the Navy modified its ship strike probability calculations for the HCTT MMPA and ESA consultations. The time period of the analysis expanded, and two recent ship strikes were included. As discussed in Appendix I, Section I.4 of the HCTT Final EIS/OEIS, the quantitative risks increased and the Navy increased its take request from 5 to 6 large whales over the 7-year period from 2025 to 2032. The take request is formally presented and correct in the Navy's submissions to NMFS for the MMPA and ESA consultations.
OHA-06	Expended Materials Appendix I of the DEIS/OEIS states that in order to determine the potential level of disturbance of military expended materials on marine substrates, its assumed that the effect footprint on the seafloor is twice the size of its footprint. The actual effect on the bottom will depend on the number and location of military expended materials and those not recovered. Non recoverables mentioned in Table I-1 include: acoustic counter measures, some types of anti-torpedos, some types of air-launched lightweight torpedos, fiber optic cables for AMNS neutralizers, some types of buoys, some types of heavyweight torpedos, sonobuoy casings, and some types of aerial drones. For some of these items, the Table I- 1 further notates those that are "typically recovered", which implies that in some cases this may not be the case. While OHA does not necessarily disagree with how the footprints for expended materials are estimated, we do have concern with the lack of discussion on how much expended nonrecoverable material may already exist on the sea floor from past DON use of the training area. Even as expended materials are discussed within the cumulative effect section of the DEIS/OEIS as having "minute concentrations", they are discussed in a qualitative manner that provides no quantitative data to support them. As such, OHA believes that the DEIS/OEIS should discuss how much is known	The EIS/OEIS discusses military expended materials (MEM) quantitatively where that information is available. The fate of accumulated past materials is difficult to articulate due to great variability in material construction/materials, seafloor type, ocean temperature, and currents. In general, MEM on the seafloor is colonized, covered in silt, breaks down, or sees a combination of these outcomes. As described in Table 3.5-4 in the EIS/OEIS, materials would likely be covered by sediments in under a year. Several bottom trawl surveys have failed to uncover significant levels of MEM, even when conducted in areas of high military use. Because of all the uncertainty, a qualitative analysis is appropriate in this EIS/OEIS.

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	about existing military expended materials on the seafloor in a quantitative manner and how an accumulation of non-recovered expended materials from past and current DON use of the training area could impact marine life and environments.	
OHA-07	Cumulative Effects In OHA's NOI comments, we did recommend that the DON's consideration of cumulative impacts should consider activities that are of an extraction nature (i.e., deep-sea mining) and those that could further frustrate any kind of recovery and protection or marine life, such as: the longliner fishing fleets (foreign and domestic) that harbor in Honolulu; the Aquarium Trade as it is extractive and effects near shore ocean life; and, Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) that occur within Hawaiian waters and or on land that impact our fresh water and ocean systems. None of these suggestions were taken within the current DEIS/OEIS. Thus, OHA cannot help but question the conclusions reached within Section 4 of the DEIS/OEIS which states that cumulative effects to environmental components like water quality, marine mammals, and fishes would ultimately "not result in measurable additional effects" or produce "incremental stressors" that "are not anticipated to be significant." Further, many of the conclusions in Section 4 are qualitative and not quantitative. While commercial fishing is very briefly discussed, a greater level of specificity should be included to directly address longliner fishing, both from foreign and domestic parties, with statistics on the occurrence of these vessels and activities. Similarly, various military actions are discussed that may be part of RIMPAC, but it is not clearly stated as such within the DEIS/OEIS. In fact, RIMPAC is not even mentioned. Again, OHA calls for consideration of deep-sea mining, long-liner fishing fleets (foreign and domestic), the aquarium trade, and RIMPAC exercises as part of the cumulative effect analysis. OHA NOI comments also noted that in the 2018 DEIS/OEIS, "quality" of information on past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions varied and that quantifications were done where possible. In the absence of quantitative data, a "qualitative assessment" was made by "professional judgement and experience." The document appeared to concede that given the largescale study area, the "analysis of the incremental	As stated in Section 4.1.2 of the EIS/OEIS, the cumulative effects analysis considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Although a recent Presidential Executive Order (EO) was released that prioritizes U.S. leadership in seabed mapping and mineral exploration, there are currently no known specific deep-sea mining projects proposed in the Hawaii area. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will review applications and issue exploration licenses and commercial recovery permits to U.S. entities for deep-sea mining in international waters. As noted in the comment, the cumulative analysis considered all commercial and recreational fishing effects, not limited to long-line fishing. RIMPAC is included in the HCTT Proposed Action, and would not be considered as a cumulative effect. See the description of RIMPAC in Appendix A, Section A.1.1.2.

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	contribution of cumulative stress that the proposed action may have on a given resource is largely qualitative and speculative." OHA found this situation unfortunate as essentially DON training activities are continuing without solid quantitative analysis and potentially without appropriate mitigations. OHA argued that minimally, the DON should indicate in the new DEIS/OEIS where quantitative data is used versus qualitative. If findings and information are speculative, then the DON must call out where such speculation exists. The DON should then indicate ways in which quantitative and non-speculative data can be obtained through additional research or a means of appropriate monitoring actions. Unfortunately, the phrasing used in the 2018 EIS/OEIS which detailed qualitative versus quantitative analysis of cumulative effects are nearly identical in the current DEIS/OEIS. Thus, the DON again disregarded OHA's concerns regarding cumulative effects and continues to ignore the importance of pointing out specifically where quantitative versus qualitative analysis was used in the determination of cumulative effects. The DON should further make clear how follow up research data and monitoring mechanisms can or could improve both quantitative and qualitative conclusions, and possibly trigger amendments to existing mitigation measures.	
OHA-08	Consultation Planning Section 6.1.4 of the DEIS/OEIS mentions Executive Order 13175, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments." Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 4710.02 and DON Instructions 11010.14B are further cited as specific documents to follow in regard to consultation and interactions with Federally recognized tribes. The DEIS/OEIS goes on to acknowledge that tribal coordination is distinct from NEPA and on a timeline distinct from NEPA consultation. However, there is no mention of a specific consultation timeline for Native Hawaiians. OHA would like to remind DON that DODI 4710.03, "Consultation Policy with Native Hawaiian Organizations," should also be adhered to in a way that provides parity with how Tribal interactions are treated and discussed within the DEIS/OEIS. In OHA's NOI comments, we did suggest that the DON may want to consider a NEPA public participation plan as an optional tool pursuant to	Section 6.1.4 has been updated to include information regarding efforts to consult with Native Hawaiian Organizations. Public involvement is an important part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NHPA Section 106 process. The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The NHPA Section 106 process requires the Navy to consider the potential impacts of their undertakings on historic properties, including Native Hawaiian sacred sites. The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Native Hawaiians and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in late 2023, and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the

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	32 CFR 775.11 as a means to set protocols (i.e., meeting minutes/notes, comment periods, speaking time allocations, engagement with Indigenous Peoples). We further offered to assist the DON with providing notice to the Hawaiian community through our monthly newspaper, Ka Wai Ola, and online social media outlets. OHA also noted that in November 2022, a memorandum was issued by the Executive Office of the President, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), providing guidance to Federal departments and agencies on Indigenous Knowledges. This includes guidance on inclusion of such knowledge in the NEPA and NHPA processes, encouragement of early and sustained engagement, maintaining trust, and even developing an "Indigenous Knowledge Plan". We argued that a public participation plan could include a robust Indigenous Knowledge component that specifically incorporates guidance from the CEQ November 2022 memo. Yet, the DON did not elect to take OHA up on our offer for help or our recommendations for a NEPA public participation plan or inclusion of a "Indigenous Knowledge Plan". This complete disregard for any recommendations or assistance on consultation planning and outreach from the OHA, coupled with a disregard of the DODI specific to Native Hawaiians, demonstrates to us that the DON may not be interested in meaningful consultation and outreach with Native Hawaiians. The DON should at least minimally acknowledge within the DEIS/OEIS the attempts of OHA – a Native Hawaiian organization with a unique constitutional and statutory mandate to represent the interests of Native Hawaiians – to assist the DON and provide clear reasons on why such recommendations and assistance was disregarded.	NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In late 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs and discussions with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings. The Action Proponents did consider a NEPA public participation plan as an optional tool, however with the robust consultation party list and continued successful efforts to include the Hawaiian community in our NEPA and NHPA processes, the additional and perhaps redundant efforts were considered unnecessary.

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Hawaii Office of Planning & Sustainable Development (OPSD)		
OPSD-01	1. Issues of Programmatic Concern We acknowledge that the EIS/OEIS addresses many of the issues that are of programmatic concern for OPSD and the Hawai'i CZM Program. Issues of importance evaluated in Volume 1 of the EIS/OEIS to our office include, but are not limited to, Section 3.2 Sediments and Water Quality Explosives and explosives byproducts; Section 3.5 Habitats; Section 3.6 Fishes; Section 3.7 Marine Mammals; and Section 3.10 Cultural Resources. The EIS/OEIS does provide an acceptable evaluation of the USN's compliance with applicable environmental regulations and policies and preserves the flexibility necessary for the Navy and Marine Corps to train and test military applications at sea.	Thank you for your review and comment.
OPSD-02	2. Marine Debris Appendix C, Section C.1.3.1.3, pages C-15 and 16, Marine Debris in Nearshore and Offshore Areas off the Hawaiian Islands, Volume 2 of the EIS/OEIS does include an in-depth evaluation of marine debris and the environmental threats that results from this manmade hazard. However, it does not offer solutions or state how the USN would work with other federal and state regulatory agencies to help mitigate this hazard. Regarding the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), this analysis would benefit from examining plans, policies, and initiatives promoted by federal, state, and county agencies, as well as private entities, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and community advocacy associations (in both California and Hawai'i) to diminish the threats caused by marine debris. Numerous projects and initiatives exist in the Pacific region that focus on diminishing the threats caused by marine debris to marine life, coral reefs, and nearshore resources. Additionally, the FEIS should consider how the USN can collaborate with Federal and State agencies to mitigate the threat of marine debris to the marine ecosystem in the HCTT study area.	This EIS/OEIS limits direct and indirect analyses to MEM, which are items that are expended during a training or testing activity and not recovered. Analyses are conducted throughout several sections in the EIS/OEIS for each resource area that MEM could affect. For example, see Section 3.2, Section 3.3.3.2.2, Section 3.5.3.2.2, and Section 3.6.3.4.2. In each analysis, the conclusion is reached that the proposed use of MEM would not result in significant effects. The Action Proponents will continue practicing strong environmental stewardship. While all projects depend on available funding and Congressional appropriations, the Action Proponents will continue to advocate for funding requests to support marine debris removal efforts within Hawaii state waters. Examples of projects that have been completed or continue to be supported include Navy's annual funding of Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam's Marine Debris Reduction project, Pacific Missile Range Facility's Marine Debris marine clean-up events, and U.S. Marine Corps Base Hawaii's funding and support for beach trash removal from the marine environment.
OPSD-03	3. CZMA Federal Consistency We note that Appendix J (Volume 4, page J-27 of the EIS), contains correspondence between our office and the Naval Facilities Engineering	The Navy has completed consultation with Hawaii Office of Planning & Sustainable Development pursuant to the CZMA, as described in Section 6.1.1 of the Final EIS/OEIS.

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	Systems Command Pacific on the need for a federal consistency submittal by the USN, DTS 202312191034ME, dated December 20, 2023. A placeholder space on page J-29 is found in Appendix J for the eventual CZMA federal consistency review. Furthermore, Section 6.1.1, page 6-6 of the FEIS, Coastal Zone Management Act Compliance states "The Proposed Action is consistent with activities that were covered in the 2018 HSTT and 2022 PMSR EIS/OEISs. Per the CZMA of 1972 (16 U.S.C. section 1451, et seq.), federal actions that have an effect on a coastal use or resource are required to be consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of federally approved Coastal Management Plans. As such, the Action Proponents will prepare consistency determinations in accordance with federal consistency determinations to be submitted to the California Coastal Commission and the Hawai'i Office of Planning." We also note that a conditional concurrence for federal consistency was issued by our office on the 2018 Hawai'i -Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) for Phase III of the National Environmental Policy Act /Executive Order 12114 Coverage of the HCTT Range use and infrastructure study area, as found in DTS201807021119RI, dated July 2, 2018. The 2018 federal consistency conditional concurrence included the following: 1) HSTT operations or activities shall not cause, or result in, the take of any State of Hawai'i listed endangered or threatened species per our enforceable policies HRS Chapter 195D and Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR) Chapter 13-124 on endangered and threatened species, indigenous wildlife; 2) The USN is responsible for continuing monitoring of seabird populations at Kaula Island also per our enforceable policies related to HRS Chapter 195D and HAR Chapter 13-124; and 3) If the requirements for conditional concurrences specified in 15 CFR § 930.4(a), (1) through (3), are not met, then all parties shall treat this conditional concurrence letter as an objection pursuant to 15 CFR Part 930, subpart C.	

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	It is advised that the USN should continue consultation with our office on the applicable requirements and rules related to the submittal of a CZMA federal consistency review.	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)		
USEPA-01	See attachment	Thank you for your review of the Draft EIS/OEIS. Responses to your specific comments and recommendations follow.
USEPA-02	Review Summary The EPA identified environmental quality concerns and analysis improvements that can be addressed in the final EIS. For your consideration, we have recommendations to enhance disclosure of and impacts from mine warfare activity frequency and locations. The DEIS predicts that mine warfare training would have negligible impacts. We note that the public meetings hosted in early January 2025 indicated that there is public concern regarding the proposed mine warfare training, specifically the number and locations of training events in Hawaii. The Navy's proposed action, Alternative 1, indicates that the Navy would be training at a representative level of training annually, instead of the maximum level of training, and as such, there may be fewer trainings over the course of the project as compared to Alternative 2. However, in Tables 2-11, 2-15, and 2-17, the numbers of mine trainings do not meaningfully differ between Alternative 1 and Alternative 2, with a difference of as little as 1 event between the alternatives. The exception is the mine countermeasure and neutralization testing in the California study area, which may be reduced by 27 events in Alternative 1. The EPA recommends the Navy disclose in the FEIS how they will determine the number of mine warfare events that would occur under Alternative 1, and whether they can commit to a lower number of training events in the Hawaii study area.	Alternative 1 represents the minimum training and testing for military forces to gain the necessary levels of readiness for the commander to be confident of meeting statutory requirements. For some activities, as noted in the comment, the Alternative 2 level of training or testing could be the same or similar to Alternative 1. In those cases, the minimum (Alternative 1) and the maximum (Alternative 2) operational needs would be the same. The Alternative 1 level of activities is already at a minimum, so a lower number of activities in Hawaii would not meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action.
USEPA-03	Locations for mine warfare events are not explicitly defined in the DEIS and are inconsistently labeled in some figures. For example, Figure 5-2 shows an underwater range at the Pailolo Channel, but in Figure H-35, that underwater range is explicitly defined as a minefield training area. Additionally, in Figure H-39, there are three mine training ranges on the west coast of San Clemente Island. These mine training ranges are not entirely reflected in Figure H-37. The EPA recommends the Navy include	The figures described in the comment are all correctly labeled. Given that each figure has a different purpose or scale, some information was more specific or more generalized than in other figures. For instance, Figure 5-2 does not require the level of detail to explain which underwater ranges are used for mine warfare, and Figure H-37 is at a scale that would result in a cluttered and illegible figure if every range area were included.

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	maps explicitly disclosing the locations for mine warfare events, as well as correctly and consistently labeling these areas across all figures in the supplemental material and main document. Furthermore, the EPA recommends the Navy discuss how these areas were chosen as locations for the mine warfare events. Discuss if alternative areas were analyzed and if so, why they were excluded.	That level of specificity is used for Figures H-35 and H-39. For a list of all mine warfare areas, see Section A.3.6 in Appendix A. All mine warfare areas are shown in Figures A-8 through A-13. As discussed in Section 2.4.1.1, there are no other potential locations in the Pacific where land ranges, Operating Areas (OPAREAs), undersea terrain and ranges, and military airspace combine to provide the areas necessary for training and testing realism and effectiveness required to train and certify naval forces for combat operations. Specifically for mine warfare training, areas are chosen based on proximity to ports or land that would be similar to potential mission areas. The military services require large contiguous areas in which to operate. New weapons systems have greater ranges, and tactics to accommodate those extended ranges require an extended battlespace.
USEPA-04	Section 5.7.1 describes geographic mitigation for explosives, physical disturbance, and strike stressors near coral reefs and precious coral beds, but notes that mitigation would not occur in "designated areas." Similarly, Section 5.7.2 describes geographic mitigation near artificial reefs, hard bottom substrate, and shipwreck areas, except for in designated areas. The full extent of designated areas is not described in detail in the DEIS. The EPA recommends that the Navy explicitly list all designated areas excluded from geographic mitigation activities. The EPA further recommends that the Navy individually map each of these designated areas, along with relevant layers such as shallow-water coral reefs, precious coral beds, live hard bottom, artificial reefs, and shipwrecks, and analyze whether the proposed action may result in significant impacts for each of those areas.	The Final EIS/OEIS has been revised to clarify that the designated areas in Hawaii are the Barbers Point Underwater Range, Ewa Training Minefield, and the Puuloa Underwater Range. These areas are located on Figure A-11 in Appendix A and Figure H-32 in Appendix H. Regarding the recommendation to map the designated areas, the Action Proponents used the best available science to identify bottom substrate In the HCTT Study Area. Substrate types are shown for the entire Hawaii Range Complex in Figure 3.5-2 in Section 3.5.
USEPA-05	The EPA has specific concerns about areas that appear to be selected for mine warfare activities in environmentally sensitive areas, especially if these are designated areas where geographic mitigation activities would not apply. The Pailolo Channel, Kalohi Channel, and Maui Basin are described as minefield training areas in Figure H-35, but Figures 5-2 and K-3 show these to be located in the primary region of precious coral bed in the Hawaiian Islands. Section 3.4.3.2.1.1, in discussing effects on invertebrates such as corals from explosives, notes that "many corals and	Mitigation measures protecting shallow-water coral reefs, precious coral beds, artificial reefs, hard bottom substrates, and shipwrecks apply to all areas mentioned in the comment. For mine warfare activities in the Pailolo Channel, Kalohi Channel, and Maui Basin, the Navy completed consultation with NOAA regarding deploying bottom-placed mine targets. In cases where targets can be precisely placed on soft bottom, they can be deployed within 350 yards of live bottom. In all other areas

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	hard bottom invertebrates are sessile, fragile, and particularly vulnerable to shock wave effects. Many of these organisms are slow growing and could require decades to recover." Additionally, the Ewa Training Minefield is located in an area of significant live hard bottom substrate, shipwrecks, and in close proximity to artificial reefs, all resources that mitigation efforts described in Section 5.7.2 seek to protect. The EPA recommends the Navy consider alternative locations for these mine warfare activities, in order to minimize impacts in sensitive areas.	and in all other activities, the Navy would continue to apply the 350-yard buffer around sensitive bottom habitats. The Navy has been conducting the same type of training in the Ewa Training Minefield for decades and is familiar with the bottom types occurring there. The Navy continues to apply appropriate mitigation measures as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS to protect live hard bottom substrates, shipwrecks, and artificial reefs in or near the area.
Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD)		
VCAPCD-01	Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the DEIS. APCD has reviewed the Air Quality portion of the DEIS. Table 3.1-3 on Page 3.1-16 incorrectly states that Ventura County is in non-attainment of the 2008 ozone air quality standard. According to the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan, Ventura County attained the 2008 federal ozone standard by its July 20, 2021 attainment date. Please correct this information. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the project. You may contact me at nicole@vcapcd.org should you have any questions. Nicole Collazo, AQS, VCAPCD Planning Division	Thank you for your review of the Draft EIS/OEIS. We have corrected the reference to VCAPCD's attainment with the 2008 8-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone.

L.2.2 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Comments

Table L.2-2 contains comments from non-governmental organizations received during the public comment period and the Navy's response. Responses to these comments were prepared and reviewed for scientific and technical accuracy and completeness. Comments appear as they were submitted and have not been altered.

Table L.2-2: Comments Received from Organizations

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350 Hawaii		
350 Hawaii-01	Comments in Opposition to Proposed Draft EIS Military Undersea Training Exercises Off Hawaiian Islands I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org has serious concerns about the inadequacy and faulty analysis of the Draft EIS. The Navy has failed to justify the need for conducting at-sea military readiness activities, comprised of training, and testing, and wrongfully ignores the serious negative impacts that will be created and will not be able to be mitigated. As a result, 350Hawaii strongly opposes the proposed military undersea training exercises involving sonar and explosives off the Hawaiian Islands. Below is a list of some of our major concerns. Negative Impact to our Climate System Just considering the estimated 583,053 metric tons of annual CO2 emissions from the 'preferred option' in this proposal (1), this is the equivalent to 136,000 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year, a significant contribution to climate breakdown at a time when scientists warn that emissions need to be falling like a stone if we are to preserve a livable climate for our children. Bottom line, the amount of energy that will be consumed and climate pollution produced is not justified. 1. [see page 42 in Table 3.1-31: Estimated increase in Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Military Readiness Activities in the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area Alternative Annual Increase in CO2-Equivalent Emissions CO2 Eq. (in Metric Tons/Year) of Section 3.1 AIR QUALITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE] Draft EIS is Inadequate and Faulty	The Navy and the other joint lead agencies share your concern for the environment. The analysis and the science show that there would be less than significant impact on the environment, including marine species, water and air quality, and greenhouse gasses (GHG). All of the potential effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS. The Navy must be trained and equipped for prompt and sustained combat incident to operations at sea. As outlined in Section 1.5 (Purpose and Need), that requires training and testing systems at sea. Simulation is an insufficient substitute. Operating ships and aircraft at sea generates GHG emissions. For context, however, the estimated increase in GHG emissions for the preferred alternative represents approximately 0.009% of US GHG emissions and 0.001% of the world GHG emissions. Estimated emissions assume each activity occurs independently; in reality some activities are combined, which results in less GHG emissions. Navy will continue to proactively reduce overall GHG emissions from operations by decreasing the use of fossil fuels and increasing the use of alternative energy sources to the extent possible while meeting national security requirements.

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	This draft EIS is woefully inadequate and is a disingenuous attempt to fulfill established requirements for an environmental analysis, and instead provided an exercise in 'box checking' rather than what is truly needed to determine whether potential critical environmental impacts exist. While admitting that the ocean ecosystem is already experiencing and absorbing a multitude of stressors, and giving vague examples of a series of mitigations the Navy would undertake to lessen cumulative impacts, the environmental impact statement erroneously concluded that the modifications and additions to the training areas would have "less than significant" effect on sea creatures, plants and water and air quality. Ignoring and/or downplaying serious impacts to the environment and habitat as this EIS does is shameful. The fact that the Navy only provides 'lip service' to the impacts of this proposal on climate change and greenhouse gas emissions is just one of many examples of how the EIS failed to meet the statutory requirements.	
350 Hawaii-02	Greenwashing and Downplaying Multiple Negative Impacts To be clear, the greenwashing by the military pretending these training exercises can be done in a way that will not unacceptably harm endangered species and environmentally sensitive habits, not to mention our already destabilized climate system, is simply immoral and shameful. Experts have already provided ample evidence that clearly demonstrates the proposed plans will caused significant harm due to the noise vibrations, chemical and heavy metal contamination, vegetation destruction, wildlife injury, pollution, and energy use. This documentation is already on record.	The analysis was completed using the best available, peer-reviewed science. The Action Proponents used the best available science to make their decisions and estimate effects. No new or contradictory science has been presented that refutes the conclusions. The Action Proponents continue to pursue new scientific data, collected through professional studies and verified through credible, recognized sources, working proactively with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state, federal, and non-profit environmental organizations to ensure military readiness activities are safe and minimize impacts to the environment.
350 Hawaii-03	Insufficient Mitigation Measures As typical for the military, the Draft EIS is woefully lacking in its planned mitigation measures to address the potential impacts on marine life, ecosystems, and the climate. Perhaps it is because it is clear that the damage truly cannot be mitigated, yet this heavy price is supposed to simply be accepted by the public, as if there is no alternative. However, there is an alternative. It is a lie that this training is necessary to protect us if it is killing us and all the things in our environment that we	As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy and the other joint lead agencies implement the most practical mitigation measures with the aim of achieving the least practicable adverse impacts to marine mammal species or stocks, to the maximum extent practicable during proposed military readiness activities. To that end, expansion of some mitigation areas are proposed in this EIS/OEIS.

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	hold dear. The only sane alternative is to cease these training exercises in these sensitive ecosystems, and explore alternative methods that do not pose such significant risks to our marine life and ecosystems. Instead of working on new plans that will further contaminate and damage our environment, the US Navy should focus on cleaning up the many messes they have already created. Period. Enough is enough.	
Earthjustice (EJ)		
EJ-01	Earthjustice submits these comments on behalf of the Conservation Council for Hawai'i and the Center for Biological Diversity in response to the U.S. Navy's request for public input on the draft environmental impact statement/overseas environmental impact statement (DEIS) for Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT). See 89 Fed. Reg. 100,990 (Dec. 13, 2024). The last time a federal court reviewed the Navy's analysis for training and testing activities around Hawai'i and California, the court concluded the Navy's failures "to analyze a true 'no action' alternative and … to analyze alternatives with less environmental harm" violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Conservation Council for Hawai'i v. National Marine Fisheries Serv., 97 F. Supp. 3d 1210, 1236 (D. Haw. 2015). For the reasons set forth below, similar fatal flaws persist in the DEIS for this round of HCTT activities. Moreover, the DEIS fails to take the "hard look" at impacts to marine mammals and other environmental factors that NEPA mandates. Earth Island Inst. v. U.S. Forest Serv., 351 F.3d 1291, 1300 (9th Cir. 2003). To comply with its statutory obligations, the Navy should correct these deficiencies and circulate a revised DEIS for public comment.	The military services complied with all applicable environmental laws, including its requirements under NEPA when developing this EIS/OEIS. Since the 2018 HSTT analysis, the Navy has included a No Action Alternative which considered the potential that NMFS does not issue authorization and the Action Proponents would not conduct the proposed training and testing activities in the Study Area. Navy has also, since the 2018 HSTT EIS analyzed two, distinct and different Action Alternatives. The Navy has used the latest updated science as well as improved acoustic modeling to support the analysis presented and considered. The analysis does consider all reasonably foreseeable effects on all 12 of the resource categories required for the "hard look".
EJ-02	California The Navy has failed to take a hard look at the environmental impacts of its expansion of activities off the California coast. The proposed activities include a significant expansion of the California Study Area designated for military training and testing: The HCTT Study Area differs from the HSTT Study Area in that HCTT includes an expanded SOCAL Range Complex (Warning Area 293 [W-293] and W-294 and the sea space beneath); new testing sea space between W-293 and PMSR; the inclusion of sea space associated with two existing training and testing at-sea ranges (PMSR and the NOCAL Range Complex);	The best available science was used to estimate marine mammal densities throughout the Study Area, including PMSR and the NOCAL Range Complex. Please see Appendix C for detailed information on species and habitats that were considered in the analysis. Pirotta et al. (2022) was reviewed and considered in the analysis of behavioral effects. The 10-fold increase in sonar activity within main feeding areas, as analyzed in the 2022 study, is an extreme scenario that is NOT being proposed as part of the Navy's action. Unlike the scenario analyzed in the

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	inclusion of sea space along the Southern California coastline from approximately Dana Point to Port Hueneme; and four amphibious approach lanes providing California land access from NOCAL and PMSR (Figure 2-2). The DEIS has notable deficiencies in its analysis of this expanded area. One major concern is the lack of site-specific data on wildlife and their preferred habitats within the newly included regions. The DEIS relies heavily on outdated or generalized data, which may not accurately reflect the current distribution and density of sensitive species or environmental conditions and prey availability. For example, understanding the specific environmental context of an animal is important to evaluate the effect of noise on it. Pirotta et al. noted that blue whales exhibit significant behavioral responses to sonar, such as changes in diving patterns, vocalization rates, and movement paths. These responses can lead to disruptions in critical activities like feeding and mating. The study concluded that to evaluate the effects at the population level it is critical to consider things like prey resources and other contexts that magnify the harmful effects on blue whales.	2022 study, the sonar activities analyzed as part of this Proposed Action is not expected to interfere with feeding, reproduction, or other important biological functions of marine mammals and, therefore, any effects from this action would be less than significant on marine mammals. Effect on prey species were considered under the analysis of Marine Mammal Secondary Stressors in Section 3.7.3.8. Based on the analysis, activities that include the use of sonars or explosives would not be expected to interfere with feeding, reproduction, or other biologically important functions of marine mammals, and would therefore result in less than significant effects.
EJ-03	Another problem is that the DEIS inadequately explains and fails to compare the difference between the proposed expanded activities and prior iterations. The DEIS improperly generalizes the effects on marine mammals, other marine life, and habitat and fails to examine the increased activity levels. For example, the DEIS acknowledges that, in the California Study Area during the maximum year of HCTT activities, there will be an increase of greater than 20 percent more hours of regular duty cycle (MF1) hull-mounted sonar and approximately 50 percent more hours of high duty cycle (MF1C) hull-mounted sonar. Yet, it fails to provide a meaningful and adequate description of what that means. Despite the extremely large expansion of the California Study Area, the inadequate approach in the DEIS yields a description of environmental effects that is virtually indistinguishable from prior analyses. The DEIS provides no "assurance that the [Navy] 'has indeed considered environmental concerns in its decisionmaking process,'" as NEPA requires. Methow Valley Citizens, 490 U.S. at 349 (citation omitted).	The EIS/OEIS evaluated the potential effects of the proposed activities throughout the entire Study Area based on context and intensity, including the NOCAL Range Complex and PMSR. The higher number of hours of regular duty cycle (MF1) and high duty cycle (MF1C) hull-mounted sonars in the California Study Area under this proposed action compared to the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS are primarily due to additionally considering activities in the NOCAL Range Complex and PMSR. Effects on marine mammals were analyzed by species and stock, with the portion of impacts shown by region (e.g., NOCAL, PMSR, and SOCAL) in Appendix E. All the species that could occur in the new expanded area were also evaluated, including ESA-listed marine mammal, sea turtle, and fish species. Also, the unique nearshore areas in Northern California where amphibious landings are proposed were carefully evaluated. Throughout the EIS/OEIS, specific information is provided regarding the potential effects on marine mammals and other

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		marine life. For example, Section 3.7 provides specific modeling results for effects from potential stressors, including sonar, on marine mammals in the Study Area. These model results are updated from previous analyses based on the proposed activities and the best available science regarding marine mammal population densities and hearing criteria and thresholds. Appendix E provides even more details on the acoustic and explosive stressors under a maximum year of military readiness activities.
EJ-04	Hawaii The DEIS fails to adequately explain specific new activities proposed for Hawai‘i, leaving critical gaps in the analysis of potential environmental impacts. One major omission is the increased use of unmanned systems across air, surface, and subsurface domains. The DEIS does not provide sufficient detail on how these autonomous systems will interact with marine life, particularly in sensitive habitats. Given the heightened risks posed by unmanned operations— such as potential collisions and noise pollution—the lack of thorough assessment falls short of satisfying NEPA.	All unmanned systems proposed for use fall within the larger category of aircraft and vessels. As stated in Appendix H, the terms “aircraft” and “vessels” can also refer to their unmanned variants: unmanned aircraft systems (UASs), unmanned surface vessels (USVs), and unmanned underwater vehicles. Because the unmanned systems are generally smaller, slower, and quieter than their manned counterparts (see the revised Table 3.0-7 that compares noise levels of a large UAS with manned aircraft), the EIS/OEIS took the conservative approach of analyzing the impacts of all aircraft and vessels as manned unless the unmanned system had unique stressors associated with its operation.
EJ-05	Additionally, the DEIS does not fully address the installation of new cable and sensor infrastructure east of Kāne‘ohe. The document lacks clear descriptions of the scale, methods, and long-term monitoring plans associated with this installation. Such infrastructure could disrupt benthic habitats and contribute to increased sedimentation, which can harm coral reefs and associated marine species. Without a detailed evaluation of mitigation strategies, this activity represents a significant, unexamined risk to Hawai‘i’s coastal ecosystems.	The Final EIS/OEIS was changed to include additional installation details associated with the proposed seafloor cable. Please see the description and references in Appendix A, Section A.3.5.2. The Action Proponents completed consultation for this action under the Magnuson-Stevens Act with NOAA, in which a detailed analysis of effects to benthic habitats, corals, and other marine species was conducted. Please see Appendix J (Agency Correspondence) for the description of that process.
EJ-06	Another area of concern is the installation and maintenance of mine training shapes in the Maui Basin. The DEIS does not adequately analyze the ecological consequences of placing and retrieving these objects in this sensitive marine environment. The potential for seabed disturbance, habitat degradation, and interference with local fisheries remains insufficiently addressed. Similarly, missile and artillery firing from the	For mine warfare activities in the Maui Basin, the Navy completed informal consultation under the Magnuson-Stevens Act with NOAA in 2022 regarding deploying bottom-placed mine targets in those areas. In cases where targets can be precisely placed on soft bottom, they can be deployed within 350 yards of live bottom, avoiding sensitive habitat to the

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	Pacific Missile Range Facility introduces risks related to unexploded ordnance, marine debris, and potential chemical contamination. The Navy fails to provide an adequate assessment of these increased impacts.	maximum extent practicable. In all other areas and in all other activities, the Navy will continue to apply the 350-yard buffer around sensitive bottom habitats. Per NOAA Fisheries concurrence, the Navy's adherence to these procedures will ensure that adverse effects on EFH will be no more than minimal and no further conservation recommendations are necessary. The missile and artillery firing from PMRF results in stressors similar to those that have been occurring for decades in this area from Navy shipboard gunnery and missile firing as well as from long occurring missile firing from PMRF, all of which result in effects beyond 3 NM from shore. These effects have been and continue to be determined to be less than significant. For each resource section, please see the section on Physical Disturbance and Strike, Section 3.4.3.3, for an example in the Invertebrates resource section.
EJ-07	Further gaps in the DEIS include the U.S. Air Force's air-to-air gunnery training and the use of new vessels during amphibious landings. Both activities have the potential to introduce heightened noise pollution, increased vessel traffic, and habitat disturbance. However, the DEIS does not adequately evaluate how these new training elements will affect marine life and local fisheries. Without comprehensive impact assessments and clear mitigation measures, these new activities pose significant environmental and regulatory concerns that must be addressed in a revised DEIS.	The U.S. Air Force's proposed gunnery training would occur in the same airspace (within Warning Areas in the Hawaii Range Complex) as the proposed Navy activities. The Air Force activities would be indistinguishable from Navy aircraft gunnery activities, occurring well out of sight and out of hearing of any land areas. See the activity description for Gunnery Exercise Air-to-Air – Medium Caliber in Appendix A, Section A.1.4.3. The amphibious vessels, while new, would function similarly to previously analyzed vessels. Of note, with the Marine Corps transition away from tracked vehicles, the new wheeled amphibious vehicles would likely result in less impact than the legacy tracked systems. See the analysis of effects under Physical Disturbance and Strike for each resource; Section 3.5.3.2, for example, in the Abiotic Habitats resource section. Also, see additional background information in Appendix F.
EJ-08	The DEIS also fails to adequately analyze the projected increase in sonar use in Hawai'i's waters under Alternative 1. The document indicates that, in the Hawai'i Study Area during the maximum year of HCTT activities, there will be an increase of greater than 10 percent more hours of regular duty	The EIS/OEIS adequately analyzes the impacts due to sonars under both alternatives in this Proposed Action. The predicted impacts in Section 3.7 of this EIS/OEIS show the increase in impacts due to sonar between Alternative 1 and Alternative 2.

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	cycle (MF1) hull-mounted sonar and approximately 20 percent more hours of high duty cycle (MF1C) hull-mounted sonar as compared to prior assessments. However, the DEIS does not provide sufficient evaluation of how this escalation will affect marine mammals, particularly those that are behaviorally sensitive or that inhabit areas near training complexes. Scientific studies indicate that sonar exposure can disrupt essential behaviors, yet the Navy asserts—without evidence—that these effects will not interfere with feeding, reproduction, or other biologically important functions. Under Alternative 2, the number of high-frequency, mid-frequency, and low-frequency sonar sources would see increases, yet the DEIS does not provide any meaningful analysis of the potential environmental consequences of these changes. Instead, the Navy claims in a conclusory fashion that the impacts on marine mammals would not significantly differ from those outlined in Alternative 1, an assertion that lacks scientific support. Given that species in Hawaiian waters are already vulnerable to noise pollution and behavioral disruptions, even minor increases in sonar activity could have impacts that are not fully accounted for in the assessment.	Modeling of impacts due to sonars is based on numerous scientific inputs, with further detail outlined in the Quantifying Acoustic Impacts on Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles: Methods and Analytical Approach for Phase IV Training and Testing (September 2024) Technical Report. The behavioral criteria and thresholds incorporate the best available science on the differing sensitivity of marine mammals to disturbance, as detailed in the Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis (Phase 4) Technical Report. Both technical reports can be found on the project website: https://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/. In addition, Appendix D of the EIS/OEIS contains a thorough scientific discussion, using the best available science, of the underlying biological and scientific factors associated with possible impacts from sonar exposure, including scientific data on vulnerable or sensitive species. A detailed analysis on the impacts of all acoustic and explosive stressors, including sonar, on marine mammal populations can be found in Appendix E of the EIS/OEIS. The analysis in Appendix E includes an estimate of impacts by geographic region and in identified Biologically Important Areas. Based on the analysis in this EIS/OEIS, military readiness activities are not expected to have effects at the population-level of marine mammals.
EJ-09	The DEIS fails to consider the best available science regarding the impacts of sonar on sharks. A 2019 study that found some sharks changed their behavior in response to an artificial sound with energy below 1 kHz. This is concerning, as these are relatively low-frequency sounds compared to the much higher-intensity sources such as sonar, pile driving, and explosions being proposed by the Navy. In fact, a recent review study determined that 81 and 82 percent of relevant studies have found significant impacts of noise on invertebrates and fish. The Navy must consider information like this when assessing impacts to vulnerable shark species like the threatened Oceanic whitetip.	The potential impacts of sonar on sharks (and other fishes) is provided in the EIS/OEIS in Section 3.6 and in Appendix E. Both references provided by the commentor (Chapuis et al. (2019) and Duarte et al. (2021)) have been reviewed and are also included in the analysis (see Appendix D, Section D.2.2 and D.3.4.1, respectively). The review study mentioned (Duarte et al., 2021) provides a synthesis of the negative impacts of noise pollution on marine animals, which is also considered in the Navy's impact analysis. It is not surprising that a large amount of published literature focuses on the negative impacts of noise on marine life since this is a common, global topic of concern and is funded by multiple agencies and universities.

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EJ-10	The DEIS fails to fulfill NEPA's mandate to disclose and discuss the "reasonably foreseeable environmental effects of the proposed federal action" on marine mammals. 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C)(i). Although the DEIS directs the public to the appendices for impacts from acoustics and explosives (Appendix E) and from direct strikes (Appendix I), see, e.g., DEIS vol. 1 at 1-10 to 1-11 (tbl. 1-4), the appendices are riddled with obscurities, inconsistences, and omissions, undermining NEPA's purpose "to ensure that environmental issues are fully considered and incorporated into the Federal decision making process," 32 C.F.R. § 775.3(b).	The EIS/OEIS fully complies with NEPA. In addition, the extensive studies and analysis, in light of the best available science, exceeds the required hard look at impacts on marine mammals. Appendix E provides a breakdown—by marine mammal species and stressor—of potential effects from the Proposed Action.
EJ-11	Disaggregated data obscures the action alternatives' impacts. According to the DEIS, the preferred alternative (Alternative 1) "presumes a representative level" of training and testing that would occur over a 7-year period, while Alternative 2 "assumes the maximum level of activity would occur every year over any 7-year period." DEIS vol. 1 at ES-5. To comply with NEPA, the Navy is obliged to give a clear picture in its EIS of the total impacts to each marine mammal population over the 7-year period under each alternative. Appendices E and I lack any such straightforward disclosures. Instead, they present data in a disaggregated and confusing manner and omit critical information and analyses, subverting NEPA's mandate to promote informed decision-making and, equally important, public involvement. See Methow Valley Citizens, 490 U.S. at 349. For example, Appendix E (acoustics and explosives) divides its disclosure of the effects to marine mammal populations/stocks of conducting seven years of training and testing under Alternative 1 across 9 separate tables—by training type, testing type, and service (i.e., Navy, Coast Guard, Army). The situation is even worse for Alternative 2, where Appendix E chops up the different types of training and testing by different services into 10 separate tables and further discloses the effects of only one year of "maximum" training or testing. Nowhere does Appendix E disclose the effects to marine mammal populations/stocks of conducting all seven years of training and testing under Alternative 2.	The EIS/OEIS clearly quantifies combined training and testing impacts to each marine mammal species or stock due to each acoustic and explosive stressor over one maximum year and over a seven-year period under both Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 in Section 3.7. Appendix E provides additional detail to further help the reader understand the source of the potential impacts due to acoustic and explosive stressors and promote informed decision-making. This information is presented systematically and includes summary impacts for each species or stock, impacts by stressor, and impacts corresponding to the incidental take authorizations requested under the MMPA for this Proposed Action. Relevant information is not omitted. Although clear and complete information was provided on impacts under each alternative in Section 3.7 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, the Final EIS/OEIS includes additional summary tables in Appendix E for the combined acoustic and explosive impacts.
EJ-12	Appendix I (direct strikes) similarly breaks down effects by technology type (i.e., "high-energy laser" and "military expended materials"). DEIS vol. 4, app. I at I-33 (tbl. I-16), I-35 (tbl. I-18). Appendix I provides estimates of	Regarding analyzing all humpback whale stocks in one humpback whale category in California, the probability of any type of strike by MEM or high-energy laser is so low that

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	marine mammal exposures from these two activities under Alternatives 1 and 2 for only "a Single Year." Id. It fails to disclose the impacts to marine mammals over the entire 7-year period for which training and testing are proposed. Given that the level of activities under Alternative 1 varies from year to year, one cannot simply multiply the estimated annual harm by seven. See DEIS vol. 1 at 3-20 (tbl. 3.0-13), 3-23 (tbl. 3.0-18). Leaving it to the public and regulators to piece together voluminous, disaggregated data to determine the two analyzed alternatives' overall effects to each marine mammal population violates NEPA's core disclosure requirement. See Lands Council, 395 F.3d at 1027 ("Congress wanted each federal agency spearheading a major federal project to put on the table, for the deciding agency's and for the public's view, a sufficiently detailed statement of environmental impacts and alternatives so as to permit informed decision making. The purpose of NEPA is to require disclosure of relevant environmental considerations that were given a 'hard look' by the agency, and thereby to permit informed public comment on proposed action and any choices or alternatives that might be pursued with less environmental harm."). Moreover, Appendix I fails to provide information about the harm to individual marine mammal populations/stocks from direct strikes. For direct strikes due to high-energy lasers and military expended materials, Appendix I lumps together all the impacts to an entire species from direct strikes in each of the two study areas (e.g., all impacts to the "humpback whale" in the California Study Area), without differentiating between the defined stocks). DEIS vol. 4, app. I at I-33 (tbl. I-16), I-35 (tbl. I-18.) Given the differences in both the population sizes of and known threats to the various potentially affected marine mammal stocks, the Navy's failure to identify impacts by stock deprives the analysis in Appendix I of all meaning. Appendix I acknowledges that Navy training and testing activities have harmed whales in the past due to vessel strikes and, if continued as proposed, will continue to do so. DEIS vol. 4, app. I at I-36 to I-39. While Appendix I identifies six large whale stocks that "would be the most likely struck," it fails completely to quantify the number of predicted vessel strikes that each stock would suffer under either of the analyzed alternatives. Id. at I-39. Particularly given that vessel strikes are a significant	parsing that out further by stock is unnecessary and likely at a level of precision not supported by the analysis. The Final EIS/OEIS discussion of whale strike by Navy and Coast Guard vessels has been revised to include predicted vessel strikes by stock. The analysis and conclusions of effects are disclosed throughout the EIS/OEIS but are first summarized in Chapter 3, (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) with additional supporting information provided in appendices.

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	source of mortality to several stocks of critically endangered whale species, the absence of a stock-by-stock analysis of impacts from vessel strikes violates NEPA's "hard look" mandate. See, e.g., Pacific SAR at 207-09 (Eastern North Pacific Stock of blue whale), 215-16 (California/Oregon/Washington Stock of fin whale).	
EJ-13	Discrepancies between the Navy's preferred alternative and its MMPA Letter of Authorization request sow confusion over the extent of impacts. Working through the (arduous) process of aggregating data for each marine mammal population reveals a universal mismatch between the Navy's preferred alternative's anticipated effects and the amount of take for which the Navy seeks permission under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) in its September 16, 2024, Request for Regulations and Letters of Authorization ("LOA Request"), available at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/military- readiness-activities-hawaii-california-training-and-testing-hctt-study-area-2025. First, as noted above, Appendix I (direct strikes) and the DEIS, more generally, lack any disclosure quantifying the anticipated number vessel strikes to large whales under either action alternative. In the LOA Request, in contrast, the Navy specifies that it and the Coast Guard seek authorization to strike up to 5 and 4 large whales, respectively. LOA Request at 5-10. The LOA Request further breaks down the number of vessel strikes by stock. Id. To take the requisite "hard look," the Navy must disclose in its NEPA analysis the number of vessel strikes anticipated under each alternative and analyze the impact of those vessel strikes on each affected marine mammal stock.	The Final EIS/OEIS discussion of vessel strike has been revised to include predicted vessel strikes by stock. The NEPA conclusions are aligned with the MMPA take request.
EJ-14	Aside from ship strikes (whose impacts are unquantified), the preferred alternative's estimated mortalities from acoustics and explosives for each marine mammal stock (346) exactly double those in the LOA Request (173), making it unclear whether the Navy is requesting take authorization for only half of the proposed action's anticipated effects, or whether the Navy's MMPA take request is inaccurate and understated. In addition, the preferred alternative's estimated Level A and Level B takes from acoustics and explosives all differ (often substantially) from those in the LOA Request, with no uniform trend or pattern across marine mammal populations. For example, for the Eastern North Pacific stock of blue whale, the preferred	The Navy and Coast Guard requested take from vessel strikes has been added to the Final EIS/OEIS in the conclusion of Section 3.7.3.5.1.1. Estimated mortalities (due to explosives only) over both a maximum year and over seven years under both alternatives were accurately summed and shown in Section 3.7 of the Draft EIS/OEIS. Those values, as well as those in the species/stock analyses and explosive impact summary tables in Appendix E, matched the mortality estimate in the Incidental Taking

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	alternative's estimated Level A takes (220) are 32% more than the Level A takes sought in the LOA Request (150), while the estimated Level B takes (35,885) are 31% more than the Level B takes sought in the LOA Request (24,808). For the Hawaiian monk seal, the preferred alternative's estimated Level A takes (40) double those in the LOA Request (20), while the estimated Level B takes (5,349) are around 11.6% less than the Level B takes sought in LOA Request (6,053). The Navy must correct or explain these discrepancies to disclose clearly the amount of take sought and the anticipated effects of its proposed action, as NEPA requires. See 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C)(i), (ii).	Authorization Request in the September 2024 LOA application that was publicly available on the NMFS web site at the time of the Draft EIS/OEIS public comment period. Similarly, predicted impacts in Section 3.7 and in the species/stock analyses in Appendix E match the Level A and Level B Incidental Taking Authorization Request in the September 2024 LOA application. The Action Proponents thank the commenter for noting the table error in Appendix E. Two summary tables were mis-labeled in Appendix E of the Draft EIS/OEIS. These tables (Table 2.4-82 and Table 2.4-83 in Appendix E of the Draft EIS/OEIS and corresponding Table A-92 and Table A-93 in Appendix A of the LOA Request) have been correctly labeled as combined impacts due to all acoustic and explosive stressors in the Final EIS/OEIS, rather than sonar only. Estimates of impacts in Section 3.7, in the individual species or stock analyses in Appendix E, and in the other summary tables in Appendix E were not affected by this isolated table error.
EJ-15	The DEIS improperly excludes the harm inflicted on marine mammals by foreign navies participating in HCTT activities. The Navy improperly excludes from its DEIS analysis of the impacts to marine mammals from foreign navies that participate in HCTT activities. Federal courts have long held that an agency's NEPA analysis must evaluate not only the direct impacts of the agency's own actions, but also "the indirect effects" caused by actions carried out by others "that can be expected to result from" the federal agency's proposal. Nat'l Wildlife Fed'n v. Coleman, 529 F.2d 359, 373 (5th Cir. 1976); see, e.g., id. (to assess "the total impact … on the crane" of highway construction, agency had to evaluate "the residential and commercial development that can be expected to result"); City of Davis v. Coleman, 521 F.2d 661, 674-77 (9th Cir. 1975) (agency must consider "growth-inducing effects" of constructing highway interchange). As the Ninth Circuit has emphasized, "[i]f impact statements are to be useful, they must address the major environmental problems likely to be created by a project." City of Davis, 521 F.2d at 677. The Navy invites foreign navies to come to the HCTT Study Area to participate in HCTT activities like the Rim of the Pacific Exercise. See DEIS	The Navy did not improperly exclude impacts from foreign participants. Section 2.3.1 of the Final EIS/OEIS has been updated: "In furtherance of national security objectives, foreign militaries may participate in multinational training and testing events in the Study Area. Foreign military activities that are planned and under the substantial control and responsibility of the Action Proponents are included in the proposed action. These participants could be in various training or testing events described in Appendix A, and their effects are analyzed in this EIS/OEIS. However, when foreign militaries operate independently within the Study Area as sovereign vessels or aircraft outside the planning and control of the Action Proponents, those activities are not considered part of the Proposed Action. There are many reasons why foreign military vessels and aircraft may traverse U.S. waters or come into U.S. port, not all of which are at the request of any of the Action Proponents. Foreign military vessels and aircraft operate

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	vol. 1 at 2-5 to 2-6 (tbl. 2-1). Foreign navies would not be in U.S. waters, harming marine mammal populations/stocks in the Study Area, unless the Navy invited them. The Navy is obliged—but the DEIS failed—to evaluate foreign navies' impacts on marine mammals (and other potential environmental impacts), which "can be expected to result from" the Navy's proposed course of action. Nat'l Wildlife Fed'n, 529 F.2d at 373. The deaths of two endangered fin whales that were struck in May 2021 by "an Australian Navy vessel [that] was positioning to participate in a U.S. Navy-led exercise in Southern California" vividly illustrates the significant impacts that foreign navies participating in HCTT activities can inflict on marine mammals. LOA Request at B-18. In June and July of 2021, the U.S. Navy struck an additional two unidentified large whales off the Southern California coast. 90 Fed. Reg. 4,944, 4,976 (Jan. 16, 2025). The Navy struck another whale (either an endangered fin whale or endangered sei whale) off Southern California in May 2023. Id. In sum, "[s]ince 2021 there have been five documented strikes of large whales in SOCAL by naval vessels, three by the U.S. Navy and two by the Royal Australian Navy." Id. at 4,975. The DEIS improperly limits Appendix I's analysis of the impact of vessel strikes on marine mammals to only strikes "by Navy surface ships" and the Coast Guard, ignoring the additional harm to marine mammals from strikes by foreign navies participating in HCTT activities. DEIS vol. 4, app. I at I-36. In the MMPA context, the Navy has claimed that the two fin whales killed by the Australian Navy are not "part of" HCTT activities because the "the strike did not occur while the [Australian ship] was actively participating in a joint training exercise with the U.S. Navy." 90 Fed. Reg. at 4,952. Leaving for another day the validity of the Navy's MMPA analysis, there is no question that, in the NEPA context, the Navy must include as effects of proposed HCTT activities the harm inflicted by foreign navy vessels. The only reason the Australian destroyer was "near Cortes Bank," where the vessel strike took place (and which lies within the HCTT Study Area), on the morning of May 7, 2021, was to "get[] into position to participate in a U.S. Navy-led exercise later that day." 90 Fed. Reg. at 4,975; see also DEIS vol. 1 at 2-2 (fig. 2-1). The Navy's failure to factor into the DEIS's analysis such foreseeable harm inflicted by foreign navies participating at the Navy's invitation in HCTT activities violates NEPA's "hard look" mandate.	pursuant to their own national authorities and have independent rights under customary international law, embodied in the principle of sovereign immunity, to engage in various activities on the world's oceans and seas."

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EJ-16	The DEIS fails to consider how HCTT activities increase vessel strikes by non-military ships. The DEIS fails to examine how HCTT activities contribute to vessel strikes by non-military ships, precluding shipping lanes from being located outside of the Santa Barbara Channel. For the Santa Barbara Channel alone, scientists estimate that, in the summer and fall months (June– November), vessel strikes kill an average of 8.9 blue whales, 4.6 humpback whales, and 9.7 fin whales each year, with an additional 5.7 humpback whales dying annually due to vessel strikes during winter and spring (January–April). Redfern et al. (2020) found that vessel strike risk is highest for blue, humpback, and fin whales in the central region of California when vessel traffic occurs nearshore. If vessel traffic instead were to follow an offshore route similar to those used by ships from 2009-2011 (to avoid California Air Resources Board regulations that applied within 24 nm of shore), mean risk for all three species could be reduced by up to 35%. The increase in whale fatalities due to the displacement of non-military vessel traffic is an indirect effect of the proposed HCTT activities, which the DEIS ignores entirely.	On May 29, 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its opinion in Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle County, which held that NEPA does not require the review of environmental impacts from other foreseeable projects that are separate in time and place, or other projects which the reviewing agency possesses no regulatory authority over. The Court emphasized that agencies possess discretion and latitude to draw a "manageable line" regarding how far to go in considering indirect environmental effects from the project at hand. Vessel strikes by non-military ships occur separate in time and place from the Proposed Action and are outside of the Action Proponents' regulatory authority. The Navy does not designate shipping lanes or have the authority to prohibit non-military ships from transiting through the Study Area. Additionally, there is no scientific evidence suggesting that military activities directly or indirectly cause strikes by non-military vessels. Therefore, the Navy has decided not to examine the tenuous relationship between the Proposed Action and vessel strikes by non-military ships. Many factors determine the routes taken by non-military vessels but Navy activity has not caused changes in shipping lanes. Vessel strike to marine mammals is not associated with any specific training or testing activity but rather is an inadvertent, limited, sporadic, and incidental result of Navy and Coast Guard vessel movement within the HCTT Study Area. The Navy and Coast Guard consulted with NMFS to quantify the probability of strikes for Navy and Coast Guard. Civilian non-military vessel movements are not part of the HCTT Proposed Action. The Navy and Coast Guard are also required to report to NMFS each ship strike after it occurs. While scientific literature acknowledges ship strike risk from commercial shipping is significant, since these ships do not self-report there is no

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		quantifiable data on the actual number of strikes. In regard to vessel traffic around major California shipping ports, the Navy does not designate shipping lanes. There is no science to suggest that military activities cause the strikes by non-military vessels. Indirect effect of military activity to the susceptibility of other shipping vessels to have a strike is not quantifiable due to insufficient quantitative information across the HCTT Study area for non-military vessel strikes because of no uniform reporting requirements.
EJ-17	The DEIS fails to take a "hard look" at the effects of inflicting millions of nonlethal takes on marine mammals each year. The Navy acknowledges that HCTT activities will inflict harm on marine mammals on more than 34 million occasions over the seven years of proposed training and testing, including over 36,000 marine mammals that would suffer permanent hearing loss or physical injury. LOA Request at 5-2, tbl. 5-1.19 In the face of this massive harm, the DEIS baldly asserts that, "[a]lthough potential adverse effects on certain marine mammal species from military readiness activities may include behavioral responses, or injury to individuals, those injuries are not expected to lead to long-term consequences for populations." DEIS vol. 1 at 3.7-64. The DEIS similarly claims that "the combined effects from all stressors under Alternative 2 are not meaningfully different from Alternative 1, and therefore the conclusions for significance, ESA- listed species, and critical habitat are the same under Alternative 2." Id. at 3.7-65. By no stretch of the imagination does the DEIS justify these claims. The mere fact that most of the more than 34 million instances of harm to marine mammals involves disruption of marine mammals' essential behavioral patterns does not mean that long-term harm to populations will be avoided. As NMFS has explained, "there are known avenues through which behavioral disturbance of individuals can result in population-level effects." 78 Fed. Reg. 78,106, 78,146 (Dec. 24, 2013). Accordingly: [a]n estimate of the number of Level B harassment takes, alone, is not enough information on which to base an impact determination. In addition to considering estimates of the number of marine mammals that might be ''taken'' through behavioral harassment, NMFS must consider other	The Navy concludes that training and testing activities proposed in the Study Area would result in Level B and Level A takes, as summarized in Section 5.1 (Incidental Take Request from In-Water Acoustic and Explosive Sources), Section 5.2 (Incidental Take Request From In-Air Acoustic Stressors) and Section 5.3 (Incidental Take Request from Vessel Strikes) of the Request for Regulations and Letter of Authorization submitted to NMFS (LOA Application). However, the estimated number of takes, although large, is conservative; and more importantly, it does not equate to long-term population-level impact on affected species. Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented in the LOA Application represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance.

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	factors, such as the likely nature of any responses (their intensity, duration, etc.), the context of any responses (critical reproductive time or location, migration, etc.), as well as the number and nature of estimated Level A harassment takes, the number of estimated mortalities, and effects on habitat. Id. The Navy failed to conduct the required analysis to determine if Level A and B takes will cause significant harm to affected marine mammal populations/stocks. For example:	• The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where high levels of training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species. NMFS independently conducted its own analysis and determined that HCTT activities have no more than a "negligible" impact on marine mammal species or the population stock. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in Navy decision making, and in the conduct of testing and training. Utilizing the latest science and technology, the Navy completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the potential environmental effects from Navy training and testing activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species.
EJ-18	• The Eastern North Pacific stock of blue whales is already in a precarious state. It is designated as "depleted" under the MMPA, is listed as "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and has an estimated population of only 1,898. See Pacific SAR at 205, 208. Its current level of human-caused mortality and serious injury (18.6 whales annually) is more than four times its PBR level of 4.1 whales annually. Id. at 208;20 see also Rockwood, R. C., et al., Modeling Whale Deaths from Vessel Strikes to Reduce the Risk of Fatality to Endangered Whales, 8 Frontiers in Marine	The Final EIS/OEIS discussion of vessel strike in Appendix I has been revised to include predicted vessel strikes by stock. The predicted vessel strikes were considered in the effects analysis.

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	Science 919 (2021). The Navy seeks take authorization for an average of .29 ship strikes per year (2 strikes over 7 years) for this stock. LOA Request at 5-10. The DEIS neglects to quantify and disclose such ship strike effects, as discussed above, much less discuss and analyze the fact that vessel strikes due to the Navy's proposed training and testing would deepen the risk of extinction to this population. Cf. Nat'l Wildlife Fed'n v. Nat'l Marine Fisheries Serv., 524 F.3d 917, 930 (9th Cir. 2008) (Under the ESA, "where baseline conditions already jeopardize a species, an agency may not take action that deepens the jeopardy by causing additional harm.").	
EJ-19	The DEIS further fails to discuss whether the additional impacts from acoustics and explosives under the two action alternatives (an annual average of 31.43 Level A takes (auditory and non-auditory injury) and 5,126.43 Level B takes (temporary hearing loss and behavioral effects) under the preferred alternative and an annual maximum of 38 Level A takes and 6,584 Level B takes under Alternative 2) would exacerbate population-level harm.	Predicted impacts due to acoustic and explosive stressors are summed and clearly presented in Section 3.7. Appendix E of the EIS/OEIS further analyzes impacts to each species/stock which includes considering biological risk factors such as prey availability and anthropogenic stressors such as human-caused mortality and serious injury. Ecological considerations including stock vulnerability factors (Section 2.3.4) and critical habitat analysis (Section 2.4), in addition to a review of best available science in Appendix D, were included in the hard-look analysis. Based on the analysis in this EIS/OEIS, military readiness activities are not expected to have population-level effects for any marine mammals.
EJ-20	• The Central America/Southern Mexico-California-Oregon-Washington Stock of humpback whales is designated as "depleted" under the MMPA, is listed as "endangered" under the ESA, and has an estimated population of only 1,496. Pacific SAR at 183-84, 187. Its current level of human-caused mortality and serious injury (14.9 whales annually) is more than four times its PBR level of 3.5 whales annually. Id. The DEIS similarly omits any discussion of whether the impacts from acoustics and explosives under the two action alternatives (an annual average of 18.14 Level A takes and 2,104. Level B takes under the preferred alternative and an annual maximum of 25 Level A takes and 2,780 Level B takes under Alternative 2) would deepen population decline.	Predicted impacts due to acoustic and explosive stressors are summed and clearly presented in Section 3.7. Appendix E of the Draft EIS/OEIS analyzes impacts to species/stocks which includes considering biological risk factors such as prey availability and anthropogenic stressors such as human-caused mortality and serious injury. No serious injury or mortality impacts are estimated to occur to this stock due to acoustic and explosive stressors under the Proposed Action. Based on the analysis in this EIS/OEIS, military readiness activities are not expected to have population-level effects for any marine mammals.
EJ-21	• The Hawaiian monk seal is designated as "depleted" under the MMPA, is listed as "endangered" under the ESA, and has an estimated population of only 1,564. Pacific SAR at 39, 44. Its current level of human-caused	Predicted impacts due to acoustic and explosive stressors are summed and clearly presented in Section 3.7. Appendix E of the Draft EIS/OEIS analyzes impacts to species/stocks which

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	mortality (5.4 seals annually) exceeds its PBR level of 5.1 seals annually. Id. at 44. Again, the DEIS fails to discuss or disclose whether the impacts from acoustics and explosives under the two action alternatives (an annual average of 5.71 Level A takes and 764.143 Level B takes under the preferred alternative and an annual maximum of 10 Level A takes and 826 Level B takes under Alternative 2) would deepen population-level harm.	includes considering biological risk factors such as prey availability and anthropogenic stressors such as human-caused mortality and serious injury. No serious injury or mortality impacts are estimated to occur to this stock due to acoustic and explosive stressors under the Proposed Action. Based on the analysis in this EIS/OEIS, military readiness activities are not expected to have long-term consequences to any populations of marine mammals.
EJ-22	Marine mammal behavioral responses to sonar can significantly interfere with essential life functions such as feeding, mating, and communication. These disruptions can lead to starvation or disrupted mating, ultimately affecting marine mammals' survival and reproductive success. For instance, exposure to sonar can cause marine mammals to abandon critical habitats, leading to energy depletion and increased vulnerability to predators. Additionally, avoidance of the sound source can result in the displacement of marine mammals from their preferred habitats. This displacement can cause stress and force the animals into less suitable areas, where food may be scarce, and environmental conditions may be suboptimal. Such disturbances and harassment can have long-term impacts on the health and well-being of marine mammal populations. In some cases, the behavioral response can lead to strandings or vessel strikes that result in injury or death. The DEIS fails to quantify and adequately consider the effects of multi-day exposures. While it acknowledges that multi-day events may expose animals consecutively, it fails to quantify the impact of consecutive day exposures on feeding, reproduction, and displacement of marine mammals. It instead relies on an unhelpful statement that effects on individuals would range from less than once per year to several times per year. This is insufficient.	Appendix D summarizes the best available science on acoustic impacts to marine mammals, including the types and severity of impacts observed in response to acoustic stressors and the population consequences of disturbance. Appendix E of the Draft EIS/OEIS shows which activities are most impactful to each species or stock, including the portion of impacts due to integrated/coordinated activities and major training exercises that occur over multiple days. Appendix E also shows the average number of times any individual in each population is predicted to be impacted during a maximum year of activity under the Proposed Action. For most species or stocks, the potential for repeated impacts to individuals is very low and, for many stocks, is less than once per year. Based on consideration of best available science on behavioral responses and population consequences of disturbance, and following the assessment in Appendix E that includes consideration of life history traits and stock vulnerability factors, any behavioral responses are unlikely to consequently result in injury or long-term consequences. U.S. Navy sonar has not been identified as a causal factor in an atypical mass stranding in several decades. Other high severity responses have not been observed during observations of actual training or testing activities. The Navy does not anticipate that marine mammal strandings or mortality will result from the operation of sonar during military readiness activities in the Study Area. Through adaptive management under the MMPA, NMFS and the Navy will determine the

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		appropriate way to proceed if a causal relationship were to be found between Navy activities and a future stranding.
EJ-23	The DEIS's use of cutoff distances is in error. The distances are not supported by solid evidence and are also already considered by the model used to estimate effects. The models already consider both the loudness of the noise and the context of the situation. Adding these cutoff distances undermines the accuracy of these models and underestimates the behavioral responses of marine mammals to noise.	The consideration of proximity (cut-off distances) was part of the criteria developed in consultation with NMFS. The derivation of the behavioral response functions and associated cut-off distances is provided in the Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis (Phase 4) Technical Report. Section 3.1.4 (Dose and Contextual Responses) of above report explains that at low received levels, distance to the sound source or platform likely mediates the likelihood of a behavioral response. Although distance was investigated as a covariate in the Bayesian behavioral response function model, most behavioral response studies to date have used similar source levels making received level and source-receiver distance tightly correlated (see Section 3.1.9 [Behavioral Cut-off Conditions] of the technical report). Therefore, including distance in the model using the available response-received level data did not improve the behavioral response functions. Since it was not possible to directly account for distance in the Bayesian model at this time, the Navy incorporated the behavioral cut-off conditions, beyond which significant behavioral reactions are assumed to be unlikely. As described in Section 3.1.9 [Behavioral Cut-off Conditions] of the technical report, the distance cut-off conditions were conservatively estimated based on observations from multiple cited studies. The Navy's BRFs applied within these distances are currently the best method for providing the public and regulators with a more realistic (but still conservative where some uncertainties exist) estimate of impact and potential take under military readiness for the Proposed Action within this EIS/OEIS. As the science related to marine mammal behavior advances, the Navy will continue to work with NMFS to refine consideration of contextual factors, such as distance, in its assessment of behavioral responses.

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EJ-24	Moreover, there are observations of marine mammals exhibiting behavioral responses such as stopping foraging at distances well beyond the cut-off distance. For example, a study of Cuvier's beaked whales in Southern California exposed to mid-frequency sonar, including both hull-mounted and air-deployed, "dipping" systems, confirmed that they modify their diving behavior up to 100 km away. A single seismic survey has been shown to cause endangered fin and humpback whales to stop vocalizing – a behavior essential to breeding and foraging – and other baleen whales to abandon habitat over an area of at least 100,000 square nautical miles. Similarly, a low-frequency, high-amplitude fish mapping device was recently found to silence humpback whales at a distance of 200 kilometers, where received levels ranged from 88 dB to 110 dB. Overall, there is no support for the DEIS's conclusory statement that the effects of sonar and other transducers under the Navy's preferred alternative "are not expected to interfere with feeding, reproduction, or other biologically important functions" of any marine mammal species. The conclusion is arbitrary and capricious and contradicted by numerous studies of the impact of sonar on wildlife.	The Navy relied upon the best available science to develop the behavioral response functions in consultation with NMFS. The information in the comment's cited references does not fundamentally change the assessment of impacts or conclusions of this EIS/OEIS. As stated in the Criteria and Threshold Phase IV Technical Report, "…Falcone et al. (2017) modeled apparent responses to mid-powered sources out to 50 km and responses to high-powered sources at distances as great as 100 km. However, the models were not developed to estimate distances to response, and care needs to be taken when interpreting the results in that context." Responses at 100 km were generally mild, such as a slight (< 2 min) increase in the duration of shallow dives that was similar to the range of duration variability found in dives when no mid-frequency active sonar was present. The inter-deep dive interval duration also increased for both mid- and high-powered MFAS sources starting at 100 km; however, the inter-deep dive interval duration only exhibited the strongest increase within 20 km of the source. Navy activities are unlike the large-scale seismic surveys discussed in Clark and Gagnon (2006) and MacLeod (2006). Risch et al. (2012) is discussed in Section D.4.5 (Behavioral Response), along with Gong et al., (2014) who analyzed the same dataset as Risch et al., (2012) and concluded that the humpback whale call rate did not change in response to Ocean Acoustic Waveguide Remote Sensing but could be explained by natural causes such as herring presence. As described in Section 3.7.4, the Navy has conducted active sonar training and testing activities in the Study Area for decades, and there is no evidence that routine training and testing has negatively impacted marine mammal populations in the Study Area. Using the best available science, the Action Proponents have thoroughly assessed the potential impacts associated with the proposed training and testing activities. Per the analysis in this EIS/OEIS, long-term consequences for

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		marine mammal populations are unlikely to result from training and testing activities in the Study Area. As discussed in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy will implement mitigation to avoid or reduce potential impacts from the Proposed Action on marine species.
EJ-25	The Navy's further conclusion that the impacts under Alternative 2 "are not meaningfully different from Alternative 1 for marine mammals' stocks" means that the two action alternatives are not sufficiently different alternatives to comply with NEPA's mandate to consider a reasonable range of alternatives.	The Alternatives carried forward meet the Action Proponents' purpose and need (see Section 1.5) to ensure that they can fulfill its obligation under Title 10. See Section 2.4 for more detailed information on the development of alternatives. The Navy complied with NEPA requirements in the development and consideration of alternatives. This EIS/OEIS explains why the Navy has eliminated other alternatives in Section 2.4.1.
EJ-26	The Navy Must Consider New Scientific Information about the Sensitivity of Marine Mammals to Noise. The DEIS should be updated to consider new information on the sensitivity of marine mammals to sonar. Despite the important updates that the Navy made to criteria for the high frequency cetacean auditory group and updates to estimates of the behavioral responses, the Navy must continue to keep up with the best currently available science on the thresholds for auditory impacts and behavioral responses. The Navy must also ensure that it is using the best methods to calculate responses to sonar. A 2024 study focused on dolphins' sensitivity to military sonar and revealed that dolphins exhibit strong avoidance behaviors and significant changes in group configurations at sound levels much lower than those currently considered harmful. The findings indicate that dolphins are highly sensitive to sonar, even at low received levels, which can lead to disruptions in their natural behaviors, such as foraging, communication, and social interactions. New data show that temporary auditory injury occurs in harbor porpoises exposed to a one- sixth octave band sound centered at 8 kHz. A sound exposure level of 174 dB re 1 μPa^2s resulted in significant temporary threshold shift across different sound levels and exposure durations. Another recent study revealed that minke whales possess ultrasonic hearing sensitivity, a trait that was previously unknown. It showed that minke whales are sensitive to frequencies as high as 40 to 90 kilohertz. This	The impacts on marine mammals are estimated using the best available science on behavioral response and hearing. Appendix D of the EIS/OEIS summarizes the best available science that was used to analyze impacts of marine mammals from sonar. Please refer to Appendix G of the Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis (Phase IV) Technical Report for details on how dose-response functions were implemented. The Navy considered Southall et al. (2024) in the Draft EIS/OEIS in Appendix D, Section D.4.5.2.1.3. An editing error prevented the citation from being listed in the Appendix D list of references. That error has been corrected. The potential responses observed in this study occurred at received levels and distances assessed for potentially significant behavioral responses in the analysis in this EIS/OEIS. The findings of this study do not change the conclusions of this EIS/OEIS. Kastelein et al. (2024) was unpublished during the development of the Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds. Sharing data before peer-reviewed publication is at the discretion of the authors and funding agencies involved in each study. While some pre-publication data were shared with Navy for timely inclusion in the Phase IV Criteria and Thresholds, some were not. For example, results from the Houser et al., (2024) minke

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	finding has profound implications for conservation efforts, as it suggests that minke whales may be more vulnerable to high-frequency noise pollution than previously thought. New information about the impacts of sonar on beaked whales must be considered. Between 1960 and 2004, there were a total of 121 mass stranding events noted for beaked whales, most of which were associated with naval sonar. According to a review of the mass stranding events, the sonar was consistent with something like decompression sickness with nitrogen bubbles causing hemorrhaging and organ damage. When exposed to sonar, whales experienced extreme stress, leading them to rapidly change their diving patterns and accumulate nitrogen bubbles in their bodies. Additionally, a model of impacts of sonar on beaked whales showed population declines for a variety of scenarios with significant declines happening when animals were both displaced and stopped foraging. It showed that either displacement or cessation of foraging alone could lead to a 50 percent population decline—some scenarios alarmingly lead to extinction. Another model demonstrated more intense responses to military activities with sonar than prior studies. These new studies highlight the importance of being able to adjust the sensitivity thresholds used to estimate sonar. The Marine Mammal Commission noted that the Navy's model does not allow it to readily adjust the thresholds, and thus the data are often too old to properly estimate marine mammal take.	whale hearing study were included in the creation of the Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis (Phase IV) Technical Report, and influenced the division of mysticetes into two hearing groups, low-frequency (LF) and very low-frequency (VLF). Inclusion of the harbor porpoise data from Kastelein et al. (2024) would raise the VHF non-impulsive exposure function and TTS onset; thus, the function applied in the analysis in this EIS/OEIS is conservative. Effects on other impulsive and non-impulsive exposure functions are small (i.e., 1 dB or less), therefore changes to Phase IV criteria and thresholds are not warranted. Bernaldo de Quiros et al. (2019), a report summarizing a workshop on beaked whales and atypical mass stranding events, was considered in the Draft EIS/OEIS. It does not present new information but summarizes the state of science. Hin et al. (2023) note the uncertainty or lack of information for many of the parameters in their model. Their study suggests what parameters should be further explored to better understand impacts on beaked whale populations. This study was considered in the Draft EIS/OEIS. The data in Jacobson et al. (2022) was included in the development of the Sensitive Species behavioral response function applied in this analysis, as described in the Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis (Phase IV) Technical Report.
EJ-27	The DEIS fails to justify its conclusion that the HCTT activities would have "less than significant effects" on marine mammals. The DEIS baldly claims that that its direct strikes and use of acoustics and explosives will have "less than significant effects" on marine mammals under both the preferred alternative (Alternative 1) and Alternative 2. DEIS vol. 1 at ES-11 to ES-12 (tbl. ES-1). These sweeping conclusions cannot be squared with the threats that marine mammal populations are already	Based on best available science, the Navy and NMFS, through consultation under the MMPA and the ESA, concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed military readiness activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons:

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	facing, and the Navy's proposal to kill, injure, or otherwise harm these species even further. In the DEIS, the Navy incorrectly claims that, for impacts on marine mammals to be "significant" for purposes of NEPA, the impacts must "adversely affect[]" a marine mammal species "over the long term or permanently such that the population in the Study Area would no longer be sustainable." DEIS vol. 1 at 3.7-13. Not so. As the Navy notes elsewhere in the DEIS, the significance of a proposed action's effects should be assessed by considering, among other things, "[w]hether the action may … be inconsistent with Federal, State, Tribal, or local policies designed for the protection of the environment." Id. at 3-6 (emphasis added). Several of the marine mammal species that HCTT activities harm are listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA. "One of the ESA's central purposes is to conserve [listed] species," and the statute "accomplishes its purpose in incremental steps, which include protecting the remaining members of a species." Nat'l Wildlife Fed'n v. Nat'l Marine Fisheries Serv., 886 F.3d 803, 818 (9th Cir. 2018) (emphasis added). Killing and injuring individual marine mammals from ESA-listed species cause "irreparable harm" that undermines the achievement of federal policies to protect imperiled species, constituting significant impacts. Id.; see also Nat'l Wildlife Fed'n, 524 F.3d at 930 (Under the ESA, "where baseline conditions already jeopardize a species, an agency may not take action that deepens the jeopardy by causing additional harm"). The proposed HCTT activities also violate the federal policies enshrined in the MMPA, which allows take of marine mammals incidental to military readiness activities only if the taking will have a "negligible impact" on an affected species or stock. As one court has explained, "[b]ecause any mortality level that exceeds PBR will not allow the stock to reach or maintain its optimum sustainable population ('OSP'), such a mortality level could not be said to have only a 'negligible impact' on the stock."40 NMFS has likewise recognized that when mortality of a species is above its PBR, "a negligible impact finding under section 101(a)(5)(A) cannot be made." Here, the Navy has acknowledged that HCTT activities threaten to kill two blue whales from the Eastern North Pacific Stock, which is already experiencing human-caused mortalities and injuries far beyond its PBR. See	• Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species. Regarding the Eastern North Pacific Stock of blue whales, NMFS has determined in their Proposed Rule (July 2025) that the incremental impact of the Navy's proposed activities would be negligible for that stock of blue whales. The same conclusions were reached for the Hawaiian monk seal and humpback whales (Central America/Southern Mexico- California-Oregon-Washington stock).

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	LOA Request at 6-22 to 6-23; Pacific SAR at 208-09. The Navy further knows that the foreign navies that it invites to participate in HCTT activities can cause additional mortalities to large whale species like the blue whale. See 90 Fed. Reg. at 4,952. Such impacts are clearly "significant." So too are additional adverse impacts to endangered Hawaiian monk seals and to endangered humpback whales from the Central America/Southern Mexico-California-Oregon-Washington Stock, both of which already experience human-caused mortality and serious injury above PBR.	
EJ-28	As discussed above, the DEIS unlawfully failed to factor into its analysis the harm that foreign navies participating in HCTT activities inflict on marine mammals, including from vessel strikes. The DEIS's analysis of impacts to sea turtles suffers from the same fatal flaw. More generally, the DEIS improperly discounts the potential harm to sea turtles from vessel strikes. While the Navy acknowledges that vessels "present a risk for collision with sea turtles," the DEIS fails to quantify or analyze the extent of risk to sea turtles. DEIS vol. 1 at 3.8-1. The National Marine Fisheries Service reported that one of the most common causes of sea turtle stranding is vessel strikes, estimating that annually hundreds of sea turtles are struck by vessels in the United States. This is not merely a problem near congested areas, but sea turtles are at risk of vessel strike whenever they are present in the study area and the mitigation is insufficient to protect them from harmful effects. The DEIS also fails to take a "hard look" at the cumulative impacts to imperiled sea turtles. Sea turtles are already facing extinction risk limit because of fishing gear entanglement. For example, Pacific leatherback sea turtles have been observed entangled in groundfish pot gear off California in 2008 and crab trap gear in 2016. And, in 2019, a leatherback sea turtle was found dead in southern California, entangled in rock crab gear. Leatherback sea turtles are critically endangered; every single one matters for the species' conservation. Regular observations of leatherbacks entangled in fishing gear far exceed the estimated mortality limit that would allow the species to recover. This is especially problematic given that Western Pacific leatherback sea turtles are estimated to be declining about 6 percent annually. Any serious injury or mortality of leatherback sea turtle due to HCTT activities would be detrimental to the population.	See response to EJ-13. The EIS/OEIS uses the best available science to analyze potential effects on sea turtles from vessel strikes (see Section 3.8.3.4.1.1 and Appendix F Section F.8.2.1). In addition, the Action Proponents completed a consultation under the ESA with NMFS and completed an analysis with quantified expected vessel strikes of sea turtles in Hawaii and California. The Action Proponents took a hard look at the cumulative effects on sea turtles in Section 4.3.8 of the EIS/OEIS.

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EJ-29	The DEIS fails to adequately analyze the impacts of aircraft noise. Although the DEIS cites the study by Kuehne et al. about noise propagation underwater from military aircraft, it does not seem to include analysis at a depth necessary to address the findings. Kuehne et al. monitored military aircraft noise for 28 days in Washington State and detected concerning noise levels 30 meters below the sea surface. The researchers noted that the noise exceeded thresholds that can trigger behavioral responses in marine mammals, fish, and sea birds. However, the DEIS appears to calculate exposures only at a depth of 2 meters. Similar analysis of sonic boom impacts is also flawed. The study demonstrates that the sea surface does not serve as an acoustic barrier to military aircraft noise, and that the Navy must re-examine the impacts of the aircraft noise based on this new information.	Chapter 3 includes analysis of impacts on marine mammals, fish, and birds due to aircraft noise under this Proposed Action. The analysis does not assume that the sea surface is an acoustic barrier to aircraft noise. Section D.1 in Appendix D explains how sound behaves at the air-water interface. Section 3.0 presents representative sound levels underwater for various aircraft in the metrics used in each cited study. The studies cited in this EIS/OEIS support the Navy's conclusions regarding aircraft noise impacts, including sonic booms, to species present in the Study Area. The activities in this Proposed Action do not include the airfield activities studied by Kuehne et al. (2020). In addition, Kuehne et al. (2020) made no direct observation of any species being affected by overflights. Instead, they compared the measured in-air and underwater received levels with published audiograms and prior behavioral response studies of terrestrial and marine species. Keuhne et al.'s conclusions regarding animal responses to aircraft noise were flawed due to inappropriate comparison of aircraft noise to other sound sources and inappropriate estimation of noise disturbance thresholds from other studies.
EJ-30	The DEIS also underestimates the effects of pile driving off Port Hueneme. The Navy's assumptions about pile driving discount the impacts of its activities on marine mammals. The calculation assumes that animals move away from pile driving, which is unsupported. The Navy must provide data to support its five-minute accumulation period or adjust it accordingly. Pile driving at Port Hueneme can also have harmful effects on the tidewater goby, a small fish species listed as endangered. The intense underwater noise generated by pile driving can disrupt the tidewater goby's communication, navigation, and breeding behaviors, with noise levels reaching up to 220 dB, which is harmful to marine life. Additionally, the physical process of pile driving can disturb the sediment and water quality in the goby's habitat, leading to increased turbidity and changes in the chemical composition of the water, making it less suitable for the goby's eggs and larvae. The Navy should avoid tidewater goby spawning season	In lieu of available data to ascertain typical species specific exposure periods, the Navy's assumption is that most animals (including marine mammals) would avoid areas with higher sound levels that could cause injury over periods of time shorter than 5 minutes. Although some individual marine mammals may not immediately avoid the sound source, criteria for AINJ and TTS are conservative in that they do not account for recovery of hearing effects during breaks in sound exposure (e.g., silent periods as the hammer is repositioned, when pinnipeds lift their heads out of the water or haul out, etc.). This likely results in an over estimation of marine mammal take under the current analysis. Regarding the tidewater goby, the Navy is not currently consulting with USFWS on this species as its potential to occur

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	from May to July for pile driving activities at Port Hueneme. Contrary to statements in the DEIS, the vibrations and pressure waves from pile driving can also cause physical injuries to the tidewater goby, including damage to their swim bladders and other organs.	in the HCTT Study Area is considered rare due to its preference for brackish waters (outside the Study Area), and therefore additional mitigation measures are not warranted. However, for reference, the Navy has conducted an analysis on the potential impacts of pile driving on fishes, which is applicable to all ESA-listed and non-listed populations that could occur within the Study Area. The analysis and the conclusions for fish populations are provided in Section 4 of Appendix E and summarized in Section 3.6 of the EIS/OEIS. Furthermore, the methods for analysis are summarized in Appendix E.2, which states clearly that expected sound source levels would be much lower than 220 dB for all pile sizes and types, resulting in relatively small ranges to potential injurious effects. The Navy has concluded that all potential impacts, including potential injuries from sound exposure (as described in Appendix D), would not likely lead to population-level impacts for fishes anticipated to occur in the Study Area. Due to the periodic nature of pile driving training activities, any disturbance of sediment would be minor, temporary, and localized and would likely recover within a few days to weeks after cessation of the activity.
EJ-31	The DEIS inadequately explains the effects of the electronic warfare systems. Electromagnetic fields can have notable impacts on sharks and rays, including vulnerable oceanic whitetip, scalloped hammerhead, and tope sharks. Elasmobranchs have specialized sensory organs, which allow them to detect electric fields in their environment. Electricity can affect elasmobranchs' orientation, navigation, and prey detection, with potential consequences for their egg-laying sites, foraging habitats, and migration routes. Additionally, electromagnetic fields can affect the foraging behavior of sharks. They may be attracted to or repelled by the electromagnetic fields, which can alter their feeding habits and impact their overall health and survival. The DEIS fails to adequately examine the impacts of its electric warfare activities on sensitive shark species. However, the DEIS's justification for why electronic warfare has no effects—because it is a small	The EIS/OEIS fully analyzes the effects of electromagnetic energy on marine species, including sharks. The research that indicates a reaction from sharks requires an electromagnetic field that is significantly stronger than those generated by proposed activities. Please see Appendix F, Section F.6.1.1.

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	addition to the earth's magnetic field and similar to a vessel— are a poor substitute for the required analysis of what the effects would be on feeding and deterrence from the areas.	
EJ-32	New information bearing on the impacts of the Navy's activities includes information indicating that the Navy is increasingly using unmanned systems. These have not been adequately evaluated in the DEIS. For example, unmanned vessels lack the lookouts that the Navy relies on to mitigate effects to marine mammals.	All unmanned systems proposed for use fall within the larger category of aircraft and vessels. As stated in Appendix H, the terms "aircraft" and "vessels" can also refer to their unmanned variants: unmanned aircraft systems (UASs), unmanned surface vessels (USVs), and unmanned underwater vehicles. Because the unmanned systems are generally smaller, slower, and quieter than their manned counterparts, the EIS/OEIS took the conservative approach of analyzing the impacts of all aircraft and vessels as manned unless the unmanned system had unique stressors associated with its operation. All Navy vessels and unmanned vehicles follow standard operating procedures (SOPs) that are primarily in place to provide for safety and mission success. Some of these SOPs may also benefit ESA-listed species by reducing the risk of vessel strike or disturbance. Unmanned vessels include a wide array of sizes and operating characteristics. Larger and faster systems with the potential to affect marine mammals or present a safety risk have embedded sensors designed for avoidance of large objects. For those activities that include a support vessel that has positive control over an unmanned vehicle, one Lookout is required on that surface support vessel. Although there has not been a whale ship strikes from USVs, out of an abundance of caution for this newer larger class of USVs, the Navy included large USV annual at-sea days in the calculation of estimated vessel strike probabilities.
EJ-33	California. A recent NOAA survey tracked marine mammals off West Coast and found that several species are moving northward. This movement is due to marine heatwaves and other ecosystem changes that have become more frequent in the past decade. The survey observed over 1,354 groups of	The marine mammal species distribution models developed to support the Navy's acoustic effects analysis rely on years of survey data that include data collected during large-scale oceanic and atmospheric fluctuations (e.g., strong El Niño events). Furthermore, the models incorporate habitat variables

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	cetaceans, including dolphins, whales, and porpoises, and recorded unusual sightings of species like striped dolphins off the coasts of Oregon and Washington, areas where they are not typically found. This northward shift in marine mammal distribution could have significant implications for the DEIS and modeling for the Navy's proposed activities. The DEIS must consider these changes in species distribution to evaluate accurately potential impacts on marine life and implement appropriate mitigation measures.	(e.g., sea surface temperature) known to influence species' distributions to predict species densities. "Data used to develop the species distribution models included survey data collected during 2014, which was documented as an anomalously warm year in the study area when large distributional shifts in cetacean abundance were observed. Species distribution models were able to capture these substantial shifts in distribution (see Becker et al., 2018; DOI: 10.1111/ddi.12867), and the models used to support the Navy's acoustic effects analyses included the 2014 data as well as an additional year of survey data in 2018 (see Becker et al., 2020, NOAA Technical Memo # 638). While marine heatwaves and similar phenomenon may influence shifts in species distributions, other factors (e.g., prey distribution) are important factors that need to be considered along with coupled ocean-atmosphere changes.
EJ-34	Beaked whales: The DEIS underestimates the potential harm to beaked whales off California. The Navy estimates significant levels of behavioral responses and temporary threshold shift, but it concludes that there will be 0 to 0.5 auditory injuries from sonar and no mortality from other activities. What is known, however, about beaked whales is that they are extremely sensitive to sonar and have experienced numerous mass strandings caused by military sonar. Beaked whales are vulnerable to stranding events caused by changes in diving patterns and vocalizations in response to sonar. Moreover, beaked whales exhibit site fidelity making them vulnerable to population-level impacts from military activities off California. Marine mammals with high site fidelity have more limited options for avoiding impacts of a high- intensity noise. In a recent review of impacts on beaked whales, the authors identified military sonar as a key threat. A new study also provides information on the types of conditions that increase the presence of Cuvier's beaked whales, which is useful because they are difficult to detect.	Populations of marine mammals with strong site-fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) in Southern California within range complexes where decades of Navy training and testing have occurred have been surveyed yearly and, combined with a lack of strandings associated with Navy activities in Southern California does present strong evidence that HCTT activities are not causing adverse impacts to marine mammal populations; however, this is not the only evidence relied upon in the analysis provided in the HCTT EIS/OEIS to reach this conclusion. The Navy funds researchers worldwide, including in Southern California waters, to study the potential impacts of sonar training and testing activities on the marine environment. This data, along with all other best available science reviewed in Appendix D, Section D.4.5 ; and Appendix E, Section 2.1.1 is relied upon to analyze potential impacts to marine mammals exposed to training and testing activities. In all areas where beaked whales and other sensitive species are shown to occur, particularly where they may be resident to an area that includes frequent sonar use, animals continue to use the area and often demonstrate no response or

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		only a short-term response to the sonar. Cetaceans near the PMRF range in Hawaii that are known or likely to be resident to the area have been observed moving towards areas of active sonar while continuing their normal behavior, and beaked whales at all Navy ranges seem to leave the area during periods of sonar but then return to the area almost immediately after the sonar has ceased (see Section D.4.5 [Behavioral Reactions] for more details on these studies). Data on beaked whales from the Pacific Missile Range Facility show that they likely leave the range or move to the edges of the range during the multi-day Submarine Command Course training events that involve mid-frequency active sonar, but then return to their normal distribution on the range within a few days after the end of the event (Manzano-Roth et al. 2016). However, an analysis of their dive data indicated no reduction in dives on the range following shorter training events that may have involved mid-frequency active sonar or explosives (Henderson et al. 2016). These combined data seem to indicate no or limited responses by beaked whales to short duration training events, and avoidance of longer term training events but with a rapid recovery to baseline behavior. Marine mammal strandings have been a historic and ongoing occurrence attributed to a variety of causes, both natural and anthropogenic. Over the last 50 years, increased awareness and reporting has led to more information about species affected and raised concerns about anthropogenic sources of stranding. While there have been limited numbers of marine mammal mortalities potentially associated with U.S. Navy activities, the root causes are not clear in most cases. The EIS/OEIS fully complies with NEPA and the extensive studies and analysis, in light of the best available science, exceeds the required hard look at impacts to marine mammals. All of the potential effects from Navy training and testing activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the Draft EIS/OEIS. See for

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		example the discussion on nitrogen decompression in Appendix D, Section D.4.7.1.1. Finally, in Appendix K, the Navy used scientific data on vulnerable or sensitive species such as beaked whales to derive the geographic mitigation areas in the Draft EIS/OEIS. This analysis is then compared against the operational needs of the Navy for its training and testing activities to develop mitigation procedures and areas, which have the least practicable adverse impact on marine mammals and allow the Navy to meet its training and testing requirements.
EJ-35	North Pacific right whales: The DEIS failed to analyze the effects of the action on critically endangered North Pacific right whales. To comply with NEPA's "hard look" mandate, the Navy must consider vessel strikes, sonar and explosions. Recent observations demonstrate that North Pacific right whales overlap with the HCTT Study Area. North Pacific right whales migrate south to areas like southern California for the winter. Between 1990 and 2023, eleven individuals were confirmed in ten sightings during the winter and spring in the southeastern North Pacific, all off the coast of California from February to May except two: one off the southern tip of Baja California, Mexico, in February 1996; and one at the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary in April 1996. North Pacific right whales were seen twice in California in 2017, off La Jolla and in the Channel Islands, as well as a sighting of a skim-feeding right whale off Año Nuevo in April 2022 and an animal in Monterey Bay in March 2023. In May 2024, a North Pacific right whale was observed off the California coast near Marin County. The North Pacific right whale is one of the most critically endangered whales in the world, with a total population hovering around only 26–31 individuals. The serious injury or death of even one whale from this population—particularly if it is a reproductive-aged female—would have catastrophic consequences for this species' survival and recovery. Exposure to sonar can cause them to alter their migration routes, potentially leading to collisions with ships or entanglement in fishing gear. The Navy must not only evaluate the impacts of sonar, but it must also consider the risks of vessel traffic on the species.	Applying the best scientific information available, and as described in Section 3.7.2 of the EIS/OEIS, there is ample evidence to support the Navy's conclusion that North Pacific right whales are unlikely to be present in the Study Area. In consultation with NMFS as a cooperating agency, the scientists in the NMFS Office of Protected Resources have agreed with this assessment. While it is possible that right whales in the North Pacific may, in the future, expand their current range, it remains unlikely they would be present in Hawaii or Southern California in the period covered by the analysis in the EIS/OEIS. If North Pacific right whales did return to Hawaii and Southern California waters, Navy and NMFS would be required by ESA to reopen the regulatory consultation regarding that species. Finally, with regard to the comment recommendations for research, the Navy will continue to work with its Scientific Advisory Group to determine appropriate research objectives. However, the Navy has been funding and continues to fund passive acoustic monitoring in the areas of the Pacific where training and testing occurs. For details on the Scientific Advisory Group and the Navy's monitoring efforts, see http://www.navymarinespeciesmonitoring.us/

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EJ-36	Southern sea otters: Southern sea otters are expanding their range south, and the DEIS inadequately examines the impacts of the proposed activities on these ESA-listed sea otters. It is particularly concerning that the expanded California Study Area includes more northern areas, which are likely to have sea otter impacts. Range expansion is important to the conservation and recovery of the sea otters, and they must not be displaced from new habitats by Navy activities. Notably, there is also an important population on San Nicholas Island. Southern sea otters, which rely on their acute hearing for detecting predators and foraging may experience behavioral or auditory effects from noise and sonar. Auditory effects or masking can impair their ability to hunt and avoid danger, and affect their survival and reproduction rates. The cumulative impact of these disturbances can contribute to the decline of this already vulnerable species. The DEIS improperly discounts impacts on sea otters from sonar and noise because otters spend time with their heads above the water. It acknowledges that the amphibious approach activities would overlap with sea otter habitat, however, it concludes with insufficient support that mitigation measures will avoid sea otter strikes. The DEIS also fails adequately to analyze the disturbance and displacement of sea otters from activities.	The EIS/OEIS fully analyzes the potential effects on sea otters. See Section 3.7 and Appendix C, Section C.6.2.11. Also see Section 2.4.4.1 in Appendix E for the analysis of acoustic impacts to the southern sea otter. The analysis in this EIS/OEIS finds no estimated take and no significant impacts to Southern sea otters under this Proposed Action. A detailed discussion of potential acoustic impacts to Southern sea otters is in Appendix E. The behavioral responses of sea otters from sonar are discussed in Section D.4.5.4.1 in Appendix D. Briefly, limited research on the effects of noise on sea otters show decreases in diving behavior, resulting in their heads being out of the water and therefore not accumulating sound energy underwater. The dive profile for sea otters used in this analysis is shown in the Dive Distribution and Group Size Parameters for Marine Species Occurring in the U.S. Navy's Atlantic and Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Areas technical report (August 2024). Southern sea otters in the Study Area are typically present in nearshore areas where they are unlikely to be directly exposed or impacted by Navy sonar or other transducers as shown in the U.S. Navy Marine Species Density Database Phase IV for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area technical report (January 2024). In consultation with USFWS under the ESA, the Action Proponents and USFWS agreed that southern sea otters could occur in or near two of the amphibious approach lanes in Northern and Central California. For the protection of the southern sea otter during amphibious training in these two areas, amphibious landing craft and boats will avoid kelp beds to the maximum extent practicable and will not exceed 10 knots speed in water depths less than 25 meters.
EJ-37	Humpback whales: The endangered Central America/Southern Mexico-California-Oregon- Washington Stock of humpback whales has a population estimate of fewer than 2,000 individuals. They have critical habitat designated in the California Study Area and are vulnerable to the effects of	The EIS/OEIS fully analyzes the potential effects on humpback whales, including the Central America/Southern Mexico-California-Oregon- Washington stock. See Section 3.7 and Appendix C, Section C.6.2.4. Also see Section 2.4.1.4 in

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	sonar and vessel strikes, among other threats. The DEIS inadequately examines the impact of the proposed activities on these endangered humpback whales and their critical habitat.	Appendix E for the analysis of acoustic impacts to humpback whales.
EJ-38	Blue whales: The California Study Area represents an important feeding zone for blue whales, and they have a high probability of occurrence in the area. Blue whales are highly sensitive to harmful impacts from sonar. The proposed activities threaten endangered blue whales from noise disturbance, vessel traffic, and explosive detonations. Anthropogenic threats are preventing the recovery of blue whales. A recent abundance estimate for the Eastern North Pacific blue whale is 1,898 whales. This blue whale population has shown no signs of recovery, and removal of more than one blue whale will impede its recovery.	The EIS/OEIS fully analyzes the potential effects on blue whales, including the Eastern North Pacific and Central North Pacific stocks. See Section 3.7 and Appendix C, Section C.6.2.1. See Chapter 5 and Appendix K for mitigation measures and mitigation areas that benefit the blue whale. Also see Section 2.4.1.1 in Appendix E for the analysis of acoustic impacts to blue whales. There are no predicted injury or mortality takes of blue whales from sonar or explosives. Although the Navy and Coast Guard are each requesting vessel strike take for one blue whale over the 7-year MMPA permit period of this project, there has been no known occurrence of a Navy or Coast Guard strike of a blue whale and none is anticipated.
EJ-39	Southern resident killer whales: Southern resident killer whales are critically endangered and have critical habitat in the California Study Area. Southern resident killer whales are in decline and need bold, swift actions to prevent their extinction. There are only 73 southern residents remaining. NMFS has identified the southern resident killer whale as one of only eight animals that are “Species in the Spotlight” because of their very high risk of extinction. The southern resident population has now dropped to its lowest point in more than 40 years and is continuing to decline, with significant losses just in the last five years. Scientists report that there are only 26 breeding adults in the southern resident killer whale population, and only 14 adult females have successfully given birth in the last decade. A recent genetic analysis found that only two adult males fathered 52 percent of the calves born since 1990. A population viability study from 2018 indicated that southern residents have an annual decline of 0.91%, meaning the population would reach an expected size of only 75 by 2036. However, the southern residents have already surpassed that dangerous milestone, and their numbers continue to plummet. The loss of even a single whale can substantially reduce the probability of survival and recovery for this	As shown in Section 3.7, this analysis predicts no significant impacts to Southern Resident killer whales. Appendix E further details the acoustic impact analysis that found no modeled impacts to this stock. This stock is largely residential to the Salish Sea, north of the California Study Area. While a sub-set of Southern Resident killer whales (K and L pods) may travel into the NOCAL Range Complex from January to May, where they could be exposed to noise in the designated small and resident population BIA from a limited number of military readiness activities, they typically do not travel south of Monterey, California. Additionally, due to the mitigation measures outlined in Appendix K, visual identification of killer whales within a vessel’s mitigation zone would warrant the cessation of sonar. Since killer whales have relatively high sightability, the Navy is confident in its assessment that Southern Resident killer whales within the California portion of the HCTT Study Area would not be impacted by sonar.

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	endangered population. The recovery plan for southern residents stresses the importance of "agency coordination and established MMPA mechanisms to minimize any potential impacts from human activities involving acoustic sources, including Navy tactical sonar." Southern resident killer whales depend on their acoustic environment for their survival. They rely on echolocation to target their prey and also depend on acoustic communication. Scientists believe that foraging during their long migration down the California coast in the winter is especially important for their survival and recovery. Therefore, noise can significantly impede their fitness during their time off the California coast. In May 2003, the U.S. Navy vessel USS Shoup was conducting a mid-frequency sonar exercise while passing through Haro Strait, between Washington's San Juan Islands and Canada's Vancouver Island. According to one contemporaneous account, "[d]ozens of porpoises and killer whales seemed to stampede all at once . . . in response to a loud electronic noise echoing through" the Strait. Several field biologists present at the scene reported observing a pod of endangered orcas bunching near shore and engaging in very abnormal behavior consistent with avoidance, a minke whale "porpoising" away from the sonar ship, and Dall's porpoises fleeing the vessel in large numbers. Eleven harbor porpoises—an abnormally high number given the average stranding rate of six per year—were found beached in the area of the exercise. The DEIS fails to adequately consider the vulnerability of this critically endangered killer whale population and describe the disturbance and foraging losses that will result from the proposed activities—particularly sonar and vessel noise.	
EJ-40	Hawaii Sharks and Rays: The DEIS fails to address the significant extinction risks faced by coral reef- associated sharks and rays in Hawai'i, as highlighted by Sherman et al. (2023). Nearly 59% of these species are at risk due to overfishing, climate change, and habitat degradation. The report also indicates that large-bodied species, which play key ecological roles in nutrient cycling and prey regulation, are particularly vulnerable. The exclusion of these concerns from the DEIS represents a major gap in assessing biodiversity impacts. The DEIS does not incorporate the latest population decline data or consider the broader ecological consequences	The threats facing all species of fish, including rays and sharks, was included in the analysis in the EIS/OEIS in Appendix C, Section C. 5.1.4. As stated in Section 4.3.6 of the EIS/OEIS, "[a]lthough it is possible that the Proposed Action could contribute incremental stressors to a small number of individuals, which would further compound effects on a given individual already experiencing stress, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Action has the potential to put additional stress on entire populations. Therefore, it is anticipated that the incremental contribution of the Proposed Action, when added

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	of species loss, particularly the role of sharks and rays in maintaining reef ecosystem stability. The omission of these findings results in an incomplete assessment of potentially devastating environmental consequences for protected species like the Oceanic whitetip sharks and giant manta rays.	to the effects of all other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, would not result in measurable additional significant effects on fishes in the Study Area or beyond." Also, mitigation measures for underwater explosives include a requirement for divers to observe the area for hammerhead sharks and manta rays.
EJ-41	Minke Whales: Minke whales occur in the action area and are extremely sensitive to sonar exposure. Researchers found significant behavioral changes in the movement and calling behavior of minke whales in response to sonar activities during U.S. Navy training at the Pacific Missile Range Facility in the waters off Kauaʻi. This is particularly concerning as the behavior being disrupted was most likely related to breeding as it is believed that the calling of minke whales in the Hawaiʻi region from October through April relates to males calling to attract mates. The cessation of calling as a result of increased sonar activities could lead to reduced reproductive output for this population.	Sonar exposure within the HCTT Study Area that has the potential to disrupt communication efforts by minke whales would take place during limited time periods and in variable locations and distances from the calling animal. Masking of minke whale vocalizations would be limited as their calls are relatively lower frequency than mid- and high-frequency sonar. As shown in Section 3.7, most predicted impacts to minke whales are temporary auditory effects that are unlikely to contribute to any long-term impacts to individuals or the population. On average, minke whales in this stock would be impacted less than once per year during a maximum year of activity, as shown in Appendix E.
EJ-42	Pygmy Killer Whales: Pygmy killer whales have been involved in stranding events associated with high-intensity mid-frequency sonar. Recent research suggests that the rarity of pygmy killer whales around Kauaʻi and Niʻihau, relative to the amount of survey effort off those islands, may be related to the regular Navy testing and training activities that occur there. Additionally, because “pygmy killer whales are rarely encountered around Kauaʻi and Niʻihau, they are likely to be naïve animals that may be more susceptible to disturbance or mass strandings. Although no pygmy killer whale strandings have been documented on Kauaʻi or Niʻihau, the likelihood of stranded animals being detected in Hawaiʻi is low.”	Section D.4.7.1.3 in Appendix D, and Section 2.3.1 (Severity of Behavioral Response to Military Readiness Activities) in Appendix E discuss the potential for stranding due to sonar and other transducers. The Navy’s technical report titled Marine Mammal Strandings Associated with U.S. Navy Sonar Activities from the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS (https://www.nepa.navy.mil/Portals/20/Documents/Pacific%20Fleet/HSTTEIS/FINAL_PIII_Navy%20Stranding_TR_submital.pdf) also discusses strandings in further detail. The cited literature (Baird et al., 2024) does not provide a correlation between naval sonar activities and stranding events in pygmy killer whales. Also, see Chapter 5 and Appendix K for mitigation measures and mitigation areas that benefit the pygmy killer whales.

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EJ-43	Dwarf Sperm Whales: Dwarf sperm whales have also been involved in stranding events associated with high-intensity naval mid-frequency active sonar use. While only a single stock of dwarf sperm whales previously was recognized in Hawaiian waters, new research indicates that there is also a small resident population. Due to this species' susceptibility to stranding in response to the use of military sonars, this population warrants not only recognition, but separate management from the much larger offshore population.	The cited literature (Baird et al., 2021) does not provide a correlation between naval sonar activities and stranding events in dwarf sperm whales. The Navy assesses impacts based on the stock structure managed by NMFS (see NOAA Fisheries Marine Mammal Stock Assessment Reports – Dwarf Sperm Whale). Table 2.4-20 in Appendix E does report estimated impacts within the small/residential Hawaiian population of dwarf sperm whales within the described BIAs. Also, see Appendix K for mitigation areas that benefit the dwarf sperm whales.
EJ-44	Main Hawaiian Islands Insular False Killer Whales: The endangered main Hawaiian Islands insular false killer whale population is critically declining, with only approximately 138 individuals remaining. The Navy's planned activities pose a significant threat to this imperiled species, as some of these operations are expected to take place within designated critical habitats. These activities have the potential to disturb or degrade essential features of these habitats, interfering with the species' ability to forage and communicate effectively. Given the precarious status of this population, even temporary disturbances could contribute to long-term declines, increasing the risk of extinction.	The Navy's acoustic effects model predicts no auditory or non-auditory injuries to false killer whales in this stock and relatively few TTS exposures (refer to Appendix E for details). The model predicts that individuals would be affected approximately once per year and that the potential for long-term effects to the stock is low. Two of the four essential features or characteristics defining critical habitat for this stock would not be affected by the Proposed Action. A detailed analysis of potential effects on the remaining two characteristics is provided in Appendix E and explains why the Navy concluded that the Proposed action may affect but is not likely to adversely affect false killer whale critical habitat. In addition, the Navy is implementing geographic mitigation (see Appendix K) to reduce the effects of sonar on marine mammals, including false killer whales and their critical habitat.
EJ-45	The DEIS's conclusion that the two action alternatives would cause "less than significant effects" to cultural resources is completely unsupported. DEIS vol. 1 at ES-15; see also id. at 3.10-32. As the DEIS acknowledges, "Native Hawaiians who participated in Section 106 consultation for past EISs were concerned about any harm the Proposed Action would bring to the natural world, including harm to Kanaloa, who manifests as the ocean itself." Id. at 3.10-16. The DEIS further notes that Native Hawaiians believe that "[m]ilitary readiness activities within the Hawaii Study Area … hinder	The EIS/OEIS analysis does support less than significant impacts on cultural resources because military readiness activities are conducted in a manner that avoids known cultural resources. The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also consulted with Hawaiian civic

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	their cultural beliefs and their ability to practice cultural traditions." Id. Among other things: Due to the close relationship Native Hawaiians have with aumakua living in the ocean, Native Hawaiians believe they are able to sense distress felt by marine life due to in-water military readiness activities. The presence of military warships and submarines in the waters around Hawaii is viewed as causing an elemental imbalance in nature. The military's presence in and around the Hawaiian Islands is also viewed as disrespectful and in contrast to the Native Hawaiian belief that they are a peaceable and neutral nation. During past consultations, it was consistently conveyed that military readiness activities in waters within the Study Area causes [sic] the Native Hawaiians emotional and at times physical distress. Id. While the DEIS catalogues the severe impacts that HCTT activities cause to cultural resources and the significant harm to cultural practitioners that they inflict, the Navy fails to give the impacts the weight they deserve, dismissing them as not "significant." Id. at 3.10-32. The Navy's failure to offer a "rational connection between facts and judgment" does not "pass muster under the arbitrary and capricious standard," Motor Vehicle Mfrs. Ass'n of U.S., Inc. v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co., 463 U.S. 29, 56 (1983), and violates NEPA's command to provide an accurate assessment of "foreseeable adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented." 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C)(ii).	clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings.
EJ-46	The DEIS fails adequately to examine the effects on air quality in already overburdened communities of expanding training and testing activities off California. For example, communities living near Long Beach are in the highest percentiles for pollution vulnerability. Port pollution is a key contributor to air pollution in Long Beach, which will be exacerbated by the proposed activities. The 2023 report by the American Lung Association has once again highlighted the disproportionate burden of air pollution faced by the Long Beach community. This year's findings underscored the alarming reality that the Los Angeles-Long Beach area remains the most polluted by smog in the entire country. Shockingly, there have been over 160 days of high ozone pollution recorded since 2019, and it is the nation's smog capital.	The Study Area does include Southern California; however, training and testing activities within 12 nautical miles of Long Beach would be rare and include primarily small boats, similar to non-military vessels that make up the vast majority of current vessel traffic in the Long Beach area. As indicated in Appendix A of the EIS/OEIS, only one activity could occur near Long Beach, the Civilian Port Defense activity. This activity could occur within the California Study Area no more than 3 times annually. The effects on air quality from implementation of the Proposed Action would be less than significant across the entire Study Area.

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	Ground-level smog is a potent respiratory irritant that leads to respiratory distress, exacerbates conditions like asthma, long-term respiratory illness, and even mortality. The community in West Long Beach has extensive exposure to air pollution, heightened risks of pollution-related health problems, and the South Coast Air Basin is in non-attainment of ozone and particulate matter.98 The West Long Beach community is about 90 percent people of color and immigrant residents who are disproportionately burdened by pollution.	
EJ-47	The DEIS provides only a cursory, conclusory description of effects in its cumulative impacts analysis, which "does not offer any more than the kind of 'general statements about possible effects and some risk' which [the Ninth Circuit has] held to be insufficient to constitute a 'hard look.'" Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Ctr. v. Bureau of Land Mgmt., 387 F.3d 989, 995 (9th Cir. 2004) (citation omitted). Among other things that should be updated in the flawed analysis, the impact of the Navy's activities must be considered in light of the significant impact that entanglement in fishing gear is having on threatened and endangered species. The DEIS must consider that humpback, fin, and gray whale stocks experience significant anthropogenic mortality. Specifically, 2024 was an alarming year for whale entanglements in fishing gear. NOAA Fisheries has released preliminary data showing that 34 whales have been confirmed entangled in fishing gear off the U.S. West Coast in 2024. That number is higher than for any other year since 2018. Shortly after the release of the latest numbers, another entangled humpback whale was spotted by whale watchers near Orange County, California. Most of the entangled whales were humpbacks, with 29 confirmed reports, along with reports of four gray whales and one fin whale. The bulk of the entanglements were reported in California, with 23, but they occurred all along the Pacific coast. Between 2004 and 2023 there were 256 confirmed humpback whale entanglements off the West Coast of the United States. This represents only a fraction of the number of whales injured and killed by fishing gear entanglements because many of them are never reported or observed.	The analysis in this EIS/OEIS assesses direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on marine mammals. Direct, indirect, and combined impacts are assessed in Section 3.7. Cumulative impacts are addressed in Chapter 4. Whale entanglements were specifically considered throughout the analysis, both as a potential for entanglement from military expended materials and as an ongoing risk from fishing gear (see Appendix C, Sections C.6.2.1.4, C.6.2.2.4, C.6.2.3.4, etc.).
EJ-48	The Navy's heavy reliance on increased observer coverage as mitigation for its activities is improper. Having observer coverage is necessary, but, on its own, provides insufficient mitigation for the harm that HCTT activities	As described in Section 5.6.2, vessel strike mitigation involves maneuvering to maintain a specified distance from marine mammals and sea turtles, which may include reducing speed.

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	inflict. Lookouts are not as effective in mitigating acoustic impacts as time-area restrictions. Courts have held that an agency may not choose the lesser mitigation option of lookouts to protect marine mammals from military sonar, "especially knowing that many potential disruptions to marine mammal behavior will be difficult to detect or avoid through lookouts." Observers cannot see everything. Visibility is limited, even in ideal weather conditions, and even more so in choppy water conditions, in times of low light, and at night. The first image below shows that, even in calm conditions, a 50-foot North Atlantic right whale is nearly impossible to see. And the second image shows that a drone can assist in detection. The DEIS improperly eliminates effective mitigation measures from consideration, including alternative technologies and passive acoustic monitoring instrumentation. However, there are sufficiently beneficial mitigation efforts through the use of drones and passive acoustic monitoring, which is particularly useful in an instrumented range as these. Mitigation methods the Navy should implement include: • Imposing a 10-knot ship speed limit in whale mitigation areas to reduce the risk of vessel strikes.	As described in Section 3.0.4, vessels used under the Proposed Action are required to operate in accordance with applicable navigation rules. Implementing mandatory vessel speed restrictions is deemed impractical based on safety, sustainability, and mission criteria as described in row 16 of Table 5-20. In a review of Navy unpublished data, the multi-year average of U.S. Navy surface ship speeds on the continental shelf off California is between 10-15 knots.
EJ-49	• Improving detection of marine mammals through the use of alternative detection methods including thermal and acoustic methods.	The Navy is currently funding research for the development and efficacy of thermal imaging systems as potential vessel strike mitigation through the Living Marine Resources program. Currently, the technology has not reached the level of performance needed for deployment during military readiness activities for mitigation uses. If thermal/IR mitigation technologies mature to the state where they are determined to be sufficiently effective at mitigating marine mammal impacts when considering the range of environmental conditions analogous to where the Action Proponents train and test, the species that could co-occur in space and time with the activities, then the Action Proponents will assess their compatibility with military readiness applications. This would include a practicality assessment of the budget and acquisition process (including costs associated with designing, building, installing, maintaining, and manning equipment), the logistical

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		and physical considerations for retrofitting platforms with the appropriate equipment and their associated maintenance, repairs, or replacements (e.g., conducting engineering studies to ensure compatibility with existing shipboard systems), the resource considerations for training personnel to effectively operate the equipment, and the potential security and classification issues. The Action Proponents intend to continue to use passive acoustic monitoring prior to activities involving explosive sonobuoys and explosive torpedoes, and during sinking exercises, as required in Phase III. During active acoustic use, Navy assets with passive acoustic monitoring capabilities (such as sonobuoys) that are already participating in an activity will continue to monitor for marine mammals, as described in Section 5.6. However, the fluidity and nature of military readiness activities (e.g., fast-paced and mobile readiness evolutions), as well as the limitations of these monitoring capabilities (e.g. inability to determine the location of a vocalizing animal) make it impractical for passive acoustic devices to be used as precise real-time indicators of marine mammal location for mitigation (e.g., active sonar power downs or shutdowns, ceasing use of explosives) without an accompanying visual sighting. Furthermore, the Navy's instrumented ranges do not have the capabilities to be used effectively for mitigation. Most notably, there is not a real-time feed of hydrophone data to vessel and aircraft operators. The Canadian DND's project seeking real-time detection of marine mammals during sonar operations is in development. The Action Proponents are following progress and lessons learned.
EJ-50	• Restricting activities during times of low visibility.	Although the majority of active sonar use occurs during the day, the Action Proponents may have a nighttime training requirement for some systems. Training in both good visibility (e.g., daylight, favorable weather conditions) and low visibility (e.g., nighttime, inclement weather conditions) is vital because

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		environmental differences between day and night and varying weather conditions affect sound propagation and the detection capabilities of sonar. Temperature layers that move up and down in the water column and ambient noise levels can vary significantly between night and day. This affects sound propagation and could affect how sonar systems function and are operated. As described in Table 3.0-27, most explosive events are conducted during daylight hours. Aircrew are not authorized to deploy ordnance through extensive cloud cover where visual clearance for non-participants is not possible. The two exceptions to this requirement are (1) when operating in the open ocean, clearance for non-participating aircraft and vessels through radar surveillance is acceptable; and (2) when the officer conducting the exercise or civilian equivalent accepts responsibility for the safeguarding of airborne and surface traffic.
EJ-51	• Capping the maximum level of activities each year.	As stated in Section 5.1 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, mitigation is designed to "ensure that the Proposed Action has a negligible impact on marine mammal species and stocks, and effects the least practicable adverse impact on marine mammal species or stocks and their habitat." Also in Chapter 5 are the practicality assessment criteria, including criterion 3 which requires any implemented mitigation measure to allow for the Action Proponents to continue meeting mission objectives and statutory mandates. The analysis of impacts indicates that existing mitigation measures provide the most benefit to the species without jeopardizing mission objectives and statutory mandates. Any further limits or caps on activities would risk those objectives and mandates with limited or no benefit to marine species.
EJ-52	• Avoiding testing and training exercises in key migration corridors and prime feeding areas. • Avoiding testing and training exercises during key feeding times.	As described in Appendix K of the HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS, BIAs were assessed to inform geographic mitigation areas. This assessment resulted in a variety of changes including modification and elimination of existing areas, as well as the creation of new mitigation areas. In most cases, the entire

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	• Avoiding testing and training exercises in areas where the whale presence in the area is "High" or "Very High," per WhaleSafe.	extent of BIAs cannot be avoided and still allow the Navy to conduct its Title 10 training and testing responsibilities. For the HCTT EIS/OEIS, the Navy is proposing a significant increase in geographic mitigation spatial extent, much of which coincides with the revised BIA spatial extent, to account for protection of multiple species where practicable.
EJ-53	• Maintain mitigation for the core feeding biologically important area for blue whales in the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. In the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS, only a small portion of the Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR) and its associated activities overlapped the SOCAL portion of the HSTT Study Area. A small portion of the original blue whale BIA overlapped with this area, which became the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area. Due to the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area and inclusion of PMSR sonar training and testing activities in the Proposed Action, continuing mitigation in the San Nicolas Island Mitigation Area and extending the temporal restrictions beyond the five months already proposed are impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives, and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples. Furthermore, given the addition of the Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Area and Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area, both of which cover significantly larger

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		geographic extents of the blue whale core feeding BIA, as well as core BIAs for other species, maintaining the San Nicolas Island Mitigation area would provide limited or no benefit to marine species.
EJ-54	• Prohibit sonar and explosives in all the whale mitigation areas off California from June through November.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. To further reduce activities or increase the period during which they are limited would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate.
EJ-55	• Aircraft should not be exempt from mitigation areas.	Aircraft are not exempt from mitigation areas. As detailed in Section 5.7 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS, several geographic mitigation areas have proposed requirements which apply to aircraft (e.g., restrictions or prohibitions on explosive use, an annual cap on dipping sonar, etc.).
EJ-56	The Ninth Circuit has emphasized that consideration of the "no action" alternative is "an integral part of [NEPA's] statutory scheme." Bob Marshall Alliance, 852 F.2d at 1228. In the DEIS, the Navy includes a "no action" alternative, under which NMFS denies the "Navy's application for Letters of Authorization" under the MMPA, and "the Navy would not conduct the proposed training and testing activities." DEIS vol. 1 at 2-30. The DEIS fails, however, to provide any meaningful analysis of the benefits to the environment associated with cessation of the Navy's activities. Instead, for every category of potential environmental impact, the DEIS merely asserts in a cursory, conclusory manner that "baseline conditions of the existing	As required by NEPA, the Navy included the No Action Alternative. Additionally, the EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. The analysis of those action alternatives did not result in significant effects on the environment. Given that the effects from the preferred action alternative are not significant, it follows that the No Action Alternative would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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	environment for [that type of environmental impact] would either remain unchanged or would improve slightly after the current military readiness activities cease." Id. at 3.1-19 (Air Quality and Climate Change), 3.2-9 (Sediments and Water Quality), 3.3-4 (Vegetation), 3.4-6 (Marine Invertebrates), 3.5-7 (Abiotic Habitats), 3.6-9 (Fishes), 3.7-12 (Marine Mammals), 3.8-10 (Reptiles), 3.9-7 (Birds), 3.10-18 (Cultural Resources), 3.11-25 (Socioeconomic Resources and Environmental Justice), 3.12-8 (Public Health and Safety); see also id. at 3.8-111 (for sea turtles and sea snakes, "cessation of some stressors would be more beneficial than others"). For every category of potential impact, after making that conclusory, uninformative statement, the Navy flatly stated: "the No Action Alternative is not analyzed further within this section." The DEIS's lack of meaningful analysis is particularly striking in its discussion of marine mammals. As discussed above, in its DEIS and its LOA Request, the Navy acknowledges that HSTT activities inflict substantial harm on vulnerable species of whales, dolphins and other marine mammals, including several species listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA. During the seven-year period from December 2025 to December 2032, the Navy's preferred course of action (Alternative 1) would disrupt marine mammals' essential behavioral patterns (such as migration, surfacing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering) or cause temporary hearing loss (TTS) over 34 million times, would cause permanent hearing loss (PTS) or other injuries more than 36,000 times, and would kill scores of marine mammals. LOA Request at 5-2, (tbl. 5-1), 6-22 to 6-23. Given that HCTT activities have been barraging marine mammal populations for years with similar levels of harmful sonar, explosions, and vessel strikes, one would reasonably expect that eliminating this chronic source of stress and injury would have substantial environmental benefits, allowing resident populations of marine mammals to recover from years of abuse. See Forney, et al. (2017) (noting potential population-level impacts from long-term noise disturbance, particularly to small, resident populations of marine mammals). Without citation to any data or scientific analysis, however, the DEIS asserts in a conclusory manner that ceasing the Navy's training and testing under the "no action" alternative would leave the status of impacted marine mammal populations/stocks "unchanged" or, at	

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	best, "slightly improved from baseline conditions." DEIS vol. 1 at ES-11 to ES-13 (tbl. ES-1). NEPA demands much more than such "generalized conclusory statements." Klamath–Siskiyou Wildlands, 387 F.3d at 996. The Ninth Circuit has consistently held that "NEPA documents are inadequate if they contain only narratives of expert opinions." Id. To satisfy NEPA, the public must "receive the underlying environmental data from which [an agency] expert derived her opinion." Id. (quoting Idaho Sporting Cong. v. Thomas, 137 F.3d 1146, 1150 (9th Cir. 1998)). The absence of data and analysis to support the DEIS's conclusions about the "no action" alternative violates NEPA.	
EJ-57	The DEIS considers only three alternatives: (1) the statutorily mandated "no action" alternative; (2) an alternative consisting of all of the training and testing activities the Navy actually wants to conduct (Alternative 1; the preferred alternative); and (3) an outrageously exaggerated alternative that consists of far more training and testing than the Navy would ever want to conduct (Alternative 2; "the maximum number of training activities that could occur within a given year and assumes that the maximum level of activity would occur every year over a 7- year period"). DEIS vol. 1 at 2-32; see also id. at 2-30 to 2-31. Evaluating only this limited set of alternatives stacks the deck in favor of the Navy's preferred alternative. See id. at 2-30 (noting that the "no action" alternative "is inherently unreasonable in that it does not meet the purpose and need"). Nowhere does the Navy comply with NEPA's command to evaluate "choices or alternatives that might be pursued with less environmental harm." Lands Council, 395 F.3d at 1027 (emphasis added); see State of Cal. v. Block, 690 F.2d 753, 767-68 (9th Cir. 1982). The DEIS thus fails "to put on the table, for the deciding agency's and for the public's view, a sufficiently detailed statement of environmental impacts and alternatives so as to permit informed decision making." Lands Council, 395 F.3d at 1027. In Conservation Council for Hawai'i, the court faulted the Navy for refusing to consider alternatives that would reduce harm to marine mammals by prohibiting or restricting training and testing activities in specific areas identified as biologically important. The court rejected as "pure hyperbole" the Navy's claim that, "out of an ocean area bigger than the land mass occupied by the entire United States, it is simply not feasible to say that	As required by NEPA, the Navy included the No Action Alternative. Additionally, the EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. The analysis of those action alternatives did not result in significant effects on the environment. From an MMPA compliance standpoint, Navy must implement mitigation that benefits marine mammals in order to meet the least practicable adverse impact standard. Navy chooses to consider mitigation in all alternatives. The mitigation measures, both geographic and activity-based, are developed as a holistic mitigation package that will meet the least practicable adverse impact standard across all alternatives. Navy has considered the most recent science regarding BIAs in consultation with NMFS and is implementing mitigation that balances the need for realistic training against protecting marine species.

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	there is even a single square mile outside of the Humpback National Marine Sanctuary that the Navy could possibly avoid using for any period without reducing military readiness." Conservation Council for Hawai'i, 97 F. Supp. 3d at 1238. It concluded that "the Navy's categorical and sweeping statements, which allow for no compromise at all as to space, time, species, or condition, do not constitute the 'hard look' required by NEPA." Id. The current DEIS improves somewhat on the Navy's prior efforts by incorporating into both of its two action alternatives limits on some training and testing activities in some biologically important areas. See DEIS vol. 1 at 3.7-14 to 3.7-16; Id., app. K. The Navy persists, however, in insisting on analyzing only a single suite of time/area restrictions that would apply under either action alternative. DEIS vol 1 at 2-29. The DEIS's failure to analyze a range of alternative time and/or area restrictions to protect vulnerable populations of marine mammals unlawfully undermines NEPA's goal to ensure agency decision-makers have before them and take into proper account "all possible approaches to a particular project … which would alter the environmental impact and the cost-benefit balance.'" Bob Marshall Alliance, 852 F.2d at 1228. Considering a range of alternatives that restrict HCTT activities in different biologically important areas is also necessary to carry out NEPA's purpose: "to permit informed public comment on proposed action and any choices or alternatives that might be pursued with less environmental harm." Lands Council, 395 F.3d at 1027. The Navy's claim that it would not be "reasonable" to develop alternatives that consider different configurations of geographic and temporal limitations on HCTT activities ignores the core purpose of a NEPA alternatives analysis: to identify opportunities for a federal agency to reduce its environmental impacts while still accomplishing its mission. DEIS vol 1 at 2-29; see 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C)(iii). To accomplish that, the Navy must develop alternatives that compare the environmental impacts associated with carrying out training and testing activities in different locations and at different times of the year. The Navy must then present a reasonable range of such alternatives in its DEIS so that the public (including outside experts)	

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	can provide comments on both the Navy's "proposed action and any choices or alternatives that might be pursued with less environmental harm." Lands Council, 395 F.3d at 1027. Developing mitigation measures after the DEIS's issuance, see DEIS vol 1 at 2-29, precludes the "informed public participation" that NEPA requires. Block, 690 F.2d at 767. The Navy must therefore expand the range of alternatives under consideration and issue a revised DEIS for public comment. When it does so, the Navy must take into account updated science on biologically important areas, which the DEIS fails to incorporate. For the Hawai'i region, thirty-five BIAs were recently outlined or updated from the original 2015 initiative, with thirty-three focusing on small and resident odontocete populations and two targeting humpback whale reproductive areas. Additionally, two reproductive watch list areas were identified for minke whales and humpback whales. "Watch lists" are areas that cetacean experts believe are likely BIAs, but currently lack sufficient information to meet the criteria for a BIA. Even if the Navy refuses to include these additional BIAs for mitigation, then it is important to employ some sort of conservation or compensatory mitigation to address the harm that its proposed activities will have in those biologically important areas. At minimum, mitigation in those areas should have been considered as an alternative for informed decision-making.	
EJ-58	Finally, in developing a reasonable range of alternatives, the Navy should consider alternatives that include temporal shifts in training activities to reduce harm to marine mammals from vessel strikes. In many places, whales are present only seasonally, increasing the risk of vessel strikes. For example, blue whales congregate at certain times of year, and the risk of vessel strike to an aggregation of blue whales is much more harmful.	Seasonal or temporal restrictions would limit training and testing using sonar and explosives to narrow fragmented timeframes and locations that are not practicable with ensuring effective, realistic training and testing (see Table 5-20, row 22 "Additional seasonal restrictions for training and testing based on species occurrence or density"). Likewise, these restrictions would have a significant impact on the testing of current systems and the development of new systems. This would deny weapons system program managers and research, testing, and development program managers the flexibility to rapidly field or develop necessary systems due to the required use of multiple areas within limited timeframes. Therefore, implementing seasonal or temporal restrictions beyond what

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		has been analyzed in Appendix K and described in Chapter 5 would be impracticable and would prevent the military services from meeting their Title 10 requirements to successfully accomplish military readiness objectives.
EJ-Oral	David Henkin testified as follows: MR. HENKIN: Aloha mai kakou. AUDIENCE: Aloha. MR. HENKIN: My name is David Henkin, H-e-n-k-i-n. I'm an attorney with Earthjustice of Honolulu. And we're going to be submitting some more extensive written comments on the Draft EIS but since we're having a meeting, I wanted to share some thoughts tonight. The first one goes to just, overall, the readability of the Draft EIS and the way in which information could be presented clearly but is not, which defeats the purposes of having public participation. So, for example, many here tonight are concerned about the impacts on marine mammals from the sonar training to the explosive training. And we can't find in the main body of this document any summary of how much harm individual species would suffer. My understanding is that it's in one of the appendices. It's a several-thousand-page document, so I haven't gotten there yet. But it would be easy enough to put in the main body where most people are going to look or at least tally up all the different types of harm you're going to cause as the Navy already has in its application to the National Marine Fisheries Service for permit to cause this harm under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. So if you go to the -- you search on the web and you find their application, you'll find out that every year they're asking to kill 39 marine mammals. They're asking to cause what's called "Level A take. I'll translate that. That means harm to a marine mammal that's likely to result in injury, including permanent deafness to animals that rely on their hearing to survive, to over 6,300 marine mammals every year and over 6 million Level B takes which is harassing, significant harassing. So these animals cannot sleep, cannot eat, cannot communicate with their keiki. These are significant things which is why they're regulated in the Marine Mammal Protection	Due to EIS page limits required by the law, the HCTT authors focused the body of the EIS/OEIS on analysis and determination of effects, moving background information to appendices. The analysis of environmental consequences for marine mammals from acoustic stressors, for example, is in Section 3.7.3.2 within the main body of the EIS/OEIS. The model-predicted effects (estimated incidental takes) from acoustic and explosive sources can be found in Appendix E. Estimated probability of vessel strikes and the number of vessels strikes the Navy and Coast Guard are requesting from NMFS have been included in the Final EIS/OEIS in Section 3.7.3.5.1.1. Also, the Final EIS/OEIS includes additional summary tables in Appendix E for the combined acoustic and explosive impacts. As addressed in Section 2.3.1 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, in furtherance of national security objectives, foreign militaries may participate in multinational training and testing events in the Study Area. Foreign military activities that are planned and substantially controlled by the Action Proponents are included in the proposed action. These participants could be in various training or testing events described in Appendix A, and their effects are analyzed in this EIS/OEIS. However, when foreign military vessels and aircraft operate independently within the study area as sovereign vessels outside the planning and control of the Action Proponents, those activities are not considered part of the Proposed Action. There are many reasons why foreign military vessels may traverse U.S. waters or come into U.S. port, not all of which are at the request of any of the Action Proponents. Foreign military vessels and aircraft operate pursuant to their own national authorities and have independent rights under customary international law,

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	Act. You couldn't find that from looking at the Draft EIS. That's a problem. This is supposed to be a disclosure document, not a document to sow confusion. Likewise, if you look in the main body of the EIS, you can't find anything about how many vessels strikes are going to be caused. We know that Navy vessels kill marine mammals when they hit them. And I'm told that it might be in Appendix I; I am not there yet. But, again, the letter -- the request for a permit says that they are requesting to kill up to five whales through vessel strikes. Now let's talk about that. For purposes of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Navy does not consider its responsibility the whales that are killed by foreign navies that are coming to Hawaii or Southern California or off the coast of California to train with the U.S. Navy, the ones that are invited. I'm not going to get into this but I – for purposes of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, but it's 100 percent the case that under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Navy needs to consider not only the harm that it directly is causing with its activities but all of what are called the "indirect effects." So if they consider the Australian Navy coming to Southern California a couple years ago and killing two fin whales off the coast of Southern California, those whales were literally draped on the front of the boats as they pulled into the harbor. They say that's not our kuleana for purposes of the Marine Mammal Protection Act but we'll deal with that in that context. But for NEPA, you betcha that those whales that are killed by foreign navies that have been invited, that the Navy has chosen to invite to come into our waters, those are the Navy's responsibilities. And nowhere in this document does it talk about that. So that's not taking the mandated hard look at what the impacts are and that kind of just hides the goal. So let's talk now a little bit about the Navy's conclusion that nothing they are doing is causing any significant environmental impacts, nothing. If you look at the submarine executive summary, somehow all of this is less than significant. And my question is less than significant to whom? Certainly not to the law. The Navy seems to have the idea that you need to be violating some other law in order for the impact to be significant. Not so. The Navy is not allowed to do illegal things.	embodied in the principle of sovereign immunity, to engage in various activities on the world's oceans and seas. The Navy consulted with both the USFWS and NMFS regarding federal endangered species in compliance with Section 7 of the ESA. These processes resulted in determinations of no jeopardy under the ESA and negligible impact with implementation of mitigation measures to support least practicable adverse impact.

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	So if it's violating the Endangered Species Act because it's pushing a species to extinction or close to extinction, you can't do that under the Endangered Species Act. If it's causing more than negligible impact to a marine mammal's thought, it can't get a permit under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. So don't tell us that you need to have population level effects before the impacts are significant. That's just not the law. So as I mentioned, 39 dead marine mammals every year, over 5300 Level A takes, over 6 million harassment. This is significant. And you need to be honest with yourselves. You need to be honest with the decision-makers in order to do a lawful analysis. I have a few more comments that I can offer later. Mahalo. MALE SPEAKER: Thanks, David. MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.	
Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii (EDEM)		
EDEM-01	Dangers of Harmful Chemicals: The use of LRAD-based ammunition, UOX, depleted uranium, and other harmful chemicals such as PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) in underwater military training poses significant risks to both the environment and human health. These chemicals can enter the marine environment and accumulate in the food chain. Marine organisms, including fish and seaweed, can absorb these toxic substances, which can then be consumed by humans. Exposure to depleted uranium can lead to kidney damage and other health issues. PFAS are known to have adverse reproductive, developmental, and immunological effects in animals and humans. The ingestion of contaminated seafood and seaweed can result in these harmful chemicals entering the human body, posing serious health risks. Moreover, once these chemicals are released into the environment, they cannot be removed. Heavy metals, radioactive materials, and PFAS are highly persistent and can remain in the environment for decades, continuing to pose risks to marine life and human health.	Section 3.2 concludes, based upon the best available science, that chemical, physical, and biological changes to sediment or water quality would be measurable but below applicable standards, regulations, and guidelines; and would be within the existing conditions or designated uses. The proposed military readiness activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of military expended materials and associated chemical constituents in the ocean environment. Regarding toxins entering the food chain, the EIS/OEIS includes analysis of this issue in two sections: Section 3.2 and Section 3.6. In both sections, the conclusions indicate that all levels of metals, chemicals, and other byproducts would be either below detectable levels or at levels below existing standards, regulations, and guidelines.
EDEM-02	Impact on Marine Life: The use of sonar and explosives poses a significant threat to marine mammals, such as whales, dolphins, and seals, as well as fish species like the Hawaiian monk seal and various reef fish. These	Because of the potential for sonar and explosives to effect marine mammals, in addition to the analysis in the EIS, the Action Proponents consulted with NMFS under both the MMPA

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	activities can disrupt their communication, navigation, and feeding behaviors, and in some cases, cause physical harm or even death. The intense noise from sonar can cause disorientation, strandings, and even hemorrhaging in these sensitive creatures. Explosives can result in direct physical injuries or fatalities, further endangering already vulnerable populations.	and the ESA. The EIS/OEIS conclusions and the consultations indicate that the military readiness activities would not have significant effects on any marine species. Utilizing the latest science and technology, the Navy completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the potential environmental effects from military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of these protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species.
EDEM-03	Impact on Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument: The Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument is one of the world's largest protected areas, encompassing 583,000 square miles of ocean waters, including ten islands and atolls of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. This sanctuary is home to over 7,000 marine species, many of which are endemic and endangered. The proposed military exercises pose a significant threat to this fragile ecosystem. The noise and physical disturbances from sonar and explosives can disrupt the delicate balance of this unique marine environment, potentially causing long-term damage to its biodiversity and cultural heritage. Endangered species such as the Hawaiian monk seal, Laysan duck, Hawaiian green turtle, hawksbill turtle, leatherback turtle, olive ridley turtle, loggerhead turtle, Laysan finch, Nihoa finch, black-footed albatross, short-tailed albatross, various reef fish, and endemic corals are particularly at risk. The monument's high rate of endemism in corals and reef fish makes it especially vulnerable to disturbances.	The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. Because the area is now a National Marine Sanctuary, the Action Proponents completed Section 304(d) consultation under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. The proposed activities would be generally limited to vessels conducting training while transiting through the southeastern portion of the Monument boundary on route to and from the Western Pacific in an area of open water. Very few activities have historically occurred within the Monument/Sanctuary and that is expected to continue. No

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		new activities are proposed to occur there. Proposed activities would not have the potential to affect historic property. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
EDEM-04	Environmental Damage: The detonation of explosives and the presence of military vessels can cause irreparable damage to marine ecosystems, including coral reefs and other sensitive habitats. Coral reefs, which are vital to the health of our oceans, can be shattered by the shockwaves from explosions. The destruction of these habitats not only affects marine life but also the overall health of our oceans, leading to a decline in biodiversity and the disruption of ecological balance.	The reasonably foreseeable effects on coral reefs and other marine species were analyzed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 describes mitigation measures designed to avoid reef impacts. The analysis of effects on invertebrates, which includes corals, is found in Section 3.4. Specifically, the analysis of explosives is in Section 3.4.3.2. Other sensitive habitats are analyzed in Section 3.5, with an analysis of explosives effects in Section 3.5.3.1. Proposed underwater detonations would occur only in areas with sandy bottoms and not near coral reefs. Other use of explosives detonate on the surface of the ocean and would have no effect on coral reefs. Based on the locations where explosives use is proposed, the location of coral reefs and other sensitive habitats, and the best available science, the impacts would be less than significant.
EDEM-05	Scope of Military Underwater Exercises: The military underwater exercises cover a vast area of the ocean, with training ranges extending up to 500 nautical miles (approximately 930 kilometers) across littoral waters. These exercises can reach depths of up to 6,600 feet (2,000 meters). The extensive area and depth of these exercises increase the potential for widespread environmental impact. Toxin Dispersion and Impact on Hawaiian Shores: The toxins released during these exercises, including heavy metals, radioactive materials, and PFAS, can be carried by ocean currents and reach the shores of the Hawaiian Islands. The time it takes for these toxins to reach the shores can vary depending on ocean currents, weather conditions, and the specific location of the exercises. However, it is possible for contaminants to travel significant distances and impact coastal ecosystems and human health. Given Hawaii's geologic landscape, which is made up of permeable volcanic	Section 3.2 concludes, based upon the best available science, that chemical, physical, and biological changes to sediment or water quality would be measurable but below applicable standards, regulations, and guidelines; and would be within the existing conditions or designated uses. The proposed military readiness activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of military expended materials and associated chemical constituents in the ocean environment. The conclusions indicate that all levels of metals, chemicals, and other byproducts would be either below detectable levels or at levels below existing standards, regulations, and guidelines.

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	rock, contaminants can quickly move through the system and reach the shoreline.	
EDEM-06	Harmful Military History: The U.S. military has a history of using Hawaiian shorelines and oceans as debris dumpsites, causing harm and danger to human life and the environment. Notable dumpsites include Pearl Harbor, where Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam has released significant amounts of toxic chemicals, including nitrate compounds, into the ocean; Kaneohe Bay, where the U.S. Marine Corps Base Hawaii has also contributed to the release of toxic chemicals; the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility, where the Navy's Red Hill facility has been responsible for multiple fuel leaks, contaminating the water supply and posing an existential threat to the people of Hawaii; and Haleakalā, where the Space Force observatory experienced a significant fuel spill, and the cleanup and remediation efforts have been slow and inadequate. These practices have resulted in long-term environmental damage and pose ongoing risks to human health. The failure to adequately clean up and remediate these sites further exacerbates the problem.	Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process. The comment is beyond the scope of the Proposed Action, which is focused on at-sea training and testing. All Navy vessels follow the Uniform National Discharge Standards that are established under the Clean Water Act in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency. For additional information on the standards followed by Navy vessels, see Appendix C, Section C.1.1.1.2.
EDEM-07	Military Exercises: The proposed military exercises include a range of activities such as active sonar, used for detecting submarines and other underwater objects, which can cause significant noise pollution and harm marine life; explosives, used for training and testing purposes, which can cause physical damage to marine ecosystems and harm marine life; other sources of underwater sound used for various training and testing activities; and bombing exercises conducted on land targets such as Kaʻula Island, which has been used as a bombing range since 1952.	Because of the potential for sonar and explosives to effect marine mammals, in addition to the analysis in the EIS, the Action Proponents consulted with NMFS under both the MMPA and the ESA. The EIS/OEIS conclusions and the consultations indicate that the military readiness activities would not have significant effects on any marine species. Utilizing the latest science and technology, the Navy completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the potential environmental effects from military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of these

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		protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. The Proposed Action does not include non-explosive bombing exercises on Kaula Island. Those activities are included in the 2025 Pacific Missile Range Facility Land-Based Training Environmental Assessment.
EDEM-08	Insufficient Mitigation Measures: The proposed mitigation measures are inadequate and do not fully address the potential impacts on marine life and ecosystems. While the military has proposed measures such as monitoring marine mammals and halting exercises if they are detected, these measures are often insufficient. The vastness of the ocean and the limitations of current monitoring technology mean that many animals may go undetected, leaving them vulnerable to harm.	Through the Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Environmental Readiness Program; U.S. Navy Marine Species Monitoring Program; Living Marine Resources Program; ONR; USCG environmental programs; and other programs and offices, the Navy has sponsored research and monitoring for over 30 years. The Navy continues to research and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. Please see Table 3.0-1 in Section 3.0 of the EIS/OEIS for more information regarding marine species monitoring and research programs. Also, see Chapter 5, Section 5.1 for an explanation of how the Action Proponents develop mitigation to meet the appropriate balance between being environmentally beneficial and practical to implement. Table 5-1 in that section explains the criteria that are evaluated to ensure the Action Proponents can still meet their requirements to effectively train and test.
EDEM-09	Lack of Comprehensive Data: There is a concerning lack of comprehensive data on the long-term effects of these exercises. The environmental impact assessments often overlook critical information and do not provide a complete picture of the potential risks. Long-term studies are needed to understand the cumulative impacts of repeated training exercises on marine life and ecosystems. Without this data, it is impossible to make informed decisions that adequately protect our environment.	The military services, through this EIS/OEIS and various regulatory consultations, comply with all legal and regulatory requirements related to the protection of our environment. The Navy has conducted past analysis (through three prior phases, see Section 1.1 through Section 1.3) and acquired regulatory authorizations as best available science has not shown that training and testing has in fact caused significant or non-repairable impact to marine species or their habitat. The analysis was completed using the best available, peer-reviewed science, which includes decades of monitoring studies within the HCTT Study Area. Please see Chapter 3, Section 3.0.1.1 for additional details on some of those studies.

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		The cumulative effects are analyzed in Chapter 4.
EDEM-10	Legal and Regulatory Issues: Previous legal challenges have highlighted the need for additional steps to protect marine life. Courts have sometimes ruled that the military must take further action to mitigate the impacts of their exercises. These rulings underscore the ongoing debate about the balance between national security and environmental protection. It is essential that the military complies with all legal and regulatory requirements and prioritizes the protection of our environment. Violations of NEPA and HEPA: The proposed military exercises violate the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Hawaii Environmental Policy Act (HEPA). NEPA requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. The Navy has failed to adequately assess the environmental impacts of these exercises, particularly the cumulative and long-term effects on marine life and ecosystems. Similarly, HEPA requires state agencies to consider the environmental consequences of their actions. The proposed exercises fail to comply with HEPA's requirements for thorough environmental review and public participation. Even in the early stages, NEPA and HEPA require agencies to integrate environmental considerations into their planning processes. This includes identifying potential environmental issues early on, considering cumulative impacts, ensuring public participation, and evaluating a range of reasonable alternatives. Failure to meet these requirements can result in violations of NEPA and HEPA, even before final decisions are made.	In planning and performing these activities, the Action Proponents strictly follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes conducting comprehensive environmental assessments and impact statements, as mandated by the NEPA. These processes involve thorough evaluations of potential effects on the environment, cultural sites, and local communities. Public participation is a cornerstone of NEPA, and the Action Proponents actively seek and consider input from all stakeholders to inform their decisions. There is no state action that triggers HEPA in relation to this at-sea training and testing by the Navy.
EDEM-11	Hawaii State Constitution and Public Trust Doctrine: Under the Hawaii State Constitution, Article XI, Section 1, the State and its political subdivisions are required to conserve and protect Hawaii's natural beauty and all natural resources, including land, water, air, minerals, and energy sources, for the benefit of present and future generations. All public natural resources are held in trust by the State for the benefit of the people. The proposed military exercises violate this public trust doctrine by threatening the health and sustainability of Hawaii's natural resources.	Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS analyzes the environmental effects of all proposed activities. Additionally, under the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Navy submitted a consistency determination to the Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development. The determination concluded that the Navy's proposed activities are consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of the State of

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		Hawaii, including those related to coastal ecosystems and marine and coastal resources. Navy's activities will not violate the public trust doctrine. Hawaii submerged land (out to 3NM) will not be significantly impacted. To the extent any Navy training or testing occurs over or within these submerged lands (not otherwise acquired by the United States), the Navy's use is an exercises of the navigable servitude held by the United States (per Section 1314(a) of the Submerged Lands Act; thus activities are compatible. NEPA and the other regulatory considerations (as explained in Chapter 6 of the EIS/OEIS), to include MMPA and ESA, do not prescribe application of the precautionary principle as explained in the comment. Each law or regulation has specific legal thresholds and standards to apply. Navy has adhered to the specific legal standards of each law or regulation.
EDEM-12	Precautionary Principle: The precautionary principle, as recognized in environmental law, requires that precautionary measures be taken when an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. The proposed military exercises pose significant risks to marine life and ecosystems, and precautionary measures should be taken to prevent potential harm. It appears clear that the proposed actions violate the precautionary principle, even if there were any doubt that those actions might violate other rules requiring environmental protection.	Based on the analysis in the EIS/OEIS and decades of monitoring conducted during actual training and testing events, the proposed military readiness activities will not pose a risk to the environment given that these same activities have been conducted for many years here and in other range complexes with no indications of broad-scale impacts that are either injurious or of significant biological impact to marine life. The EIS/OEIS includes a robust suite of mitigation measures, which will be implemented in both action alternatives (i.e., whichever alternative is selected). These mitigation measures, as well as standard operating procedures that the military services routinely employ, are discussed in detail and specifically inform the decision maker and the public how adverse impacts can be avoided or minimized. Details regarding the development of reasonable alternatives are provided in Section 2.4 (Action Alternatives Development).
EDEM-13	Heavy metals, lead, depleted uranium, and PFAS: Heavy metals such as lead, chromium, cadmium, and beryllium are often used in various types of ammunition and explosives. Lead is commonly used in bullets and	Section 3.2 concludes, based upon the best available science, that chemical, physical, and biological changes to sediment or water quality would be measurable but below applicable

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	projectiles due to its density and malleability. It is also found in primers and some propellant bags used for light artillery cartridges. Depleted uranium is used in armor-piercing ammunition and some types of bombs. It is favored for its high density, which allows it to penetrate armored targets effectively. PFAS are used in some military applications, including firefighting foams and certain types of explosives. These chemicals are known for their resistance to heat, water, and oil, making them useful in various military contexts. Common explosive materials used in military applications include TNT (Trinitrotoluene), known for its stability and reliability, and widely used in military ordnance; RDX (Cyclotrimethylenetrinitramine), a powerful explosive used in demolitions and munitions; and PETN (Pentaerythritol Tetranitrate), used in detonators and booster charges due to its high velocity of detonation. Propellants used in military ammunition include single-base, double-base, and triple-base propellants, as well as composite propellants. These materials provide the necessary thrust to propel projectiles. Initiating explosives such as lead azide, lead styphnate, mercury fulminate, and tetracene are used to initiate the detonation of other explosives. These materials are selected based on their specific properties and the intended military application. The use of these substances poses significant environmental and health risks, particularly when they are released into the environment during military training exercises and operations.	standards, regulations, and guidelines; and would be within the existing conditions or designated uses. The proposed military readiness activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of military expended materials and associated chemical constituents in the ocean environment. Regarding toxins entering the food chain, the EIS/OEIS includes analysis of this issue in two sections: Section 3.2 and Section 3.6. In both sections, the conclusions indicate that all levels of metals, chemicals, and other byproducts would be either below detectable levels or at levels below existing standards, regulations, and guidelines.
EDEM-14	Hawaii Supreme Court Case Ching vs. Case: In Ching v. Case, 145 Haw. 148, 449 P.3d 1146 (2019), the Hawaii Supreme Court affirmed that the State has a duty to reasonably monitor and protect trust lands, including those leased to third parties for military purposes. The proposed military exercises fail to meet this duty by posing significant risks to Hawaii's natural resources and failing to adequately protect the public trust. This duty is rooted in the Hawaiian concept of “mālama ‘āina,” which means “to care for and protect the land.” In Hawaiian culture, the land is considered a living entity that sustains life, and it is the responsibility of the people to care for and protect it. The phrase “mālama ‘āina” embodies the deep connection and respect that Hawaiians have for their land, emphasizing the importance of stewardship and sustainability.	These military at-sea activities are not occurring on leased lands. Hawaii submerged land (out to 3NM) will not be significantly impacted. To the extent any Navy training or testing occur over or within these submerged lands (not otherwise acquired by the United States), the Navy’s use is an exercises of the navigable servitude held by the United States (per Section 1314(a) of the Submerged Lands Act; thus activities are compatible. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in Navy decision making, and in the conduct of testing and training. Utilizing the latest science and technology, the Navy completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop

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		science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the potential environmental effects from Navy military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, and geographic mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of these protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species.
EDEM-15	Jurisdiction and Offshore Military Exercises: Hawaii's jurisdiction extends 3 nautical miles (approximately 5.6 kilometers) offshore. The proposed military exercises extend up to 500 nautical miles (approximately 930 kilometers) offshore, well beyond Hawaii's jurisdiction. However, the environmental impacts of these exercises can still affect Hawaii's coastal waters and marine life. The proposed exercises are more extensive and potentially more harmful than the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises, which involve multiple nations and are conducted in and around the Hawaiian Islands. RIMPAC exercises have already demonstrated the potential for significant environmental impacts, including noise pollution, habitat destruction, and the release of harmful substances. The proposed exercises pose even greater risks due to their larger scale and the use of more destructive technologies. In conclusion, we urge the Navy to reconsider these training exercises and to explore alternative methods that do not pose such significant risks to our marine life and ecosystems. The health of our oceans and the well-being of our marine species must be prioritized. We call on the Navy to engage in transparent and meaningful dialogue with the public and to consider the concerns of the communities that will be affected by these exercises.	The Navy submitted a consistency determination to the Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development. The determination concluded that the Navy's proposed activities are consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of the State of Hawaii, including those related to coastal waters and marine life. The EIS/OEIS's alternatives were developed in order to satisfy the military services' purpose and need related to fulfilling their Title 10 requirements. Only alternatives that will adequately meet military readiness requirements were selected. The EIS/OEIS includes a robust suite of mitigation measures, which will be implemented in both action alternatives (i.e., whichever alternative is selected). These mitigation measures, as well as standard operating procedures that the military services routinely employ, are discussed in detail and specifically inform the decision maker and the public how adverse impacts can be avoided or minimized. Details regarding the development of reasonable alternatives are provided in Section 2.4 (Action Alternatives Development). The Navy has been open and transparent throughout this NEPA process (please see Appendix L – Public Involvement). The Navy has evaluated activities that have been occurring for decades and based on best available science, the environment and marine species are not significantly affected.

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Hawaii's Thousand Friends (HTF)		
HTF-01	We were unable to find information in the DEIS about the number of new service personnel and their families that will be homeported at either Pearl Harbor or Marine Base Hawaii in connection with this Action. A U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) 2023 report concerning the U.S. military's impact on Oahu's housing shortage confirms that the military has a major impact on Oahu's housing supply, the availability of housing for Hawaii residents and affordability. The report finds that while DoD is aware that the housing crisis in Hawaii will only abate when DoD builds more housing on Hawaii military bases. The report states that there are 42,000 service members on Oahu, 25,000 reside on military installations with about 14,700 living off-base in rental housing and 2,150 service members purchased homes. The 40% of service members living off base represents 1 in 10 private rental properties on Oahu not available to residents of the island. According to a 2019 state study and Honolulu's 2024 Housing Plan, the five-year demand for rental housing is 11,857 units or 53.5% of the total housing demand on Oahu. The 2023 DoD report puts the demand for on-base housing at 13,614. We realize that the purpose of this DEIS is to conduct military readiness and training activities but along with these purposes comes impacts to not only our islands land and ocean environment but to Oahu's residents. The FEIS must factor in the need for on-base housing for existing and new service personnel and their families that will be stationed on Oahu in connection with this Action. In the FEIS provide the number of new personnel and their families that will be homeported at both Pearl Harbor and Marne Corp Base Hawaii. In the FEIS provide information on the number of new housing units that are needed to accommodate new service personnel and their families. In the FEIS provide information on how many single units and family housing units will be built on both bases to house inbound single service personnel and service personnel with families.	The comment is beyond the scope of the Proposed Action. Home basing and home porting decisions that could result in movement of personnel to or from Hawaii would be analyzed in other NEPA documents. While training and testing evaluated in this analysis may bring units to Hawaii and they may have in-port opportunities off vessels, those episodes will be infrequent, short and temporary. Most units training in the Hawaii Range Complex will continue their transit after training or testing, to include deployment.

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	If no new housing units will be built either at Pearl Harbor or Marine Base Hawaii in the FEIS explain why. Oahu's mayor and the Governor have declared Oahu's lack of housing especially units that are affordable to local residents as a crisis. Oahu cannot continue to house military personnel off base at the expense of island residents. In the FEIS explain how many new structural facilities will be built on and off base to accommodate the new operations	
HTF-02	The FEIS must explain how whale activity/presence will be determined by the Navy prior to potentially dangerous activities including the use of active sonar, explosives etc. Will the Navy rely only on visual observation or will the Navy supplement this with passive acoustic monitoring and other techniques?	Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, which includes how the Navy employs Lookouts, passive acoustic monitoring, and other techniques to minimize effects on marine species.
HTF-03	The FEIS must provide information on the location, number and dimensions of each off base on land structure that will be connected to the cables as they come on land.	None of the proposed cable projects would connect to land facilities; instead, all would connect to existing underwater junctions located offshore. Please see Appendix A, Section A.3.5.2.
HTF-04	In the FEIS explain the methodology that will be used to assess the cumulative impacts on marine life from explosions in the ocean, physical disturbances and strikes from vessels, seafloor devices and pile driving.	Please see Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS.
HTF-05	In the FEIS provide information on how often "seafloor devices" will be used in the Hawaii Study Area and describe each study area and anticipated impacts on marine life.	Please see Chapter 3, Section 3.0.3.3.4.3. Table 3.0-22 in this section provides the number of events within each Study Area that could include seafloor devices.
HTF-06	In the FEIS explain if the Study and Impact area includes the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. If so, explain why this archipelago in included.	The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands fall within the boundaries of the Temporary Operating Area (TOA), described in Appendix H, Section H.2.1.2. As stated in Section H.2.1.2, the TOA is used for testing activities, such as missile testing from the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF). Training in the TOA can include live missile firing associated with ballistic missile defense exercises, and vessel transits. Very few activities have historically occurred within the area around the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and that is expected to continue. No new activities are proposed to occur there.

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		Types of events can be in the air, at the surface, or sub-surface. Activities conducted in this area are performed in compliance with applicable environmental laws.
HTF-07	In the FEIS provide a full account of the combined effects of the proposed activities, existing and foreseeable future sources of air pollution on each area after explosive activities.	Please see Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1 of the EIS/OEIS.
HTF-08	In the FEIS describe and define the "same areas" where many in-water detonations would occur and the cumulative impacts on marine life from these continuing activities.	In-water detonations are proposed to occur in the same locations where they have been occurring for decades in the Hawaii Range Complex, at Pearl City Peninsula, Lima Landing, Barbers Point Underwater Range, Ewa Training Minefield, and the Puuloa Underwater Range. See Figure A-11 in Appendix A or Figure H-32 in Appendix H to see those locations. The cumulative effects of in-water detonations, as well as all other proposed activities can be found in Chapter 4.
HTF-09	In the FEIS identify the areas considered "localized impact area" and define what is meant by "relatively low intensity."	"Relatively low intensity" means low relative to other sources. For example, as used in Section 3.0.3.3.3.1, the electromagnetic field generated by a proposed mine neutralization activity would be approximately 2,300 microteslas. This is a low-intensity source when compared to a refrigerator magnet, which could produce 15,000 to 20,000 microteslas. "Localized impact area" means that the stressor in question would not have effects over large areas of the ocean. Using the same mine neutralization activity as an example, a marine species sensitive to electromagnetic forces would have to be within feet of the mine neutralization source to be affected. As explained in Table 3.2-1 in Section 3.2 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, localized in the case of water quality near expended munitions would be within 1 meter.
HTF-10	Statements in this DEIS such as "Fishes located near the surface during the day would likely move away from mobile laser targets before lasers were fired…" are unrealistic and provide no comfort that thousands upon thousands of fish will be killed.	As stated in the EIS/OEIS in Section 3.6.3.3.2, activities that include the use of high-energy lasers would not have reasonably foreseeable adverse effects on fishes for several reasons, including: (1) the relatively low number of events (8 per year in Hawaii), (2) the very localized potentially affected area of the laser beam, and (3) the temporary duration of

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	In the FEIS explain how it is known that "fish will move away" when they are not aware that lasers will be fired.	potential effects (seconds). The fourth reason has been revised in the Final EIS/OEIS to: (4) Fishes located near the surface during the day would likely move away from mobile laser targets due to the water disturbance of the moving target, decreasing the potential for exposure. In addition to those, the high-energy lasers are designed to automatically shut off if it loses lock on the target.
HTF-11	The DEIS is unclear. Is the Navy asking for a "take" of ESA listed fishes? If so, in the FEIS explain how many of each species will be taken and over the period of time each species will be taken.	No takes of ESA-listed fish species are expected, and no takes have been requested.
HTF-12	In the FEIS identify the circumstances under which a whale, shark or some other deep water marine species could become entangled in a decelerator or parachute and what procedures, if any, are in place to untangle the mammal.	The analysis explaining this for fishes is found in Section 3.6.3.5 and for marine mammals in Section 3.7.3.6 of the EIS/OEIS.
HTF-13	In the FEIS identify each species of whale, the number of each species and the period of time that that each whale species can be killed.	The complete analysis of impacts on marine mammals is included in Section 3.7 of the EIS/OEIS. Additional supporting information can be found in Appendices C, E, and F.
HTF-14	In the FEIS explain what department or agency will keep track of each whale species killed and when and provide information when the "take" limit has been reached.	Navy regulations require Navy units to report marine mammals strikes or strandings that occur in the vicinity of Navy activities. This information is reported to NMFS.
HTF-15	In the FEIS explain the process should actions from this Action go beyond the "take" number for each marine species. Such as, does reaching the "take" limit on a single species during the allotted time mean that no more of that species may be killed? If so, identify the agency or agencies responsible for enforcing this limit. In the FEIS explain the consequence if the whale killings go beyond the allotted number of "takes."	NMFS and the USFWS are responsible for the stewardship of U.S. national marine resources, including marine mammals and ESA-listed fishes and marine birds. Letters of Authorization have been requested in accordance with the MMPA from NMFS for proposed military readiness activities. If the level of activities or the level of take are expected to exceed those requested, reinitiation of consultation with the appropriate agency could be required. Through this and other adaptive management practices described in Section 5.5 of the EIS/OEIS, decisions, policies or actions can be adjusted over time.
HTF-16	In the FEIS explain what "modernization and sustainment of ranges" means.	The military services require at-sea ranges for the efficient conduct of training and testing. Some ranges include submerged infrastructure such as undersea cables or simulated

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		mine targets. Modernization and sustainment of ranges includes actions to upgrade or update range infrastructure, including installing seafloor cables and moving or replacing submerged mine warfare targets.
HTF-17	In the FEIS identify the entity that is proposing critical habitat for the green sea turtle around all islands and when these critical habitat boundaries will be established.	Please see Appendix C, Section C.7.2.1.1, where the following information is provided: "On July 19, 2023, NMFS issued a proposed rule for critical habitat designation" for the green sea turtle. The critical habitat will be established upon publication of the Final Rule.
HTF-18	In the FEIS provide information on can what happens to a sea turtle when it forages around or on a stationary seafloor device.	Section 3.8.3.6 of the Draft and Final EIS/OEIS analyzes the effects of potential ingestion stressors to sea turtles from proposed activities. Seafloor devices are too large to be considered a potential ingestion risk so were not analyzed here. However, the potential of a physical disturbance or strike to a sea turtle from stationary seafloor devices was analyzed in Section 3.8.3.4.3. Additional background information related to ingestion risks and seafloor devices is found in Appendix F, Section F.8.2 and F.8.4.
HTF-19	In the FEIS explain the purpose of identifying historic shipwrecks. Is it so that they can be used as targets?	Shipwrecks are avoided during proposed activities. Please see Table 5-8 in Chapter 5 for a description of the mitigation measures regarding shipwrecks.
HTF-20	In the FEIS identify the areas where sinking exercises will take place and how often these exercises will occur.	Sinking exercises occur in different locations depending on the requirements for each specific exercise. As stated in Appendix A, Section A.1.10.15, each location is required to be greater than 50 nautical miles from shore and in water depths greater than 6,000 feet. Navy is required, per the General permit held under the Ocean Dumping Act, to report location information to EPA after a sinking exercise.
Kailua Neighborhood Board (Kailua)		
Kailua-01	The Kailua Neighborhood Board (KNB) reviewed the Navy's December 2024 2,822 page (with 16 Appendices) Hawaii-California Training and Testing Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)/Oversees Environmental Impact Statement posted at https://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/ . The DEIS,	As described in Appendix A, Section A.1.10.1, Bombing Exercise Air-to-Surface could occur throughout the Hawaii Range Complex, at least 12 nautical miles from shore. However, Kapu Hot is an area approximately 40 miles south of Oahu that is the

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	in addition to discussing installation and maintenance of ocean mine warfare training areas off Hawaii and more and maintenance of ocean mine war, the DEIS discusses more frequent use of nearshore areas such as Kaneohe Bay and Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, along with new activities that include training in ocean mine warfare. The following resolution was unanimously approved by the KNB at the regular meeting on February 6, 2025: The Kailua Neighborhood Board supports the following comments, questions, and recommendations as comments on the Navy's Hawaii-California Training and Testing DEIS/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement. The approved comments, questions, and recommendations are detailed in the attachment letter. (1) In the FEIS identify the areas where bombing activities routinely occur and provide information on the measures that will be taken to protect the marine environment, coral, and human health.	primary live-fire range in the Hawaii Range Complex, where bombing exercises would most likely occur. Kapu Hot can be located on Figure H-30 in Appendix H. Mitigation measures can be found in Chapter 5, Table 5-3 (for explosive bombs) and Table 5-4 (for non-explosive bombs).
Kailua-02	(2) In the FEIS state the number of times that air-to-surface gunnery tests of fixed-wing aircraft test the delivery of bombs against surface maritime targets will occur in the deep ocean waters off Kaneohe Bay, Kailua Bay and Waimanalo coastline. In the FEIS explain the short and long-term impacts from each "test" and cumulative impacts from all air-to-surface gunnery tests on the marine environment and ocean marine life.	Air-to-surface gunnery training and testing could occur 632 times per year within the Hawaii Range Complex. None of these activities would occur in or near Kaneohe Bay, Kailua Bay or Waimanalo. All air-to-surface gunnery would occur a minimum of 3 nautical miles from shore and usually within an FAA designated Warning Area. Analysis of impacts of this and all activities are included in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Analysis of cumulative effects can be found in Chapter 4.
Kailua-03	(3) In the FEIS identify and explain the long-term and cumulative impacts from projectiles, missiles, bombs, target-related materials, chaff (including fibers, end caps, and pistons), and decerators/parachutes on the marine environment and large ocean marine life such as whales off the coast of Kaneohe, Kailua and Waimanalo.	Analysis of impacts of this and all activities are included in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Analysis of cumulative effects can be found in Chapter 4. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects analyzed in Chapters 3 and 4 cover marine life throughout the Hawaii Study Area, including off the coast of Kaneohe, Kailua and Waimanalo.
Kailua-04	(4) In the FEIS identify the areas where air-to-surface bombing exercises air-to-surface will occur and identify the short and long-term and cumulative impacts on the ocean environment and large marine mammals such as whales and dolphins.	See response to Kailua-01. Analysis of impacts of this and all activities are included in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Analysis of cumulative effects can be found in Chapter 4.
Kailua-05	(5) In the FEIS identify areas, if any, off the coast of Kaneohe Bay, Kailua Bay and Waimanalo where bomb drops will occur. In the FEIS explain any short	All air-to-surface bombing is not proposed to occur near Kaneohe Bay, Kailua Bay, or Waimanola, and would occur a

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	and long-term and cumulative impacts from these bombings on the marine environment, fish, large ocean mammals, nearshore coastal areas and human health.	minimum of 12 nautical miles from shore and usually within a Warning Area. Analysis of impacts of this and all activities are included in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Analysis of cumulative effects can be found in Chapter 4.
Kailua-06	b. According to the DEIS facilities and operations will support the home basing of P-8A Mission Maritime Aircraft fleet and fleet replacement squadrons at NAS North Island and MCB Kaneohe Bay and base up to two Marine Medium Titrotor squadrons in MCB Kaneohe Bay to conduct aviation operations at training areas on all islands. (1) The introduction of new squadrons will require new housing for Navy personnel and their families. In the FEIS provide the number of new housing units that will be built on base to house new Navy personnel and their families. (2) In the FEIS provide the number of new people that will be based at MCB Hawaii and the short and long-term and cumulative impacts on off base housing. (3) In the FEIS identify and explain the short and long-term and cumulative impacts from the additional aircraft noise on Kailua residents who live off base. (4) In the FEIS identify the number of new P-8s to be based at MCB Hawaii, the expected number of flight events each year and short and long-term impacts from noise on Kailua residents. (5) The maps in the DEIS are unclear. Will there be any bombing or exercises that use explosives on the Kailua Bay side of the Marine Base and in Kailua Bay? If so, in the FEIS identify the short and long-term and cumulative impacts to the bay marine environment, nearshore environment and human health from these activities.	The comment is beyond the scope of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action does not include any changes to homebasing aircraft or personnel. The proposed activities would not result in changes to personnel homeporting in Hawaii. No bombing or explosives are proposed near Kailua Bay or Marine Corps Base Hawaii.
Kailua-07	c. Fiber optics will be installed on the seafloor as part of range sustainment and modernization. The cables will be installed at underwater ranges. (1) In the FEIS identify the location of the fiber optic in Kaneohe Bay and specify the short and long-term and cumulative impacts on the marine environment especially coral and fish from the installation of fiber optics in the bay.	The Draft EIS/OEIS and the Final EIS/OEIS identify the location of the seafloor cable that was installed at the Wave Energy Test Site (WETS) near Kaneohe Bay (Figure A-6 in Appendix A). Land structures are not part of this Proposed Action. No undersea cable would be installed in Kailua Bay as part of this Proposed Action.

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	(2) In the FEIS identify the location and number of on land structures needed to be built in connection with fiber optic cable and provide information on the short and long-term impacts to the land and ocean resources from this construction. (3) In the FEIS provide information on the possibility of an underwater range and cable line being placed in Kailua Bay. If a cable line is proposed describe the project, the process, number, location of buildings, underwater location of the cable line, location where cable will come on shore and short and long-term impacts on the land and marine environment. (4) In the FEIS discuss what precautions are in place to protect marine mammals during the approximately 40 days cable laying process?	Please see Appendix A, Section A.3.5.2.1 of the Final EIS/OEIS for a description of some of the precautions taken during cable laying.
Kailua-08	d. The DEIS states that green sea turtles and hawksbill sea turtles nest regularly in the Study Area with rare instances of olive ridley nesting at MCB Hawaii. (1) Does the study area include MCB Hawaii? If so, in the FEIS identify the nesting locations on MCB Hawaii of the green sea turtles, hawksbill sea turtles and olive ridley turtles, describe actions that will be taken to protect all three turtle species during construction, daily activities and mission exercises.	The Study Area is only in the bay and the ocean and stops at the shoreline, and so does not include Marine Corps Base Hawaii.
Kailua-09	(2) The DEIS is unclear on exactly how whales and other large marine life will be protected during dangerous deep ocean activities such as use of sonar and air to ocean explosives, and ocean floor mines. In the FEIS identify all measures to be used to ensure the safety of large mammals during sonar and explosive actions.	Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS.
Kailua-10	(3) In the FEIS identify the short and long-term and cumulative impacts from construction and new activities, identified in the DEIS, and ocean mine warfare training on green sea turtles, hawksbill sea turtles and olive ridley turtles.	Please see Section 3.8 for an analysis of potential effects on sea turtles. Analysis of cumulative effects can be found in Chapter 4, Section 4.3.8. This Proposed Action does not include any construction.
Kailua-11	(4) Will the Navy and/or the MCB Hawaii seek a “take” of any of these turtles.? If so, in the FEIS state how many of the green sea turtles, hawksbill sea turtles and olive ridley turtles can be killed during each calendar year and how long the “take” will last for each species.	Yes, the Action Proponents have consulted with the NMFS for sea turtle takes incidental to proposed military readiness activities. Table 3.8-4 in Section 3.8.3.1.1 of the EIS/OEIS shows the estimated takes from acoustic sources in a maximum year

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		of training and testing. Table 3.8-6 in Section 3.8.3.1.2 shows the estimated takes from air gun testing in a maximum year. Table 3.8-9 in Section 3.8.3.2.1 shows the estimated takes from explosives training and testing in a maximum year. No mortality takes are estimated from acoustic sources or air guns; 1 annual mortality take of a green sea turtle (5 over 7 years) is estimated. No mortality takes are expected of any other sea turtle species.
Kailua-12	(5) In the FEIS explain how turtle nests and baby turtles will be protected during exercises that use beaches on and off MCB Hawaii.	The Proposed Action does not include use of beaches.
Kailua-13	e. In the FEIS describe in detail the types of new training or testing activities that will take place in the nearshore areas of Kaneohe Bay? (1) Will training and testing activities take place in nearshore waters in Kaneohe Bay, Kailua Bay and Waimanalo coast that are open to the public? If so, in the FEIS describe the types of activities and the short and long and cumulative impacts of those activities on the public and marine life. (2) Will the Navy close Kaneohe Bay and Waimanalo coast from public use for training and/or testing activities? If so, in the FEIS identify the types of activities, length of time the bay and coastline will be closed for each event, number of times the bay and coastline will be closed for each training or testing and the short and long term and cumulative impacts of each closing on the marine environment. (3) Will ammunition be detonated in Kaneohe Bay and off the Waimanalo coast? If so, in the FEIS identify the types of ammunition that will be detonated and the short and long-term and cumulative impacts on human health, the marine environment i.e. coral, fish, turtles in Kaneohe Bay and along the Waimanalo coast. (4) In the FEIS provide information on how often Kaneohe Bay will be used for new readiness activities and provide information on the short and long-term impacts on water quality, marine life, endangered species and human health from each event and cumulative impacts from all events combined. (5) In the FEIS identify and describe all activities including military readiness activities and new training or testing activities that will take place along the Kailua Bay coastline of MCB Hawaii.	Amphibious training operations will be confined to designated training areas aboard MCTAB or MCBH. By design, military training occurs within these established areas, with no planned or anticipated impediments to civilian recreational use of Waimanalo coast beaches located outside designated military use areas. Furthermore, there are no planned changes to existing agreements allowing periodic use of military beaches by the public, and no impacts on current use are expected. The only activities proposed to occur near or in Kaneohe Bay are mine warfare activities that would involve small boats, divers, small unmanned underwater vehicles, and the temporary placement of mine warfare targets. Similar activities could occur in the ocean just off the beach at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, with the addition of helicopters to be used for mine neutralization training. No activities are proposed in or near Kailua Bay. No activities in these areas would involve explosives of any type. No bay or coastline closures would occur. All potential impacts are described in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Analysis of cumulative effects can be found in Chapter 4.

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	(6) If training or testing activities will take place along the Kailua Bay coastline of MCB Hawaii in the FEIS describe the short and long-term impacts and cumulative impacts on water quality, marine life, endangered species, and human health from such activities. (7) In the FEIS discuss long and short-term and cumulative impacts on water quality, marine life, endangered species and human health in Kaneohe Bay and Kailua Bay from deep ocean training and testing exercises.	
Kailua-14	(8) In the FEIS state the cumulative effects on air quality on Kailua, Kaneohe and Waimanalo residents from the increased flight activities over these residential communities.	Please see response above. Also, see Section 3.1 for Air Quality analysis of effects. Chapter 4 considers Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions. Section 4.3.1 discusses the cumulative effects due to air pollutant emissions.
Kailua-15	(9) Will any explosives be used in Kailua Bay or Kaneohe Bay? If so, in the FEIS identify the type of explosives, describe how often they will be used, identify the number of explosives to be used at each event and provide information on the short and long-term and cumulative impacts on the marine environment and human health from the use of explosives in both bays. (10) In the FEIS provide the distance from the shoreline along the Windward Coast, Kailua, Kaneohe and Waimanalo that explosives of any kind will be used in the water. In the FEIS identify short and long-term and cumulative impacts from using explosives in the near shore marine environment on residents fishing and snorkeling, tourism and human health.	No explosives would be used within 3 nautical miles of the Windward Coast, Kailua, Kaneohe, or Waimanalo.
Kailua-16	(11) Will there be an increase in artillery and rocket fire in the future on MCB Hawaii and will there be late evening firing? If so, in the FEIS explain what actions have been or will be taken to not impact off base residents with excessive noise. (12) In the FEIS provide the number of new housing units that are needed and how many housing units will be built to house personnel and their families with the P-8A Mission Maritime Aircraft fleet and fleet replacement squadrons. (13) In the FEIS identify the short and long-term and cumulative impacts on the ocean environment and marine life in Kaneohe Bay and Kailua Bay from	This Proposed Action does not include any on-land activities nor does it include activities or change of personnel at MCB Hawaii. Any increase or change in training or personnel on MCB Hawaii would require a separate environmental analysis.

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	increased numbers of people and increased construction activities at MCB Hawaii.	
Kailua-17	(14) In the FEIS identify and explain the processes to be used should unexploded munitions be found on the coast of Kaneohe Bay, Kailua Bay and Waimanalo coast. (15) In the FEIS identify and explain the processes to be used to remove unexploded munitions found in the ocean waters of Kaneohe and Kailua Bays.	If any items found on a beach could be munitions, do not approach, touch, move, or disturb the item. Carefully leave the area and call 911. For more information, please visit the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources website at: https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/blog/2020/04/27/nr20-051/
Kailua-18	(16) In the FEIS explain how explosive debris will be cleared from the ocean floor, corals and along coastlines.	Most military expended materials, including fragments from high-explosive munitions, would not be recovered from the ocean. The effects of those items permanently expended in the ocean are analyzed throughout Chapter 3 as physical disturbance stressors, entanglement stressors, and ingestion stressors. See Section 3.0.3.3 of the EIS/OEIS for additional information on these stressors.
Kailua-19	(17) In the FEIS explain what efforts will be used to test water quality for metals and radioactive materials after each explosive action. (18) In the FEIS explain what base line measurements of water quality and measurement post training on water quality will be taken.	Please see Section 3.2 and Appendix F, Section F.2.1. Water sampling and testing will not be conducted after explosive activities as it is not warranted. Radioactive materials would not be released as part of any proposed activity.
Kailua-20	(19) In the FEIS describe how unexploded ordnances will be handled on land and in the water.	No on land activities with explosives are part of this action. Explosive ordnance is only used at particular locations around Oahu. These areas are located on Figure A-11 in Appendix A and Figure H-32 in Appendix H. But should a historic explosive ordnance be found, do not approach, touch, move, or disturb any items found on land or in the water that could be munitions. Carefully leave the area and call 911. For more information, please visit the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources website at: https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/blog/2020/04/27/nr20-051/
Kailua-21	(20) In the FEIS provide information if any munitions used in ocean warfare including mines will be radioactive. (21) In the FEIS discuss if any weapons in ocean mine warfare will be radioactive.	No radioactive munitions or weapons would be used as part of any proposed activity.

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Kauai Chamber (Kauai)		
Kauai-01	On behalf of the Kaua'i Chamber of Commerce, I am pleased to provide this testimony in support of the Hawai'i-California Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) concerning the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF). As the voice of Kaua'i's business community, the Chamber recognizes PMRF's vital role in national defense, environmental stewardship, and driving local economic activity, Alignment with the Chamber's Mission and Work The Kaua'i Chamber is committed to promoting economic development, supporting sustainable business practices, and enhancing the quality of life for all residents of Kaua'i. We work to foster strong partnerships between local businesses, government agencies, and the military to create a thriving and resilient economy. The HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS aligns with these objectives by demonstrating PMRF's continued investment in our local workforce, infrastructure, and environmental conservation efforts. Economic Contributions and Socioeconomic Impact The HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS (December 2024, Section 3.11: Socioeconomics) outlines PMRF's substantial economic contributions to Kaua'i. These include: • Job Creation & Workforce Development: PMRF directly supports local employment by providing high-skilled jobs and contracting with businesses for goods and services. This fosters economic stability and career growth opportunities for Kaua'i residents. • Support for Local Businesses: The facility procures materials and services from Kaua'i-based vendors, reinforcing the success of local industries such as construction, hospitality, and retail. • Military-Driven Economic Stability: The planned modernization and sustainment of training ranges will help maintain and potentially increase economic contributions, ensuring continued benefits for local businesses and workers.	Thank you for your review of the EIS/OEIS.

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	• Tourism & Recreational Activities: The EIS/OEIS confirms that military training activities have a minimal impact on tourism and recreation, with any restrictions being temporary and localized. This ensures that Kaua'i's vibrant visitor economy remains strong while balancing the needs of military readiness. These findings highlight PMRF's integral role as a cornerstone of Kaua'i's economy and reinforce its importance to our island's financial well-being. Community Partnership and Public Engagement PMRF has a longstanding history of community engagement and public transparency. The EIS/OEIS demonstrates PMRF's commitment to working collaboratively with local stakeholders, ensuring that Kaua'i residents have a voice in its ongoing activities. The public meetings and comment periods outlined in the EIS/OEIS reflect PMRF's dedication to open communication, public input, and accountability. These efforts align with the Chamber's values of collaboration and inclusivity. Environmental Stewardship and Sustainable Practices A key strength of PMRF's operations is its unwavering commitment to environmental protection and conservation. The EIS/OEIS highlights several proactive initiatives, including: • Marine Wildlife Protection: PMRF invests over $20 million annually in marine species research and monitoring in partnership with NOAA Fisheries Service. These efforts ensure that military activities do not harm Hawaiian monk seals, sea turtles, or other protected marine species. • Sustainable Waste & Energy Management: PMRF actively reduces its environmental footprint through plastic waste reduction, hazardous material recycling, and clean energy initiatives. • Habitat Conservation: The facility takes steps to protect critical habitats by implementing best practices in land and ocean management. These initiatives align with the Chamber's commitment to sustainability and ensure that economic growth does not come at the expense of environmental responsibility. Conclusion	

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	The Kauaʻi Chamber fully supports the Hawaiʻi-California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS for PMRF. This document provides a thorough and transparent evaluation of PMRF's contributions to national security, the local economy, and environmental sustainability. By aligning with the Chamber's mission of economic growth, workforce development, and environmental responsibility, PMRF strengthens Kauaʻi's economy while ensuring the protection of our island's natural and cultural resources. We commend the comprehensive analysis and public engagement efforts outlined in the EIS/OEIS and urge all stakeholders to recognize the mutual benefits that PMRF brings to Kauaʻi. Continued support for PMRF's initiatives will contribute to a prosperous, resilient, and sustainable future for our island. Thank you for considering our perspective.	
Ka Lāhui Hawaiʻi (KLH)		
KLH-01	To Whom It May Concern, I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself and in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana(ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft EIS/OEIS for the HCTT activities. About Ka Lāhui Hawaiʻi Ka Lāhui Hawaiʻi is a Native Hawaiian initiative advocating for the self-determination and sovereignty of the Hawaiian people. Established in 1987, it serves as a voice for the Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian)community, advocating for the protection of Hawaiian land, culture, and resources. The organization works to uphold Indigenous rights and environmental justice, speaking up against military and governmental actions that continue to harm sacred spaces and fragile ecosystems in Hawaiʻi. Concerns Regarding the Draft EIS/OEIS Misrepresentation of the No Action Alternative	The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, and in the conduct of military readiness activities. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species populations. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species. Given that the impacts from the action alternatives were anticipated to be less than significant and, in most cases

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	Under § 1502.14, the alternatives section is the heart of the EIS. However, the No Action Alternative is misrepresented in the document. The Navy states that ceasing military activities would result in conditions being "unchanged or slightly improved from baseline conditions." This is a gross misrepresentation of the benefits of halting harmful military activities. The Navy currently runs 7,432 activities per year in Hawaii alone (Tables G-16 and G-17). Stopping these activities would bring significant positive impacts, including: - Endangered Species Recovery: Without thousands of harmful interactions annually, endangered species such as the Hawaiian monk seal (ʻīlioholoikauaua) and humpback whales would have a far greater chance of recovery. - Cultural and Community Benefits: For Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), ocean creatures are relatives, as described in the Kumulipo. The Navy's activities disrupt sacred cultural practices, such as fishing and traditional ceremonies. - Reef and Ocean Health: Coral reefs, already under immense stress, would have a chance to recover. Healthy reefs support subsistence fishing, wildlife, and global oceanic health. The No Action Alternative should be re-evaluated to accurately reflect these benefits rather than dismissing them.	minimal to undetectable, it was determined that impacts associated with the No Action Alternative would remain unchanged or slightly improved.
KLH-02	Harm to Endangered Species and Marine Mammals Hawai'i is a biodiversity hotspot currently experiencing a mass extinction event. The Navy has applied for permission to "take" 33.7 million instances of harm to marine mammals over seven years. Despite this, the Navy falsely concludes that its impact is not significant. Humpback Whales: 52,470 "takes" (19,028 in Hawaii alone)Hawaiian Monk Seals: 9,228 "takes" Bottlenose Dolphins: 349,184 "takes" in Hawaiian waters alone False Killer Whales: 25,700 "takes" (982 in Hawaiian waters) Spinner Dolphins: 63,569 "takes" in Hawaiian waters alone Blue and Fin Whales: 93,784 "takes" across the Pacific	Based on best available science, the Navy and NMFS, through consultation under the MMPA and the ESA, concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed military readiness activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates

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	Additionally, Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument and Kaula Island are home to endangered birds such as ʻAkeʻake (Band-rumped storm petrel), Uaʻu (Hawaiian petrel), and Aʻo (Newell Shearwater). The Navy fails to account for impacts like egg abandonment due to training-related disturbances. The significance determination for impacts on endangered species must be reconsidered under paragraphs (d)(vi) and (d)(ii).	(i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
KLH-03	Expansion of Military Activities The Navy proposes increasing military activities in Hawaiian waters by 43-49% under Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. These expansions include: - Nearshore Military Testing: Increasing nearshore activities (0-3 Nautical Miles) from 1,812 to 2,708 annually, directly harming reefs and feeding/resting areas for honu (Hawaiian green sea turtles). - Increased Explosives, Sonar, and Live Fire: Increased use of active sonar, underwater explosives, and live-fire exercises will devastate marine life, reefs, and endangered species.	While some activities are new or increasing, other activities are decreasing or ceasing. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects on marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. Please see Section 3.4, Section 3.5, and Section 3.8 for the analysis of all proposed activities on those resources.
KLH-04	Lack of Consultation with Kanaka Maoli. The Navy has failed to conduct meaningful consultation with Kanaka Maoli, despite clear environmental justice concerns. Public meetings were scheduled at the end of the comment period, limiting engagement. Additionally, the EIS exceeds legal page limits, making it inaccessible to the community.	The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023, and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of

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		engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings. The page limit does not include tables, figures, or appendices. The main body of the EIS/OEIS (Chapters 1-6) is 300 pages of text when tables and figures are not included.
KLH-05	Cumulative and Global Impacts The EIS/OEIS dismisses cumulative impacts of Navy activities, including: - Climate Change: Coral reefs are already stressed by ocean acidification and warming. Military activities will exacerbate these impacts. - Pollution: The Navy's history of contamination includes: - 5-million-gallon underground oil plume beneath Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam - 1.89-million-gallon wastewater spill into the ocean near Pearl Harbor - Red Hill Jet Fuel Leaks, contaminating water sources linked to the ocean These pollution events violate federal and state environmental laws and exacerbate harm to endangered species. The Navy must be held accountable for its role in worsening ocean health. Conclusion The Draft EIS/OEIS fails to acknowledge the long-term, significant harm caused by military activities in Hawaiian waters. The No Action Alternative must be re-evaluated to reflect the benefits of stopping harmful activities.	The EIS/OEIS included an analysis of cumulative impacts in Chapter 4, including impacts to coral reefs, and water quality.

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	The Navy must prioritize marine life, cultural practices, and ocean health over military readiness. Sincerely, Healani Sonoda-Pale Spokesperson, Ka Lāhui Hawai'i	
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)		
NRDC-01	The proposed management measures in the Hawai'i Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area (see the section on the Hawaii 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area below for additional discussion) are an important step forward for mitigation of impacts from dipping sonar. However, the available scientific evidence on the impacts of dipping sonar on deep-dive rates in beaked whales, as summarized above, indicates that management of this acoustic source should be expanded, including to areas representing important habitat for beaked whale species.	Per the requirements found in Table 5-9 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, the Action Proponents would not exceed 300 hours of MF1 surface ship hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar or 20 hours of helicopter dipping sonar annually within the Hawaii Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area. This includes any combination of major training exercises or unit level training. Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples. Furthermore, the current geographic extent of the Hawaii Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area wholly encompasses the most important portion (i.e., "child" portion of a hierarchical BIA) of the Blainville's beaked whale BIA, encompasses the vast majority of the most important portion of the Cuvier's beaked whale BIA , as well as portions of both species parent BIA.
NRDC-02	**Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area (Jun. 1 – Oct. 31)** 1. Extend the seasonality of the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area to April 1 to December 31 Combined scientific evidence from sightings data and passive acoustic detections show that blue whales are present off southern California almost year-round, and at relatively higher densities from April 1 through December 31. The seasonality of the Southern California Blue Whale	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed

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	Mitigation Area should be extended to reflect this integrated scientific information.	Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Extending the temporal restrictions beyond the five months already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples. Furthermore, per Calambokidis et al 2024, the revised blue whale core feeding area has a temporal range of June through November. The mitigation area already covers June through October and extending an additional month to cover the range of the BIA may not provide sufficient benefit, given the Action Proponents will also implement activity-based mitigation measures (Section 5.6) for any activities within the Study Area, in addition to the geographic mitigation area requirements.
NRDC-03	2. Limit all sources of mid-frequency active sonar The Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area represents important foraging habitat for endangered blue whales. As discussed above, the best available scientific information shows that disturbance from MFAS can cause cessation of deep-feeding behavior, displacement to areas of lower prey density, and the disruption of calls associated with foraging. Cumulatively, this may have serious ramifications for blue whale health and fitness. Moreover, blue whales exhibit social and reproductive behaviors within the area, both of which may be disturbed by military sonar. The Navy should carefully consider prohibiting use of all sources of MFAS during the time period the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area is in effect.	Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples. Furthermore, other training mid-frequency active sonar (MFAS) systems are likely to be used less frequently in the vicinity of the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area than hull-mounted surface ship mid frequency active sonars. Given water depths, the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area is

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		not conducive for large scale anti-submarine warfare exercises, nor near areas where other anti-submarine warfare training and testing occurs. Due to the presence of existing Navy subareas in the vicinity the southern part of the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area, a limited amount of helicopter dipping MFAS could occur. These designated range areas are required for proximity to airfields in San Diego such as Naval Air Station North Island and for airspace management. However, helicopters only used these areas for a Kilo Dip. A Kilo Dip is a functional check of approximately 1-2 pings of active sonar to confirm the system is operational before the helicopter heads to more remote offshore training areas. This ensures proper system operation and avoids loss of limited training time, expenditure of fuel, and cumulative engine use in the event of equipment malfunction. The potential effects of dipping sonar have been accounted for in the Navy's analysis. Further, due to lower power settings for dipping sonar, potential impact ranges of dipping sonar are significantly lower than surface ship sonars. Moreover, during a Kilo Dip or any other use of MFAS, the Action Proponents will implement the activity-based mitigation as described in Table 5-2 (Activity-based Mitigations for Acoustic Stressors).
NRDC-04	3. Require vessel speed restrictions Vessel strikes are a primary cause of mortality in Eastern North Pacific blue whales and are currently occurring at rates far above what is considered sustainable. Vessel noise is also limiting the acoustic space available to blue whales in which to carry out behaviors that are essential to their survival. As such, the Navy should include seasonal and/or dynamic restrictions to limit vessel speed within the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area, as it has in certain portions of the AFTT (see the section “Mitigation and research on Navy ship speeds” below for further discussion).	As described in Section 5.6.2, vessel strike mitigation involves maneuvering to maintain a specified distance from marine mammals and sea turtles, which may include reducing speed. As described in Section 3.0.4, vessels used under the Proposed Action are required to operate in accordance with applicable navigation rules. Implementing mandatory vessel speed restrictions is deemed impractical based on safety, sustainability, and mission criteria as described in row 16 of Table 5-20. In a review of Navy unpublished data, the multi-year average of U.S. Navy surface ship speeds on the continental shelf off California is between 10-15 knots.

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NRDC-05	**Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area (Jun. 1 – Oct. 31)** 1. Extend the seasonality of the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area to April 1 to December 31 As described above and in the Southern California Blue Whale Mitigation Area section above, changes in migratory timing due to the effect of climate change on primary prey species have resulted in aggregations of humpback whales being present off central California through December, and blue whales arriving in the region as early as April. The seasonality of the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area should be extended to reflect these changes, as supported by multiple lines of scientific evidence.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Extending the temporal restrictions beyond the five months already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-06	2. Prohibit use of air-deployed mid-frequency active sonar As discussed previously in these comments, air-deployed MFAS (i.e., dipping sonar) has been shown to have disproportionate impacts on beaked whales and may impact other species in a similar manner. The Navy should carefully consider restricting or limiting air-deployed MFAS within the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area during the months it is in effect.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Air-deployed MFAS (i.e., dipping sonar) use in the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area during the Proposed Action is anticipated to be infrequent relative to other portions of the California Study Area, given its distance from airfields with helicopters that would use dipping sonar. Restricting its already low use would not provide sufficient benefits to marine

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		mammals, given the Action Proponents will be implementing activity-based mitigation measures for any active sonar use, including dipping sonar (see Table 5-2). Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-07	3. Restrict other sources of mid-frequency active sonar The Navy should carefully consider restricting or limiting other activities involving MFAS, including unit-level training and maintenance and system checks while vessels are in transit, in the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area during the months it is in effect.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Other than hull-mounted MFAS, which is already limited in this area, and dipping sonar, other mid-frequency sonar use in the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area during the Proposed Action is anticipated to be infrequent relative to other portions of the California Study Area. Restricting its already low use would not provide sufficient benefits to marine mammals, given the Action Proponents will be implementing activity-based mitigation measures for any active sonar use (see Table 5-2). Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to

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		realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-08	4. Prohibit use of low-frequency active sonar Baleen whales are particularly vulnerable to impacts from LFAS, particularly in breeding areas and along migratory routes where low-amplitude communication calls between mothers and calves can be easily masked. The Navy should carefully consider prohibiting use of LFAS within the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area year-round.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Low-frequency active sonar use in the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area during the Proposed Action is anticipated to be infrequent relative to other portions of the California Study Area. Restricting its already low use would not provide sufficient benefits to marine mammals, given the Action Proponents will be implementing activity-based mitigation measures for any active sonar use, including low-frequency active sonar (see Table 5-2). Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-09	5. Prohibit the use of in-water explosives In-water explosives can cause serious harm to marine mammals, including physical injury. The Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area includes portions of several BIAs for ESA-listed and other protected whale species; these animals are at risk from the use of in-water explosives in this area, as indicated by the Navy's own impact estimates. The Navy should prohibit	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both

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	the use of in-water explosives in the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area.	beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Explosive use in the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area during the Proposed Action is anticipated to be infrequent relative to other portions of the California Study Area. Restricting their already low use would not provide sufficient benefits to marine mammals, given the Action Proponents will be implementing activity-based mitigation measures for explosive activities (see Table 5-3). Prohibiting the use of in-water explosives in the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-10	6. Require vessel speed restrictions Vessel strikes are the primary cause of mortality in several baleen whale species, including stocks present in the California portion of the HCTT Study Area. In addition, vessel noise is limiting the acoustic space available to endangered and protected species to carry out behaviors essential to their survival. The Navy should include requirements to limit vessel speed seasonally and/or dynamically within the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area.	As described in Section 5.6.2, vessel strike mitigation involves maneuvering to maintain a specified distance from marine mammals and sea turtles, which may include reducing speed. As described in Section 3.0.4, vessels used under the Proposed Action are required to operate in accordance with applicable navigation rules. Implementing mandatory vessel speed restrictions is deemed impractical based on safety, sustainability, and mission criteria as described in row 16 of Table 5-20. In a review of Navy unpublished data, the multi-year average of U.S. Navy surface ship speeds on the continental shelf off California is between 10-15 knots.
NRDC-11	**Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Area (Jun. 1 – Oct. 31)** 1. Enhance mitigation measures to align with those proposed for the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area Taking into account the impact and mitigation considerations discussed in previous sections of this letter, we recommend that the same enhanced	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area.

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	mitigation measures proposed above for the Central California Large Whale Mitigation Area also be applied in the Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Area.	Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Air-deployed MFAS (i.e., dipping sonar), other non-hull mounted MFAS, low-frequency active sonar, and explosive use in the Northern California Large Whale Mitigation Area during the Proposed Action is anticipated to be infrequent relative to other portions of the California Study Area. Restricting their already low use would not provide sufficient benefits to marine mammals, given the Action Proponents will be implementing activity-based mitigation measures for any active sonar and explosive use (see Tables 5-2 and 5-3). Extending the temporal restrictions beyond the five months already proposed, increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed, and prohibiting explosive use would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and hinder Navy ability to realistically train in furtherance of its statutory mandate. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-12	**California Large Whale Awareness Mitigation Area** 1. Issue awareness notifications during times of year that gray whales and fin whales are most likely to be present at their greatest densities Based on the revised BIAs, gray whales are most likely to be present in the region in their highest numbers from November through June, and fin whales from June through November. The Navy should plan to issue awareness notifications for these species during these timeframes.	As described in Table 5-16, The California Large Whale Awareness Messages are intended to be temporally dynamic on an annual basis based on predicted oceanographic conditions and apply throughout the California portion of the Study Area. The Navy currently releases two West Coast whale awareness messages per year, a fall message for gray and fin whales from Nov-May and a spring message for blue and fin whales from best oceanographic estimate of start through Nov. These dates align with the 2024 revised biologically important area seasons

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		(Calambokidis et al. 2024). These messages will continue under HCTT.
NRDC-13	2. Use the most recent data possible for predicting concentrations of blue, fin, and humpback whales. The Navy should use the dynamic SDMs developed by the SWFSC and the WhaleWatch model predictions to inform their assets on where and when concentrations of whales are most likely to be present based on recent oceanographic conditions.	Dynamic SDMs and WhaleSafe information inform the details included in the Navy's annual awareness messages. These models are not suitable to the small scale range sub-areas Navy vessels must operate in due to training and testing requirements, schedule deconfliction, and safety. Nor are the models suitable or available to ships at sea due to satellite transmission bandwidth restrictions (i.e., limited internet access).
NRDC-14	**California Large Whale Real-Time Notification Mitigation Area (year-round)** 1. Issue real-time notifications when one or more large whales are observed within 1 NM of a Navy vessel, and extend notifications to U.S. Coast Guard vessels performing or supporting Navy-related activities All instances of vessel strike should be avoided when possible. The likelihood of avoiding a vessel strike would be improved if the Navy issued real-time notifications when one or more large whales are sighted within 1 NM of a Navy vessel within the area between 32–33 degrees North and 117.2–119.5 degrees West. The DEIS notes comparable vessel strike risk to large whales from U.S. Coast Guard vessels performing or supporting Navy activities (DEIS at 3.7-53, Table 3.7-19), and so real-time notifications should also be transmitted to those vessels to further improve situational awareness.	Working with NMFS, the Navy and NMFS agreed that individual large whale sightings within California are particularly common. The Navy reviewed sighting data from NMFS' SWFSC and Navy-funded researchers to determine a metric (i.e., count of whales) that might be indicative of unusual foraging or other life history events. The best number was four or more large whales of any species. If Navy ships are training in coordination with U.S. Coast Guard vessels, bridge-to-bridge radio is available for notification of whale presence in the area.
NRDC-15	2. Use both visual and passive acoustic monitoring platforms to detect whales and trigger awareness notification systems The probability of detection of one or more whales in the California Large Whale Real- Time Notification Mitigation Area should be maximized by using both visual and acoustic monitoring platforms. The Navy should deploy unmanned acoustic gliders or fixed hydrophones with real-time acoustic detection capability within the California Large Whale Real-Time Notification Mitigation Area, and use both acoustic and visual detections to trigger real-time notifications.	Navy's instrumented ranges do not have the capabilities to be used effectively for mitigation. Most notably, there is not a real-time feed of hydrophone data to vessel and aircraft operators. See Section 5.5.3 (ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ACOUSTIC MONITORING DEVICES) of the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS for further details. Additionally, water space management would preclude non-tactical use of gliders.

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NRDC-16	3. Require dynamic speed reductions to 10 knots upon receipt of a real-time notification, when practicable. Upon receipt of a real-time notification, Navy vessels, and U.S. Coast Guard vessels engaged in training and testing activities, should reduce or maintain vessel speeds at 10 knots until whales are no longer detected in the area either visually or acoustically.	As described in Section 5.6.2, vessel movement mitigation involves maneuvering to maintain a specified distance from marine mammals (500 yards for large whales, 200 yards for non-bow riding dolphins) and sea turtles, which may include reducing speed. The direction to reduce speed, if warranted, was a new addition to Navy mitigation in 2024. As described in Section 3.0.4, vessels used under the Proposed Action are required to operate in accordance with applicable navigation rules. Implementing mandatory vessel speed restrictions is deemed impractical based on safety, sustainability, and mission criteria as described in row 16 of Table 5-20. In a review of Navy unpublished data, the multi-year average of U.S. Navy surface ship speeds on the continental shelf off California is between 10-15 knots.
NRDC-17	**Hawai‘i Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area (year-round)** 1. Limit major training exercises to reduce cumulative exposure In light of the latest scientific information on the severity of the impacts of cumulative exposure to resident or seasonally resident populations, the Navy should carefully consider prohibiting major training exercises involving hull-mounted MFAS within the Hawai‘i Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area. If some major exercises absolutely cannot be avoided, the Navy should consider further reducing their number, and, to the extent practicable, carry out each exercise in a different portion of the Hawai‘i Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area (i.e., one exercise in the north, one exercise in the south), to ensure that marine mammal populations with highly discrete site fidelity, as indicated by the designation of child S-BIAs, are not exposed to multiple major training exercises within a single year.	Per the requirements found in Table 5-9 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, the Action Proponents would not exceed 300 hours of MF1 surface ship hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar or 20 hours of helicopter dipping sonar annually within this mitigation area. This includes any combination of major training exercises or unit level training. Major exercises involve multiple units, often spread across the Hawaii Range Complex. So, there is rarely a concentration of sonar or other stressors in one area. Also, the individual activities that make up a major exercise would not frequently occur within the Hawaii Island Marine Mammal Mitigation Area. The main Hawaii-based major exercise, RIMPAC, occurs only every other year in the summer and outside of humpback whale breeding season. While all areas of HRC could be used for some sort of training during RIMPAC, the majority of sonar and explosive use generally, but not exclusively, occurs outside of the mitigation area. Explosive use in the Hawaii Island Marine Mammal Mitigation area is prohibited year-round.

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NRDC-18	**Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area (year-round; acoustic restriction from Nov. 15 to Apr. 15)** 1. Extend the boundaries of the Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area to encompass child S-BIAs for endangered MHI insular false killer whales Several core habitat areas (child S-BIAs) for endangered MHI insular false killer whales lie within and adjacent to the existing Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area. As the Navy has not indicated in the DEIS that these areas are important for training and testing activities, we recommend that the Navy extend the boundaries of the Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area to include the child S-BIAs for MHI insular false killer whales, including the northeast Kaiwi Channel.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Final mitigation measures resulting from consultation will be documented in the Navy ROD.
NRDC-19	2. Extend the prohibition of the use of MF1 surface ship hull-mounted MFAS, and other sources of MFAS (see recommendations below), from December 1 through May 31 Humpback whales can be found in Hawai'i from the late fall through spring, with the highest concentrations of whales occurring between February and March. The 2015 BIA spanned the months of December through April, but new satellite tagging and sightings data used to inform the revised BIA boundaries indicate that the most important reproductive areas occur in the Main Hawaiian Islands from December through May. As such, the dates of the acoustic mitigation measures in the Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area should be modified to run, in accordance with the revised BIA, from December 1 through May 31.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Extending the temporal restrictions beyond the five months already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and present implications for continuing to meet statutory mandates. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-20	3. Prohibit use of air-deployed mid-frequency active sonar year-round Air-deployed MFAS (or dipping sonar) has been shown to have disproportionate impacts on beaked whales and may impact other deep-diving species in a similar manner; it has also recently been shown to induce significant and strong and persistent behavioral changes in	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area.

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	dolphins.103 The Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area should include a prohibition on air-deployed MFAS, to protect the multiple small, resident, and acoustically sensitive populations for which S-BIAs have been designated in the mitigation area.	Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and present implications for continuing to meet statutory mandates. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-21	4. Limit other sources of mid-frequency active sonar year-round The Navy should carefully consider restricting all other sources of MFAS, including other major training exercises involving hull-mounted MFAS and that used by individual units (e.g., unit-level training, and maintenance and system checks while ships are in transit) in the Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and present implications for continuing to meet statutory mandates. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-22	5. Prohibit use of low-frequency active sonar between December 1 and May 31 Baleen whales are particularly vulnerable to impacts from low-frequency active sonar, particularly on breeding areas and along migratory routes	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action and the expansion of the California portion of the Study Area.

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	where low-amplitude communication calls between mothers and calves can be easily masked. The Navy should prohibit use of low-frequency sonar within the Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area between November 15 and May 31 to protect North Pacific humpback whales on calving habitat.	Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Increasing the active sonar restrictions beyond what is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and present implications for continuing to meet statutory mandates. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-23	6. Require vessel speed restrictions between December 1 and May 31 Vessel strikes are a primary cause of mortality in baleen whale species and mothers and calves are particularly vulnerable. In addition, vessel noise limits the acoustic space for baleen whales to carry out behaviors essential to their survival. These impacts may be most acutely felt by mothers and calves, which communicate to one another at low amplitudes to avoid detection by predators. As such, the Navy should include restrictions to limit vessel speed within the Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area between December 1 and May 31.	As described in Section 5.6.2, vessel strike mitigation involves maneuvering to maintain a specified distance from marine mammals and sea turtles, which may include reducing speed. As described in Section 3.0.4, vessels used under the Proposed Action are required to operate in accordance with applicable navigation rules. Implementing mandatory vessel speed restrictions is deemed impractical based on safety, sustainability, and mission criteria as described in row 16 of Table 5-20. In a review of Navy unpublished data, the multi-year average of U.S. Navy surface ship speeds on the continental shelf off California is between 10-15 knots.
NRDC-24	**Hawai'i Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area (Dec. 15- Apr. 15)** 1. Extend the reporting period to December 1 through May 31 The dates of the Hawai'i Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area should be extended to December 1 through May 31, to reflect the dates of the revised BIA on which the Hawai'i 4-Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area is based. We note that the use of surface ship hull-mounted MFAS is only expected in parts of the Hawai'i Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area that do not overlap with the Hawai'i 4-	The Navy has extended the date range of the Hawaii Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area from November through May, as reflected in the Final EIS/OEIS.

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	Islands Marine Mammal Mitigation Area, given the prohibition on the use of this acoustic source in the latter area during this time period.	
NRDC-25	2. Report other sources of mid-frequency and low-frequency active sonar Other forms of mid-frequency and low-frequency active sonar may impact North Pacific humpback whales, and the use of those sources should also be reported within the Hawai'i Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area, which reflects the reproductive habitat area of highest importance for this population (i.e., the child R-BIA).	The Navy will continue to report the total hours of MF1 surface ship hull-mounted mid-frequency active sonar (MFAS) used in the Hawaii Humpback Whale Special Reporting Areas from December 15 through April 15 will aid the Navy and NMFS in analyzing the effectiveness of mitigation in these areas during the adaptive management process. MF1 surface ship hull-mounted MFAS was chosen as the representative source to report because it is a well-understood source in terms of its effects on marine mammals, extensively used during training and testing activities, and has not changed significantly since Phase I. For consistency of reporting, retention of MF1 hours as the reporting metric will to allow for clear comparison to past documents.
NRDC-26	**Hawai'i Humpback Whale Awareness Notification Mitigation Area (Nov. 1-Apr. 30)** 1. Issue awareness notifications during times of year that humpback whales are most likely to be present at their greatest densities Based on the revised R-BIA, humpback whales are most likely to be present in the region in their highest numbers from December 1 through May 31. We recommend extending the end-date of the Hawai'i Humpback Whale Awareness Notification Mitigation Area to May 31 to reflect this revision. Given interannual variability in the timing of baleen whale migrations, we recommend maintaining the November 1 start date to support the detection of early arriving humpback whales to the Hawai'i Range Complex.	The Navy has extended the date range of the Hawaii Humpback Whale Awareness Messages from November through May, as reflected in the Final EIS/OEIS.
NRDC-27	**Important Cuvier's beaked whale habitat in the Southern California Bight** It is clear that mitigation measures are needed to protected Cuvier's beaked whales from acoustic impacts in areas of the SOCAL Range Complex. The available scientific data are sufficient to inform the identification of important habitat areas for the species in this region. However, balancing necessary mitigation measures for Cuvier's beaked whales with military readiness is a real challenge in this area. We therefore recommend that the Navy and NMFS convene a group of experts to	To date, no documentation of harm to individuals or populations has been observed over 20 years of monitoring. The Navy has been funding Cuvier's beaked whale research and monitoring in SOCAL since 2004. This research includes as much information related to overall beaked whale population health such as individual re-sighting rates, passive acoustic detections on occurrence, documentations of mother-calf pairs, satellite tracking, genetics, and starting in 2025, body

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	develop a suite of mitigation measure that are feasible for the Navy but would still reduce harm to individual beaked whales and the risk of population-level impacts.	condition analysis using drone photographs. In addition, numerous opportunistic exposure response studies are ongoing. To date, no documentation of harm to individuals or populations has been observed over 20 years of monitoring. The Navy, in consultation with NMFS, has already begun planning the development of a Potential Consequence of Disturbance (PCOD) model for SOCAL Cuvier's beaked whales based on past and ongoing date collection efforts. Finally, NMFS and Navy already meet annually to discuss the state of monitoring science and other adaptive management issues including mitigation.
NRDC-28	The Navy should also consider source-based approaches to mitigate impacts on this and other frequently exposed populations. Several recent studies suggest that modifying the sonar signal might reduce behavioral response in at least some species of marine mammals, and certain promising types of modifications, such as converting upsweeps to downsweeps—which would not alter the signal's spectral output in any way—may well be practicable and should be studied further, especially for reducing impacts in cases where spatial conflicts are unavoidable (see the section "Research into sound-source modifications" below for further discussion).	As discussed in Table 5-20, row 26, active sonar signals are designed explicitly to provide optimum performance at detecting underwater objects (e.g., submarines) in a variety of acoustic environments. The action proponents train with various active sonar signals, including up-sweeps and down-sweeps, to accurately replicate operational scenarios. Reducing training realism by restricting the signal used would ultimately prevent units from deploying with the required level of readiness necessary to accomplish their missions and impede the Navy's ability to certify forces to deploy to meet national security tasking. Likewise, testing program requirements include test parameters designed to accurately determine whether a system is meeting its operational and performance requirements. Reducing realism by restricting the signal used would impact the ability of researchers, program managers, and weapons system acquisition programs to effectively test systems and platforms (and components of these systems and platforms) before full-scale production or delivery to the fleet. For these reasons, modifying or limiting the sonar signal as mitigation is impractical to implement as it would result in degraded realism of training and testing
NRDC-29	**Cross Seamount (Hawaii)** As Cross Seamount represents important foraging habitat for a rare and potentially evolutionary distinct species of beaked whale, we recommend	As discussed in Section K.7.1.3 (Hawaii Public Comment Mitigation Area Assessment) of the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS, implementing new geographic mitigation measures in addition

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	that the Navy designate a year-round mitigation area to protect the seamount. Such a designation would have secondary benefits for a variety of other odontocete species foraging at Cross Seamount seasonally between November and May. While Cross Seamount is the only seamount in the main Hawaiian Islands EEZ capable of supporting a commercial offshore handline tuna fishery, several of the deeper seamounts nearby (including Bishop, Brigham, Clark, Daly, Day, Dutton, Ellis, Finch, Indianapolis, Jagger, McCall, Palmer, Pensacola, Perret, Powers, Swordfish, and Washington seamounts) are productive longline fishing grounds for larger-sized yellowfin and bigeye tuna as well as swordfish. In general, seamounts are now well known to alter prey distributions and abundances through behavioral and top-down trophic forcings. Due to these effects, seamounts are considered hotspots for pelagic biodiversity and associations among top predators, including marine mammals. Cross Seamount, for the reasons stated above, has greatest conservation priority; but given the scientific basis for the generalization of marine mammal- seamount associations, and given evidence that a number of other seamounts within the HCTT Study Area exhibit levels of productivity capable of supporting commercial fisheries, the Navy should also consider habitat-based management measures for these other nearby seamounts.	to ongoing activity-based mitigation within the vicinity of Cross Seamount would not be effective at reducing adverse impacts on beaked whales or other marine mammal populations. That 2018 assessment remains valid today. The Navy has been training and testing in the broad ocean area around Cross Seamount with the same basic systems for over 40 years, and there is no evidence of any adverse impacts to marine species. Additionally, it would not be practicable to implement. The broad ocean area around Cross Seamount and the seamounts to the north are unique in that there are no similar broad ocean areas in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands that are not otherwise encumbered by commercial vessel traffic and commercial air traffic routes.
NRDC-30	**Important habitat areas off O‘ahu, Kaua‘i, and Ni‘ihau** The Navy should further consider the implementation of mitigation areas off O‘ahu, Kaua‘i, and Ni‘ihau. Providing mitigation measures for select activities during even a limited season within some important habitat areas could have value in reducing cumulative disturbance and stress in resident populations. Such measures should at least be considered.	The Navy reevaluated all geographic mitigations in Phase IV to account for updated science as well as new activities in the Proposed Action. Through the geographic mitigation development and assessment processes, the Action Proponents ultimately commit to the maximum level of mitigation that is both beneficial and practical to implement under the Proposed Action. The proposed sonar and explosive limitations within geographic mitigation areas, both year-round and seasonal, reflect this balance. Additional geographic mitigation that which is already proposed would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and present implications for

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		continuing to meet statutory mandates. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-31	**Further identification of important habitat areas in understudied regions** The fact that we have highlighted only a limited number of additional important habitat areas in this section reflects the paucity of information on marine mammal habitat currently available for much of the HCTT Study Area. Such lack of information can lead to incorrect estimates of species density in some locations and undermine the extent and nature of the estimated impact of Navy activities on marine mammals, particularly for far-ranging exercises like RIMPAC. In addition to the designation of geographic mitigation areas identified above, we recommend that efforts are undertaken in an iterative manner to identify additional important habitat areas across the HCTT Study Area, using the full range of data and information available (e.g., habitat- based density models, NMFS-recognized BIAs, ESA critical habitat designations, passive acoustic monitoring data, other survey data, oceanographic and other environmental data, etc.).	The 2024 revision of Biologically Important Areas (BIAs) is the most comprehensive collection of data to date, incorporating both published and unpublished information, some of which was informed by research funded by the Navy. There is no other detailed review of scientific information that the BIAs did not consider. Therefore, the 2024 BIAs are the foundation for the Navy's proposed HCTT mitigation areas. In essence, the Navy did review and consider the information in the BIAs and along with practicability considerations for significant impacts to training and testing, providing the best balance of marine mammal protection and military readiness. The Navy has continually funded annual improvements to NMFS' spatial habitat modeling since 2010. These models are considered for derivation of marine species density for acoustic impact modeling. For some species, there is highly variable occurrence on an annual basis. Therefore, most models are aggregations of multi-year data sets and were also considered during the 2024 BIA development. Finally, NMFS the federal agency responsible for marine mammal stock assessments, has limited survey data in remote areas, such as those far from the main Hawaiian Islands. While the Navy has co-funded some NMFS surveys in the past, the vastness of the ocean and logistical constraints limit the extent of survey coverage. In conclusion, the Navy considered the best available scientific information for development of geographic mitigation areas.
NRDC-32	**Stand-off distances** The Navy does not incorporate stand-off distances of any size within its requirements for mitigation areas. Thus, activities that are otherwise restricted or limited within a mitigation area could occur directly along the area's boundary and ensonify habitat within the mitigation area at levels that can cause injury and increase the risk or severity of behavioral disruption.	The boundaries of geographic mitigation areas are delineated with the intent to reduce impacts to resources to the maximum extent practicable. Increasing their geographic extent beyond what is already proposed (e.g., a buffer or stand-off distance) would be impractical because it would modify military readiness activities in a way that would prevent them from meeting mission objectives and present implications for

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	The Navy should consider establishing stand-off distances around its mitigation areas to the greatest extent practicable, allowing for variability in size given the location of the area, the type of operation at issue, and the species of concern.	continuing to meet statutory mandates. See Table 5-1 of the HCTT EIS/OEIS for examples.
NRDC-33	**Integration of important habitat areas to improve resolution of operations** The delineation of BIAs by NMFS, the availability of predictive habitat models for some species and regions, and evidence (including that described above) of additional important habitat areas within the HCTT Study Area provide the opportunity for the agencies to improve upon their current approach to the development of alternatives by improving resolution of their analysis of operations. We offer the following thoughts for consideration. Recognizing that important habitat areas imply the non-random distribution and density of marine mammals in space and time, both the spatial location and the timing of training and testing events in relation to those areas is a significant determining factor in the assessment of acoustic impacts. Levels of acoustic impact derived from the Navy Acoustic Effects MOdel (NAEMO) are likely to be under- or over-estimated depending on whether the location of the modeled event is further from the important habitat area, or closer to it, than the actual event. Thus, there is a need for the Navy to compile more information regarding the number, nature, and timing of testing and training events that take place within, or in close proximity to, important habitat areas, and to refine its scale of analysis of operations to match the scale of the habitat areas that are considered to be important. While the DEIS, in assessing environmental impacts on marine mammals, breaks down estimated impacts by region, the resolution is seldom greater than range complex or homeport and is not specifically focused on areas of higher biological importance. Current and ongoing efforts to identify important habitat areas for marine mammals should be used by the Navy as a guide to the most appropriate scale(s) for the analysis of operations.	The Navy appreciates the recommendations provided by NRDC and will consider them when planning future phases of analysis.
NRDC-34	**Research into sound-source modifications**	Active sonar signals are designed explicitly to provide optimum performance at detecting underwater objects (e.g., submarines) in a variety of acoustic environments. The action

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	A number of European studies have demonstrated that certain modifications of mid-frequency and high-frequency signals significantly reduce the reactivity of harbor porpoises, whose strong reactivity to human noise is well documented. The studies suggest that substantial mitigation could be achieved by employing down-sweeps rather than up-sweeps when harmonics are present, or by reducing the level of side bands (or harmonics). Some of these modifications, such as converting up-sweeps to down-sweeps, would not alter a system's spectral output in any way. Other signal characteristics may also be of interest. For example, short rise times (i.e., rise times less than or equal to 15 ms) are correlated across mammalian species with startle response, raising concerns about sensitization. Studies on captive gray seals have demonstrated that sounds with short rise times elicit an acoustic startle response, followed by "rapid and pronounced" sensitization, and subsequent sustained spatial avoidance, rapid flight responses, "clear signs of fear conditioning," and avoidance of food located near the sound source. Acoustic stimuli with longer rise times did not elicit the same type of negative response. High-frequency echosounders with short rise times were found to produce a strong behavioral response in the same species, leading the researchers to conclude that they could produce startle responses, and therefore potentially sensitization, as well. We recommend further research and exploration of the feasibility of signal modification, including converting up-sweeps to down-sweeps, reducing the level of the side bands, or lengthening the rise time. In the DEIS, the Navy considered, but rejected, modification of active sonar sources for training as part of a potential mitigation measure ("26. Reducing annual active sonar hours, replacing active sonar, with passive sonar or modifying active sonar sources for training"), deeming it impractical for achieving the mission. The rationale provided in the DEIS doesn't clearly justify why signal modifications alone would be impractical, however. Indeed, some of those modifications, such as converting up-sweeps to down-sweeps, would not alter the system's spectral output in any way. We believe source modification requires greater validation across species and in more behavioral contexts before any decisions are made to alter signals—but, given the preliminary data, and given the potential of this	proponents train with various active sonar signals, including up-sweeps and down-sweeps, to accurately replicate operational scenarios. Reducing training realism by restricting the signal used would ultimately prevent units from deploying with the required level of readiness necessary to accomplish their missions and impede the Navy's ability to certify forces to deploy to meet national security tasking. Likewise, testing program requirements include test parameters designed to accurately determine whether a system is meeting its operational and performance requirements. Reducing realism by restricting the signal used would impact the ability of researchers, program managers, and weapons system acquisition programs to effectively test systems and platforms (and components of these systems and platforms) before full-scale production or delivery to the fleet. For these reasons, modifying or limiting the sonar signal as mitigation is impractical to implement as it would result in degraded realism of training and testing.

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	measure to reduce the instances and severity of behavioral harassment, we urge the Navy to aggressively sponsor that research.	
NRDC-35	**Thermal detection systems** The Navy considered but rejected "[u]sing developmental mitigation technologies for mitigation," including infrared, thermal detection, unmanned aerial vehicles, passive acoustic range instrumentation, and automated detection software or sensors. The Navy's analysis doesn't account for the fact that the last five years have seen thermal detection technologies advance from the developmental to the operational. A study evaluating the performance of thermal imaging-based automatic whale detection technology for its use across different oceans found that the technology can detect whales in polar, temperate, and subtropical ocean regimes over distances of several kilometers, and outperforms marine mammal observers in the number of whales detected. The authors of that study, which was published five years ago, concluded that the "results show that thermal imaging technology can be used to assist in providing protection for marine mammals against ship strike and acoustic impact across the world's oceans." A field comparison of marine mammal detection methods offshore Atlantic Canada, published that same year, found that overall detection rates increase when multiple detection methods are used, and that visual observers with a rotating infrared camera should increase detections in good visibility conditions, and that a combination of infrared and passive acoustic monitoring improves detection rates during darkness. A separate study demonstrated that an infrared camera detected the same number of blows of North Pacific gray whales during both day and night, implying equal efficacy under both conditions. Simulations indicate that thermal detection systems could also be effective as a vessel strike mitigation tool, when used as part of a combined mitigation system and the system is optimized for the characteristics of the vessel. And a recent study demonstrated that thermal detection systems can also be used to detect the thermal signature of the bodies of killer whales in the Salish Sea, indicating that the system may also be suitable for supporting monitoring of smaller cetaceans.	The Navy is currently funding research for the development and efficacy of thermal imaging systems as potential vessel strike mitigation through the Living Marine Resources program. Currently, the technology has not reached the level of performance needed for deployment during military readiness activities for mitigation uses. If thermal/IR mitigation technologies mature to the state where they are determined to be sufficiently effective at mitigating marine mammal impacts when considering the range of environmental conditions analogous to where the Action Proponents train and test, the species that could co-occur in space and time with the activities, then the Action Proponents will assess their compatibility with military readiness applications. This would include a practicality assessment of the budget and acquisition process (including costs associated with designing, building, installing, maintaining, and manning equipment), the logistical and physical considerations for retrofitting platforms with the appropriate equipment and their associated maintenance, repairs, or replacements (e.g., conducting engineering studies to ensure compatibility with existing shipboard systems), the resource considerations for training personnel to effectively operate the equipment, and the potential security and classification issues.

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	Because mitigation measures based on visual observation, such as safety zone maintenance, results in highly limited risk reduction for most species and under most conditions, we view alternative detection measures as a significant area for development. Plainly, infrared and thermal detection technologies have achieved a readiness level that is capable of supporting monitoring and mitigation during Phase IV. Indeed, it is now common for certain offshore industries, such as offshore wind, to include infrared and/or thermal detection systems as part of their monitoring and mitigation protocols. They should be applied here.	
NRDC-36	**Mitigation and research on Navy ship speeds** The speed at which Navy vessels operate during testing and training exercises, and during general transit between exercises, has direct implications for the probability of mortality from a ship strike. Slowing vessels below 10 knots can reduce collision rates by 90% and decrease the probability of serious injuries or death. The acoustic footprint of vessels also lessens dramatically with reduced speeds. In the current DEIS for the HCTT Study Area, the Navy considers, but rejects, implementing mandatory vessel speed restrictions, on the grounds that they are unsafe, unsustainable, and run counter to the Navy's mission. DEIS at 5-34, Table 5-20. It is reasonable to propose, however, that under certain operational conditions maintaining a 10-knot vessel speed would be practicable for the Navy. For example, the analysis performed by the Navy for its Northeast North Atlantic Right Whale Mitigation Area, within the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing Study Area, is one that carefully considers practicability and concludes that there are certain circumstances when the speeds of Navy vessels can be limited to 10 knots. For example, during non-explosive torpedo events within the Northeast North Atlantic Right Whale Mitigation Area, surface ships will maintain a speed of no more than 10 knots during transits and normal firing. Vessel strikes are a primary threat to large whale species, including populations that seasonally inhabit the California Range Complex and humpback whale mothers and calves in the Main Hawaiian Islands. As for any fast-moving vessel, a strike from a Navy vessel or U.S. Coast Guard vessel engaged in Navy activities may result in the mortality of endangered species. As such, we urge the Navy to conduct a thorough practicability	As described in Section 5.6.2, vessel movement mitigation involves maneuvering to maintain a specified distance from marine mammals and sea turtles, which may include reducing speed. As described in Section 3.0.4, vessels used under the Proposed Action are required to operate in accordance with applicable navigation rules. Implementing mandatory vessel speed restrictions is deemed impractical based on safety, sustainability, and mission criteria as described in row 16 of Table 5-20. In a review of Navy unpublished data, the multi-year average of U.S. Navy surface ships around Hawaii is between <5 knots around major islands to 15 knots. Off California average U.S. Navy surface ship speeds range between 10-15 knots. Furthermore, there has not been a U.S. Navy ship strike to whales in Hawaii from since the Navy began seeking MMPA and ESA authorization (2009-2025). While off California, there can be long gaps without ship strikes with the longest consecutive period over 11-years without a strike. Also, the activities affected by this speed measure are carefully scripted testing events, not dynamic training activities. Finally, AFTT was able to do a practicability analysis because of a civilian North Atlantic right whale notification system applicable to only a small area of AFTT. Similar systems do not exist in the Pacific.

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	analysis, as has been demonstrated for the AFTT Study Area, and implement vessel speed mitigation measures in the HCTT Study Area. Additionally, given that the speed of Navy ships during all aspects of their operations potentially impacts marine mammals, we recommend that the Navy collect data on ship speed and report them to NMFS as part of the EIS process. This will allow for objective evaluation by NMFS of vessel-strike risk, of harassment resulting from vessel activity, and of the potential benefit of additional speed-focused mitigation measures.	
NRDC-37	**On-range passive acoustic sensors** The Navy has substantial capability, at both SOAR and the Pacific Missile Range Facility, to detect, identify, localize, and track various cetacean species in real time. That capability has been used to support behavioral response studies in both locations. Yet the Navy claims that that using passive acoustic range instrumentation for mitigation purposes is still in a research and development stage "not sufficiently beneficial." DEIS at 5-33, Table 5-20. However, scientific studies have used that instrumentation for exactly these types of purposes, and the methodologies undertaken—while continually evolving—do not require more research and development before they can be used to support the mitigation of acoustic, explosive, and vessel-related stressors. The Navy should make a serious effort in its final EIS to analyze what is plainly a viable form of mitigation.	The Navy's instrumented ranges do not have the capabilities to be used effectively for mitigation. The range hydrophones cannot track animals with any granularity and can only detect if animals are present in a general area. Most notably, there is not a real-time feed of hydrophone data to vessel and aircraft operators. Animals are almost always present on the ranges, therefore expending the resources to notify exercise participants is not necessary. Furthermore, there are not enough trained analysts to be present during all training exercises and during a training event there is not enough space in the range operations center for analysts to be present. This topic was previously discussed in Section 5.5.3 (ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ACOUSTIC MONITORING DEVICES) of the 2018 HSTT Final EIS/OEIS. The Navy, in consultation with NMFS, has already begun planning the development of a Potential Consequence of Disturbance (PCOD) model for SOCAL Cuvier's beaked whales based on past and ongoing data collection efforts. This effort integrates past and ongoing data collection on beaked whale population demographics since 2004 (tagging, photoID, genetics, body condition, response to sound). In addition to the population study in SOCAL, Navy funded researchers are also monitoring a non-exposed beaked whale population off Guadalupe Island, Mexico.
NRDC-38	**Compensatory mitigation**	The Navy has for years implemented a very broad and comprehensive range of measures to mitigate potential

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	To the extent that additional operational mitigation is impracticable, the Navy should consider adopting compensatory mitigation to help improve the conservation status or habitat of affected populations. Compensatory mitigation is a concept that is routinely employed in implementation of the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, and other environmental laws, and is consistent with the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which is broad in its characterization of mitigation. 16 U.S.C. § 1371(a)(5)(A)(II)(aa) (requiring NMFS to prescribe not only "permissible methods of taking pursuant to [a specified activity]," but also "other means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact" on affected marine mammal species and populations and on their habitat). The Navy should consider compensatory mitigation for the adverse impacts of the permitted activity on marine mammals and their habitat that cannot otherwise be prevented or mitigated.	impacts on marine mammals from military readiness activities. As the EIS/OEIS documents in Chapter 5, the Navy is increasing its mitigation measures to enhance marine mammal protections to the maximum extent practicable. The Navy would also assert that based on the analysis presented in the EIS/OEIS, Navy training and testing activities would not have significant adverse impacts on marine habitats, in general. As noted in Section 3.0.1.1, the Navy provides extensive investment for programs in basic and applied research. This program focuses on improving the broader scientific understanding of protected marine species across Study Areas, including species occurrences, responses to stressor exposure, and consequences of stressor exposure on individuals and populations. Regarding compensatory mitigation, the Navy has considered and incorporated the appropriate level of mitigation measures in its action consistent with the requirements under the ESA, MMPA, and other statutes. Moreover, as explained elsewhere, specific mitigation measures recommended by the commenter outside of the numerous measures that will be implemented (and in some cases would avoid impacts altogether) as part of the Proposed Action would not serve the purpose and need of the Proposed Action because these measures would degrade the Navy's ability to test and train under as close to realistic conditions. The mitigation measures that have been evaluated in the NEPA analyses have also been found by NMFS to have the least practical adverse impact on the marine mammal species or population stocks. The vast majority of Navy takes of marine mammals are relatively minor and temporary behavioral reactions that do not have measurable long-term or permanent impacts on stocks or species. The Navy is unaware of any proven or effective mechanisms for using compensatory mitigation for offsetting temporary behavioral reactions to marine mammals. Many of the methods of compensatory mitigation that have

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		proven successful in terrestrial settings (e.g., purchasing or preserving land with important habitat, improving habitat through plantings) are not applicable in a broad ocean setting with such far-ranging species. Thus, any presumed conservation value from such an idea would be purely speculative at this time. Given the level of current and future research on marine species within HCTT from multiple Navy programs, the Navy asserts that the most scientifically rigorous process is already in place in terms of HCTT species conservation.
NRDC-39	**Long-term monitoring** As part of its species monitoring program in the Pacific, the Navy has supported baseline research into the occurrence, distribution, and population structure of marine mammal species and stocks through tagging and passive acoustic monitoring studies and other approaches. The data resulting from these annual investments provide baseline information upon which the extent of exposure to disturbance from training and testing activities, individual and, ultimately, population-level impacts, and the effectiveness of mitigation measures, can be evaluated. In addition, studies involving aerial surveys, passive acoustic monitoring, and tagging have produced important information on spatial and temporal habitat use that can be used to directly inform seasonal or year-round mitigation areas for training and testing activities. Continuing to make funds available to support long-term monitoring studies is critical, particularly at a time when the distributions of many marine mammal species are shifting rapidly because of climate change and its effects on prey distribution. Understanding these distributional shifts as they occur is key to ensuring that the impacts of anthropogenic activities on marine mammals are accurately estimated and detected, and that corresponding mitigation measures are designed to be effective and remain so. Long-term passive acoustic monitoring data has proven to be one of the most cost-effective and useful signals of these distribution shifts. For example, analyses of long-term passive acoustic monitoring data off the U.S. East Coast has shown how the migratory patterns of several baleen	The U.S. Navy is the second largest Federal Agency contributing to marine mammal research behind NMFS. To tabulate the amount of funding for marine mammal research, the U.S. Marine Mammal Commission annually solicits input from all U.S. Government agencies for total funding of marine mammal research by year and agency. In Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), the latest year with data currently available, the U.S. Navy cumulatively contributed $21.76 million to marine mammal research representing 26% of all Federal funding that year. FY24 data is being collected and analyzed by the Marine Mammal Commission with results to be published by late 2025. While the Navy uses passive acoustic devices at select areas, it is logistically impracticable to monitoring the entire U.S. West Coast. The Navy's at-sea ranges off the West Coast cover over 371,679 NM^2. Furthermore, development of and maintaining an Integrated Ocean Observing systems within the U.S. EEZ has been and remains the mission area of the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (https://ioos.noaa.gov/). In the Pacific Northwest there is the Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems and in Southern California there is Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System.

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	whale species shifted over a decade. Off the U.S. West Coast, analysis of passive acoustic data elucidated that blue whales were arriving at known foraging areas one month earlier relative to a decade ago. A more extensive network of passive acoustic platforms off the U.S. West Coast, designed in a manner that optimized the power of the network to detect large-scale distribution shifts, would be of great benefit for estimating and mitigating the impacts of Navy training and testing, as well as a myriad of other human activities, and to inform adaptive management responses to climate change. We recommend that the Navy initiate and invest in establishing such a network off the U.S. West Coast (California to Washington).	
NRDC-40	We also recommend that the Navy's monitoring program expand funding for projects that aim to quantify the impact of Navy activities at the individual, and, ultimately, population level. First, detailed, individual-level behavioral-response studies, such as focal follows and tagging using digital acoustic recording tags (DTAGs), carried out before, during, and after Navy operations, can provide important insights, and we encourage the Navy to expand funding for these types of projects. Second, recent studies using DTAGs have also been used to characterize social communications between individuals of a species or stock, including between mothers and calves; we recommend that the Navy prioritize funding studies that further characterize the suite of vocalizations related to social interactions. Third, the use of unmanned aerial vehicles is proving extremely useful for surveying marine species, and may provide a less invasive approach to undertaking focal follows. Imagery from unmanned aerial vehicles can also be used to assess body condition and, in some cases, health of individuals. We recommend that the Navy make funds available to use these technologies for assessing marine mammal behavior before, during, and after Navy operations (e.g., swim speed and direction, group cohesion). In addition, studies into how these technologies can be used to assess body condition for a broader array of marine mammal species should be supported, as this can provide an important indication of energy budget and health, which can inform the assessment of population-level impacts.	The U.S. Navy, in coordination with NMFS, funds on average over $5M of marine mammal monitoring across five Pacific at-sea ranges. Also in coordination with NMFS is the current focus on limiting resources to monitor key focus species by area. It is fiscally and logistically impractical to monitor every marine mammal species to the degree requested by the commentor. Therefore, the Navy focuses on key species such as beaked whales and large whales in California, and beaked whales, some other whales, and select dolphin species in Hawaii. The Navy has been funding Cuvier's beaked whale research and monitoring in SOCAL since 2004. This research includes as much information related to overall beaked whale population health such as individual re-sighting rates, passive acoustic detections on occurrence, documentations of mother-calf pairs, satellite tracking, genetics, and starting in 2025 body condition analysis using drone photographs. In addition, numerous opportunistic exposure response studies are ongoing. To date, no documentation of harm to individuals or populations has been observed over 20 years of monitoring. The Navy in consultation with NMFS has already begun planning the development of a Potential Consequence of Disturbance (PCOD) model for SOCAL Cuvier's beaked whales based on past and ongoing date collection efforts. Finally,

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		NMFS and Navy already meet annually to discuss the state of monitoring science and other adaptive management issues.
NRDC-41	Tracking the impacts of Navy operations at the level of marine mammal populations is a complex task for species that are generally data-poor, and for which even severe changes in demographic rates may take many years to detect. For a select number of relatively data-rich species, the Navy originated an approach to model population consequences of disturbance ("PCoD"), either through an entirely quantitative or through one that also relies on expert elicitation—for those species where little or no empirical evidence exists to quantify the relationship between behavioral or physiological change and fitness. However, while PCoD can be helpful, we caution against over-reliance on this modeling approach in light of the significant uncertainties inherent in the estimation of model parameters, the difficulties in validating the results, and the fact that even the model based on expert elicitation can still only be applied to a relatively small number of well-studied species. We therefore recommend the Navy expand funding to explore the utility of other, simpler modeling methods that could provide at least an indication of population-level effects, even if each of the behavioral and physiological mechanisms are not fully characterized. The modeling approach undertaken by researchers for beaked whales in the California Current offers one such example. Here a Bayesian hidden-process modeling approach was used to estimate abundance and population trends of beaked whales using sightings data from six ship-based, line-transect, cetacean abundance surveys between 1991 and 2008. Model results indicated that Cuvier's beaked whales were experiencing an average rate of decline at 2.9 percent per year. This type of modeling effort will likely be most useful for species and stocks, like beaked whales, that are known to show site fidelity to survey areas, so that trends in abundance are less likely to be influenced by immigration or emigration. Additionally, we encourage the Navy to contribute increased funds to studies aimed at exploring other potential proxy measures of changes in population-level abundance and demographics, in order to develop an early-detection system for populations that may be experiencing a decline as a result of Navy activities. The comparative demographic study of beaked whale	The Navy, in consultation with NMFS, has already begun planning the development of a Potential Consequence of Disturbance (PCOD) model for SOCAL Cuvier's beaked whales based on past and ongoing date collection efforts. This effort integrates past and ongoing data collection on beaked whale population demographics since 2004 (tagging, photoID, genetics, body condition, response to sound). In addition to the population study in SOCAL, Navy funded researchers are also monitoring a non-exposed beaked whale population off Guadalupe Island, Mexico.

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	populations in the Bahamas, on and off the AUTEC range, is a cogent example of a study that is long overdue for Southern California, to understand the effect that repeated behavioral disruptions and displacement of foraging activity are having on the region's small beaked whale populations, such as the Cuvier's beaked whale population on SOAR.	
NRDC-42	**Auditory impacts** In estimating instances of auditory harm, the Navy relies on a technical report, prepared specifically for Phase IV of Navy authorizations, that modifies the onset thresholds and weighting functions, and certain of the hearing groups of marine mammals, used for previous authorization cycles. See DEIS at D-68 (referencing U.S. Department of the Navy 2024a). NMFS relied extensively on the Navy's report in revising its own auditory guidance last year, much as it did for prior iterations, making the Navy's methodology the basis for future auditory impact analyses. We will refer to NMFS' analysis in this section of our comments. Use of means and medians.— As was the case with prior iterations of the agencies' auditory criteria, we disagree strongly with the use of means or medians to determine thresholds of auditory effects. Thresholds based on mean or median values will lead to roughly 50% of an exposed cohort experiencing the very impacts that the threshold is designed to avoid, at levels that are considered safe. And such thresholds are likely to result in a substantial undercounting of auditory harm. The agencies' approach has been sharply criticized in the peer-reviewed and cannot be said to represent "theoretical approaches… generally accepted in the scientific community." 40 C.F.R. § 1502.21(c)(4). [See NRDC original comment document text and appendix for additional background] Southall et al. (2019) found an approximately +/- 6dB difference in measured versus predicted TTS onset data. NMFS should have included a similar measure of accuracy in Appendix A, but that document provides no measure of natural variability or uncertainty, or any indication of predictability. For the reasons above, we recommend that the agency implement a 6dB reduction to its TTS and PTS thresholds in line with the suggestions by Tougaard et al. (2015). We note that a 6dB adjustment would accord with the minimum level of "non-trivial" TTS required to	The technical guidance appropriately uses measures of central tendency based on an onset level of 6 dB TTS. No reduction is necessary or supported by the scientific literature, especially considering numerous other conservative methods in the auditory criteria. For example, the Navy assumes no recovery of hearing during time intervals between intermittent exposures. However, multiple studies from humans, terrestrial mammals, and marine mammals have demonstrated less temporary threshold shift from intermittent exposures compared to continuous exposures with the same total energy because hearing is known to experience some recovery in between noise exposures. Therefore, the Navy's approach is known to overestimate the effects of intermittent noise sources such as tactical sonars. Furthermore, marine mammal temporary threshold shift data have shown that, for two exposures with equal energy, the longer duration exposure tends to produce a larger amount of temporary threshold shift. Since most marine mammal temporary threshold shift data have been obtained using exposure durations up to an hour, much longer than the durations of many tactical sources, the use of the existing marine mammal temporary threshold shift data tends to over-estimate the effects of sonars with shorter duration signals.

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	evaluate onset, effectively adjusting the exposure functions to more closely match the point where TTS begins.	
NRDC-43	***Definition of auditory injury.***— In prior iterations of the Guidance, the agencies predicated auditory injury on the direct induction of permanent threshold shift ("PTS"); with the new cycle, however, the agencies modified their definition to include both directly-induced PTS and also what could be termed indirectly induced (or accumulated) injury, as may arise from the loss of cochlear neuron synapses or other effects. NMFS 2024 Guidance at 7. This second pathway does not immediately induce PTS, but still results in injury and permanent, compromised auditory function. We concur with the agencies' expanded definition as consistent with the best available science, but caution that they have not adequately considered the implications of that change for their injury threshold. The present Guidance agrees with previous versions of the Guidance in positing 40 dB TTS as the onset of PTS. It should be plain, however, that 40 dB TTS cannot continue to represent auditory injury once indirect or accumulated injury is added. Conceptually, if directly induced PTS alone equates to 40 dB TTS, the two processes together must equate to less than 40 dB TTS. Southall et al. (2019) suggest the limitations of 40 dB TTS as the threshold for auditory injury, commenting on their own prior use of that threshold: "This is identical to the value Southall et al. (2007) used as an estimate of PTS onset, although here this is not presumed to represent the onset of physical injury as there are no available empirical data to test this assumption." Whatever the onset chosen, it necessarily must be less than, or otherwise different from, 40 dB TTS. The Navy should modify its injury onset thresholds accordingly.	Auditory injury (AINJ), currently estimated using the SEL at which 40 dB of TTS is predicted to occur, encompasses both a permanent change in hearing sensitivity that is reflective of underlying damage (i.e., PTS) and other types of injury that are not apparent from hearing threshold measurements (i.e., hidden hearing loss, which has been previously observed at threshold shifts of 40 - 50 dB measured 24 hours after exposures). The Phase 4 definition of AINJ is consistent with Phase 3 criteria, where the SEL at 40 dB of predicted TTS captured PTS and other types of auditory injury. Between Phase 3 and Phase 4, the terminology changed but the underlying definition did not. The purpose of changing the terminology from PTS to AINJ was to more accurately reflect that the criteria (in both Phase 3 and Phase 4) covers all types of auditory injury. For details, see the Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Analysis (Phase 4) Technical Report: https://www.nepa.navy.mil/Portals/20/Documents/Pacific%20Fleet/HSTTEIS/HCTT/DraftEIS/TechnicalReports/Phase4AcousticandExplosiveCriteriaFinalAPR2025.pdf
NRDC-44	***Pseudoreplication***.— The agencies received criticism on their prior iterations of auditory impact criteria for the problem of pseudoreplication. Wright et al. (2015) observed that the problem was introduced at several stages of the agencies' analysis and most prominently in their derivation of TTS-onset criteria for the mid-frequency cetacean hearing group. There the Navy and NOAA derived criteria by group-averaging data sets produced through tests on individual mid-frequency cetaceans. The effect of averaging all these data sets together was to over-represent bottlenose	Since marine mammal hearing and noise-induced hearing loss data are limited, both in the number of species and in the number of individual's available, attempts to minimize pseudoreplication would further reduce these already limited data sets. Specifically, with marine mammal behavioral temporary threshold shift studies, behaviorally derived data are only available for two mid-frequency cetacean species (bottlenose dolphin, beluga) and two phocids in water pinniped

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	dolphins in general and those more thoroughly tested individuals in particular, violating well- established statistical principles that maintain the integrity of results by ensuring that only independent data are considered. NMFS appeared to address the pseudoreplication problem in its 2024 Guidance, by demonstrating that the median of species medians and the median of all individuals are effectively equivalent for audiogram generation. Unfortunately, neither NMFS nor the Navy attempted a similar demonstration (i.e., comparing the median of species medians and the median of all individuals) in calculating TTS, and thus PTS, onset. As a result, the TTS and PTS thresholds remain susceptible to pseudoreplication and thus may be statistically flawed. Indeed, they are likely to over-represent certain species from which the majority of TTS data have been collected and under-represent species with few data—a serious problem for species groupings that include widely varying taxa. That problem may be exacerbated by the apparent availability of self-mitigation in some of the odontocete species involved in TTS studies (see discussion in DEIS at D-69), but not in the broader set of mid-frequency and high-frequency cetaceans.	species (harbor seal and northern elephant seal), with out of the water pinnipeds and high-frequency cetaceans only having behaviorally derived data from one species (harbor porpoises and California sea lions). Arguments from Wright (2015) regarding pseudo replication within the temporary threshold shift data are therefore largely irrelevant in a practical sense because of limited data. Multiple data points were not included for the same individual at a single frequency; if multiple data existed at one frequency, the lowest temporary threshold shift onset was always used. There is only a single frequency where temporary threshold shift onset data exist for two individuals of the same species: 3 kHz for dolphins. Their temporary threshold shift (unweighted) onset values were 193 and 194 dB re 1 μPa^2s. Thus, the Navy asserts that the current approach makes the best use of the given data. Appropriate means of reducing pseudoreplication may be considered in the future, if more data become available. Many other comments from Wright (2015) and the comments from Racca et al. (2015) appear to be erroneously based on the idea that the shapes of the auditory weighting functions and temporary threshold shift/permanent threshold shift exposure thresholds are directly related to the audiograms; i.e., that changes to the composite audiograms would directly influence the threshold shift/permanent threshold shift exposure functions [e.g., Wright (2015) describes weighting functions as “effectively the mirror image of an audiogram” (p. 2) and states “The underlying goal was to estimate how much a sound level needs to be above hearing threshold to induce temporary threshold shift.” (p. 3) — both statements are incorrect and suggest a fundamental misunderstanding of the criteria/threshold derivation.] This would require a constant (frequency-independent) relationship between hearing threshold and temporary threshold shift onset that is not reflected in the actual marine mammal temporary threshold shift data. Attempts to create a “cautionary” outcome by artificially lowering the composite audiogram thresholds would not

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		necessarily result in lower temporary threshold shift/permanent threshold shift exposure levels, since the exposure functions are largely based on fitting mathematical functions to the existing temporary threshold shift data.
NRDC-45	***Use of data outliers***.— We are concerned that the agencies have not taken sufficient account of data outliers in calculating their exposure functions. Perhaps most glaring is the inclusion of a 132 dB data point in calculating the mean difference between TTS onset and the auditory threshold at f0. If that 132 dB result is not considered an outlier among the other cited values (116 dB, 116 dB, and 118 dB), we do not know what would count as one. More generally, a visual review of Figures A.14-17 in the Navy's technical report, as reproduced in NMFS' Guidance, indicates the presence of multiple apparent outliers, which collectively are likely to influence the fit of the exposure function. Many of these data points are substantially higher than their comparables and thus would tend to draw the exposure function upwards. Indeed, a number of exposures from studies that only report TTS exceeding 6 dB, or that only report TTS of still higher shifts, lie below the functions for each group—implying that the agencies' curves are too high to adequately capture TTS onset levels. The appropriate way to handle outliers is to remove them from the analysis, not simply to use the median, which those outliers continue to influence.	Outliers cannot be identified statistically with enough certainty to warrant exclusion from limited datasets. As detailed in the Navy's technical report Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis (Phase 4), in many cases, conservative decisions were made to exclude datapoints (mean TTS at specific frequencies) from the exposure function fitting process that would draw exposure functions upwards (for example, see the Very High Frequency (VHF) cetacean high frequency TTS data).
NRDC-46	***Low-frequency cetacean hearing group***.— One of the most criticized elements of NMFS' prior Guidance was its weighting function for low-frequency cetaceans. Simply put, the best available science on sound production and acoustic ecology in many baleen whale species indicated greater sensitivity at lower frequencies than the agencies' weighting scheme suggested. That criticism stands, as the Navy and NMFS have not altered their approach, but once again have put forward a non-conservative weighting scheme, with a low-frequency roll-off beginning just above 400 Hz, instead of retaining the M-weighting curve presented in Southall et al. (2007), which was a more appropriate response to the same lack of data. Again, it defies reason that species like the endangered rorquals would be supposed	The Navy has split the mysticetes into two hearing groups for its Phase IV analysis: Very Low-Frequency (VLF) and Low Frequency (LF) cetaceans (see Appendix B of the *Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Effects Analysis (Phase 4) Technical Report*). This decision is outlined in detail within the documentation and includes the best available science including the recommendations of Southall et al. (2019) and the minke whale studies by Houser et al. (2024).

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	to have relatively low acoustic sensitivities at frequencies essential to their life histories. NMFS did observe, in adopting its 2024 Guidance, that the joint U.S.-Norwegian study of minke whales should provide hearing data on one low-frequency cetacean species within one or two years. NMFS 2024 Guidance at 2. Certainly, the agencies should commit to a re-evaluation of Low Frequency Cetacean group thresholds as those data are published. To this end, we note again in these comments that the first published study, which appeared in November 2024—after the Navy's technical report was released—showed sensitivity of minke whales to frequencies much higher than previously supposed (at least 45 kHz);185 and that the unpublished data indicate greatest sensitivity at 32 kHz. These data are available and should be addressed. Additionally, the Navy should acknowledge that, given substantial differences among these species in their anatomy, sound production, and acoustic ecology, minke whales may not represent the hearing sensitivity of blue, fin, humpback, gray, and certain other baleen whales in the LF group and that a more conservative approach to weighting in the very low frequencies may very well be necessary.	
NRDC-47	***Avoidance***.— In estimating auditory harms, the Navy assumes that marine mammals will actively avoid sound above a certain threshold and simulates that avoidance movement by reducing the animal's received level. This approach has the advantage of being more nuanced than the flat 95% reduction in auditory impacts that the Navy imposed during its last environmental review cycle. Nonetheless, the Navy's approach is predicated on a number of incorrect assumptions that tend to assume greater avoidance movement, and greater protection from auditory impacts, than the best available science can support. Marine mammals may remain in important habitat, and the most vulnerable individuals may linger in an area, notwithstanding the risk of harm; marine mammals cannot necessarily predict where an exercise will travel; and Navy vessels engaged in certain activities may move more rapidly than a marine mammal that is attempting to evacuate. Furthermore, as the Marine Mammal Commission points out in its comments, the DEIS assumes a sustained pace of avoidance that is	It is necessary to account for avoidance to reasonably estimate the number of auditory effects. The Navy's approach to assessing avoidance is based on the best available science on susceptibility to auditory impacts and the likelihood of behavioral response. The model for assessing avoidance is detailed in the technical report *Quantifying Acoustic Impacts on Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles: Methods and Analytical Approach for Phase IV Training and Testing (2024)*. Because this improved model considers the sensitivity of a behavioral group to disturbance, it better accounts for animals that may not respond at all or that may respond in a manner could reduce sound exposure levels. If avoidance is initiated, the assumptions for swim behavior are realistic, as they are based on observed responses to acoustic stressors and baseline data. For most species, the duration of the assumed avoidance was limited.

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	unrealistic for some species, and a non-conservative rate of propagation loss— using spherical spreading—that certainly would not apply to all conditions. Avoidance adjustments were first used in 2012, for an environmental impact report prepared under the California Environmental Quality Act; in that case, the authors, to compensate for their non-conservative assumptions about avoidance, presumed that every instance of permanent threshold shift would result in biological removal. The Navy should not adjust for avoidance here; if it does so, it should ensure that its modeling assumptions are highly conservative given the uncertainties of marine mammal behavior described above.	The avoidance method was newly integrated into the existing NAEMO software framework for Phase 4 and was built into the post-processor stage. The post processor stage does not have access to the propagation loss data. Using a generalized spherical spreading propagation loss was most appropriate given the data available within the post processor and the design of the avoidance methods.
NRDC-48	**Behavioral impacts** ***Behavioral risk functions***.— As with Phase III, the Navy has put forward a biphasic approach that assumes an unmediated dose-response relationship at higher received levels and a context- influenced response at lower received levels. We again agree with the Navy that a biphasic approach is better suited to the data and the theoretical literature and incorporates contextual factors far better than the simple approach it used in earlier analyses. We believe, however, that certain assumptions made in producing the Navy's behavioral risk functions for Phase IV may not be inconsistent with best available science. The Marine Mammal Commission, in its comments, flags a number of instances where the Navy does not provide evidentiary justification for a significant change in its risk functions, such as its decision to increase the functions' upper bounds; or does not incorporate available data, such as behavioral response study data on beaked whales in the Atlantic and passive acoustic data on beaked whales on SOAR; or where multiple received levels from the same animal exposed to the same source may have been included, potentially resulting in the problem of pseudoreplication. The Commission observes that these methodological concerns tend to make the Phase IV functions less precautionary for cetaceans than the ones used by the Navy during Phase III. We would echo these points and also flag the need to incorporate the latest behavioral response data on common dolphins, which were published last year. As noted above, a behavioral response study of short-beaked and long-beaked common dolphins exposed to simulated and	The behavioral response functions applied in this analysis are based on the best available science. Responses to comments from the Marine Mammal Commission are addressed separately in this appendix. Although not incorporated into the behavioral response functions, relevant new studies are not excluded from the analysis in this Final EIS/OEIS. Thus far, no new information has been published or otherwise conveyed that would fundamentally change the assessment of impacts or conclusions of this Final EIS/OEIS. The Navy will incorporate emergent findings into the Navy's future behavioral response functions as appropriate. The Navy's current Odontocete BRF considers the potential for behavioral responses that may rise to the level of 'harassment' under the MMPA for military readiness activities at the estimated received levels in Southall et al. (2024).

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	operational MFAS on the Southern California Range Complex (Southall et al. 2024) showed "clear and, in some cases, strong and persistent behavioral changes" well below the received level of 160 dB (RMS) previously considered to induce response in 50 percent of "non- sensitive" marine mammals. It is even lower than the 168 dB (RMS) used as the 50 percent response rate in the Navy's Phase IV risk function for odontocetes. In the Navy's revision, that risk function was shifted substantially rightward across virtually the entirety of the curve; the function should be recalibrated in light of the new data.	
NRDC-49	We are also concerned about the omission of other relevant studies on the behavioral response of wild marine mammals to MFAS, beyond those noted by the Marine Mammal Commission. For beaked whales, those studies include the on-range analysis of changes in inter-deep-dive-intervals and other foraging parameters (Falcone et al. 2017), discussed above in relation to dipping sonar. Because of its basis in actual, operational sonar use, because of its focus on a salient and consequential foraging behavior, and because of its unusually broad temporal scope, that paper represents one of the most revealing observational efforts that has been made on any species in response to any acoustic source. (Many, if not most, of the studies incorporated into the risk functions involved simulated exercises or captive animals or brief exposures.) One would need to determine how the received levels recorded during the study should be averaged into data points for purposes of incorporating into the Navy's analysis. But the Navy's risk functions are arbitrary if they fail to include directly relevant published science on the impacts of its activities.	Findings from Falcone et al. (2017) on goose-beaked whales are discussed in Appendix D. The Navy's behavioral response functions are based on the best available science as described in the *Criteria and Thresholds for U.S. Navy Acoustic and Explosive Analysis (Phase 4)* technical report (https://www.nepa.navy.mil/Portals/20/Documents/Pacific%20Fleet/HSTTEIS/HCTT/DraftEIS/TechnicalReports/Phase4AcousticandExplosiveCriteriaFinalAPR2025.pdf). To be included in the behavioral response function, data sets needed to relate known or estimable received levels to observations of individual or group behavior. The data in Falcone et al. (2017) is not included in the development of the BRFs because it is not possible to reasonably estimate the received levels in this study; however, this data was considered in developing the distance conditions for the application of the Sensitive Species behavioral response function.
NRDC-50	Finally, we believe that the EIS must consider a somewhat broader range of behavioral impacts than that encompassed by the Navy's risk functions. Those risk functions are predicated, as before, on the MMPA's "harassment" definition for military readiness activities, which sets forth a higher threshold than the one applicable to non-military activities. Compare 16 U.S.C. § 1362(18)(B)(ii) (defined for military readiness activities as "disruption of natural behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, surfacing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering, to a point where such behavioral patterns are abandoned or significantly altered") with 16 U.S.C. § 1362(18)(A)(ii) (defined for other activities as "disruption of	The analysis in this EIS/OEIS assesses all reasonably foreseeable effects on marine mammals. Direct, indirect, and combined effects are assessed in Section 3.7. Cumulative impacts are addressed in Chapter 4. Although the behavioral risk functions predict responses that may rise to the level of harassment defined for military readiness activities, this analysis does not discount the potential for low severity disturbances that are considered to be within the range of baseline behaviors. In addition, the analysis in Appendix E considers how the potential for repeated

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	behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering"). By contrast, NEPA requires consideration of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that are reasonably foreseeable and caused by the proposed action (40 C.F.R. § 1508.1(i))—a definition that would encompass effects at the lower MMPA take threshold. This point should not be regarded as merely technical or formalistic: the HCTT contains a number of small, resident populations that are repeatedly exposed to disturbance from the Navy's activities, and even minor, low-severity disruptions may contribute over time to aggregate effects on their fitness. Even if the present risk functions were sufficient for NMFS' compliance with NEPA, they do not alone satisfy the Navy's responsibilities under NEPA.	exposures is influenced by movement ecologies, such as residency, as well as impacts within Biologically Important Areas that are delineated for small and resident populations.
NRDC-51	***Use of cut-off distances***.— As in Phase III, the Navy has applied cut-off distances to its estimation of behavioral effects, beyond which it presumes that significant behavioral effects will not occur or should be significantly discounted through post-modeling adjustment. [cite] Its ostensibly more nuanced approach in Phase IV would seem to account for some impacts occurring beyond the cut-off distances, by including exposures where the received level has an impact probability above 50 percent. Notably, however, the nominal cut-off distances for each of the Navy's four defined species groups are generally much smaller than those applied to activities with higher source levels or multiple platforms in Phase III: a reduction from 20 km to 10 km for mysticetes, from 20 km to 15 km for odontocetes, from 10 km to 5 km for pinnipeds, and from 50 km to 40 km for beaked whales, although the cut-off distance for harbor porpoises remains the same, at 40 km. DEIS at E.2-26. The consequences can be seen from the Navy's histograms at E.2-32 and E.2-33, wherein, for all marine mammal species other than beaked whales and harbor porpoises, well over half of all modeled impacts are visibly eliminated from the total. For beaked whales and harbor porpoises, which are binned for Phase IV in a single "sensitive species" group, the reduction appears on the order of 30 to 40 percent. We urge the Navy to abandon the use of cut-offs. The adjustment makes no sense theoretically since distance is already incorporated in its Bayesian response functions as a contextual factor. Additionally, the chosen cut-off	Section 3.1.4 (Dose and Contextual Responses) of the Phase 4 Criteria and Thresholds report explains that at low received levels, distance to the sound source or platform likely mediates the likelihood of a behavioral response. Although distance was investigated as a covariate in the Bayesian behavioral response function model, most behavioral response studies to date have used similar source levels making received level and source-receiver distance tightly correlated (see Section 3.1.9 [Behavioral Cut-off Conditions] of the Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report). Therefore, including distance in the model using the available response- received level data did not improve the behavioral response functions. Still, the Navy agrees that distance is an important contextual factor. Since it was not possible to directly account for distance in the Bayesian model at this time, the Navy incorporated the behavioral cut-off conditions, beyond which significant behavioral reactions are assumed to be unlikely. As described in Section 3.1.9 [Behavioral Cut-off Conditions] of the Criteria and Thresholds Technical Report, the distance cut-off conditions were conservatively estimated based on observations from multiple cited studies. Applying the distance cut-off condition is appropriate to reasonably estimate significant impacts.

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	distances are based on little to no data from the behavioral response studies that the Navy purports to rely on—none at all for harbor porpoises and pinnipeds—as the Navy's technical report on acoustic criteria appears to acknowledge. More than this, the chosen distances are inconsistent with data that are available, including but not limited to response data on beaked whale foraging and blue whale vocalization, as well as opportunistic data from strandings. In their comment letter, the Marine Mammal Commission provides two additional examples of inconsistencies, from the Navy's technical report, involving humpback whale and sperm whale reactions during behavioral response studies. We agree with their recommendation that the Navy refrain from using cut-off distances and rely instead on the take estimates produced through its response functions.	In addition, high source level exposures are addressed using a probability of response condition rather than the dual distance cut-off applied in Phase 3. This method was devised in part to address public comments, including those from the MMC, received in Phase 3 that were concerned with cutting off behavioral responses, in some cases, where the probability of response was still above 50 percent. The concurrent application of this probability of response condition in Phase 4 increases the prediction of significant impacts beyond the distance cut-off in some instances. Thus, the Phase 3 distance cut-offs should not be directly compared to the combined distance and probability cut-off conditions applied in Phase 4. The Navy does not believe that the application of the dual cutoff conditions underestimates behavioral reactions that would be considered MMPA Level B takes during military readiness activities. Melcón et al., (2012) found that the probability of recording blue whale D calls decreased with higher received levels at the HARP buoy averaged over many hours. However, this study does not provide any information about the distance between the sound source and any animals and cannot be used to derive cut-off distances. As stated in the Criteria and Threshold Phase IV Technical Report, "…Falcone et al. (2017) modeled apparent responses to mid-powered sources out to 50 km and responses to high-powered sources at distances as great as 100 km. However, the models were not developed to estimate distances to response, and care needs to be taken when interpreting the results in that context." Responses at 100 km were generally mild, such as a slight (< 2 min) increase in the duration of shallow dives that was similar to the range of duration variability found in dives when no mid-frequency active sonar was present. The inter-deep dive interval duration also increased for both mid- and high-powered MFAS sources starting at 100 km; however, the inter-deep dive interval

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		duration only exhibited the strongest increase within 20 km of the source. Finally, although the March 2000 strandings in the Bahamas were attributed to the confluence of Navy sonar " in a complex environment that [included] the presence of a surface duct, unusual underwater bathymetry, constricted channel with limited egress, intensive use of multiple, active sonar units over an extended period of time, and the presence of beaked whales that appear to be sensitive to the frequencies produced by these sonars," it is not possible to estimate the distance between the sound source and any of the affected animals at the initiation of behavioral responses. As the science related to marine mammal behavior advances, the Navy will continue to work with NMFS to refine consideration of contextual factors, such as distance, in its assessment of behavioral responses. Currently, the Navy's behavioral response functions with the cut-off conditions provide the public and regulators with a more realistic (but still conservative where uncertainties exist) estimate of impacts and potential takes under military readiness for the Proposed Action. Because the Navy's estimations were realistic and conservative where uncertainties exist, it is not necessary for the Navy to re-estimate marine mammal takes.
NRDC-52	**Behaviorally mediated injury and mortality** Here, as in previous environmental review cycles, the Navy discounts the widely accepted explanation about the mechanism of sonar-related pathologies, maladaptive alteration of the dive pattern, as an "hypothesis" that "has been under debate in the scientific community." DEIS at D-124. But this characterization is belied by the Navy's summary of the supporting studies, which includes post- stranding pathology, laboratory study of organ tissue, and theoretical work on dive physiology, as well as by expert reviews, and is clearly best available science. See DEIS at D-124 to D-126. Experiments on common bottlenose dolphins to test for nitrogen bubble formation after sudden repetitive dives have found no evidence of gas bubble formation. But beaked whales, which are adapted to perform long	Section D.4.7 accurately summarizes the best available science on behaviorally mediated injury, including research related to beaked whales. Military readiness activities have not been identified as a causal factor for any stranding in the Study Area. Neither NMFS nor the Navy anticipates that marine mammal strandings or mortality is reasonably likely to result from military readiness activities in the Study Area. The Navy considered the best available science on bubble pathology, summarized in Appendix D, to develop the conclusions presented in this EIS/OEIS. It is correct to state that there is uncertainty regarding the mechanism behind the bubble pathology exhibited in a small number of stranded

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	and deep dives, show saturation of nitrogen levels at the surface, making them particularly vulnerable. The DEIS finally discounts the potential for harm entirely by pointing to "the rarity of observations of bubble pathology." DEIS at D-126. Yet its analysis points to the present lack of understanding of the frequency with which the pathology occurs, due mainly to a paucity of experimentation in the conditions needed to induce it. Id. Indeed, the purported "rarity of observations" may well have to do with the infrequency with which beaked whale strandings— which rarely occur due to the offshore distribution of these species—are detected and investigated swiftly enough to assay for gas-bubble formation. The reasonable response cannot be to wholly discount a serious pathology that the best available science says is occurring at some unknown frequency in association with mid-frequency sonar use. For purposes of analysis, the Navy must assume that a number of beaked whales are subject to injury and mortality from gas-bubble formation.	beaked whales. Additionally, it is appropriate to conclude that this effect would not be expected as a result of this Proposed Action. A small number of strandings have been associated with the use of U.S. Navy sonar; none of these have occurred in the Study Area. The analysis in this EIS/OEIS, based on the best available science, indicates that beaked whales would not suffer this injury due this Proposed Action. Additionally, the Navy's behavioral response criteria takes into account the greater sensitivity of these species to acoustic disturbance.
NRDC-53	**Cumulative and population-level effects** In order to satisfy NEPA, an EIS must include a "full and fair discussion of significant effects." 40 C.F.R. § 1502.1(b). It is not enough, for purposes of this discussion, to consider the proposed action in isolation, divorced from other public and private activities that impinge on the same resource; rather, it is incumbent on the Navy to assess cumulative impacts as well, including the "effects on the environment that result from the incremental effects of the action when added to the effects of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions." 40 C.F.R. § 1508.1(i)(3). ***Definition of "significance***."— As an initial matter, the Navy's definition of the "significance" threshold is incompatible with NEPA and its implementing regulations. The EIS first states that a marine mammal stressor should be deemed significant if it produces short- or long-term changes "well outside the limits of natural variability" relative to a species' ability to meet habitat, reproductive, or other requirements. It goes on to say that the designation would be appropriate if "the population in the Study Area would no longer be sustainable" permanently or over a long term. DEIS at 3.7-13.	The analysis in this EIS/OEIS assesses all reasonably foreseeable effects on marine mammals. Direct, indirect, and combined effects are assessed in Section 3.7. Cumulative impacts are addressed in Chapter 4. As stated in Section 3.7.3 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, "Regarding marine mammals, the effects of acoustic, explosives, and physical disturbance and strike stressors would be considered significant if the effects have short-term or long-term changes well outside the limits of natural variability in terms of space and the species' ability to meet nutritional, physiological, or reproductive requirements within the Study Area." A significant effect finding would be appropriate if a marine mammal species would be adversely affected over the long term or permanently such that the full recovery of a population in the Study Area would not be expected to occur in a reasonable time.

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	The use of the phrase "sustainable" in this context suggests an unreasonably high bar for significance: extirpation, since that is the effect of a population being unsustainable permanently or over a long term. Such a definition, if intended, would not be consistent with NEPA, which sets "significance" (or, rather, the likelihood of an activity having significant effects) as the mere threshold for preparation of an EIS. See 40 C.F.R. § 1501.3(c). Nor would its seemingly exclusive focus on the direct effects of the Navy's activities be consistent with the regulatory definition of "effects," which requires consideration, inter alia, of the activities' incremental effects "when added to the effects of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions." 40 C.F.R. § 1508.1(i)(3). Nor would it be consistent with the "negligible impact" standard that informs NMFS' environmental review. 50 C.F.R. § 216.103 (defining "negligible impact" as one that "cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival"). The Navy should clarify its definition of "significance" given that it relies heavily on the term in characterizing the overall effects of HCTT activities on marine mammals. See passim DEIS at 3.7.	
NRDC-54	***Effects on marine mammal populations***.— In Appendix E, the DEIS presents a species-specific impact analysis that advances, in some ways, on the analysis presented in Phases II and III. It endeavors to describe marine mammal populations according to their movement ecology and feeding and breeding strategies, characteristics that may suggest their resiliency to perturbation, or at least their potential means of overcoming perturbation; and identifies, broadly, some of the other chronic anthropogenic stressors that are acting on the same populations as are exposed to the Navy's activities. See DEIS at E.2-38 to E.2-44. And it provides more quantitative detail in its take estimations than was supplied in previous environmental reviews, including an attribution of effects to particular types of Navy activities, such that it is possible to understand, for most populations, which training and testing activities have proportionately greater or lesser impacts. See DEIS at E.2-52 to E.2-166. The problem is a lack of meaningful analysis of aggregate effects on marine mammal populations. Having assembled the information described above,	The Navy, in cooperation with NMFS, has taken a hard look at the potential impacts of this Proposed Action. The combined effects of all stressors on marine mammals are addressed in Section 3.7 and cumulative impacts to marine mammals are assessed in Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS. The Navy concludes that training and testing activities proposed in the Study Area would result primarily in Level B takes which equate to harassment, not harm. The majority of Level A takes are due to auditory Injury including permanent threshold shift which equates to a reduction in hearing sensitivity over a range of frequencies. It is unlikely these impacts due to acoustic and explosive stressors would result in population-level effects as discussed in Appendix E of the EIS/OEIS. Additionally, the estimated number of takes is conservative as it does not account for activity-based mitigation that may reduce the potential for injury and mortality. As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based,

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	the DEIS simply posits, for each species it considers, that the accumulated mortalities, injuries, energetic costs, temporary losses of hearing, chronic stress, and other impacts would not significantly affect vital rates in populations, although it may significantly affect individuals. See id. It tends to rest these conclusions on broad statements about species ecology, such as the availability of compensatory foraging strategies; and on the assumption that decrements to individual fitness, such as the "energetic costs" resulting from auditory injury, will not conduce to meaningful aggregate effects. See, e.g., DEIS at 2-94 (discussion of non-endangered killer whale stocks). See id. But these conclusory statements, all of a piece, do not provide the "hard look" that NEPA demands on the crucial matter of population-level effects.	geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species as described in Appendix C. Efforts are underway to better understand the potential consequences of acoustic impacts. These efforts are not limited solely to long-term monitoring on ranges and include development of Population Consequences of Disturbance models (see Appendix D). The Navy's research and monitoring programs, described in Section 3.0.1.1 in Section 3.0, are focused on filling data gaps and obtaining the most up-to-date science to inform impact assessment. Until there are sufficient data to inform such models, the best assessment of long-term consequences from Navy training and testing activities will be to monitor the populations over time on Navy ranges. The Action Proponents have conducted military readiness activities in the Study Area for decades, and there is no evidence that routine training and testing has negatively impacted marine mammal populations in the Study Area or at any Navy Range Complex.
NRDC-55	Further, the Navy's analysis does not adequately account for disproportionate effects from activities in important marine mammal habitat. In some cases, that problem results from insufficient consideration of population structure, as is the case of Cuvier's beaked whales, where the Navy, while acknowledging that "[t]he individuals that are more residential to areas on the SOCAL Range Complex or Hawai'i Range Complex may be at a higher risk for repeated exposure and long-term consequences from repeated displacement," nonetheless discounts the potential for adverse population impacts, despite multiple published studies raising that concern. DEIS at E.2-86. In other cases, typically involving populations characterized as "nomadic," the DEIS assumes that animals will not be exposed at rates suggestive of "long- term consequences," with no	The analysis in Appendix E considers the life history traits of each population, including movement ecology. In addition to considering movement ecology, the potential for repeated impacts is quantified for each stock as the average annual effects per individual. In most populations, individuals would be impacted less than once per year on average due to the Proposed Action. In addition, the estimated take results presented in the species-specific take tables in Appendix E detail expected impacts in each critical habitat (for ESA-listed species) and Biologically Important Area (BIA) where applicable. This includes an estimate of impacts within the Biologically Important Area identified for the island-associated

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	consideration, for example, that frequent activity can have the effect of excluding animals from higher-value habitat—a chronic effect. See, e.g., DEIS at 2-94. Indeed, such long-term exclusion of odontocete species may have occurred within the PMRF, off northern Kaua'i, whose marine mammal biodiversity is low relative to other habitat off the Main Hawaiian Islands.	goose-beaked whales in Hawaii. Only a small portion of impacts to the Hawaii stock of goose-beaked whales (less than 3 percent) is predicted to occur within this BIA. No BIA has been identified for goose-beaked whales along the west coast. Chapter 5 details geographic mitigations, beyond the activity-based mitigations, that have been tailored to geographic locations, designed to benefit particular species and stocks of marine mammals, and which can include provisions to apply measures either year-round or seasonally, depending on the unique characteristics of the area. Mitigation efforts are not reflected in the take numbers within Critical Habitats and BIAs presented in Appendix E, therefore, estimated take numbers in these areas may be overestimated. Appendix D summarizes observations of beaked whale behavioral responses to sonar including data obtained on Navy ranges. Populations of marine mammals with strong site-fidelity (including resident beaked whales) in Southern California within range complexes where decades of Navy training and testing have occurred have been surveyed yearly. Appendix C summarizes what is known about the presence and site fidelity of goose-beaked whales at the Southern California Anti-Submarine Warfare Range (SOAR). Combined with a lack of strandings associated with Navy activities in Southern California, the survey data suggest that military readiness activities are not causing adverse impacts to this population. Given the known sensitivity of beaked whales to disturbance, the Navy and NMFS will continue to assess emergent best available science on these stocks through adaptive management processes. The commenter also points to the analysis of impacts to nomadic killer whales. At this time, no BIAs have been identified for these stocks. The summary of best available science in Appendix C indicates that these stocks are wide-ranging rather than habitat-constricted.

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		The presence of species in an area depends on many factors, including but not limited to bathymetry, oceanographic conditions, season, and prey availability. Estimated marine mammal densities in the Study Area are shown in the technical report U.S. Navy Marine Species Density Database Phase IV for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area (January 2024). As described in Appendix D, beaked whales and other odontocetes have shown variable responses to sonar activities conducted at the PMRF. There is currently no evidence to suggest that military readiness activities at PMRF have had a long-term impact on the presence of any species.
NRDC-56	As noted above, NEPA requires agencies to obtain information relevant to their evaluation of reasonably foreseeable significant effects unless the costs of obtaining it are unreasonable; and, where such information cannot reasonably be obtained, to base its evaluation on "theoretical approaches or research methods generally accepted in the scientific community." 40 C.F.R. §§ 1502.21(b), (c)(4). Here, the costs of obtaining such information are not unreasonable. Since the Navy last produced its impact analysis for Southern California and Hawai'i, several management authorities have moved forward with spatially specific impact assessments for marine mammals. For example, BOEM commissioned a risk assessment for offshore wind activities that, while indicative of relative rather than absolute risk, provides exposure indices for individual populations that are more geographically precise and more responsive to species characteristics and contextual (non-military) stressors than what the DEIS sets forth. This approach has since been described by the authors in a published paper, for purposes of broader application. We urge the Navy to improve its analysis of aggregate effects, taking full account of the best available science on marine mammal populations on its California and Hawai'i ranges.	The Navy uses the best available science to characterize the distribution of marine mammals in the HCTT Study Area, including the latest species distribution models that enable habitat-based predictions of cetacean distributions for temporal periods with limited survey data. The models produce high resolution density distribution maps for most cetacean species and are temporally stratified by season or month, as the data permit. Refer to the Navy's technical report on the Navy Marine Species Density Database for maps and a detailed description of the derivation process. The Navy's proposed training and testing activities would occur throughout the expansive HCTT Study and are dynamic events involving one or more vessels, aircraft, or unmanned vehicles all in motion during an event. In addition, many events involve the use of expended materials including explosives munitions. In contrast, BOEM's offshore wind projects are focused on a well-defined area where immobile wind turbines will ultimately be either moored or anchored to the seafloor. The stressors associated with Navy activities vary by activity, location, and time of year, whereas the stressors associated with an offshore windfarm are in a fixed location, well defined, and consistent throughout the lifetime of the windfarm. The comparatively limited scope of an offshore wind project allows for the possibility of a higher precision evaluation of potential effects.

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		The Navy's analysis of effects on marine mammal populations relied on the population consequences of disturbance themes identified in Keen et al. (2021). The themes were organized into three categories: life history traits, environmental conditions, and disturbance source characteristics and evaluated to assess effects on the populations in the Study Area. Refer to Appendix E of the EIS/OEIS for a detailed description of how the themes outlined in Keen et al. (2021) were employed.
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council (RAC)		
RAC-01	The RAC supports the U.S. Navy Training and Testing mission as necessary for U.S. national security. Alternatives 1 & 2 are quantitatively different; the risk assessment as summarized in Executive Summary Tables 1 & 2 concludes that all risks for both alternatives are the same. The risk assessment for alternatives 1 and 2 cannot be identical considering the greatly increased scope of actions proposed in alternative 2. This surprising conclusion suggests a flaw in the risk assessment methodology or a bias in the risk assessors. The final EIS/OEIS should clearly and thoroughly discuss how this conclusion was reached and demonstrate that the methodology is correct, and that preparer bias was addressed and eliminated.	For many activities, the stressors involved would have only very minor or no discernable effects on the resources being evaluated. For those resources, a slight or moderate increase in number of annual events would likewise be minor or indiscernible, resulting in similar conclusions. For all resource areas, the increase in annual events from Alternative 1 to Alternative 2 would not result in sufficient increased effects to change the determination from "less than significant" to "significant."
RAC-02	The RAC recommends that the final EIS includes an alternative between the No Action Alternative and Alternative 1 (the Preferred Alternative) that includes additional measures, specifically elimination of training and testing within Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary.	The Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea National Marine Sanctuary boundaries. The Sanctuary also overlaps a significant portion of the Temporary Operating Area (TOA), described in Appendix H, Section H.2.1.2. As stated in Section H.2.1.2, the TOA is rarely used and only for testing activities such as missile testing from the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF). Training in the TOA can include live missile firing associated with ballistic missile defense exercises, and vessel transits. The alternatives were developed in order to satisfy the purpose and need related to fulfilling the military services' Title 10 requirements. An alternative that excludes a large part of the Study Area does not meet the Navy's purpose and need.

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		As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
RAC-03	The DEIS needs more transparency regarding species specificity on threshold modeling and marine mammal disturbance and mortality ("takes") for the public to fully understand the impact of naval activity on the diverse mammal populations present in Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary and around the Hawaiian Islands. (See FR 90#10 pp 4944-5029: "Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the U.S. Navy Training and Testing Activities in the Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing Study Area"). The RAC recommends that the Annual Reports on these topics which are submitted to the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service be copied to the ONMS and approved for public distribution.	Reports are provided to NMFS as the regulator responsible for protecting marine mammals, and unclassified reports are publicly available on the Navy and NMFS websites. Annual reports are available to the public here: https://www.navymarinespeciesmonitoring.us/reporting/
RAC-04	The RAC acknowledges the effort of the Navy in minimizing and managing marine debris and related impacts such as increased entanglement and the work being done to minimize unexploded ordnance and to promptly remove such safety and environmental hazards. The RAC recommends that the Navy apply continual improvement methods to these efforts and report on progress regularly.	As described in Section 3.0.1.1, the Navy continues to sponsor research that benefits the marine environment.
RAC-05	The lookout/watch-stander program used during training and testing activity has been shown to be of minimal effectiveness (see Oedekoven and Thomas, "Effectiveness of Navy lookout teams in detecting marine mammals", attached). The RAC recommends that the Navy create a mitigation area around Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary and eliminate Navy testing and training activity in the area.	While the study results indicated that the effectiveness of Navy Lookout Teams was generally less than that of trained biologist observer teams, there is still value in applying this mitigation measure. Lookouts will continue to conduct visual observations as part of the suite of mitigation measures. The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea

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		Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. The proposed activities would be generally limited to vessels conducting training while transiting through the southeastern portion of the Monument boundary on route to and from the Western Pacific in an area of open water. Very few activities have historically occurred within the Monument/Sanctuary and that is expected to continue. No new activities are proposed to occur there. Proposed activities would not have the potential to affect an historic property. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, and 15 CFR 922.224, so far as is practicable.
RAC-06	The RAC recognizes the importance of sonar and the lack of practical alternatives for the naval mission, particularly for undersea activity. This requires that effective mitigation measures be implemented. For the Mitigation Areas addressed in the DEIS (Sections 5.7.3 … 5.7.6), the RAC recommends timing major activity to avoid presence of sensitive species and effective monitoring of such species in the mitigation areas. The RAC also recommends that the Navy develop and implement a protocol to ramp up sonar intensity, to warn whales and other sensitive mammals of the pending presence of loud mid-range sound allowing mammals to move away from the potentially impacted areas before they are exposed to the highest levels of sonar. This measure should be implemented within a mitigation area encompassing Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary.	Seasonal or temporal restrictions would limit training and testing using sonar and explosives to narrow fragmented timeframes and locations that are not practicable with effective, realistic training and testing. Likewise, these restrictions would have a significant impact on the testing of current systems and the development of new systems. This would deny weapons system program managers and research, testing, and development program managers the flexibility to rapidly field or develop necessary systems due to the required use of multiple areas within limited timeframes. Therefore, implementing seasonal or temporal restrictions beyond what has been analyzed in Appendix K and described in Chapter 5 would be impracticable and would prevent the military services from meeting their Title 10 requirements to successfully accomplish military readiness objectives. Regarding the use of sonar intensity ramp up, please see item #25 in Table 5-20: Mitigation Considered but Eliminated, in the Draft EIS/OEIS.

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RAC-07	The RAC has commented (see the 2017 and 2024 RAC comments to the Navy) that using the entire HCTT area as the denominator when assessing potential impacts is invalid methodology. This is particularly the case given the presence of both island-associated and open-ocean populations of many species of cetaceans recognized within the Hawaiian archipelago. The RAC recommends that the Navy assess impacts separately for Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary.	The military services believe the scope of this project is appropriate. The designation of Papahanaumokuakea National Marine Sanctuary became effective on March 3, 2025. The Action Proponents have consulted with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) under Section 304(d) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. The analysis does take into account specific areas and species for both California and Hawaii.
Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples		
SPI-01	Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples submits this comment in strong opposition to the proposed activities outlined in the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS). As an Indigenous-led organization dedicated to the protection of sacred lands and waters, we firmly oppose any military activities that threaten the health of the Pacific Ocean, marine life, and the Indigenous communities that have stewarded these waters since time immemorial. The proposed military training and testing activities; such as the use of explosives, sonar, and vessel operations, pose unacceptable risks to marine ecosystems and Indigenous cultural practices. The Pacific Ocean is not merely a military training ground; it is a living, sacred entity central to the spiritual, cultural, and physical well-being of all Indigenous peoples whose ancestral ties to these waters predate any modern nation and state. We call on the Department of the Navy to: Invest in non-destructive defence training alternatives that do not rely on live fire exercises, sonar testing, or harmful underwater detonations.	Please see Section 2.4.1 (Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration) in the EIS/OEIS that describes why live training and testing is critical to the military services' ability to meet their Title 10 requirements. Alternatives that do not include training and testing with live fire exercises, sonar, and underwater detonations fail to meet the purpose and need for the Proposed Action.
SPI-02	The HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS fails to meaningfully acknowledge Indigenous sovereignty and the rights of Native Nations and coastal Indigenous communities who have inherent governance over their lands and waters. Consultation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) should not be a mere procedural formality but a genuine process of engagement and consent. Indigenous	The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public.

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	communities must be treated as sovereign governments, not just "stakeholders." Additionally, the Department of Defense has a long history of failing to respect Indigenous lands and waters. Indigenous peoples have borne the brunt of the military environmental destruction. These past harms should serve as warning, not as justification for further degradation. We call on the Department of the Navy to: Engage in meaningful government to government consultation with all impacted Indigenous Nations and communities, respecting their inherent sovereignty.	The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023, and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings.
SPI-03	Threats to Marine Life and Cultural Practices The Draft EIS/OEIS acknowledges that the proposed activities will result in harm to marine mammals, including species that hold cultural significance to Indigenous communities. Sonar and underwater detonation interfere with marine life's natural communication, migration, and survival. The Navy's own estimates indicate that thousands of marine relatives; including whales and dolphins, could suffer from hearing loss, disorientation, and even death. For Indigenous peoples, these are not just environmental concerns, they are spiritual violations. Our traditional ecological knowledge, passed down through generations, teaches us that harming the ocean's inhabitants is an act of harm against our ancestors and future generations. The impacts extend beyond biological harm; they sever the deep cultural connections	The Navy received input from NHOs regarding traditional cultural practices associated with the ocean, including voyaging and fishing, the sacredness of the ocean and marine life, which may be considered 'aumākua. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and the decision-making process.

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	Indigenous peoples have with these waters, disrupting traditional fishing practices, ceremonial spaces, and relationships with ocean relatives. We call on the Department of the Navy to: Cease plans for training and testing activities that may harm marine ecosystems and indigenous cultural practices.	
SPI-04	Cumulative Impacts and Climate Crisis At a time when the climate crisis is accelerating, military activities that further degrade ocean ecosystems must be rejected. The cumulative impacts of chemical pollution, noise disturbance, and habitat destruction contribute to the rapid decline of marine biodiversity and the warming of ocean waters. We call on the Department of the Navy to: Conduct a full cumulative impact analysis that incorporates Indigenous ecological knowledge and recognize the sacred relationship between Indigenous peoples and the ocean. Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples stands in solidarity with all Indigenous communities opposing the militarization and destruction of our sacred waters. We urge the Navy to abandon this proposal and instead respect the wisdom of Indigenous peoples who have stewarded these lands and waters for generations.	Chapter 4 considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions and analyzes each resource area.
Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC)		
WDC-01	Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) appreciate the invitation to comment on the proposed HCTT military readiness activities. WDC has significant concerns about the negative impact of military activities on whales, dolphins and porpoises (cetaceans). Cetaceans rely on sound to forage, communicate and navigate and are therefore highly sensitive to anthropogenic noise. Cetaceans play a vital role in supporting healthy marine environments. This includes through circulation of key nutrients (such as nitrogen) required for the growth of phytoplankton at the base of marine food web, which absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen (Kiszka et al., 2022; Roman et al., 2017; Roman and McCarthy, 2010). Whilst WDC acknowledges the role of military readiness exercises in national security, WDC has concerns about the impacts of these activities	The Action Proponent's analysis considered all the concerns mentioned in the comment. Please see the following sections: Section 3.4 Chapter 5 Appendix D Appendix E

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	on cetaceans, particularly from the use of sonar (and other acoustic transducers), airguns and explosives. There is a large body of scientific evidence indicating that these activities cause behavioural disturbance (Lara et al., 2023; Sivle et al., 2016; Tyack et al., 2011), auditory injury (NMFS, 2024), physiological harm and even mortality (Siebert et al., 2022; Simonis et al., 2020). It is crucial to consider the full range of short- and long-term impacts on both individuals and cetacean populations.	
WDC-02	Location of the HCTT range In the USA, cetaceans are legally protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and several species are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The MMPA prohibits take of marine mammals which includes actions that disturb, injure and disrupt behaviour and Section 9 of the ESA prohibits actions that directly harm critical habitat, including from excessive noise. The HCTT area is of significant importance to over 26 species of cetacean that use it for migration, feeding, mating, calving and nursing. In addition, critical habitat has been designated for three ESA-listed cetaceans in the HCTT area: humpback whale Central America and Mexico Distinct Population Segment (DPS), southern resident killer whale DPS and main Hawaiian Islands insular false killer whale. The HCTT area also overlaps with the Pacific Coast of Baja California Peninsula Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA), which is critical habitat for gray whales (including the endangered Western gray whale), humpback whales and endangered blue whales. It also neighbours the Western Baja California Lagoons and Coastal Waters IMMA which provides critical habitat for gray whales (including the endangered Western gray whale) and blue whales. Consequently, WDC have concerns over the impacts of military activities on numerous cetacean species that rely on this region for critical life stages including migration and reproduction.	The Action Proponents conduct training in testing in locations that create efficiencies in the utilization of resources and provide safe conditions for these activities. Please refer to Section 1.3 (Overview and Strategic Importance of Existing Range Complexes) for further explanation about the need to train and test within the HCTT Study Area. The military services have been conducting military readiness activities within the HCTT Study Area for decades. There has been no scientific evidence to indicate the activities are having adverse effects on populations of marine mammals, many of which continue to increase in number or are maintaining populations based on what regional conditions can support. The Navy is consulting with NMFS under the MMPA and ESA for marine mammals, including humpback whale Central America and Mexico Distinct Population Segment (DPS), southern resident killer whale DPS, main Hawaiian Islands insular false killer whale, gray whales (including the endangered Western gray whale), and blue whales. Those consultations will result in a Final Rule and a Letter of Authorization under MMPA and a Biological Opinion (containing an Incidental Take Permit) or Letter of Concurrence under ESA.
WDC-03	Key concerns The main impacts of noise pollution from military activities (including active sonar, explosives, other intense impulsive sounds, vessels) on cetaceans are:	Please see Appendix D and Appendix E, Section 2 for a discussion of these topics. All of the references listed in the comment were considered in the EIS/OEIS.

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	• Injury and death – use of active sonar has been linked to numerous cetacean mass strandings (Filadelfo et al., 2009; Simonis et al., 2020). Detonation of explosives can lead to physical injury, particularly of the auditory system, and mortality (Danil and Leger, 2011; Siebert et al., 2022). • Auditory impairment – intense and/or prolonged sound exposure can cause temporary or permanent reductions to auditory sensitivity (NMFS, 2024; Southall et al., 2019), which could impair cetaceans ability to forage, communicate and navigate. • Habitat degradation and displacement – species such as beaked whales have been shown to leave areas where active sonar exercises are occurring, not returning for several days after (Tyack et al., 2011). Explosives and pile driving can also cause large scale displacement in the order of several kilometres (Benhemma-Le Gall et al., 2021; Lammers et al., 2017). • Behavioural changes – some cetaceans alter their movement (Goldbogen et al., 2013; Helble et al., 2023; Miller et al., 2014; Stimpert et al., 2014) or foraging behaviour (Sivle et al., 2016; Tyack et al., 2011), which can adversely impact energy-balance following prolonged or repeated noise exposure. • Communication masking – cetaceans may alter vocal rates or characteristics of their vocalisations following exposure to intense sound and vessel noise (Jensen et al., 2009; Lammers et al., 2017; Lara et al., 2023).	
WDC-04	Key recommendations To ensure that injury of and disturbance to individual cetaceans and populations protected under the MMPA and ESA from military activities is reduced, it is essential to avoid, minimise and mitigate the harmful impacts. Should permits be granted, WDC's key recommendations are: • Avoidance of critical habitat: areas designated as critical habitats for cetaceans should be avoided. Buffer zones around these areas should ensure noise emissions do not reach harmful levels within the critical habitat. The appropriate size of the buffer zones should be determined through noise modelling to prevent disturbance and injury based on the NMFS acoustic thresholds (NMFS, 2024).	Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS; specifically, in response to avoidance of critical habitat and seasonal restrictions, see Section 5.7. Due to recent changes in the best available science, some of the geographic mitigation areas have been enlarged. In response to baseline data collection and monitoring, see Section 5.5; in response to vessel slow-downs, see item #16 in Table 5-20. Regarding operational delays and shut-downs, the Navy currently conducts and proposed to continue conducting those mitigation measures (please see Section 5.6).

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	• Seasonal restrictions: activities should not take place during key periods of migration and reproduction for ESA listed species, particularly in critical habitat. • Baseline data collection and monitoring of behavioural responses: year-round visual and acoustic surveys should be conducted to understand cetacean usage patterns throughout the HCTT range area. This should include baseline monitoring throughout the proposed range extension areas that were not in the 2018 assessment. Large-scale monitoring programmes are essential for assessing behavioural responses and avoidance during noise-emitting activities. • Vessel slow-downs: due to incidents of whale-vessel collisions in this area in recent years (90 FR 4944 (January 16th, 2025)), vessels transiting through whale habitats (e.g. those not engaged actively in warfare training) should voluntarily slow to 10 knots. Vessel slow-downs can be effective at reducing whale collision risk (Conn and Silber, 2013) and simultaneously reduces noise emissions (Leaper, 2019). • Operational delays and shut-downs: real-time visual and acoustic monitoring of cetaceans should lead to delaying operations, or shut-downs, until the animals have left the area.	
WDC-05	• Use of noise mitigation technologies: where possible, noise emissions should be reduced at source. Low-order deflagration should be used for UXO disposal (Lepper et al., 2024) and noise abatement technology such as bubble curtains should be used to reduce noise from pile driving, airguns and explosions (Ayers et al., 2009; Cheong et al., 2023; Verfuss et al., 2019). • Increased monitoring of cetacean strandings: there should be increased shoreline monitoring for stranded cetaceans in the hours to weeks following exercises. Collection of auditory tissues and structures during post-mortem examination must be a priority, which necessitates rapid detection of carcasses. • Research and development: there should be continued investment into developing quieter technologies that are less harmful to cetaceans. This includes developing non-acoustic technologies (such as magnetic anomaly detection methods) or acoustic sonar operating in frequencies outside of cetacean hearing ranges. The effectiveness of current mitigation measures	Please see Chapter 5, item #26 in Table 5-20 for a response to reducing source levels. Regarding stranding during Navy exercises, in 2009, the Navy and NMFS developed stranding protocols and plans for each range complex that provide guidelines for response to strandings during Navy major training exercises (MTEs). Additionally, the Navy and NMFS signed a National MOU (PR-055) for stranding investigations that establishes a framework consistent with federal fiscal law requirements whereby the Navy may assist NMFS with response to an investigation of Uncommon Stranding Events (USEs) during MTEs. One component of the MOU is the regional stranding implementation plans (RSIAP) for Hawaii and Southern California. The RSIAPs delineate what the Navy and NMFS can contribute in regards to services in response to a marine mammal stranding during an MTE. The RSIAP does not have

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	in reducing risk to cetaceans, such as soft-starts, must also be quantified to demonstrate their effectiveness at deterring animals from the area of operation.	provisions for directing NOAA's handling of the stranding (including cultural practices), guiding the necropsy, nor specify direct Navy financial participation. Instead it provides guidance on things such as access to Navy installations for necropsies, availability of specialized equipment and other logistic considerations to assist stranding investigations. Regarding quieter technologies, in spite of technology advances, sonar remains the most effective means of detecting and countering submerged mines and potentially hostile submarines. The Navy uses both passive and active sonar. Sonar proficiency is a complex and perishable skill that requires regular, hands-on training in realistic and diverse conditions. Training and testing with active sonar is needed to find and counter newer-generation submarines around the world, which are growing in number, as are torpedoes and underwater mines, which are true threats to global commerce, national security, and the safety of military personnel. As a result, defense against enemy submarines is a top priority for the Navy. The detection and countering of submarines is paramount to national security. Naval forces cannot counter this threat without the use of active sonar. Because the Navy is statutorily responsible to provide combat-ready forces to operational Commanders, it must train in a manner in which it will be utilized in military operations.
Windward Coalition for Community Concerns		
Windward-01	The Draft EIS/OEIS for Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) analyzes 3 alternatives: No action or change in activity Alternative 1 - greater activity (preferred by Navy). Alternative 2 - substantially greater activity than other alternatives. Alternative 1 (preferred by the Navy) states: Expansion of training areas on the Windward side including ○ Kaneohe Bay: (mines and underwater mine countermeasure) ○ MCBH (Kailua): coastal amphibious landing ○ Bellows Beach: amphibious landing, nearshore mine detection,UUVs and ROVs, including airborne mine countermeasure training. Increased tempo of nearshore activities: The Navy proposes more frequent use of nearshore areas like Kaneohe Bay and	To clarify, there would be no explosives used in Kaneohe Bay, Kailua Bay, or Bellows, and home basing of P-8s is not part of the Proposed Action. As stated in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives), Section 2.4.2 (Alternatives Carried Forward), Alternative 2 was analyzed to understand effects for training and testing above the expected level, to the maximum that the military services could sustain.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	Marine Corps Training Area Bellows for new training or testing activities, such as: Large-Scale Amphibious Breaching Exercises ● Air Combat Maneuvers ● Air Defense Exercises including bombing surface maritime targets. ● Amphibious Assault training ● Personnel Insertion/Extraction by boat and aircraft ● Underwater Mine Countermeasure training Including ○ Diver Emplaced Explosive Charges ○ Mat weave ○ Line Charges ● Home Basing of P-8s at MCBH Aside from alternative 2 using more simulation than alternative 1, the difference between them is only vaguely described. Alternative 2 appears to be a “straw man” choice.	
Windward-02	In the Virtual Meeting (01/22/25) it was stated several times that this DEIS did not propose any new MCBH or other land based activity stating it was “outside of scope of this DEIS." a. However, if MCBH is not part of the study or proposed action, why is it specifically being listed as a location where training exercises will occur (Vol II pp. 44,45 46, 47 & 51).	To clarify, this EIS/OEIS analyzes impacts only of in-water or over water military readiness activities. In cases of amphibious landings, this EIS/OEIS covers the in-water portion and separate analyses cover the on-land portion. Activities that include MCBH or other land ranges show the area of the ocean where the activity would occur, in this case just outside the beach areas of MCBH.
Windward-03	The statement of "No new activities, just new locations” (Vol 1 pg. 211 Section 3.2.2.1, Vol 1 pg. 276 Section 3.5.2.1 & pg 572 Section 3.12.2.1) seems to contradict "Nearshore areas within the Hawaii Study Area, such as Kaneohe Bay or MCTAB, may be used more frequently or for new military readiness activities, but the geographic boundary of the Hawaii Study Area is unchanged."	To clarify, the intent of the statement is activities that are new to that specific area. The mine warfare activities to be conducted at Kaneohe Bay and MCTAB have been conducted elsewhere around Oahu, such as at Puuloa Underwater Range or the Ewa Training Minefield.
Windward-04	It is stated both in the DEIS and virtual meeting that an increase in activity in Kaneohe Bay was only to occur during RIMPAC. However, in Volume I starting pg 103, Table 2-11: Navy and Marine Corps Proposed Training Activities lists an increased annual frequency of these events. Is this increase only limited to RIMPAC?	Yes, the annual number shown in Table 2-11 would be during RIMPAC exercises.
Windward-05	Does this mean that increased amphibious landings and near shore activities will have no terrestrial, environmental, community. or cultural impact?	This EIS/OEIS covers at-sea activities and therefore does not analyze terrestrial impacts. The EIS/OEIS (see Chapter 3, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) does analyze near shore activities and considered all applicable

Comment ID	Comment	Response
		environmental effects, including potential effects on marine resources, socioeconomics and submerged cultural resources.
Windward-06	The DEIS suggest the “return” and home basing of P8A's as discussed (Vol I p. 590 Table 4-1 Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions) in addition to the 2 squadrons of Osprey. Is a new future DEIS planned for this possible increase in facilities and operations? Please clarify.	Thank you for your comment. The Final EIS/OEIS has been revised to clarify that the support provided by MCBH is for rotational detachments of P-8A squadrons, not a permanent homebasing. Any future homebasing actions would require a separate environmental planning analysis.
Windward-07	The DEIS describes the laying of marine fiber optic cable but not the onshore facilities that will receive them. Please clarify.	None of the proposed cable projects would connect to land facilities; instead, all would connect to existing underwater junctions located offshore. Please see Appendix A, Section A.3.5.2.
Windward-08	The DEIS does not clearly quantify the location and volume of the increased tempo of increased activities, e.g. number of aircraft flights, amphibious maneuvers. Please clarify as this is critical to understanding potential impacts. Nor does it clearly state whether the Navy training and/or testing activities will result in closing Kaneohe Bay and the Waimanalo coast from public recreation use and if so, how often and for how long?	The number of events per year is given in Chapter 2, Tables 2-11 through 2-19. For additional details, such as number of events including aircraft and number of targets used per year, please see Section 3.0. Amphibious training operations will be confined to designated training areas aboard MCTAB or MCBH. By design, military training occurs within these established areas, with no planned or anticipated impediments to civilian recreational use of Waimanalo coast beaches located outside designated military use areas. Furthermore, there are no planned changes to existing agreements allowing periodic use of military beaches by the public, and no impacts on current use are expected.
Windward-09	Clearly comment on additional construction with their potential of harm to coastal ecosystems and the quality of life in adjacent residential areas.	No construction is proposed in this Proposed Action.
Windward-10	The DEIS assumes that underwater controlled demolition charges will be the predominant technique to neutralize mock mines. No specification of their size, exact locations, and frequency of use makes assessment of their environmental impact impossible.	As shown on Figure A-11 in Appendix A and Figure H-32 in Appendix H, the only nearshore (less than 3 nm) in-water areas authorized for underwater detonations are the Victor Wharf on Pearl City Peninsula, Lima Landing, Barbers Point Underwater Range, Ewa Training Minefield, and the Puuloa Underwater Range. Descriptions of these areas are given in Table H-3. The number of Mine Warfare activities that could use explosives

Comment ID	Comment	Response
		are listed in Chapter 2 and described in Appendix A, Section A.1.
Windward-11	Based on general principles of air quality impact assessments in environmental impact statements, criticisms include: 1. Inadequate assessment of cumulative impacts: The Draft EIS/OEIS does not fully account for the combined effects of the proposed activities and other existing or foreseeable future sources of air pollution in the region.	Section 4 considers Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions. Section 4.3.1 discusses the cumulative effects due to air pollutant emissions.
Windward-12	Reliance on emissions estimates rather than pollutant concentrations: The assessment focuses on estimated emissions rather than modeling the resulting pollutant concentrations and comparing them to National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).	Air quality impacts were qualitatively assessed based on magnitude of emissions, location and initial dispersion of emissions, duration of exposure, meteorological conditions, wind patterns, buoyancy of pollutants, and other relevant factors as explained in Section 3.1.8.
Windward-13	Limited scope of analysis: The air quality impact assessment does not consider all relevant pollutants and does not adequately address impacts across the entire affected area.	The air quality analysis estimated the increase in criteria pollutants and Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAP) of concern from all proposed activities at each of the air basins potentially affected by the proposed activities. Detailed emissions and discussion of impacts are presented in Section 3.1 and Appendix G.
Windward-14	There is no indication that key pollutant levels will be subsequently measured to confirm emissions estimates.	Ambient air monitoring is not within the scope of the EIS. Emission factors used are recognized and routinely employed.
Windward-15	Insufficient consideration of mitigation measures: The Draft EIS/OEIS does not thoroughly explore or propose effective measures to reduce air quality impacts.	The analysis shows the effects on air quality from implementing the Preferred Alternative would be less than significant. The expected change in air quality impacts would not cause or contribute to a violation of ambient air quality standards. Further, negligible amounts of Hazardous Air Pollutants would be emitted, and their impacts are not expected to increase human health risks. Based on the anticipated change in impacts, mitigation measures are not required.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
Windward-16	Outdated methodologies: The assessment does not use the most current air quality modeling techniques or data sources recommended by regulatory agencies.	The assessment uses the best available emission factors and data sources to qualitatively approximate air pollutant plume locations and impacts. Emission factors and methodologies are presented in Appendix G.
Windward-17	According to the HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS, explosives are to be used in Hawaii in: ● The transit corridor connecting Hawaii and California ● Hawaii Range Complex ● At-sea components of these range complexes, including: ○ Navy pierside locations ○ Port transit channels ○ Bays ○ Harbors ○ Inshore waterways ○ Amphibious approach lanes ○ Civilian ports where training and testing activities occur On the Windward Side the DEIS states these include Kaneohe Bay, MCBH and Bellows. The Navy emphasizes that in many areas these will be non-explosive “dummy mines.” However, the Draft EIS/OEIS proposes the use of both non-explosive practice munitions as well as explosive munitions to neutralize these”dummy mines”. The draft EIS does not clearly comment on the latter’s potency, location and frequency of use, noise or potential impact on marine life and the environment. Additionally the distance from shore of not less than 3 nautical miles is qualifi ed by the terms “most” (vol1 pg 283) and “typically” (vol1 pg 286) leading to concerns that there might be detonations closer to shore. How much closer and how frequently? In the DEIS placement of dummy mines would also be placed in Kaneohe and Kailua bays (Appx A p 78-79). Also in the document it is mentioned that dummy mines may be neutralized in training exercises (at times by explosives). However, At the virtual public meeting of 01/22/25 it was emphatically stated that no explosives of any size or type would be used in	As shown on Figure A-11 in Appendix A and Figure H-32 in Appendix H, the only near shore (less than 3 nautical miles) in-water areas authorized for underwater detonations are the Victor Wharf on Pearl City Peninsula, Lima Landing, Barbers Point Underwater Range, Ewa Training Minefield, and the Puuloa Underwater Range. Descriptions of these areas are given in Table H-3. The Mine Warfare activities that could use explosives are described in Appendix A, Sections A.1.9, A.2.1.4, and A.2.3.3. Other explosives could be used, but those are explosive weapons such as bombs, gunnery, or missiles, all occurring outside 3 nautical miles from shore. These weapons detonate in air or on a surface target. Descriptions of these activities are found throughout Appendix A.

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	Kailua Bay or Kaneohe Bay. If the public meeting statement by the Navy is accurate, it should be clearly stated in the DEIS.	
Windward-18	The Navy previously acknowledged that its activities could harm marine life, including marine mammals, sea turtles, and other sea life. Despite this the 2024 Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) demonstrates inadequate mitigation measures for protecting marine life. These include: 1. Limited protection for humpback whales: a. The Draft EIS/OEIS designates a humpback whale cautionary area with a buffer zone in areas of high whale concentration. The previous Navy's operating permit (2018) initially allowed up to 3 large whales to be killed in ship strikes, which was reached by 2024. b. If the proposed new limit of 5 is reached, marine life damage can continue with the approval of the U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander. c. Inasmuch as the Navy has been able to perform its mission for years under the time/area restrictions of the 2015 Settlement, maintaining those restrictions would be a reasonable alternative. d. This EIS/OEIS sidesteps previous litigation providing marine mammal protections. e. This EIS/OEIS downplays long-term effects: as in previous EIS documents it minimizes the likelihood of lasting, permanent injuries to marine life populations due to training and testing activities. f. There seems to be limited and inadequate evaluation in high risk areas for the presence of whales or other marine mammals. The primary technique appears to be on-deck lookouts with visual observation as previously proposed. Will the Navy supplement this with passive acoustic monitoring and other sensitive technologies?	Please see Chapter 5 and Appendix K of the EIS/OEIS for an analysis of mitigation measures and mitigation areas. NMFS and the Navy will consult, and the final mitigation measures and mitigation areas will be made in agreement with NMFS. The Navy continues to comply with all regulations applicable to protection of marine mammals. Potential effects on marine species and populations are fully analyzed in the EIS/OEIS. Chapter 5 includes information about the use and limitations of passive acoustic monitoring. It is important to note that NMFS evaluates the Action Proponents' request for authorizations to take marine mammals, pursuant to specific requirements of the MMPA and its implementing regulations administered by NMFS, and to decide whether to issue the authorizations. Part of that evaluation considers the mitigation measures and mitigation areas that are developed in coordination between the Action Proponents and NMFS.
Windward-19	Insufficient coral reef protection: While the Draft EIS/OEIS includes a measure to limit training and testing within 350 yards of coral reefs, however, this distance may not be sufficient to prevent damage from underwater sound and other activities.	The analysis of effects on corals is found in Section 3.4 and concludes that the proposed activities, when conducted with appropriate SOPs and mitigation measures, would result in less than significant effects. Additionally, the Action Proponents completed consultation with NMFS, Pacific Islands Regional

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		Office (PIRO) pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Action Proponents concluded, and NMFS PIRO concurred, that effects on abiotic bottom habitat, including coral reefs, would be no greater than minimal and short term.
Windward-20	Concerns about a significant increase in the use of sonar and explosives: The proposed activities include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of underwater sound, which can have significant impacts on marine mammals and other sea life.	Please see Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) for the analysis of effects on the marine environment.
Windward-21	Adequacy of marine species protective measures: The Navy states it would continue to employ appropriate marine species protective mitigation measures, which may be inadequate in view of the large scale and intensity of the proposed activities. Additionally, it does not present a clear strategy in assessing impacts.	Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS for information on marine species mitigation measures. Specifically, see Section 5.5 that describes the monitoring, research, and adaptive management strategy through which mitigation measures have and will continue to evolve along with the science.
Windward-22	Cumulative impacts: The EIS/OEIS may not adequately address the cumulative impacts of ongoing and expanded military activities on marine ecosystems over time.	Please see Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS for cumulative effects analysis.
Windward-23	Effectiveness of mitigation measures: We are concerned about the practicability and efficacy of the proposed mitigation measures in real-world conditions. It is unclear exactly how the Navy will evaluate and ensure compliance with environmental regulations.	Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS for information on marine species mitigation measures, and Chapter 6 for information on the military services' regulatory compliance.
Windward-24	The 2024 Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) evaluation of noise pollution and mitigation initiatives is inadequate due to: 1. Limited scope of analysis: Inadequate consideration of cumulative long term effects: The analysis evaluates noise impacts from individual events rather than considering the cumulative effects of multiple training and testing activities over time. This approach underestimates the overall impact of noise pollution on marine and terrestrial life.	Please see Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS for cumulative effects analysis.
Windward-25	2. Lack of comprehensive mitigation strategies: The Navy claims it will employ “appropriate marine species protective mitigation measures", however, the specifics are vague. This lack of detail makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of proposed mitigation efforts.	Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS for information on marine species mitigation measures.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
Windward-26	3. Insufficient attention to underwater noise: The focus on in-air noise e.g. pinnipeds, may overlook the significant impacts of underwater noise on various marine species, including cetaceans and fish.	The EIS/OEIS evaluated the potential in-water acoustic effects of the proposed activities throughout the entire Study Area. Effects on marine mammals were analyzed individually by species as found in Appendix E.
Windward-27	4. Limited geographic scope: The analysis appears to concentrate on the Pacific Missile Range Facility, potentially neglecting noise impacts in other areas.	The EIS/OEIS evaluated the potential effects of the proposed activities throughout the entire Study Area, as defined and shown in Section 2.1 and in Appendix H, Section H.2.
Windward-28	5. Inadequate consideration is given to the adoption or development of alternative quieter technologies for training and testing activities that could reduce overall noise pollution.	In spite of technology advances, sonar remains the most effective means of detecting and countering submerged mines and potentially hostile submarines. The Navy uses both passive and active sonar. Sonar proficiency is a complex and perishable skill that requires regular, hands-on training in realistic and diverse conditions. Training and testing with active sonar is needed to find and counter newer-generation submarines around the world, which are growing in number, as are torpedoes and underwater mines, which are true threats to global commerce, national security, and the safety of military personnel. As a result, defense against enemy submarines is a top priority for the Navy. The detection and countering of submarines is paramount to national security. Naval forces cannot counter this threat without the use of active sonar. Because the Navy is statutorily responsible to provide combat-ready forces to operational Commanders, it must train in a manner in which it will be utilized in military operations.
Windward-29	6. Outdated assessments: The tempo of activity will clearly increase noise pollution in adjacent communities which is inadequately addressed. The evaluation categorizes noise levels based on day-night average sound levels (DNL). This averaging discounts the adverse impact on the community, especially in the evening, of brief but very loud events, (e.g. artillery or rocket fire). Additionally the DEIS does not clearly address other noise-related factors such as impacts on air quality, climate change, public health and safety, and terrestrial resources. 7. The noise from the increased tempo of air and nearshore activities will further increase the impact on already disproportionately burdened	Because of the at-sea nature of the activities in this Proposed Action, community impacts from noise and impacts on terrestrial resources are not expected. The analysis of air quality can be found in Section 3.1 (Air Quality), and the analysis of public health and safety can be found in Section 3.12.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	communities. What level of increased activity will occur in the evening and are additional mitigation such as quiet hours planned?	
Windward-30	Process We have concerns with the process. 1. Windward community members and Community Boards on several previous occasions expressed concern that a pre-holiday release of the draft EIS/OEIS limits a detailed community response and suggests it is a PR ploy to do so. This further undermines public confidence in the Navy's process. 2. The limited time for public comment (December 15, 2023, to February 11, 2024) is too short for thorough review of such a voluminous and complex document. 3. Many individuals complained of difficulty in accessing and searching these documents. Some links misdirected users creating frustration and blunting of efforts to comment on the DEIS. 4. It should be made much clearer to the public that their concerns and comments at the virtual open houses will not be a part of the public record. These meetings might distract their attention from the need to submit their concerns in writing (electronically or by mail) prior to the deadline of February 11. 5. Several discrepancies, as mentioned above, exist within the DEIS and between claims made in the virtual meeting (e.g no explosives in Kaneohe Bay). Will these be clarified in the FEIS?	Public involvement is a fundamental aspect of the National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 processes. In an effort to improve and strengthen the EIS/OEIS, the military services welcomed and appreciated the public's participation during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. The comment period (December 13, 2024, to February 11, 2025) included an additional 15 calendar days (from the required 45 days to 60 days) to allow the public more time to review and comment during the holiday season. The timing of the Draft EIS/OEIS release is directly linked to the expiration of regulatory permits and authorizations under the MMPA and ESA and the statutory requirement to complete the EIS process within two years. Current MMPA permits will expire in December 2025, requiring issuance of the ROD and MMPA Final Rule (permits) prior to that date to ensure the continuation of military readiness activities. Thank you for noting difficulties in searching and accessing the Draft EIS/OEIS. The Draft EIS/OEIS, technical reports, and supporting documentation were accessible through the project website, which also included summaries of information through the virtual open house presentation and fact sheet. Any broken or misdirected links were unintentional and were corrected immediately. All public notifications (Federal Register Notice of Public Meetings, display advertisements, news releases, eblasts, postcard mailers, social media posts, notification letters) and informational materials (website, fact sheet booklet, briefings/presentations) provided the commenting methods for the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. Comments could be submitted at one of the in-person public meetings, electronically via the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/, or via U.S. postal mail. For the

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		virtual public meeting, these notification and informational materials, in addition to verbal statements from the moderator during the in-person and virtual public meetings, also explained that "questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session are not official public comments." The approach used during the virtual public meeting is similar to an open house format used for in-person public meetings; the intent of having project representatives at poster stations is to provide project information and answer questions from the public. Thank you for pointing out potential discrepancies between information found in the Draft EIS/OEIS and what was discussed by team members during the public meetings. The Final EIS/OEIS has been revised to clarify information about the role of MCBH in support of P-8A squadrons as reflected in response to comment Windward-06.

L.2.3 Individual Comments

Table L.2-3 contains comments from private individuals received during the public comment period and the Navy's response. Responses to these comments were prepared and reviewed for scientific and technical accuracy and completeness. Comments appear as they were submitted and have not been altered with the exception that expletives, addresses, and phone numbers have been removed, as necessary.

Table L.2-3: Comments Received From Individuals

Comment ID	Comment	Response
A		
Acosta, D-01	The Draft EIS/OEIS for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing activities fails to adequately address the significant and substantive concerns of Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, and water protectors. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life and people. Additionally, the No Action Alternative must be re-evaluated to reflect the benefits of stopping harmful military activities, and the Navy must prioritize the protection of marine life, cultural practices, and the health of the oceans over military readiness. The US military, and it's destruction of people and the environment, is the largest ongoing threat to Hawai'i for decades. This report is another instance of that threat and real, ongoing damage to Hawaii and her people, being dismissed as insignificant when it is actually extremely significant. The health of our communities and our oceans, the survival of endangered species, and the rights of Native Hawaiians depend on the people holding the Navy accountable as they attempt to deceive and mislead us about the harm they do. We will hold you accountable. Stop prioritizing war over the planet's health and choose a path that honors and PROTECTS OUR MOANA and all who depend on it.	The Navy takes its environmental stewardship responsibilities seriously while preparing for its mission. As a steward of the environment, the Navy avoids, minimizes, or mitigates potential effects on the environment from its activities to the maximum extent practicable. Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process. Your comment is part of the official project record.
Acosta, D-02	Protect our moana	Thank you for your comment.
Adel, K	The US Navy has no place in Hawaii and is killing the flora and fauna and harming the indigenous population. We demand you remove their presence, the navy is not wanted there!	Thank you for your comment.
Ahmed, L	This action will cause severe damage to our oceans and the wildlife that resides in said oceans. This will have major consequences on our ecosystem.	All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were

Comment ID	Comment	Response
		analyzed in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS.
Aiden, A	by the Navy as a "historical release of petroleum products" rather than an ongoing contamination crisis. Similarly, the recent 1.89-million-gallon wastewater spill into the ocean near Pearl Harbor is attributed to "heavy rains damaging a transformer," ignoring the Navy's history of regulatory violations, including a $9 million fine for prior infractions. Also not considered are the implications of the jet fuel leaks at Red Hill, which can affect the ocean quality because the underground aquifers and water sources are connected to the ocean. These recurring pollution events violate federal and state environmental standards and threaten Hawaii's fragile marine ecosystems. The OEIS fails to adequately assess the long-term ocean impacts of these spills, particularly their effect on endangered species. Research from the University of Hawai'i and NOAA links nitrogen pollution from wastewater to the proliferation of invasive algae, which elevates arginine levels and fuels fibropapillomatosis (FP), a tumor-causing disease devastating Hawaii's green sea turtles. NOAA has credited this as the leading cause of death in endangered green sea turtles. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life. Conclusion The Draft EIS/OEIS for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing activities fails to adequately address the significant and substantive concerns of Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, and water protectors. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life and people. Additionally, the No Action Alternative must be re-evaluated to reflect the benefits of stopping harmful military activities, and the Navy must prioritize the protection of marine life, cultural practices, and the health of the oceans over military readiness. The US military, and it's destruction of people and the environment, is the largest ongoing threat to Hawai'i for decades. This report is another instance of that threat and real, ongoing damage to Hawaii and her people, being dismissed as insignificant when it is actually extremely significant. The health of our communities and our oceans, the survival of endangered species, and the rights of Native Hawaiians depend on the people holding the Navy	While the events mentioned in the comment are not part of the Proposed Action and therefore not analyzed as direct impacts, they are considered under cumulative effects in Chapter 4. The EIS/OEIS considered the stress of fibropapillomatosis in the analysis of effects on sea turtles (see Appendix C, Sections C.7.1.3.3 and C.7.2.1.4; and Appendix F, Section F.8.5.3). The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 military readiness activities. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would remain unchanged or improve slightly.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	accountable as they attempt to deceive and mislead us about the harm they do. We will hold you accountable. Stop prioritizing war over the planet's health and choose a path that honors and PROTECTS OUR MOANA and all who depend on it.	
AJ	There is logistically no reason to increase the test range for bomb. It disturbs already fragile ecosystems and is entirely dangerous for many endangered wild life species. We also know of the extent of damage it does to this living in areas where they're doing these test. Many places have seen negative impacts to quality of life, increase in cancer rates and birth defects	The EIS/OEIS's alternatives were developed in order to satisfy the military services' purpose and need related to fulfilling their Title 10 requirements. Only alternatives that will adequately meet military readiness requirements were selected. The EIS/OEIS includes a robust suite of mitigation measures, which will be implemented in both action alternatives (i.e., whichever alternative is selected). These mitigation measures, as well as standard operating procedures that the military services routinely employ, are discussed in detail and specifically inform the decision maker and the public how adverse impacts can be avoided or minimized. Details regarding the development of reasonable alternatives are provided in Section 2.4 (Action Alternatives Development).
Akaka, R	I am a high school student at Nānākuli High. I am writing to say you must stop practicing war games in our oceans. You have never cleaned up your mess and you want to still continue to destroy. This type of sick selfish practice is illegal/unlawful/gross/wrong/selfish/disrespectful to our ocean and life and food it supplies all of us in the pacific. Your military practices must stop...i oppose this practice and demand that it stops today and forever!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Akau, K	This training and testing should wait until the approval or rejection of the Papahanaumokuakea National Marine Monument. The process in its final steps as of December 2924. It would be better in the interests of the Navy to wait on that front. As far as testing around the main Hawaiian Islands all testing should be restricted considering frequent use by commercial and recreational entities. This could cause severe problems for the economy that relies on the ocean.	The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects

Comment ID	Comment	Response
		on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Sanctuary. The Action Proponents consulted with the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, in accordance with section 304(d) of National Marine Sanctuaries Act.
Akau, L	To what extent has the U.S. Navy informed the citizens of Hawai'i and California about the proposed installation and maintenence of mine warfare? 3 in-person meetings? For those living on Molokai, Lanai & Maui - will there be informational meetings? Afer all, areas around Kaneohe Bay, Paiolo Channel, Alenuhaha chall - affect on the marine ecosystems is concerning. Furthermore, how long will this training impact on our marine and possible land ecosystems take place? 80 years or more?	The military services provided public notifications that included Federal Register Notice of Public Meetings, display advertisements, news releases, email notifications, postcard mailers, social media posts, and notification letters. In addition to two public meetings held in Hawaii (Oahu and Kauai), and the meeting in San Diego, a virtual public meeting also provided the opportunity for members of the public to receive information and have questions answered, regardless of their location. The Action Proponents have applied for a Letter of Authorization (LOA) from NMFS for military readiness activities covered in this EIS/OEIS. Under the LOA, these activities would be conducted for a 7-year period.
Akeena	The wildlife of Hawaii is suffering from America's military.	Thank you for your comment.
Alan	Why would kill what's feeding humanity. Have you no shame. Have greed and power blind you from empathy. For life in general. I hope you may open your eyes to remember that we are all alive and living beings. God bless.	Thank you for your comment.
Alana, T-01	First and foremost, the Hawaiian Kingdom is being illegally occupied by the United States Military and the United States of America Corporation. THE UNITED STATES MILITARY HAVE NO JURISDICTION IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS!!! Public Law 103-150, or the Apology Law by President Bill Clinton. Where is the Treaty of Annexation between the United States and Queen Lili‘uokalani? A Joint Resolution CANNOT acquire another Nation State. The United States recognized the Kingdom of Hawaii's independence in 1826, a	We appreciate and acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the historical context of the Hawaiian Islands and the military's presence. The U.S. military is committed to conducting its activities in Hawaii with the utmost respect for the local communities, cultures, and histories that define these islands.

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	treaty was signed with the kingdom on December 23, 1826, establishing diplomatic relations and trade agreements. On January 17, 1893 Queen Lili‘uokalani was ILLEGALLY imprisoned by American Businessmen, or as President Grover Cleveland called them "insurgents". So please explain under whose authority gives the United States permission to continue to contaminate, desecrate, bomb, pollute, and illegally occupy the Hawaiian Kingdom? Because according to International Law, the United States and its military has NO JURISDICTION IN THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM. We may no longer have a Monarch, but the people OF Hawai‘i didn‘t want the United States in 1893 and have been trying to have you all deoccupy the Hawaiian Kingdom ever since. The Ku‘e Petition had over 21,000 signatures opposing annexation and we still stand by those signatures of our kupuna (ancestors). There was never a Treaty of Annexation, therefore, the United States and its military NEED TO CLEAN OUR LANDS AND DEOCCUPY THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM IMMEDIATELY!!! "Despite the unprecedented prolonged nature of the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Kingdom by the United States, the Hawaiian State, as a subject of international law, is afforded all the protection that international law provides. “Belligerent occupation,” concludes Judge Crawford in his book The Creation of States in International Law (2nd ed., 2006), “does not affect the continuity of the State, even where there exists no government claiming to represent the occupied State (p. 34).” Without a treaty of peace, the laws of war and neutrality would continue to apply." (see attachment) NO MEANS NO!!!	The HCTT Study Area plays a crucial role in ensuring national security and supporting global peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. Training and testing activities are designed to maintain readiness and effectiveness, which are essential for responding to various challenges and threats in the Pacific. In planning and performing these activities, we strictly follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes conducting comprehensive environmental assessments and impact statements, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These processes involve thorough evaluations of potential effects on the environment, cultural sites, and local communities. Public participation is a cornerstone of NEPA, and we actively seek and consider input from all stakeholders to inform our decisions. We understand the significance of Public Law 103-150, known as the "Apology Resolution," in which the U.S. Congress acknowledged the 1893 overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii and expressed regret to Native Hawaiians. While the resolution is a profound acknowledgment of past events, it does not alter the current legal status of Hawaii as a state or the military’s obligation to protect the United States. Consequently, the military's activities in Hawaii are conducted in compliance with applicable U.S. laws and agreements. We remain dedicated to transparent and respectful engagement with the Hawaiian community. Our goal is to balance the imperative of national security with a deep respect for the rich cultural heritage and environmental uniqueness of Hawaii.

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		We value the perspectives shared and will continue to consider them as we move forward.
Alana, T-02	NEA Today article on "The Illegal Overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom Government"	Thank you for your comment.
Alarcon, L	Being a San Diego resident and living in a highly Navy populated area has meant seeing the pollution the Navy causes first hand on a daily basis. Not only do our wildlife suffer from the environmental harm done by Navy ships, our people suffer from the Navy's impending presence in our neighbors. We have been unable to access our coastline for generations in my community due to the Navy's lack of awareness- they built almost all their base on our beaches- pushed residents back- and have severed our ability to even see a beach anymore despite us living on the coastline. But rental property is not my concern, my concern is that in forcing my people off our land the Navy has effectively created a pollution bubble for my entire area. We have a small segment of San Diego but have the highest rates of pollution. This causes our young and elderly to develop cancer and asthma often- so much it is almost an epidemic. Now I hear the Navy wants to expand their naval presence- forcing places like San Diego and Hawaii to endure even more pollution, this is an unacceptable risk. The Navy has accounted for tremendous loss in sea life, coral reefs suffer deeply due to ship emissions, and residents near Naval bases suffer the ultimate price of their health and prosperity. The Navy does not need an expansion it needs to commit to safer economic practices and connecting to the communities it has already destroyed by establishing reparations. NO to Navy expansion and NO to Navy pollution.	The Navy takes its environmental stewardship responsibilities seriously while preparing for its mission. As a steward of the environment, the Navy avoids, minimizes, or mitigates potential effects on the environment from its activities to the maximum extent practicable. Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process.
Alex	To whom this may concern, We can't let Marin life die due to some Hawaiian land being "our testing ground". The ocean holds so much life in it we cannot let them die. We kill and we harm all for testing and now they want to use 50%. We need to put a stop to it. We must protect the ocean and land!	The military services' analysis was completed using the best available, peer-reviewed science. We continue to pursue new scientific data, collected through professional studies and verified through credible, recognized sources. The military services work proactively with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state, federal, and non-profit environmental organizations to ensure its operations are safe and minimize impact to marine life.

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		Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, mitigation measures are implemented with the aim of achieving the least practicable adverse impacts to marine mammal species or stocks, ensuring a negligible impact on marine mammal species and stocks (as required under the MMPA), and ensures that Navy training and testing activities do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species, or result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat (as required under the ESA).
Alexia	Please consider the impact this will have on our environment. We need to take care of these crucial areas you plan to use as what is the point in polluting and destroying the ecosystem in this area of the ocean so close to the United States that you may agree you need in order to protect this land when instead you are harming it. Do we want to live on a lifeless shell of a planet?	The potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS.
Alfredo	Please do not pollute our ocean water surroundings in Hawaii! Valuable marine wildlife are depending on us and navy activities will disrupt their way of life in the waters. Please reconsider having more navy activity. Thank you.	Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process. Your comment is part of the official project record.
Allison	No expansion of testing. No more destruction. Time to clean up our mess and give native people their land back.	Thank you for your comment.
Allyson	How dare you want to WILLINGLY kill more marine life. I do not wish for the act of more military movements in marine life.	Thank you for your comment.
Alva, A	As a scientist with expertise in biology, coral reef ecology, and human interactions with marine ecosystems, I wholeheartedly believe this is not beneficial to the Hawaiian people or ecosystems it will affect. I implore the navy to consider other options. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Alvarez, S	Life in Hawaii and in our marine life must be protected. I was born in Hawaii and it is a beautiful place that should not be messed with. We need to do more to protect our earth. We only have one!	Thank you for your comment.

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Alyssa	Please don't do this. It will destroy our living ecosystem in the waters, which is something we all rely on to survive. To breathe. Without the ocean, without the living organisms in it, we would all be dead. Please reconsider this and look at the detrimental effects it has on our wellbeing	Thank you for your comment.
Andersen, H	Hawai'i is home to critically endangered species and ecosystems that are vital and special to the people of Hawai'i and the life of our planet. I strongly oppose the increase of military activity in Hawai'i to encroach on near-shore environments as well as the cultural rights and practices of the native Hawaiian people. To further lose open spaces not yet under military control would be devastating and catastrophic to the life of the Hawaiian nation.	Thank you for your comment.
Anderson, B	The idea of further destroying and sacrificing our natural marine habitats in lieu of test running naval warfare tactics (i.e., mine tests) is abhorrent to me as a U.S. citizen. There is hardly any reason I can think of that would suggest these tests couldn't be done in some other simulated manner. The lack of consideration for how these practices would impact native Hawaiians and their culture is also appalling.	Thank you for your comment. The Navy currently uses simulation for training and testing whenever possible, however, there are significant limitations, and its use cannot replace live training or testing. Section 2.4.1.3 (Simulated Training and Testing Only) of the EIS/OEIS provides further detail on why simulated training and testing can't replace live training or testing, including mine tests.
Andrade, S	The US military must discontinue the destruction of the waters, the land, the air and the livelihoods of all peoples in the entire pacific region of plant earth. All elements that contribute to healthy human existence is in this region. Centuries of continuous abuse and destruction have left our entire earth sick and crippled. In addition the cultural practices that make each indigenous person alive and functioning has also been destroyed. The US Government SHOULD BE THE LEADERS to provide protections of all land, water, air, living beings and indigenous communities. Just imagine how this will heal the world. I am pleading as a citizen of the world, please please STOP the abuse.	Thank you for your comment.
Andrea	It's frustrating that you have separated out Annual Training from Annual Testing because the negative impact will be felt by adding both columns together. I am against all ocean sonar testing/training, and all ocean explosives testing/training. Sonar testing can cause death and brain hemorrhages in whales, and hearing loss can be permanent. The current draft EIS/OEIS acknowledges marine wildlife stressors, deaths, and	The Navy continues to conduct its proposed activities in compliance with NEPA, the MMPA, and the ESA. All impacts from the proposed military readiness activities are considered in the Navy's analysis in the EIS/OEIS, as well as in the

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	permanent injuries. The Navy's own studies from years ago estimated killing 170,000 marine mammals, causing permanent injury to 500 whales and temporary injury to 8,000 (Scientific American, 2009). These are old numbers and stats, and do not at all take into consideration the increase in testing/training that you are currently proposing. With regard to sonar testing and training, www.science.org details a study that shows how many whale species strand themselves on beaches in an attempt to escape the sound. Scientific American – as far back as June 10, 2009 noted "Unfortunately for many whales, dolphins and other marine life, the use of underwater sonar (short for Sound Navigation and Ranging) can lead to injury and even death." And this same scientific magazine noted that the NRDC has campaigned against the use of sonar testing noting that the number of whale deaths and permanent injuries counted are likely a small fraction of the actual number of damaged and dead marine mammals because the vast majority never make it to shore. The NRDC also found that Naval sonar testing was in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. Somewhere along the way, the government allowed the Navy to violate the environmental protections and proceed with destroying marine life and the environment, but that doesn't make it right.	consultation documents submitted to the regulatory agencies under the MMPA and ESA.
Anelaikalani	Our ocean life weighs more of importance than the U.S. Navy ever could. We rely heavily on the ocean in every type of aspect. We use it to bathe our children and family in, we hunt and eat anything the water provides, and it's also one of the biggest elements we use when it comes to our sacred practices and rituals. The Navy base is one of the biggest contributors to tarnishing our way of living. Rarely are they ever held accountable for their pollution and crimes. Nor do their people show any respect for the island they temporarily occupy. Like many other military-affiliated facilities located here in Hawaii, they desecrate and kill our ecosystem and overall environment, making it an unsafe biome for the animals that reside in it. There's no self-awareness, there's no empathy, there's no real accountability being taken for what they do to my home and how it affects all of us. With all of that being said, I am strongly against having any military affair affect our waters and way of life anymore. Mahalo.	Thank you for your comment.
Angelo	Protect all native life in Hawái	Thank you for your comment.

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Annika	Hawaii's waters and marine life will be severely impacted by uptick in naval activities. There are many endangered species, including the Humpback Whale, that live in these waters, as well as a vast coral reef. The pollution that increased naval activity will cause will be a detriment to the marine life of Hawaii, as well as to the native of Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-01	SHAME. on. YOU.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-02	This reckless endangerment of our natural species. There is no reason to endanger wildlife or the waters in this way. We all know you can find a better solution, your just to lazy	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-03	This is senseless and reckless endangerment of Hawaiian species. We have the highest military budget but we will endlessly threaten our states. You can be more responsible so be more responsible.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-04	Our country has severally mistreated Hawaii as it is and it is one of our states. Please do this to help protect its beautiful waters and nature.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-05	Enough. No more.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-06	can you guys deflate your heads a little and think about LITERALLY anything besides yourselves for two seconds? the amount of environmental damage this would do is monumental and irreversible. you only care about the money but money is *[expletive deleted]* useless if you kill our planet. use your *[expletive deleted]* brains, good god.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-07	The amount of activity by our military and Navy already endangers vulnerable wildlife and pollutes oceans. Increasing activities puts the environment at even more risk. We have a responsibility to our future generations and our planet to be knowledgeable and to do what is necessary to protect them and our planet so that there is a future in which life prospers. All life. I strongly oppose any increased activity.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-08	The U.S. Navy holds no right to harm what is left of Hawaii for the native islanders who live there, past or present, and must only ensure that they are doing their part to protect the environment and its people. Preservation and restitution are all they need concern themselves with when it comes to Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.

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Anon-09	You are no better than Hawaii's first colonizers, and you will always be remembered as such. Their land is not yours to play with.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-10	The US navy has no right or need to be in hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-11	DO NOT HARM OUR WATERS DO NOT HARM OUR ANIMALS DO NOT HARM OUR PEOPLE	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-12	The U.S. navy should stop and reconsider the extensive marine harm they are committing. The health of the oceans impact not only marine life, but also the human lives you swore to protect under oath. Everything is connected. Our food is from the ocean and Hawaiian history and culture is deeply rooted in marine life. Think about the consequences before increasing more pollution.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-13	Stop it. Stop doing things that are stupid ideas and cause only harm to the people and environments of this country.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-14	I hope the U.S. navy will limit training exercises that negatively harm marine life. What you don't realize is that polluting the oceans will harm the human lives you swore to protect under oath. Our oceans provide food, recreation, and cultural value for people. It is especially important for Native Hawaiians who deserve reparations for historical wrongdoing by the American government. Polluting our oceans will also bring more destruction. Waste will bring many more diseases and marine life will die. This will lead to ecosystem collapses and disrupt earth's natural balance. It might even harm food security and supply. I call on the U.S. navy to end their polluting activity in and near Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-15	This project contributes to the detrimental cycles of environmental degradation and the mistreatment of native Hawaiians. Please reconsider expanding the military footprint on this small island.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-16	Hawaii should not have expanded military bases on their islands, including Moana. Japan is not enough of a threat compared to others to justify using Hawaii space over a continental state. There are already sufficient military resources present in Hawaii. Please reconsider.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-17	Do not do this! save the marine life	Thank you for your comment.

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Anon-18	Please, let the people of Hawaii live their lives and leave the nature in peace. There's a lot of good people there, and they shouldn't be disturbed by all of this. Leave them be, as they deserve peace just as much as anyone else.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-19	Leave the native people of Hawaii alone, they deserve peace just like everyone else. They shouldn't be bothered by all this military business, they have the right to live their life without having it be endangered by others, not to mention the wildlife also shouldn't be disturbed like this. Let them live their lives.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-20	To whom it may concern, Firstly, the Draft EIS 4 volumes and over 700 pages long, which is in violation of regulation that requires EIS to be no more than 300 pages long, to ensure that it is readable by community members. The No Action Alternative needs to do more diligence in describing benefits of stoping military activity, which it does not. Actual benefits include greater chances of recovery for endangered species such as Hawaiian Monk Seals, restoring the ability of Native Hawaiians to practice cultural traditions, and healthier coral reefs. The current language is a gross misrepresentation. Negative impacts "takes" have on wildlife, especially endangered species, needs deeper analysis and is represented inadequately. Additionally, the abandonment of eggs from birds when disrupted by military activity needs to be addressed, as it is not despite previous testimony. There is also not enough consultation with Kanaka Maoli, which is an oversight that leads to misunderstandings and potentially harmful scenarios. The EIS needs more input from those the Navy is directly impacting. An increase in military operations described under alternative 1 would have significantly negative impacts on the environment, including in areas with critically endangered species, is not considered, which is also a negligent oversight. I believe that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities is inadequate and misleading. US citizens expect exemplary work and care to be put into the protection of our environments and communities, and this Draft EIS is simply not it. It does not address, oversimplifies, or downplays many issues that are downright concerning. This ecosystem contains many endangered species that are in need of recovery, however the activities of the U.S. military threaten them instead. To misrepresent these threats could be a devastating mistake. The	Thank you for your comment. The length of the document is due to the complexity of some of issues involved and the requirement for the Action Proponents to take a hard look, using the best available science. To make the document more readable, much of the background information and scientific details have been moved into appendices, still available for those interested. The remaining main body of the EIS/OEIS, less tables and figures, is 300 pages in length. The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might

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	misrepresentations and misinformation in this statement could potentially lead to an unnecessary expansion of HCTT activities that have far more harm than they do benefit. Please put better effort into protecting U.S. citizens from both environmental destruction and cultural harm.	attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings. While some activities are new or increasing, other activities are decreasing or ceasing. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects on marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in

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		Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Anon-21	The United States Navy inacting this project will have damaging and unforseen effects on the ecosystem of that area, weakening an already weak ecosystem, and it needs to be protected. The agenda of the Navy should be put aside for the sake of the people and the endangered animals in this area.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-22	The U.S. military continues to put Hawai'i in danger and threat of war, pollutes our water and our land, and is consistently putting indigenous people at high risk of sexual violence while obstructing their rights as native Hawaiians by restricting our access to our ancestral lands. We will organize and kick you off our aina. You don't belong here and you never have.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-23	I strongly oppose the Navy's proposed increase of operations in the waters near Hawaii. This will have a negative impact of the environmental health of the marine wildlife, coral reef health, and cultural practices of the indigenous residents of Hawaii. This will not only have a massive impact on the quality of the ocean where these operations take place, but will also leave lasting damage that may be Irriverable	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-24	protect their moana	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-25	It is not right for the military to be contaminating our island over & over again especially an island we're may visitors come to we have families here	Thank you for your comment.

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	who deserve the best this island can provide. What we give should be given back in return.	
Anon-26	Protect Earth and Nature.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-27	Why are you risking the lives of marine life and the livelihoods of residents to increase military activity on our islands. Hasn't the military done enough damage to our islands without accountability or cooperation with the people who's lives depend on the ocean and the land.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-28	The US military expansion into Hawaii will have a catastrophic impact on the nearby wildlife. Like for instance, the destruction of natural habitats. Or the large greenhouse gas emissions being emitted due to the overconsumption of fuel by vehicles and operations. This is all to say that the US shouldn't expand into Hawaiian land.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-29	If you care about people receiving clean drinking water you will stop this!	The Proposed Action does not occur on land nor above the aquifer and would therefore not affect drinking water.
Anon-30	Natives deserve clean air and drinkable water as a human right.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-31	Please see attached	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-32	These increases in activity will harm the wildlife that is essential to the community. It will cause devastation in many areas.	While some activities are new or increasing, other activities are decreasing or ceasing. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects on marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in

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Anon-33	Based on the apology law of 1993, the only entity that can determine use of Hawaiian Land or Hawaiian waters, are the Hawaiian People. Public Law 103-150, informally known as the Apology Resolution, is a Joint Resolution of the U.S. Congress adopted in 1993 that "acknowledges that the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii occurred with the active participation of agents and citizens of the United States and further acknowledges that the Native Hawaiian people never directly relinquished to the United States their claims to their inherent sovereignty as a people over their national lands, either through the Kingdom of Hawaii or through a plebiscite or referendum" (U.S. Public Law 103-150 (107 Stat. 1510)).	The Action Proponents understand the significance of Public Law 103-150, known as the "Apology Resolution," in which the U.S. Congress acknowledged the 1893 overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii and expressed regret to Native Hawaiians. While the resolution is a profound acknowledgment of past events, it does not alter the current legal status of Hawaii as a state or the military's obligation to protect the United States. Consequently, the military's activities in Hawaii are conducted in compliance with applicable U.S. laws and agreements.
Anon-34	I oppose	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-35	Hawaiian waters are not military training grounds. They are homes for precious and rare varieties of wildlife, as well as important cultural aspects of native Hawaiian culture. I strongly believe that increasing military activity there will be detrimental to the people and animals of Hawai'i.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-36	"Although individual marine mammals would be affected, no adverse effects to marine mammal populations are anticipated" (page ES-11). Individuals comprise populations; the latter does not exist without enough of the	The proposed activities would not result in long-term population-level impact on affected species. Based on best available science, the Navy

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	former. Considering the relatively slow maturation and low birth rates of many marine mammal species, combined with the increasing number of threats they face, even a seemingly small loss of life can have devastating consequences on overall population health.	concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Anon-37	"If activities were to occur in areas where subsistence fishing takes place, closures would be temporary (lasting until the activity is complete). Communities would not be disproportionately affected by changes to accessibility of ocean areas when compared to others who fish in the Study Area" (page ES-16). Seeing as the duration of training activities are variable, the amount of time the Navy requires subsistence fisherfolk: to vacate an area may indeed cause serious issues socioeconomically. In addition, any Navy activities that involve potentially harmful chemicals, heavy metals, changes in fish populations, or environmental degradation will certainly impact subsistence fishing communities. Any claim otherwise is a flippant disregard for the wellbeing of these communities.	As stated in Section 3.11.3.2.1 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, "Subsistence fishing typically occurs from the shore (e.g., pierside) or from small vessels within 3 NM or closer to shore. Military readiness activities, especially those that involving explosives or expended materials, generally occur farther from shore (beyond 12 NM) in waters where subsistence fishing typically does not occur." Also in this same section, specific subsistence fishing areas are discussed.

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	The claim that environmental justice actions will not be impacted by increased military activity is highly inaccurate. No individuals or organizations who take environmental justice seriously will concede that increasing military activity, at the expense of marine health, is worth the risk.	Temporary closing of areas within the Study Area for security and safety would not limit public access to surrounding areas. Areas that would be temporarily closed are re-opened at the completion of the activity. Analysis of other concerns expressed in the comment can be found in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Recent Presidential Executive Orders directed the removal of environmental justice analysis in NEPA documents, so that analysis is not included in the Final EIS/OEIS.
Anon-38	Especially worrying is the explicit request on the Navy's end to be given authorization to "take marine mammals" in order to achieve their goals (page ES-I). The term "take" is here understood to mean the incidental killing of marine mammals, such as kohola (humpback whales), nai'a (dolphins), or 'ilioholoikauaua (monk seals). The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) prohibits the "take" of marine mammals, with few exceptions. I strongly urge the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to not, under any circumstance, permit the US Navy or other affiliated military branches to be given permission to incidentally kill, harm, or otherwise disrupt marine mammals through training activities. Likewise, I urge that the Navy and other military branches not be permitted any increase in the amount of take they might already be granted. Our marine mammals are already suffering from countless threats, including existing military activity, warming seas, and increased pollution. This harsh reality is acknowledged on page ES-18, though written in such a way as to inaccurately minimize the responsibility of the US military. In conclusion, I urge the US Navy, affiliated military branches, and numerous oceanic organizations to recognize that there is no reason to expand or increase activities within the existing HCTT Study Area. The US Navy has more than enough space to do what they claim is necessary in the interest of so-called "military preparedness." The No Action Alternative is the only reasonable solution towards ensuring that our oceans remain safe and healthy for current and future generations. I care about the cultural and	The term “take,” as defined in Section 3 (16 U.S.C. section 1362 (13)) of the MMPA, means “to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.” “Harassment” was further defined in the 1994 amendments to the MMPA, which provided two levels of harassment: Level A (potential injury) and Level B (potential behavioral disturbance).The vast majority of Navy takes of marine mammals are relatively minor and temporary Level B behavioral reactions that do not have measurable long-term or permanent impacts on stocks or species. The estimated number of takes, although large, is conservative; and more importantly, it does not equate to long-term population-level impact on affected species. Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals

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	ecological legacies of this expansive region, and the damage already being done by the US military results in significant harm. Please do what is right and choose the No Action Alternative. Mahalo Piha, Keola Kai Kawaihae, HI	exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Anon-39	Hello, Please do not expand naval operations off the cost of Hawaii. Naval vessels would disrupt the waters and ecosystem of the area, and bring increased pollution that could harm endangered species. The tribal elders were not consulted regarding how increased activity would also endanger native ways of life. Military Readiness is not a valid reason to claim ownership over ocean space, ocean space that has historically belonged to the indigenous people there, who have stewarded the waters and ecosystem for millenia. Hawaii was forcefully colonized by America, please do not double down on that shameful history by expanding naval presence there. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment. The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800) . The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project.
Anon-40	The claim that Cultural Resources will be avoided (page ES-15) fails to consider the reality that culturally important structures or areas often remain unknown to the military prior to engaging in readiness exercises. Resulting damages are generally deemed "accidental," yet proper steps towards mitigating such damages are, in truth, rarely taken.	Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on cultural resources listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The regulations implementing Section 106 (36 C.F.R.

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		Part 800) specify a consultation process to assist in satisfying this requirement. Consultation with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Offices, the Advisory Council, Native American tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations, the public, and state and federal agencies is required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Scoping letters for this EIS/OEIS were sent to appropriate State Historic Preservation Offices and federally-recognized Native American tribes. The Navy will continue to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act. See Section 3.10 for more information, and see Appendix J (Agency Correspondence) for the Action Proponents compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act.
Anon-41	This would destroy the marine life of Hawaii even further and further take away from native Hawaiian cultural practices. This would also destroy Hawaii's economy.	The proposed activities would not destroy marine life or Hawaii's economy. While some activities are new or increasing, other activities are decreasing or ceasing. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects on marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS.

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		Specifically, please see Section 3.10 for the analysis of potential effects on cultural resources; and see Section 3.11, which concludes that impacts to the economy would be less than significant. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Anon-42	We literally just need to leave the Hawaiians alone, the damage you've done down there is practically beyond repair. Can anyone just find a shred of humanity and stop trying to kill us all?	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-43	Don't destroy our waters!!	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-44	Protect our oceans stop killing our marine life with your bad habits.	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-45	Don't kill the marine life in our waters	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-46	The No Action Alternative is Misrepresented Under § 1502.14, the alternatives section is the heart of the EIS. The No Action Alternative, where the Navy stops military testing and training activities in our waters, is described in the document as resulting in conditions "unchanged or slightly improved from baseline conditions." This is a gross misrepresentation. The No Action Alternative should be evaluated based on the BENEFITS of stopping harmful military activities, not just the absence of harm. Currently the NAVY is running 7,432 activities per year under this EIS in Hawaii alone, according to tables G-16 and G-17.	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with military readiness activities under Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would remain unchanged or improve slightly.

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Anon-47	Don't ruin our ocean. Don't kill the marine life. The Earth needs our care	While some activities are new or increasing, other activities are decreasing or ceasing. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects on marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Anon-48	The No Action Alternative is Misrepresented Under § 1502.14, the alternatives section is the heart of the EIS. The No Action Alternative, where the Navy stops military testing and training activities in our waters, is described in the document as resulting in conditions "unchanged or slightly improved from baseline conditions." This is a gross misrepresentation. The No Action Alternative should be evaluated based on the BENEFITS of	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with military readiness activities under Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the

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	stopping harmful military activities, not just the absence of harm. Currently the NAVY is running 7,432 activities per year under this EIS in Hawaii alone, according to tables G-16 and G-17.	impacts of the No Action Alternative would remain unchanged or improve slightly.
Anon-49	First and foremost, the Hawaiian Kingdom is being illegally occupied by the United States Military and the United States of America Corporation. THE UNITED STATES MILITARY HAVE NO JURISDICTION IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS!!! Public Law 103-150, or the Apology Law by President Bill Clinton. Where is the Treaty of Annexation between the United States and Queen Lili'uokalani? A Joint Resolution CANNOT acquire another Nation State. The United States recognized the Kingdom of Hawaii's independence in 1826, a treaty was signed with the kingdom on December 23, 1826, establishing diplomatic relations and trade agreements. On January 17, 1893 Queen Lili'uokalani was ILLEGALLY imprisoned by American Businessmen, or as President Grover Cleveland called them "insurgents". So please explain under whose authority gives the United States permission to continue to contaminate, desecrate, bomb, pollute, and illegally occupy the Hawaiian Kingdom? Because according to International Law, the United States and its military has NO JURISDICTION IN THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM. We may no longer have a Monarch, but the people OF Hawai'i didn't want the United States in 1893 and have been trying to have you all deoccupy the Hawaiian Kingdom ever since. The Ku'e Petition had over 21,000 signatures opposing annexation and we still stand by those signatures of our kupuna (ancestors). There was never a Treaty of Annexation, therefore, the United States and its military NEED TO CLEAN OUR LANDS AND DEOCCUPY THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM IMMEDIATELY!!! "Despite the unprecedented prolonged nature of the illegal occupation of the Hawaiian Kingdom by the United States, the Hawaiian State, as a subject of international law, is afforded all the protection that international law provides. "Belligerent occupation," concludes Judge Crawford in his book The Creation of States in International Law (2nd ed., 2006), "does not affect the continuity of the State, even where there exists no government claiming to represent	We appreciate and acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the historical context of the Hawaiian Islands and the military's presence. The U.S. military is committed to conducting its activities in Hawaii with the utmost respect for the local communities, cultures, and histories that define these islands. The HCTT Study Area plays a crucial role in ensuring national security and supporting global peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. Training and testing activities are designed to maintain readiness and effectiveness, which are essential for responding to various challenges and threats in the Pacific. In planning and performing these activities, we strictly follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes conducting comprehensive environmental assessments and impact statements, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These processes involve thorough evaluations of potential effects on the environment, cultural sites, and local communities. Public participation is a cornerstone of NEPA, and we actively seek and consider input from all stakeholders to inform our decisions. We understand the significance of Public Law 103-150, known as the "Apology Resolution," in which the U.S. Congress acknowledged the 1893 overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii and expressed regret to Native Hawaiians. While the resolution is a profound acknowledgment of past events, it does not alter the current legal status of Hawaii as a

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	the occupied State (p. 34).” Without a treaty of peace, the laws of war and neutrality would continue to apply." (see attachment) NO MEANS NO!!!	state or the military’s obligation to protect the United States. Consequently, the military's activities in Hawaii are conducted in compliance with applicable U.S. laws and agreements. We remain dedicated to transparent and respectful engagement with the Hawaiian community. Our goal is to balance the imperative of national security with a deep respect for the rich cultural heritage and environmental uniqueness of Hawaii. We value the perspectives shared and will continue to consider them as we move forward.
Anon-50	To Whom It May Concern, I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, as well as in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana (ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities. The military doesn't need to continuously harm the environment for experiments and games we have computers that can run simulations instead of wasting money and resources.	Please see Chapter 1 (Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action) of the EIS/OEIS for an explanation of why the military is required to conduct training and testing. With the mitigation measures in place during military readiness activities, effects on the environment are not significant.
Anon-51	Military training and underwater bombing activities conflict with key United States environmental laws designed to protect marine ecosystems and endangered species. The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) prohibits actions that harass, harm, or kill marine mammals, including whales and dolphins, which are highly sensitive to sonar and explosive activities. Similarly, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) protects species such as the Hawaiian monk seal, blue whale, and leatherback sea turtle, which inhabit the waters of California and Hawaii and are at risk from these practices. Additionally, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires thorough environmental reviews to assess the impact of federal activities, including military operations, on marine habitats. Studies show that the intense noise from sonar and explosives disrupts essential behaviors like feeding, migration, and breeding, leading to stranding events and population	The Navy continues to conduct its proposed activities in compliance with all laws and regulations, including NEPA, the MMPA, the ESA, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and the Clean Water Act.

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	declines. These activities also threaten critical habitats, including California's kelp forests and Hawaii's coral reefs, which are vital ecosystems protected under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Clean Water Act. Given these legal protections and the growing evidence of harm to marine biodiversity, military training and bombing in these regions violate the intent of these laws and should be curtailed to preserve ocean health and endangered species. Malama Moana	
Anon-52	This is BD	Thank you for your comment.
Anon-53	I am firmly opposed to the increased activity. Our oceans deserve to be protected. Listen to Hawaiians.	Thank you for your comment.
Aoki-Daquip, A	Time and time again, the military stationed on our islands have not shown enough respect or responsibility in their actions towards the land. Red hill was just one of many instances of neglect leading to harm in multiple communities. Our peoples and communities in Hawaii have told our government, our legislation and our governor many times, yet we barely have our voices herd. Now you want to encourage the activity that threatens not only our peoples and communities, but the land and sea we live on? Hurting our flora and fauna, polluting our Aina, and then claiming it helps the country. We want to keep in peaceful in Hawaii, but with elevated activities from the military, there is less peace and more unrest. Take care of your responsibilities, and we take care of ours.	Thank you for your comment.
Ari-01	Please stop the increase in military activity in these sacred waters. With more activity comes the endangerment of wildlife and ocean contamination. Protect our oceans and cease the increase.	Thank you for your comment.
Ari-02	The military has no right polluting Hawaiis waters and damaging our environment. It'll effect the people and animals in a negative way.	Thank you for your comment.
Arnold, M	The military has destroyed so much of Hawaii and her pristine waters, beautiful animal life and the land. Leaving toxic materials for generations to come. Not worrying about the mess and the impact you have left on the environment and the community. Technically the US Military, is still ILLEGALLY Occupying Hawaii's land and resources, when the power should be in the Hawaiians hands. Stop military activities on Hawaiian lands and the	Thank you for your comment.

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	oceans ! The environmental impact has already been devastating . Do Not up the military activities at all. Demilitarize Hawaii !	
Arriola, I	In order to protect the endangered birds, Hawaiian monk seals, humpback whales, and green sea turtles in the HCTT area, the no action alternative should be the only alternative in the process. The cumulative impact of every single U.S. military EIS/OEIS should be taken into account in the Pacific region as multiple destructive and ongoing EIS's and Draft EIS's happen in quick succession or are overlapping. The native species that occupy the entire Pacific Ocean must be cumulatively studied in these multiple EIS's. From the Marianas to Hawai'i, we demand no action alternative.	The No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose and need of the Proposed Action (see Section 1.5).
Ashlyn	We need to protect our marine life. This would destroy it. This cannot happen. We have already caused so much damage to our earth.	The proposed activities would not destroy marine life. While some activities are new or increasing, other activities are decreasing or ceasing. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects on marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Specifically, please see Section 3.10 for the analysis of potential effects on cultural resources; and see Section 3.11, which concludes that impacts to the economy would be less than significant. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-

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Assante-Choffel, S	Protect the environment. Stop the damage to the pacific ecosystem.	Thank you for your comment.
Aster	Don't screw with the ocean	Thank you for your comment.
Atcheson, P	Decision makers- if you TRULY are working to improve and protect all, you must consider the aina (environment) you're working in. Abuse and overuse for your goals are not collateral damage for the majority. Your actions will be dealt with by your children and their future generations. Don't turn the future against yourself now.	Thank you for your comment.
Auger, H	Understanding the importance and fragility of ecosystems and the balance of natural life to human progressions is delicate and often difficult to find. However, in regards to this project specifically, it is a blatant overreach of human and militant destruction in some of Earths most precious areas that are sacred and dire for the indigenous people of Hawaii. People over profit, no matter what. There is no plausible justification to infringe on these people and their waters, and the answer to "should we?" Is NO.	Thank you for your comment.
Aurora		See Form Letter response
Aust, R-01	Good morning, I hope this email finds you well. I am trying to submit a public comment for the Hawai'i-California Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) before the February 11th, 2025 deadline, however the website is not allowing submissions. Since i am still within the designated timeframe to provide feedback, I would appreciate immediate assistance in resolving this issue.	Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or

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	Attached below is my testimony, which I am submitting directly via email to ensure it is received. Please confirm receipt and let me know how this issue will be addressed. To whom it may concern, I, Rebecca Aust, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, oppose naval expansion of sea training and testing activities in the waters of Hawai'i for several reasons. This expansion will harm the delicate and unique aquatic Hawai'ian ecosystem and environment and cause untold risk to vulnerable coral, animal, and other sea life. The expansion will also harm Hawai'I from an economic and food supply standpoint as the waters around the islands are vital to maintaining economic stability (tourism, etc.) and food security. Finally, this expansion will have a significant negative cultural impact on native Hawai'ian populations, present and future. Please refrain from expanding naval training and testing activities in the waters of Hawai'i. Thank you, Dr. Rebecca Aust	behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Aust, R-02	To whom it may concern, I oppose expansion of Naval activities into vulnerable Hawaiian ocean ecosystems due to the fragility and uniqueness of these environments, the importance of this environment for cultural reasons and preserving these environments for future indigenous Hawaiian populations, the strong economical and food dependence Hawaii has on the ocean as an island state, and the impact on diverse and unique coral reefs and animal life. Please forego expansion of naval activity into Hawaiian waters. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Dr. Rebecca Aust	Thank you for your comment.
Avendando, A	This project is extremely harmful towards the life in Hawaii not only the marine life but the indigenous life there too.	The proposed activities would not harm marine life or life in Hawaii. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects on marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our

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		consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Specifically, please see Section 3.10 for the analysis of potential effects on cultural resources; and see Section 3.11, which concludes that impacts on the economy would be less than significant. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Avery	Don't do this. What are you thinking? How does DESTROYING Marine wild life benefit anyone? And in Hawaii of all places? It's already been destroyed by colonialism and you're making it worse. Stop this.	Thank you for your comment.
Aviles, R	Save Hawaii save our culture	Thank you for your comment.
B		
B, Makana	Protecting and maintaining our oceans is more important than war games. Our children should be allowed to see our land and waters in their full glory. We must take action to ensure our marine flora and fauna are not being damaged or killed by the military exercises.	Thank you for your comment.
Barnes, A	Andrea Barnes testified as follows:	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please see Section 3.7.3.2 for a discussion on acoustic impacts on marine species. Please also

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	MS. BARNES: Good evening. My name is Andrea Barnes. I'm a former science teacher. I have not read the Draft EIS. I did appreciate the comments made by the Earthjustice lawyer. But what my comments would be about are this gloss of what is submitted (indiscernible). The vessel strike potentially remains low, according to the Navy -- MALE SPEAKER: Ma'am, you can speak louder? MS. BARNES: I'm wondering why they're asking to increase that number of fatal whale strikes from three to five if the strike potential is low, and when they hit that number during the sea or RIMPAC exercise, do they stop and everybody retreats and goes home? And how is it not possible for a vessel to be dragging a whale into port and not know that it's there? My second comment has to do with the temporary behavior changes during the exercises. How do they know about these? Have they studied it? They say they've done extensive studies. I'm a scuba diver, and I know that when I'm underwater, I get distracted by noises occurring from fighter jets and boats and so on. I -- for me, it's distracting, but I can imagine if you're a marine animal, it would be a potential loss of a food source, unable to hear and answer a call or echo or response. It may disrupt mating or nursing. And they also mention a -- creating a safety zone around the explosive area. I'm wondering how do they secure that area? Do they chase the animals out? How do they locate them? Do they have to use sonar to find them? These are the kind of questions that I have. And I hope they are addressed in the EIS. And if not, I think it's a big failure to address the details that I and other people have been talking about. Thank you. MS. TURNER: Thank you.	see Section 3.7.3.5.1 and Section I.4 in Appendix I in the Final EIS/OEIS for an explanation of how historical data is used to calculate the Navy and Coast Guard's take request with the National Marine Fishers Service (NMFS). Per the second comment, as discussed in the EIS/OEIS, the Navy used the best available data, science, and information to support its analysis of potential impacts, including the use of Navy sponsored research and monitoring data collected over the past 30 years. Section D.4 in Appendix D and Section F.7 in Appendix F of the EIS/OEIS provide summaries of potential reactions of marine mammals to Navy activities and the stressors involved in those activities (including behavioral responses to passing vessels and aircraft). The Action Proponents implement activity-based, temporal, and geographic mitigations to minimize the potential effects of the Proposed Action on marine mammals. Regarding the discovery of a killed or stranded marine mammal during Navy exercises, in 2009, the Navy and NMFS developed stranding protocols and plans for each range complex that provide guidelines for response to strandings during Navy major training exercises (MTEs). The Action Proponents do not chase animals out of mitigation zones when conducting military readiness activities involving acoustic stressors e.g., sonar), explosives, and non-explosive ordnance. Additionally, sonar is not used to locate animals. Trained lookouts employ standard visual search techniques using naked eye scanning, potentially in combination with the use of handheld binoculars, high-powered “big-eye” binoculars mounted on the

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		deck of a surface ship (depending on the event and observation platform), and night search techniques (e.g., the use of night vision devices) if events occur after sunset or prior to sunrise to locate animals. The mitigation measures described below will be implemented (as appropriate) in response to an applicable sighting within or entering the relevant mitigation zone for acoustic stressors (e.g., sonar), explosives, and non-explosive practice munitions: • Prior to the initial start of an event (or stressor use), the Action Proponents will: (1) relocate the event to a location where applicable species are not observed, or (2) delay the initial start of the event (or stressor use) until one of the "Mitigation Zone All-Clear Conditions" has been met. • During the event (i.e., during use of a stressor), the Action Proponents will (until one of the Mitigation Zone All-Clear Conditions has been met): (1) power down or shut down active acoustic transmissions, (2) cease air gun use, (3) cease pile driving or pile removal, (4) cease weapon firing or ordnance deployment, or (5) cease explosive detonations or fuse initiations. Mitigation Zone All-Clear Conditions indicate that the mitigation zone is determined to be free of applicable species. The conditions include: (1) a Lookout observes the applicable species exiting the mitigation zone, (2) a Lookout determines the applicable species has exited the mitigation zone based on its observed course and speed relative to the mitigation zone, (3) a Lookout affirms the mitigation zone has been clear from additional sightings for an applicable "wait period," or (4) for mobile events, the stressor has transited a distance

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		equal to double the mitigation zone size beyond the location of the last sighting. Regarding the other questions in this comment, please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS for a discussion of monitoring and mitigation measures.
Baron-Moore, D	I'm writing in opposition to the proposed expansion of US navy activities in and around the sacred islands Hawaii. This precious marine ecosystem bears devastating impacts already from current operations and the proposed changes put the place's marine life at risk. Please recommend that the proposed changes not be approved in order to protect the ecosystem and life ways of native Hawaiians.	Thank you for your comment.
Bassette, S	The destruction of more nature must be stopped.	Thank you for your comment.
Batista, J	I oppose the Navy from increasing it's occupation and desecration of Native Hawaiian lands.	Thank you for your comment.
Behrends, B	Please protect the beautiful state of Hawaii by limiting the presence of the Navy. Their operations are harmful to the native people's practices and the coral reefs/marine ecosystems that are so important	Thank you for your comment.
Bell, Ja	We need to protect the marine life and keep the waters from polluting.	Thank you for your comment.
Bell, Je	Please limit military activity in native Hawaiian waters. Increasing the military base and activity will only lead to further damage to marine life and island pollution.	There is only limited activity within 3 NM of land (state waters). The proposed activities occur in or over the ocean and would not contribute to pollution on land.
Bell, S	As a California native, and lover of Hawaii and the ocean, I implore you to stop the military from expanding their operations. I have been swimming and snorkeling in the ocean for decades now, and I have already seen the devastating consequences of climate change and current military operations in the waters that surround Hawaii and California. It's absolutely heart breaking to see that the once colorful, lively, and diverse ocean in this area has already lost so much diverse aquatic life, including the death of much of the corals that provide life under the sea with needed food, shelter, protection, and more. Just over the last 10 years, the biodiversity of these waters has suffered immensely, and if these military operations are allowed	Thank you for your comment.

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	to expand, I fear we will suffer a total loss of all corals in this area, which would mean certain death for the animals that live there. Humans also depend on healthy oceans for oxygen and to alleviate some of the effects of climate change. Please, for the sake of our oceans and the future of humanity, don't let the military expand their operations here.	
Benhawi, J	As a seafood company responsible for the safety of our customers, we vehemently oppose any expansion of US Navy operations close to shore and fisheries. We have a duty to protect the ocean, it is a vital human resource.	Thank you for your comment.
Benoist, S	I grew up in Hawaii and practiced Hawaiian religious practices. The ocean and the wildlife who call the ocean home are so important. The devastating risk of harm to the Kai by increasing naval presence is simply not okay. Please protect our environment and native peoples.	Thank you for your comment.
Bergquist, M	While the attached piece was authored by one, their voice stands for all of us that are submitting this as well. We must do more to protect our oceans.	Thank you for your comment.
Berlin, J	I oppose the expansion of military activities and in Hawaiian waters. Maybe work on something that helps the Hawaiian people instead. Thank you, Julia Berlin	Thank you for your comment.
Berrios, D	I can't understand why the military is continuing to hold hostage to small islands like Hawaii. The military has always talked about protecting its people and yet, The overly proud and egotistical maneuvers that the military has exhausted is putting our planet in danger. The military presence can still be filled by the remnants of pollution on the island of my own people in Puerto Rico. We still see remnants on the island of vieques. I don't know what is going on in this country, but as a daughter of a US veteran, I no longer feel safe here. If all else, I hope that speaks volumes to what you are doing. The military is supposed to help our country be safe and instead is harming this ecosystem with war and unnecessary testing which in turn is harming our planet. Please do better and tone it down in Hawaii so that the rest of the planet can live in peace.	Thank you for your comment.
Bianca-01	It's wrong that we are even testing in Hawaii to begin with. The damage this expansion could do to the locals could be devastating to the local wildlife and	Thank you for your comment. The military services have been conducting training and testing activities

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	the people who live there. I understand that the kind of people who want to test bombs on a beautiful island probably don't care about its impact however, if I may speak a language they will understand, the damage this military expansion would do will impact the tourism industry which is worth billions. People aren't going to want to fly to Hawaii to see polluted waters and dead sea turtles everywhere. Even excluding that, ethically this is the wrong move. What kind of person would want to turn an island paradise flourishing with life into a bleak grey military complex surrounded by dead plants and black waters.	within the HCTT Study Area for decades. During training and testing activities, activity-based, temporal, and geographic mitigations are implemented to minimize the potential effects of the Proposed Action on the environment. Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS for more detail on the specific mitigations the Action Proponents would implement.
Bianca-02	I do appreciate the US Navy *[expletive deleted]* with my students water supply, oceans and loving island. My students shouldn't have to live like this or have to move from their home because the US Navy wants to play with military toys on Oahu and harm the natural environment of Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Bilbo, L	Next, Lana Bilbo. MS. BILBO:· (Hawaiian chanting.) I'm representing myself today as an individual, as well as Kauai for Palestinian.· I have several comments:· One, this document is substantially over a 300-page limit is effectively eligible for a layperson to read.· There are three books over there, plus another smaller one; nobody can read that.· You have to both be trained to read that and have, like, another 40 hours a week to get through the entire thing given the period that you've allotted for this timed interview, which leads me to my second issue. There is insufficient public notice and public time for review yet again.· If you are going to have informational meetings, then you should have time for the public to review these things after you have shared your monopoly with us. Third, it is inappropriate for you guys to break the ocean and the land-based activities into things -- into separate EISs.· This is a trick to negate the cumulative effects of the Navy and the military activities, and they're only to be considered together cumulatively.· You're just making them look so small that they don't exist; it's not true. Next, this violates the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom as a nation.· The existence of which has been recognized by international courts.· You cannot operate the military here without a treaty.· The Hawaiian Kingdom is still here.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The length of the document is due to the complexity of some of issues involved and the requirement for the Action Proponents to take a hard look, using the best available science. To make the document more readable, much of the background information and scientific details have been moved into appendices, still available for those interested. The remaining main body of the EIS/OEIS, less tables and figures, is 300 pages in length. Public involvement is a fundamental aspect of the National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 processes. In an effort to improve and strengthen the EIS/OEIS, the military services welcomed and appreciated the public's participation during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. The comment period (December13, 2024, to February 11, 2025) included an additional 15 calendar days (from the required 45 days to 60 days) to allow the public

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	Next is, it has a disproportionate impact on Native Hawaiian communities, which I'm not a part of, but I mention because I know you guys say that heavily in your commenting; it disproportionately impacts our native communities and our minority communities.· And so I want you to know that it specifically does. You are also not allowed to dismiss impacts as negligible because they're short term, which, again, (indiscernible) I haven't had a chance to do it yet in the EIS (indiscernible), and I heard it in your presentation, and you consistently dismiss impacts as negligible because they are short term and that is illegal under the laws of EISs.· You cannot do that. You cannot negate them in that way. I appreciate that you gave us the opportunity to testify as a whole in front of each other instead of breaking us up and putting us in our weird little side windows like you previously did.· That's my testimony. MS. TURNER:· Thank you for your comment.	more time to review and comment during the holiday season. The Proposed Action is focused on at-sea military readiness activities and separate documents have been prepared to fulfil the military services' requirements under NEPA for land-based activities. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, the cumulative effects analysis does incorporate other documents that included both at-sea and land-based activities. The Navy appreciates and acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the historical context of the Hawaiian Islands and the military's presence. The U.S. military is committed to conducting its activities in Hawaii with the utmost respect for the local communities, cultures, and histories that define these islands. The analysis conclusions are based on a number of factors, depending on the resource being analyzed. No determinations are based simply on the time frame of effects, but take into consideration the magnitude and possibly others as well.
Binstock, U	The military has been destroying this beautiful aina for years now they want to do more damage this is crazy please do not let this happen	Thank you for your comment.
Bird, K	Please protect Hawaii, its marine life, its waters, and its culture. Do not let the Navy interfere.	Thank you for your comment.
Blackburn, M	Hello, we citizens of hawaii and california do not want any expanded or increased military testing activities in the beautiful colonized islands of hawaii and the myriad endangered species that would be impacted. environmental impact reports need to be conducted. We want our representatives to prioritize existing natural and human lives and lands overexpanded military anything. Please be on the side of life not war. thank you,	Thank you for your comment.

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	michelle blackburn california	
Blake, X	Can we PLEASE just allow Native Hawaiians to handle certain affairs? Indigenous populations are far more knowledgeable than us on the mainland aboit maintaining the Hawaiian ecosystem fir the benefit of wildlife AND cultural practices. The U.S. has already tortured Hawaii enough. Can you just let this project go?	Thank you for your comment.
Blankenship, E	I strongly oppose the dumping of SpaceX rocket debris in the sacrifice zone surrounding Papahānaumokuākea, the Pacific Islands Heritage Monument, and the Main Hawaiian Islands. This area holds immense cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, and it is unacceptable to treat it as a dumping ground for corporate space waste. I demand that the FAA conduct a full and detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which they have illegally refused to do. The failure to carry out this necessary review disregards legal obligations and the protection of our marine environment, endangered species, and Indigenous cultural sites. Additionally, I call for full public consultations in Hawai'i and with Hawaiian institutions, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), which is a co-trustee and manager of Papahānaumokuākea. Decisions impacting Hawai'i's sacred spaces should not be made without the direct involvement of Native Hawaiian organizations and the people who have protected these lands and waters for generations. Hawai'i is not a dumping ground. The FAA must uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities. Stop this reckless proposal now	Activities related to SpaceX are not part of this Proposed Action. The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
Blevins, G	The U.S. has no right to be here in Hawaii, I say no to the continuation of the presence which has caused reckless harm to the ocean thus far	Thank you for your comment.
Bockman, B-01	BOGART BOCKMAN:· Hi there, everybody.· How are you doing?· I recognize a couple of people there. So this is what I understand to be a big development area for a lot of drones, underwater -- unmanned underwater vehicles.· And given that there are some thoughts on maybe using a variety of new tactics with a unmanned	Thank you for your comment.

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	underwater vehicles, for example, some countries that may not be able to field a full nuclear capable submarine might be able to field a nuclear capable underwater vehicle. So thinking about, like, how that might affect the mutually assured destruction doctrine, for example, a robot doesn't really get that homesick, so they might not be too worried about if there's not a place to go back to, and robots are not famously known for having second thoughts. Another thing to think about is freedom of navigation, and I know this may not be as big a group of people doing things, but I was on a boat, we were coming back from a Transpac race a couple of years ago, and you know, we were going in, and the Navy declared some sort of like, hey, we're trying to fire a missile at San Clemente, and we were coming in from Hawaii on a 47-foot boat, so you know, what, are you going to wait out there for a couple more days?· A little bit limited on resources for certain things.· So keeping that in mind, you know, what people need to do for, you know, their work out there and how civilian mariners might be affected. And then also involvement of, you know, civilian mariners in development, a variety of things.I know there are certain nations around the globe that do involve their civilian mariners in UUV development. For example, China has like a bounty program if they find American UUVs out there, and/or, you know, maybe we could involve something like that to help American development, you know, make sure things aren't easy to spot or emit, you know, too much signal, so that they're easily detectable or whatnot. And that's all I really have to say.· So thank you very much. MODERATOR TURNER:· Thank you, Mr. Bockman, for your comments.	
Bockman, B-02	Communicate with the B.O.E.M about wind turbines in mitigations areas. (Central California (illegible) mitigation area) Look at both study effects	Wind turbines are not part of this Proposed Action.
Bogacz, L	The US Navy arguably have more than enough control over waters surrounding our Aina. The fact that they are asking for more is absolutely unacceptable and shall impact not only the indigenous sealife within our waters but also the fishing economy (a large industry within Hawaii) as well if they are able to conduct further activity.	Thank you for your comment.

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Brady, S	I am a Texan. I've never been to Hawaii, but I would like to go some day. Please do not allow anyone to dump hazardous waste into our oceans or frivolously disturb the waters. In Texas we have an anti-littering campaign that has a slogan of, " don't mess with Texas" please don't mess with Hawaii by destroying its beautiful marine ecosystems. Thank you	The Navy does not dump hazardous waste into the ocean. The Navy takes its environmental stewardship responsibilities seriously while preparing for its mission. As a steward of the environment, the Navy avoids, minimizes, or mitigates potential effects on the environment from its activities to the maximum extent practicable. Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process. Your comment is part of the official project record.
Brandl, I	Yall been had your priorities skewed. Leave what's left alone already, damn.	Thank you for your comment.
Brianna	Please do not move forward with your initiative to increase military presence in the waters of Hawaii. This would devastate the marine life and their ecosystem detrimentally. This action is inhumane.	Thank you for your comment.
Bridges, T	The military has been shoved up hawaii's butt for too long.!We cannot continue to do this to this states people.	Thank you for your comment.
Brooks, R	Are you not doing enough damage already to the environment? To the indigenous peoples of Hawaii? Have you not taken enough? When is enough enough?	Thank you for your comment.
Brown, L	Aloha Mai kākou! My name is La from the island of Oahu. The island that has made headlines new regarding our aquifers that had been contaminated by jet fuel which the Navy was found liable. Nothing was done until it was too late it got into the residential water supply. The Navy has done enough damage to our water. Pearl Harbor still dealing with seepage from the sunken ship which lays at the bottom of the harbor still to this day where oil is seen still lingering in the waters where my mom's family use to get fresh fish, clams, cray fish to name a few of the marine life that my people have survived on for years. When is enough enough and how much more do my people have to suffer. The ocean is a resource for my people and many like us that depend on what the ocean provides us as food. This is selfish and it will soon become years of suffering and loss. Stop!!!	Thank you for your comment.

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B, Steve	The abject ignorance of a policy that harms endangered species, destroys reef structures and upsets Hawaiian cultural practices is nothing short of monstrous. Stop this now. Do better. Be better. Mahalo	Thank you for your comment.
Bunnell, S	I oppose military/navy expansion/bombing/testing in Hawaii due to its devastating effects on the environment.	Thank you for your comment.
Burghardt, C	In reading the documents provided, I would like to ask that the Navy clarify how the use of sonar and explosives/ordinances can be used without affecting the marine life and human life in the area. If an animal or space is hit by the inert object or the blast itself, the amount of impact over the long term cannot be determined. Share the data that demonstrates that these trainings are necessary for the stated objectives. It has not been substantiated that these preparations and the amount of monies used justifies the use vs diplomacy for example. Using Hawaii as base for these operations, understanding the negligence of the Navy thus far at Puuloa and Red Hill (to name two) as well as understanding that justifying the use of this path of war to a people who are currently oppressed due to an Act of War by the US in January of 1893 (and scheduling the meetings during this time) is unacceptable. It continues the lack of respect for the islands and the beings of the Pacific. Lastly, the Navy is funded by tax dollars that I and others pay. The amount of $$, time spent and destruction and desecration is not something to which our dollars should be spent.	Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process. Your comment is part of the official project record. Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, which includes how the Navy mitigates and minimizes the potential effects from military readiness activities involving sonar and explosives on the marine environment. Please see Chapter 1 to better understand why the proposed training and testing is necessary. Please see Chapter 3 for the analysis of effects from the Proposed Action.
Burgos, I	Stop destroying the planet.	Thank you for your comment.
Butts, Z	We are already doing too much damage to the marine life that helps sustain us as humans and not doing nearly enough to help fix the issues we as humans have caused. The last thing we need is the navy increasing their activity. Protect our oceans.	Thank you for your comment.
C		
Cacoulidis, H	Aloha, I write this as a human who lives on Earth, a Hawaiian in the islands, and a citizen of the United States: It's time for a different kind of investment. We've spent untold billions of dollars and millions of lives establishing the US as the #1 global military force, no questions asked. And after all of that…it's still not enough? Well, military might is not the only way to exert influence on the world, nor should it be. Diplomacy is also a thing, and so is good	Thank you for your comment. The Draft EIS/OEIS was completed, please reference Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) for the discussion on the potential environmental effects from the Proposed Action.

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	publicity (isn't recruitment and morale down?) both of which the US could definitely use right now. Now seeing as how the kind of goodwill the US needs right now isn't the kind that can be bought, bribed, or bombed into people, consider: You guys DO realize everyone loves Hawaii, right? The whole world dreams of coming here, and when they do, they come with expectations: Hawaii is where the US gets to show the world how good it is to be a part of America (supposedly), and so far, that's worked in the US's favor. They expect locals to be relaxed and full of aloha, they expect beautiful beaches, ocean life and green mountains, and the feeling that they are truly getting away from it all. (It's hard to be relaxed when you're worried about the Navy increasing its military activity by 50% around your home and poisoning our water, bombing our land, trashing our reefs and harming our marine life.) The US military risks jeopardizing its global reputation every time it increases military activity, and we of all people should know that. You see, unlike the US, we are intimately familiar with the concept of consequences. I fear the US labors under the delusion that since it has never paid any consequences, that they must not exist. In reality, the US's actions have sown plenty of consequences that us indigenous people are left to reap, consequences that COMPOUND when not addressed. (This alone should be enough for the military to complete and EIS; if you won't help us solve problems or stop them, and least let us prepare for them adequately?!) If Hawaii (and our global communal oceans, atmosphere, and planet) were to suffer, the impact on US reputation would be far-reaching and devastating. You would crush the dreams of millions across the globe, incite the anger of many more, and raise suspicions regarding the existence of such a power in their own countries. It could also be the impetus to saving the globe from climate change…which still isn't great for the US. It opens the door to so many things, very few of which are good for US interests abroad. Frankly, you're gonna literally be the world's biggest a$$hole if you ramp up bombing and Elon starts dumping his rocket trash around our waters. Sooner or later, you'll be the ones known for trashing paradise and wiping out a whole people. But that can still change. History will not judge the US kindly at this rate; we are straining diplomatic ties with almost every country as we speak. As the center of the Pacific, the apple of the global eye, would it not be smarter, logical even, to instead invest in the well-being of Hawaii and by extension, its ecosystem? Doing so on a global stage would raise morale;	

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	other countries could point at it and say “The US takes care of its own, and the ocean and environment we all share. They are invested in the long-term well being of our planet.” That kind of goodwill cannot be bought or forced upon others with more military exercises, and might I say again: that the US needs to exercise both. You’ve proven time and again that you have military might down pat, but the diplomatic power is weak. You know what isn’t though? Our knowledge of these oceans and lands and all who live here. The future could truly be limitless through a little cooperation, but that window is closing, and forcing this through with no consideration will slam that window shut. Just do the damn EIS, okay?	
Cadavona, K-01	Kelli Cadavona, followed by Ms. Villatora. MS. CADAVONA:· Aloha.· My name is Kelli Cadavona.· I am a resident of Kauai.· And I'm speaking for myself, not necessarily for an organization, although I am very involved in the Kauai Historical Society.· But speaking on behalf of myself and as a member of the this community, I am opposed to the Navy continuing and pursuing the expansion of training and testing in Hawaii, as well as San Diego. Myself and my community value the protection of our aina and our waters.· The military has never truly shared the same value.· And while the Navy is proud to be a huge sponsor in marine conservation, they do so with our tax dollar.· They do so also because they have to clean up after themselves.· And, unfortunately, our resources come at the cost of military readiness. I am a small part of a larger community that is completely fed up with the militarization of Hawaii, and our tax dollars being gobbled up everywhere.· The 2025 federal budget for our taxes, 45 percent of our tax dollars, our federal tax dollars, will go to the defense budget. And as -- I don't want say as somebody who is the daughter of a veteran, and I have the utmost respect for other veterans, I have no problem with any military members.· And I just want to make sure that people understand, you can be in support of your neighbor who's in the Army.· You can be in support of your family members who felt the need and the duty to serve, and you can also be fully in support of the demilitarization of Hawaii.· Two things can be true.	Thank you for your comment.

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	Sorry.· I lost my place.· I also wanted to mention that the PMRF and other land leases on Hawaiian land will be up for renewal in the next decade, so opposing this project supports the overall demilitarization of Hawaii.· What the Navy has in mind will only continue; perpetuate a one-sided transaction where we, as locals and Hawaiians, have to forsake our land and health for military readiness and national security.· Thank you. MS. TURNER:· Thank you for your comment.	
Cadavona, K-02	I am opposed to the Navy continuing and pursuing expansion of training and testing in Hawaii (Oahu & Kauai) as well as San Diego. Myself and my community value the protection our of aina and our waters. The military has never shared this same value, and unfortunately our resources come at the cost of military readiness. I am a small part of a larger community that is completely fed up with the militirization of Hawai'i and our tax dollars being gobbled up by war. What the navy has in mind will only continue and perpetuate a one sided transaction where we as locals and Hawaiians have to forsake our land and health for military readiness and 'national security'.	Thank you for your comment.
Cailey	Protect our ocean do what is right. Make military accountable.	Thank you for your comment.
Cait	The amount of activity by our military/Navy already endangers vulnerable wildlife & pollutes oceans. Increasing activities puts the environment at even more risk. We have a responsibility to future generations & our planet to be knowledgeable & to do what is necessary to protect them & our planet so that there is a future in which life prospers. I strongly oppose any increased activity.	Thank you for your comment.
Caitlin-01	Please don’t do some inane *[expletive deleted]* that hurts our environment or Hawaiian people JFC	Thank you for your comment.
Caitlin-02	You are increasing an already overwhelming threat to sea life, species that we are dependent on. I know y'all like to ignore science and facts in favor of your own arrogance, but by putting marine life at greater risk, which is also putting your own species at risk. Keep it up, and you'll solve nothing while continuing to push us toward our own destruction. For once, look beyond yourself and your constant desire to make a mess of things and listen to actual experts.	Thank you for your comment.

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Camberly	Hello. I am a student at the University of North Texas and I am studying ecology for environmental science. I heard about the US navy wanting to increase their exploration and use of the Hawaiian waters by 50%.%.%. Frankly this is just absurd. Those waters have already seen so much devastation caused by man. The native people have been begging and protesting for their water and land to be kept sacred. This is their land, their waters, their way of life. Coral reefs are such a fragile and important ecosystem that have already faced irreparable damage. Carrying out a 50% increase would destroy anything that is left, and not to mention the noise pollution that has already had detrimental effects on species and communities. I really do hope that the expansion is stopped and the native Hawaiians and their homes can finally be respected and left alone.	The Navy is not increasing the use of the Hawaiian waters. As stated in Section 2.1 (Description of the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area) of the EIS/OEIS, "the geographic boundary of the Hawaii Study Area is unchanged."
Camila	Our oceans are what power our daily lives, it is something so important yet so abused. The US Navy wanting to up their operations by 50% will bring in devastating consequences. Marine life will dismantle and the amount of pollution will have catastrophic effects. Do better to protect our home. Be better.	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action does not increase the level of activities by 50 percent. While some activities are increasing, others are staying the same or decreasing. In general, the number of ships, aircraft, and personnel are similar to previous years, resulting in the same approximate level of activity in the Study Area.
Campellone, M	For Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), the ocean creatures are not just a resource but a relative, as described in the Kumulipo. Constant harm to marine life and intrusions on cultural practices, such as fishing and traditional ceremonies, have profound spiritual and community impacts. Ending military activities would restore the ability of Native Hawaiians to malama ocean relatives and practice cultural traditions. Respect the natives on their land. Their land was stolen from them and at the very least their cultural practices should be respected by government agencies.	Thank you for your comment.
Cardenas, A	Today I am writing to express that military activity should NOT be expanded in the area of Hawaii. At this critical point in our time, let us be an example of how to move forward. Protect the waters, the reefs, the animals, and therefore the people , for when one is affected, all are affected.	Thank you for your comment.

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	NO to military expansion activity in Hawaii! At this critical moment in time , let us lead with example. Protect the already endangered species, protect the waters, and protect the people. NO TO MILITARY EXPANSION ACTIVITY !	
Cardenas, N	I oppose the navy using hawaii!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Carlson, S	This is a ridiculous abuse of the environment and should not be allowed to stand. The US Military is SUPPOSED to be the good guys, so act like it!	Thank you for your comment.
Carmack, L	I find any project that fails to do proper environmental research and holistic impact reports that include the endemic species and the indigenous peoples' expertise on that impact extremely irresponsible. I wholeheartedly can't support this project in any form. I'm continuously disappointed in how military operations disrupt the functioning and peace of Hawaii's ecology, which includes its first people.	Thank you for your comment.
Carney, B	This is unnecessary and wrong. Hawaii has suffered at the hands of the US government and it's agencies. This is the time to give back what was taken, not try to conquer even more of Hawaii lands and waters. The water is connected to the coral which is connected to the fish who are connected to the birds who are connected to everything on land and water. We have to start doing things differently please. Do what is right	Thank you for your comment.
Caroline	The impact on wildlife of increased military activity near Hawaii and in her shores is not with the cost of such action. Please consider the climate change impact of these actions and do not increase military in the region	Thank you for your comment.
Carrasco, L	Please protect our oceans, the sea life and coral reefs, respect the sovereignty of indigenous peoples and leave a better world for our children and grandchildren. We don’t need more wars and destruction of our natural habitats.	Thank you for your comment.
Carrasco, M	To Whom It May Concern, I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, as well as in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana (ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact	See Form Letter response

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	Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities.	
Carter, D	The Military is harming the ocean life of Hawaii. They need to leave Hawaii and her people alone so their homeland can recover from the damage that has been caused by tourists and people who misuse and abuse the land.	Thank you for your comment.
Casburne, A	The United States government and its military forces have absolutely no right to expand their military operations even further within the waters of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, which has been illegally occupied as you well know for over a century. The marine life that should thrive in the Hawai‘ian Moana is already experiencing the detrimental effects of the current military presence, and to expand these operations would result in the catastrophic dysfunction/loss of an extremely intricate ecosystem that provides ola to many including the occupiers that currently call the Kingdom of Hawai‘i home.	Thank you for your comment.
Castillo, M	As a community member of Kauai and a Kanaka Maoli (native Hawaiian) I oppose the expansion of military influence in Hawaii. The effects to our lands, waters, and community would be extremely detrimental and harmful. Through polluting these areas during development, disposal of ammunitions waste and the imposition into our limited land resources, the impacts of military presence has been and will continue to be a danger to the survival of our island and its people.	Thank you for your comment.
Cat	LEAVE HAWAII ALONE	Thank you for your comment.
Catherine	As the world continues to see more extreme weather events and disasters, it is our duty and responsibility as humans to ensure we miniseries our impact on the earth and its delicate ecosystems. The US military is especially guilty of waste and pollution across the planet and in many cases has avoided the financial and physical responsibility of cleaning up after themselves. Please consider the long term affects of your decisions now and not the temporary and short term gains that will only kick the can down the road onto future generations. Protect Hawaii, it's people, land and resources.	Thank you for your comment.
Catrett, T	Why is there an active and continuous threat and damage to Hawaii and her people, being dismissed as insignificant when it is actually extremely significant. The health of our communities and our oceans, the survival of	Thank you for your comment.

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	endangered species, and the rights of Native Hawaiians depend on the people holding the Navy accountable as they attempt to deceive and mislead us about the harm they do. We will hold you accountable. Stop prioritizing war over the planet's health and choose a path that honors and PROTECTS OUR LAND , PEOPLE , OCEANS , AND ABINALS.	
Caverly, L	Aloha, I am opposed to any expansion of military practice in the waters of Hawaii. We have a very precious special place and clean oceans are so very important to our health and livelihoods. We also are a breeding ground for humpback whales and home to many healthy marine ecosystems which need to be preserved at all costs. Less military not more. Mahalo, Laura Caverly	Thank you for your comment.
CC	This probably won't be read but to whoever sees this remember to do the right thing and protect the earth and her environment no matter WHERE and no matter WHAT. The ancestors will be beyond proud if you do the right thing	Thank you for your comment.
Champion, H	I served on active duty for 5 years to protect this land, NOT to destroy it or the lives and culture of our citizens. Do the right thing.	Thank you for your comment.
Chase, F	Faith Chase testified as follows: MS. CHASE: Thank you. This is a great audience because it's a captive armed forces audience. And I just want to state the obvious, which why I like this audience is because you, the military, know more than anybody else, knows exactly where you woke up this morning. You woke up in the country of Hawaii. You know where you are. You've been taught that. But so this facade that you have to play out in the interim of untying this knot of an occupied country, I challenge you, the Navy, to be the first armed forces that comes forward with your JAG officer, refers to the field war manual, and begins to untangle this mess. I've gone through the Air Force. I'm from Maui. I am concerned about this. I agree with Healani, it's absurd. I think a lot of the biologists might think so, might not even like their job. They're just doing their job. But on Maui, like, the history of the military, you know, sorry to throw you under the same cover of the Air Force, but I go to biweekly meetings about the Haleakala fuel spill for a year and a half. There's no remediation going on.	Thank you for your comment.

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	I was raised on Maui. I watched Kahoolawe be blow up. You know? So we had record, the first record. So to have the audacity to say that you're going to even -- I just think that a lot of you in the room that are being tasked to answer our questions about this so-called science and research actually don't believe in it yourself. So I feel sorry for you. But I want to get back to -- I challenge the Navy. I request -- I don't -- I'm confused about the Q&A. I don't get it. We're going to have Q&A, we're not, it's a comment period maybe now, later, after. So in understanding that maybe I don't get to ask a question, I do definitely want it in the record of the EIS. But this is what needs to happen. The Navy needs to bring forth their JAG officer and begin talking about untying the mess of this great state. That's what needs to happen. So I've asked the Air Force. Maybe they'll come around. But, you know, why don't you guys be the best, be the first one. As far as $20 million for biota, isn't there $890 billion invested in Hawaii alone in the military? I'm not impressed by -- I'm not impressed by that at all. I'm a grant writer. That is nothing. So, anyway, I just have to make that quick comment. Yeah. This is ugly and surreal. I agree with the previous testifier that none of it makes sense. In the interim -- and I was schooled by my kupuna today to be peaceful, and so I will be. But, you know, why don't you be the ones that -- why don't you be the first ones that come forward in a real true, altruistic way to help all the speakers that are up in here and all the representatives that are up in here that represent the country of Hawaii. That's what we mean. And then also, like I actually said, why play board games? There's so much damage control to do. Help the houseless. Help the environment. Like, change it up. Anyway, I challenge you. Thank you for the time. MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.	

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Chauhan, A	I oppose the Navy testing and training military weapons in sensitive marine ecosystems. I stand for absolutely zero testing and training in marine areas like Hawai`i's and California's marine protected areas—the recently designated National Marine Sanctuary of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystems, Papahanaumokuakea; Honolua Bay; the Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, Chumash National Marine Sanctuary. I oppose any sonar testing as there is damage and this affects whale communication. Corals are affected by sonar disruptions in their environment as well. I oppose any vessels in marine protected areas. Anywhere else, the speed of vessels must be slow to avoid vessel strikes. In reference to vessel speeds being "similar" section 3.7.1 of draft EIS, vessel speeds ought to remain at 10 knots or less to avoid strikes with megafauna, especially whales during whale season. The sensitive unique marine ecosystems of the Hawaiian Islands are some of the last wild places on our Planet of their kind. Military weapons testing and training will disrupt and damage these ecosystems that serve as a model for our planet and are already under severe threat from human impact. Thank you for your consideration of the health of the Ocean, as the health of the Ocean is the health of humanity.	Thank you for your comment. As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life, including whales. Additionally, please see Appendix K for a complete assessment of recent scientific studies used to determine mitigation areas. Studies by Krotofil et al. for biologically important areas (BIAs) in Hawaii and Calambokidis et al. for BIAs off California were assessed. These BIAs included areas important for reproduction, feeding, and migrating. The geographic mitigation areas presented in Chapter 5 overlap with some of the BIAs.
Cho, K	NO MORE DECECRATION OF LAND AND OUR OCEAN	Thank you for your comment.
Christensen, Hu	We can NOT afford to have any type of military training done anywhere on Hawaiian lands or in hawaiian waters. Any type of militaristic "training" comes with massive detriment to the inhabitants and the ecosystem. Any type of "projectiles" tested, any type of "sonar", or any type of military equipment is made to destroy this planet. Please for the love of this planet and for the sake of humanity DO NOT CONTINUE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN HAWAII.	Thank you for your comment.
Chun, B	Barryn Chun testified as follows: MR. CHUN:· Hi.· I'll just speak as someone born and raised on Oahu.· Just some questions that any of you who truly care about Hawaii can ask yourselves. One, why use all of this money for increasing testing when we could just use it for cleaning up the aquifer of Red Hill?· Fuel and decontamination and all.	Thank you for your comment.

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	Why not use all of this money and effort to replace contaminated pipes over to, ironically, military housing and the community of Kapilina? Why not use all that money to clean up Kokuo (phonetic); Puuloa; Flint, Michigan; East Palestinian; give people the money to rebuild communities in Lahaina and L.A.?· Why on blowing stuff up? Two, why should we support an increase in testing when we know all of this just goes towards practicing the unwanted intervention and murder of people across the globe.· That's what your security issue comes from. I've seen a man being crushed alive by a tank, the mangled corpse of a girl hanging from a building, a child with their skull cracked open, a father carrying pieces of his children in shopping bags. Where did those bombs come from?· What do you think Palestine is?· How do you think this makes people see the U.S.?· Maybe stop all that and you won't need these exercises. And I say this to you, especially those of you in the military.· I don't fault you if you join, thinking that you'll be defending people, or if you've joined because you're struggling make a living.· That's -- I know it's hard. All I did was just learn a bit of history about Hawaii where I live.· I learned to see the world from other perspectives.· Aaron Bushnell did; you can, too.· I'm just strongly oppressed to foreign acts to increase trade.· It does not belong here. That's all. MS. TURNER:· Thank you.·	
CJ	I strongly oppose the proposed actions outlined in the HCTT Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The U.S. Navy must reconsider its plans due to the following critical issues: 1.Environmental Destruction – The proposed activities threaten local ecosystems, marine life, and endangered species. The EIS fails to provide sufficient mitigation measures for pollution, noise disruption, and habitat degradation. 2.Impact on Indigenous Communities – Native Hawaiian communities have historically suffered from military expansion and environmental degradation. The Navy must prioritize cultural and historical preservation over military objectives. 3.Lack of Transparency and Public Engagement – The EIS process must genuinely incorporate community feedback, ensuring local voices shape decisions	Please see Chapter 5 for a description of mitigation measures. The Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life. The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act's (NHPA) implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful

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	rather than treating public comments as a formality. 4.Alternative Solutions – The Navy should prioritize sustainable and less invasive training methods, including advanced simulations that reduce the need for environmentally harmful exercises. Given these concerns, I urge the Navy to reject the current proposal and conduct a more thorough assessment that prioritizes environmental and community well-being. The long-term consequences of this project outweigh any perceived benefits.	efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings. Public involvement is a fundamental aspect of the National Environmental Policy Act and National

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		Historic Preservation Act Section 106 processes. In an effort to improve and strengthen the EIS/OEIS, the military services welcomed and appreciated the public's participation during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. The comment period (December 13, 2024, to February 11, 2025) included an additional 15 calendar days (from the required 45 days to 60 days) to allow the public more time to review and comment during the holiday season. All public notifications (Federal Register Notice of Public Meetings, display advertisements, news releases, eblasts, postcard mailers, social media posts, notification letters) and informational materials (website, fact sheet booklet, briefings/presentations) provided the commenting methods for the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period. Comments could be submitted at one of the in-person public meetings, electronically via the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/, or via U.S. postal mail. For the virtual public meeting, these notification and informational materials, in addition to verbal statements from the moderator during the in-person and virtual public meetings, also explained that "questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session are not official public comments." This EIS/OEIS includes alternatives the meet the Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action. Please see Section 2.4.1 (Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration) for a discussion of other alternatives that were considered.
Cloud	Increasing military activity will not only cause immediate harm to the marine and other wildlife in the region, but it will have long-lasting effects on both	Thank you for your comment.

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	wildlife and human life. Our Earth is already at risk. Do not do more harm by increasing activity.	
Cole, J	The military presence in Hawai'i has caused significant harm across environmental, cultural, and social dimensions. Some of the most pressing issues include: Environmental Destruction *Toxic Contamination: The military has been responsible for widespread environmental contamination, most notably the Red Hill fuel leak, where over 19,000 gallons of jet fuel from a Navy facility leaked into O'ahu's water supply, endangering thousands of residents. *Ecosystem Damage: Military exercises such as RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific) disrupt marine life with sonar testing, ship strikes, and explosions, harming endangered species like Hawaiian monk seals, sea turtles, and humpback whales. Unexploded ordnance and chemical pollutants from military training also degrade ecosystems. *Land Misuse and Destruction: Places like Pōhakuloa Training Area on Hawai'i Island and Mākua Valley on O'ahu have been bombed and used for live-fire training, leaving lands scarred, polluted, and inaccessible to local communities. Cultural and Indigenous Disrespect *Desecration of Sacred Sites: The military has built bases and conducted exercises on lands that are culturally and spiritually significant to Native Hawaiians, including burial grounds and ancestral sites. *Loss of Sovereignty: The ongoing occupation of Hawai'i by the U.S. military is a reminder of the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893, contributing to continued struggles for self-determination. Displacement and Economic Burdens *Loss of Land: The military controls nearly 25% of O'ahu's land, displacing communities and limiting access to public spaces. *Housing Crisis: Military families receive high housing allowances, inflating rental prices and contributing to the affordability crisis for local residents. *Tourism-Military Complex: The militarization of Hawai'i fuels an economy that prioritizes military interests over sustainable, local industries, deepening dependence on external forces rather than self-sufficient economic models. Geopolitical Risk and Militarization *Targeting Hawai'i in Global Conflicts: The military presence makes Hawai'i a strategic military target rather than a place of peace. As tensions rise in the Pacific, increased military activity puts residents at greater risk. *Involvement in Foreign Conflicts: Hawai'i's location is used to train forces for wars abroad, reinforcing imperialist policies rather than focusing on peacebuilding and regional cooperation. In short, the military's presence has come at a significant cost to Hawai'i's environment,	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the environmental effects of the proposed activities, which include RIMPAC. However, the other issues noted in the comment are outside the scope of this EIS/OEIS.

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	culture, and people. Instead of further militarization, efforts should be focused on environmental restoration, Indigenous sovereignty, and sustainable economic alternatives that respect the land and its people.	
Colon, L	The US military, and it‘s destruction of people and the environment, is the largest ongoing threat to Hawai‘i for decades. This report is another instance of that threat and real, ongoing damage to Hawaii and her people, being dismissed as insignificant when it is actually extremely significant.	Thank you for your comment.
Combs, B	The United States government and its entities have done considerable damage to the worldwide ecosystem, but in particular the ecosystem of the United States. Over the past decade Hawai'i had seen around 100 oil spills from a few gallons to hundreds of gallons. In 2021 the Navy poisoned the water with gas, making the water undeniable for civilian residents as well as residents on on-post housing. There should not be increased military presence or testing on these sacred lands.	Thank you for your comment.
Condon, E	The Navy should stop activity in Hawaii period. Their actions are harmful to the environment, contribute towards climate change, and impede on Native Hawaiian culture and sovereignty.	Thank you for your comment.
Courter, E	Protect our land so our children can enjoy them. So we can all benefit from them.	Thank you for your comment.
Covington, S	Please protect our oceans and the creatures in them!!	Thank you for your comment.
Coyote, T	No testing on the aina. Protect our waters please for future generations.	Thank you for your comment.
Crosby, M	Please protect our earth! She’s our only one	Thank you for your comment.
Cummings-Paradea, T	No comment in email	No response required.
Cummings, R-01	CEASE AND DESIST NOTICE Date: 01/16/2025 From: Roslyn Cummings of E Ola Kakou Hawai'i Address: PO Box 315 Kalaheo Ahupua'a, Hawai'i (96741) To: United States Navy United States Department of Defense • United States Contractors Involved in PMRF Operations	We appreciate and acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the historical context of the Hawaiian Islands and the military's presence. The U.S. military is committed to conducting its activities in Hawaii with the utmost respect for the local communities, cultures, and histories that define these islands.

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	• Relevant Officials and Agencies SUBJECT: CEASE AND DESIST ACTIONS IN HAWAIIAN KINGDOM TERRITORY Notice to Agent is Notice to Principal. Notice to Principal is Notice to Agent. By this letter, I, [Roslyn Cummings of E Ola Kakou Hawai'i], serve notice that all ongoing activities related to the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) and associated projects, as outlined in your environmental impact statements and operational plans, constitute violations of international law, Hawaiian Kingdom law, and U.S. domestic law. These actions are unauthorized, unlawful, and conducted in direct violation of the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom. All my rights are reserved without prejudice, without recourse This notice is supported by the following maxims of law, historical context, treaties, and legal references: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND LEGAL BASIS 1. Hawaiian Kingdom's Sovereignty The Hawaiian Kingdom was ,ecognized as an independent and sovereign state by the United States, Great Britain, France, and other nations during the 19th century. Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation (1849): Article 1 of this treaty explicitly states, "There shall be perpetual peace and amity between the United States of America and His Majesty the King of the Hawaiian Islands." This treaty remains unrevoked and binding under international law. • Under Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, treaties are the supreme law of the land. The occupation and use of Hawaiian territory by U.S. military forces, without lawful annexation, constitute a breach of this treaty and international law. 2. International Law Violations • Hague Convention (1907): Articles 43 and 46 mandate the occupying power to respect the laws in force and protect private property, including land and cultural heritage.	The HCTT Study Area plays a crucial role in ensuring national security and supporting global peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. Training and testing activities are designed to maintain readiness and effectiveness, which are essential for responding to various challenges and threats in the Pacific. In planning and performing these activities, we strictly follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes conducting comprehensive environmental assessments and impact statements, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These processes involve thorough evaluations of potential effects on the environment, cultural sites, and local communities. Public participation is a cornerstone of NEPA, and we actively seek and consider input from all stakeholders to inform our decisions. We understand the significance of Public Law 103-150, known as the "Apology Resolution," in which the U.S. Congress acknowledged the 1893 overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii and expressed regret to Native Hawaiians. While the resolution is a profound acknowledgment of past events, it does not alter the current legal status of Hawaii as a state or the military's obligation to protect the United States. Consequently, the military's activities in Hawaii are conducted in compliance with applicable U.S. laws and agreements. We remain dedicated to transparent and respectful engagement with the Hawaiian community. Our goal is to balance the imperative of national security with a deep respect for the rich cultural heritage and environmental uniqueness of Hawaii.

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	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP): Articles 25 and 26 protect Indigenous peoples' rights to their traditional lands and resources. 3. Hawaiian Kingdom Law • Declaration of Rights (1839): Burial sites, land, and resources are protected under this foundational law of the Hawaiian Kingdom. • Great Mahele (1848): Established land tenure and private ownership rights, explicitly protecting ancestral lands and cultural resources. • Act for the Protection of the Sepulture (1860): Section 1 prohibits the disturbance of burial sites and iwi kupuna (ancestral remains). • Hawaiian Civil Code 1859, Section 1447: Possession is not requisite; a good claim suffices. SPECIFIC VIOLATIONS The U.S. Navy and affiliated contractors, through activities at PMRF and related projects, have violated: 1. Hawaiian Kingdom Laws by constructing, conducting military training, and desecrating cultural and burial sites. 2. International Obligations under the Hague Convention and UNDRIP by failing to respect and protect Hawaiian Kingdom territory. 3. Fiduciary Duties by mismanaging lands held in trust for the Hawaiian people. 4. Environmental and Cultural Protections by disrupting marine ecosystems, sacred land sites, and native habitats. Violations continued The U.S. Navy, U.S. military, and contractors operating under the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) are unlawfully conducting military exercises and infrastructure projects within the sovereign boundaries of the Hawaiian Kingdom. These actions violate: 1. Hawaiian Kingdom Law • The 1859 Hawaiian Civil Code prohibits unauthorized activities within the Kingdom's land and waters.	We value the perspectives shared and will continue to consider them as we move forward.

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	• The Act for the Protection of the Sepulture (1860) safeguards burial sites and cultural resources on land and within territorial waters. 2. International Law The Hague Convention (1907) obligates occupying powers to preserve the laws and territorial integrity of the occupied state. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) affirms Indigenous peoples' rights to their traditional lands, waters, and resources. 3. Treaty Obligations • The 1849 Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between the Hawaiian Kingdom and the United States mandates respect for Hawaiian sovereignty and property. 4. Environmental Law Violations • The U.S. Navy's projects involve activities that disturb marine ecosystems and cultural sites, violating Hawaiian Kingdom law and international environmental protections. DEMANDS AND REMEDIES 1. Immediate Cessation Cease all activities, including testing, construction, and operations, within the Hawaiian Kingdom's territory, as outlined in the PMRF projects. 2. Independent Review Conduct an independent review of all actions taken by U.S. agencies and contractors within the Hawaiian Kingdom, with a focus on fiduciary obligations and treaty compliance. 3. Reparations Provide reparative measures for damages caused by the unauthorized occupation and use of Hawaiian Kingdom lands and resources. 4. Compliance with Hawaiian Kingdom Law Ensure all actions align with Hawaiian Kingdom laws, treaties, and international legal standards. Demands and Remedies continued 1. Immediate Cessation of Activities	

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	All ongoing military exercises, construction, and testing within Hawaiian territorial waters and land must cease immediately. 2. Restitution for Damages Reparations must be provided for any environmental or cultural harm caused by these unauthorized activities. 3. Independent Review Conduct an independent review of U.S. Navy and contractor actions in Hawaiian Kingdom territory, focusing on compliance with Hawaiian Kingdom law and treaty obligations. FEE SCHEDULE To ensure accountability and deter further violations, the following fee schedule is hereby established: Disturbance of lwi Kupuna or Burial Sites: $2,000,000 per occurrence. • Unauthorized Use of Hawaiian Kingdom Lands: $1,000,000 per acre, per month. Violation of International Treaty Obligations: $5,000,000 per infraction. Fee Schedule for Violations continued To ensure accountability, the following fees are established: • Disturbance of Territorial Waters: $5,000,000 per occurrence. • Environmental and Marine Damage: $3,000,000 per square mile affected. • Desecration of Burial or Cultural Sites: $2,000,000 per site. • Unauthorized Use of Land or Waters: $1,000,000 per day. BOUNDARIES OF THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM Hawaiian Kingdom Territorial Boundaries The Hawaiian Kingdom's territorial boundaries encompass the entire Hawaiian Archipelago, including all islands, reefs, shoals, and surrounding waters. These boundaries were internationally recognized prior to the unlawful overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893. 1. Hawaiian Kingdom Proclamation of 1846 • The Hawaiian Kingdom formally declared its sovereignty over all lands and waters within the Hawaiian Archipelago.	

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	• This proclamation included all islands, islets, reefs, and surrounding waters, from Hawai'i Island in the southeast to Kure Atoll (Moku Papapa) in the northwest. 2. Hawaiian Constitutions of 1840 and 1852 • The Kingdom's territorial integrity was enshrined in its constitutions: • Article 1 of the 1840 Constitution: "The Kingdom of Hawai'i shall comprise the Islands of Hawai'i, Maui, O'ahu, Kaua'i, Moloka'i, Lana'i, Ni'ihau, Kaho'olawe, and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (Moku Papapa), from Nihoa to Kure Atoll." 3. 1854 Proclamation on Kure Atoll Kure Atoll, the northwestern most point of the Hawaiian Archipelago, was explicitly claimed as part of the Kingdom. • This proclamation further solidified the inclusion of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (Moku Papapa) within the Kingdom's jurisdiction. 4. 1859 Hawaiian Civil Code • The Civil Code of 1859 codified the Kingdom's exclusive jurisdiction over: Lands: All lands within the Hawaiian Islands, including Crown, Government, and Konohiki lands. • Territorial Waters: A three-nautical-mile zone extending from the shores of all islands, islets, and atolls. 5. Boundary Confirmations by International Treaties • Treaties signed between the Hawaiian Kingdom and international powers affirmed its territorial sovereignty. • The 1849 Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation with the United States recognized the Hawaiian Kingdom's jurisdiction over the entire Hawaiian Archipelago. Territorial Waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) 1. Territorial Waters (1859 Hawaiian Civil Code) The Kingdom's territorial waters were defined as extending three nautical miles from the shoreline.	

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	• Within this zone, the Kingdom retained full sovereignty, including control over all marine resources and navigation rights. 2. Modem Interpretation under International Law (UNCLOS) • Although not directly applicable to the Hawaiian Kingdom's historical boundaries, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) establishes: • Territorial Waters: Extending 12 nautical miles from the baseline (shoreline). • Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ): Extending 200 nautical miles, granting exclusive rights to natural resources within this zone. • Under international law, if applied to the Hawaiian Kingdom, these modem standards would further expand its marine jurisdiction. MAXIMS OF LAW 1. "An error of law nullifies the act." Actions taken in violation of law are void. 2. "Ignorance of the law excuses no one." All parties are expected to comply with international and Hawaiian Kingdom laws. 3. "He who does not preserve the rights of others forfeits his own." Your actions jeopardize the rights of Hawaiian nationals and residents. DECLARATION I, Roslyn Cummings of E Ola Kakou Hawai'i, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the Hawaiian Kingdom that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. This Cease and Desist Notice is binding and enforceable under international law, Hawaiian Kingdom law, and U.S. domestic law. Failure to comply with this notice will result in further legal actions and penalties. E Pule Kakou E ke Akua Mana Loa, nana i hanau i na mea a pau, e ho'omaika'i makou ia 'oe no kau aloha 'uhane 'ole a me ka pono e ho'okumu ai i ko makou 'aina aloha.	

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	We humbly come before you, 0 Almighty Creator, who gave life to all things, to seek your guidance and wisdom as we stand firm to protect na kanaka, iwi kQpuna, and waiwai-the sacred resources entrusted to us. E malama mai 'oe i na iwi kupuna i kanu 'ia ma ka lepo o ka 'aina aloha. E malama pQ no ho'i i na wai e halo ana i uka a i kai, i mea e ho'ola'a ai i ke ola no na hanauna e hiki mai ana. Guard the sacred burial sites and ensure that no harm comes to the resting places of our ancestors. Protect the waters that flow from the mountains to the sea, so they may bring life and nourishment to future generations. E ho'ike mai i ka 'oia'i'o i loko o na kanaka a me na 'ahahui e malama ai i ke kuleana i ho'oka'awale 'ia e ke Akua ia makou e malama. E kau ka maluhia i loko o ka na'au o na po'e lawelawe a me na po'e i hana 'ino i na kuleana o ka 'aina a me na kanaka maoli. Reveal truth and integrity within the hearts of those who seive, and convict those who violate the sacred trust and responsibilities given to us by your divine will. E ke Akua, e hapai i na leo o na kanaka e ku ana no ka pono o ka 'aina, na waiwai, a me na iwi kupuna. E ho'ola'a i ko makou 'ike, ka 'ike kupuna, e ho'omau i ke ola kupono no na mama o Hawai'i. Uplift the voices of those who stand for justice and righteousness for the land, the resources, and the iwi kQpuna. Bless us with ancestral wisdom to continue the sacred work of preseiving our heritage for generations to come. E ho'opa'a makou i ko makou kuleana, e hana me ka ha'aha'a, a e ho'omau me ke aloha i na mea a pau. E hapai i ka 'oia'i'o, e ho'oko i ka pono, a e ho'ola'a i ka maluhia ma lalo o kou malama 'ana. May we fulfill our responsibilities with humility, move forward with love, and commit to truth, justice, and peace under your divine protection. 'Amene. Aloha no ia kakou	
CummingsR-02	Roslyn? MS. CUMMINGS:· Thank you. (Hawaiian chanting.)	We appreciate and acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the historical context of the Hawaiian Islands and the military's presence. The U.S. military is committed to conducting its activities in Hawaii with the utmost respect for the

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	Because this is a 106, and there's intake, that means that United States, American citizens, taxpaying dollar is in this project, one. Two, I'm going to focus on historical context based on boundaries that is Hawaii Ne Pae Aina that's written in the 1839 Declaration of Rights of the Hawaiian Kingdom.· This is still the Hawaiian Kingdom. This is still our territory. So this is a notice to all of you who here in your official capacity because United States American taxpaying dollars are paying for you guys to be here and for this project to continue. When you talk about marriage, let's talk about the marriage of our people.· First and foremost, (indiscernible), our makua, their makua, and before them, that procession, that's our marriage.· When we think about marriage, we don't think about a party that we're throwing.· We think about the next generations that are being impacted by that union; that is how our marriage is based on. When you talk about laws of nature of the ocean, we talking about it as moana.· We talk about it as kilo.· Kilo's the first type of laws of nature for us; that's our science, kilo.· So if you look back, basic knowledge, 100 years from now, let's go back 100 years from this date, 100 years from that date.· I can tell you this much, our moana is a negative, a negative. When we talk about every species in our ocean, just like the land. I used to think there's no difference between aina and moana, but there is a difference.· The ·4· ·difference is, population on aina versus population in moana.· If we cannot see what's happening in our aina, we cannot see what's happening in our ocean.· So we're relying on people claiming all these different aspects and assets that are happening, but this is like business as usual. So let's talk about the discrepancy.· Let's talk about breach of trust, crimes of omission, desecration.· When you talk about na iwi kupuna, let's think about that.· We take our iwi kupuna out of the ground, and we put them into a crypt.· None of that is part of our practice, but it became our practice.· And we became acceptance of it. When we talk about future generations, which really wasn't talked about, yeah, as kanaka maoli, we need to think about that.· That's manawa, for the	local communities, cultures, and histories that define these islands. The HCTT Study Area plays a crucial role in ensuring national security and supporting global peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. Training and testing activities are designed to maintain readiness and effectiveness, which are essential for responding to various challenges and threats in the Pacific. In planning and performing these activities, we strictly follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes conducting comprehensive environmental assessments and impact statements, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These processes involve thorough evaluations of potential effects on the environment, cultural sites, and local communities. Public participation is a cornerstone of NEPA, and we actively seek and consider input from all stakeholders to inform our decisions. We understand the significance of Public Law 103-150, known as the "Apology Resolution," in which the U.S. Congress acknowledged the 1893 overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii and expressed regret to Native Hawaiians. While the resolution is a profound acknowledgment of past events, it does not alter the current legal status of Hawaii as a state or the military's obligation to protect the United States. Consequently, the military's activities in Hawaii are conducted in compliance with applicable U.S. laws and agreements. We remain dedicated to transparent and respectful engagement with the Hawaiian community. Our goal is to balance the imperative of national security with a deep respect for the rich cultural

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	past, for the present, for the future.· Those generations exist now because of the decision we're making. This is my petition to you:· Remember your fiduciary duties, remember your oath of office, and remember those of you who are in that high position signing that contract, that is your contract, and we hold you "binded" to all discrepancies that are happening.· Eo. MS. TURNER:· Thank you for your comment.	heritage and environmental uniqueness of Hawaii. We value the perspectives shared and will continue to consider them as we move forward.
Cunha, J	Please stop destroying our environment :)	Thank you for your comment.
Curran, M	Don't do it.	Thank you for your comment.
Curtis, L	Kaneohe Bay is finally recovering from destructive practices with zero concern for coral reefs, marine life, ocean wellbeing which affects everything on earth. Absolutely against any type of blasting or sonar activity which distorts their senses and destroys all life. It's bad enough we tolerate the flight training directly overhead, so anything else regarding destruction ir disturbance to land or sea should be completely prohibited.	Thank you for your comment.
D		
D'antonio, A	Please save our marine wildlife!	Thank you for your comment.
Daniel	Do not expand military zones further into the land and oceans than you already have. The environment is so precious and we need to keep it safe. Your movements will not only harm wildlife and the environment but it will also destroy the precious state of Hawaii and its inhabitants. I disagree with what the navy is trying to do.	Thank you for your comment.
DarkFyre, M	You don't care, but we the people do... Let this serve as evidence that we asked and demanded politely and nicely... Take our ecosystem into account, instead of threatening it's existence,... and ours...	Thank you for your comment.
Darnell, K	The pacific is not empty space for you to play in. It is our lives, our ancestor, our everything. GET OUT OF THE PACIFIC.	Thank you for your comment.
Darroch, S	Please do not do this research in this area. Marine animals are already exposed to so much noise pollution and human encroachment. We are destroying our oceans.	Thank you for your comment.

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Dass, J	Hasn't Hawaii, the human and wildlife residents, experienced enough harm!? Do not expand military presence! This would increase pollution and restrict habitat, risking more damage to the people, animals, and marine life.	Thank you for your comment.
David	i am here to oppose further government spending for the destruction of the ocean. i pray for life and abundance in our ocean, that the fish may find sanctuary in the flourishing reefs, limu and sponges. may her tides removed anything that is stuck and allow current to flow. may all the creatures that create and sustain what we call ocean. i am sending those who wish to oppose life, i send them light and hope. i send them this so they can find it in their heart to be on the side of the holy spirit. blessings to the ocean. stop military destruction.	Thank you for your comment.
Davis, B	Demons destroy the earth, do not be a demon. Protect the earth!	Thank you for your comment.
Day, C	Stop occupying and destroying precious wildlife indigenous peoples need to protect and steward what we have left.	Thank you for your comment.
Deauna, D	Aloha, my name is Dianne Deauna and I am a PhD candidate with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. My dissertation is on the use of climate models to study the historical and future projected state of the California Current System, as well as the broader North Pacific Ocean. I would like to contribute substantive comments on the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement / Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS).	Please see your comment and response in Table L.2-6.
DeBiasi, N	I oppose the military harming our marine life, the acceleration of global warming, and the expansion of military practices in our ocean!	Thank you for your comment.
Dee, J	Indigenous Lands to be protected by indigenous peoples and indigenous communities! If we allow this, what else will be allow?? Sacred place deserve to be respected and protected!	Thank you for your comment.
Delafield, M	Save our planet!	Thank you for your comment.
Demers, T	We need to protect our oceans and what is remaining of the environment. Adding further destruction benefits no one if we and everything we know and love are dead. We forget how lucky we are to even be here.	Thank you for your comment.

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Deming, J	The damage and destruction of the reefs, endangered species and oceanic chemistry is far too great. We shouldn't be destroying our own resources. Resources are what wars are fought over. So, protect our resources. Thank you!	Thank you for your comment.
Denham, S	I implore authorities to think about the environmental impact of expanding this training into Hawaii, Hawaii is a place with beautiful wildlife and destroying parts of that will have a ginormous impact on our world. We must do everything to protect our beautiful planet.	Thank you for your comment.
Deppe, W	Please see the attached letter for comments from California Coastal Commission staff.	Response to California Coastal Commission comments is given in Table L.2-1.
Devlin, T	As a California native and millennial interested in fostering a safe world for my children, I am writing to demand that the US Military and Navy curtail their activities in and around the waters of Hawaii. Any military training and activity around Hawaii are NOT WORTH the damage to the environment and economy of Hawaii!!! As a white person who grew up in the SF Bay Area, I have been directly affected by coastal and sea habitat damage. The types of reckless damage that military training and operations cause to ecosystems is well understood by the scientific community, and frankly we are out of time to keep treating our planet like this. I demand that military activity in and around the Hawaiian islands be CURTAILED, rather than increased by 50%. This is an issue that affects all Americans and not just Hawaiians, and I will be paying attention from the mainland as this debate continues. You must listen to native Hawaiian voices and heed their demands as they continue looking after the land and the sea, who are their relatives. The health of the ocean is our shared responsibility. Thank you	Thank you for your comment.
Diaz, M	It is important, and essential that we protect the waters and all its life within it. Keep the Navy and all armed forces from these environments.	Thank you for your comment.
Diaz, Z-01	I oppose this draft and any expansion of military activity and property. culture and values. The ocean is not just a resource to be sacrificed for “military readiness”—it is a sacred space that sustains life, culture, and spirituality. The Navy’s activities disrupt traditional practices, such as fishing, navigation, and ceremonies, and violate the rights of Native Hawaiians to care for and protect their ancestral waters. The Navy must engage in	The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act’s (NHPA) implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	meaningful consultation with Kanaka Maoli and incorporate their knowledge and values into the decision-making process. This includes recognizing the cultural significance of marine mammals, reefs, and other ocean resources and ensuring that military activities do not infringe on Native Hawaiian rights.	(NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings.
DiazZ-02	I oppose this draft and military expansion and property.of sacred spaces, relationship with aina and moana. The EIS and presentations demonstrated a profound lack of consultation with Kanaka Maoli and a failure to understand the significance of marine life to Native Hawaiian culture and values. The	See response above.

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	ocean is not just a resource to be sacrificed for "military readiness"—it is a sacred space that sustains life, culture, and spirituality. The Navy's activities disrupt traditional practices, such as fishing, navigation, and ceremonies, and violate the rights of Native Hawaiians to care for and protect their ancestral waters. The Navy must engage in meaningful consultation with Kanaka Maoli and incorporate their knowledge and values into the decision-making process. This includes recognizing the cultural significance of marine mammals, reefs, and other ocean resources and ensuring that military activities do not infringe on Native Hawaiian rights.	
Dizon, J	The expansion of military activities will endanger many native species and natural resources of Hawaii. I do not support the draft.	Thank you for your comment.
Doktor, P	Aloha To Whom It May Concern, I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, my family, my ancestors and future kin. As a descendent of war in Okinawa, I am also in solidarity with the indigenous people and nation, and allies for the protection of our most precious resources: the `āina, the abundance of nature that makes life possible on our islands, and our children. Protecting our natural resources from destruction is genuine security, making the military one of our biggest threats to life here in Hawai`i, both through toxic operations and the threat of military retribution, as the Naval fortification of Pearl Harbor proved eight decades ago. I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities. To begin with, my own personal experience in the military informs me how much mission trumps all other concerns, resulting in devastating ecological damage. I remember how our unit would decimate the environment with our armored personnel carriers and tanks through routine training. I remember how the EPA would shut down parts of the range after devastating damage, mercury poisoning, etc. until we would get the all clear to open up public lands utilized for annual training campaigns. Sure we were briefed to try not to destroy the natural environment, but there was zero	The Navy complied with the requirements of NEPA in the development and consideration of alternatives. Section 2.4 (Action Alternatives Development), more specifically, Section 2.4.2 (Alternatives Carried Forward) includes a discussion of the No Action Alternative which is provided to compare the magnitude of potential effects, but which is inherently unreasonable in that it does not meet the purpose and need (see Section 1.5, Purpose and Need) or the Action Proponent's statutory requirements under Title 10. The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA

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	accountability, and with many troops still teens, protecting environment was never part of our mission. However, my opposition to RIMPAC is not all personal, but equally over its many public health and safety threats. Not to mention threats to endangered species, marine life and reef critical to the health of the land—thus, people. The so-called No Action Alternative is typical military double-speak where it disingenuously fails to include the many benefits of no military training; we experienced this in Hawai`i just from the unexpected rebounding of nature that occurred during Covid-19 lockdowns due to the diminished human disruption. Rather than overkill like the 800 page EIS dumped upon the public, I will just summarize and get to point: NO TO RIMPAC! It does not make us safer; on the contrary, it endangers us, and brings regional tensions. Moreover, the US military is an occupation military, having illegally overthrown the sovereign nation of Hawai`i, is hardly an arbiter of defending a people they overthrew by military violence and occupation. This EIS does not provide for the sufficient consultation by the aboriginal people and nation of these islands. They never have, and they never will: in Hawai`i, we see our military neighbors get gaslit and poisoned by their own commanders, as evidence by the Red Hill Underground Fuel Tanks that has been leaking for eight decades, including releases that poisoned their own personnel and dependents. As a military veteran, from a military family including my father, a Marine who fought in WWII, Korea and Vietnam, we have come to understand the military is a power used for and by politics, not the people. Moreover, the inclusion of armed forces guilty of crimes against humanity and genocide, particularly by the example of Israeli "Defense" Forces, but includes governments like Indonesia with ongoing issues with colonialism. The participation with such national mercenaries undermines any moral credibility by the US Armed Forces. You cannot both stand for freedom and rule of law, when at the same time collaborating with militaries that do not abide by international laws on war like the Geneva Convention we are supposed to remember in basic training. Hawai`i should not welcome war criminals to train along side our troops. If human trafficking were a concern,	Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings.

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	that is another reason to stop RIMPAC exercises exploiting these trafficked victims. Therefore, for these and many more reasons, I conclude that the Draft EIS/OEIS for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing activities fails to adequately address such concerns as I have briefly mentioned. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life and people. So-called military readiness is not superior to the laws and the people of the land, and on the contrary, is a threat to genuine security because of its history of subverting this relationship, and subjugating otherwise free people to serve politicians, rather than the other way around. War is terror. Stop practicing terrorism with biannual RIMPAC exercises. Submitted for testimony, Pete Doktor Member of Veterans for Peace, Hawai`i Chapter 113	
Dolan, D	This is going to cause harm to the marine life, water pollution and indigenous life. Please do not do this.	Thank you for your comment.
Dom	Better solutions make better futures	Thank you for your comment.
Dominguez, K	I am trying to submit my public comment for the Hawai'i-California Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environment Impact Statement (OEIS) before the February 11, 2025 deadline, but the website is not allowing submissions. Since the public is still within the designated timeframe to provide feedback, I would appreciate immediate assistance in resolving this issue. Attached below is my testimony, which I am submitting directly via email to ensure it is received. Please confirm receipt and let me know how this issue will be addressed. I do not support government training in the water of Hawai'i and California. I actively vote against it.	On February 10, 2025, while the comment period was open, members of the public that entered comments on the project website were given a warning that their submission was not received. However, comments were still being received, this warning was given in error. The website administrators found the problem and resolved it on the same day. This comment was received via email with no attachment. The project team emailed the commenter in an attempt to obtain the attachment mentioned in the comment, but no response was received.
Don	Better solutions make better people	Thank you for your comment.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
Donavan, K	Please DO NOT ALLOW THE MILITARY TO EXPAND. You will destroy the land and water!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Drafton, M	Greetings, I am trying to submit my public comment for the Hawaii-California Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) before the February 11, 2025 deadline, but the website is not allowing submissions. Since the public is still within the designated timeframe to provide feedback, I would appreciate immediate assistance in resolving this issue. Attached below is my testimony, which I am submitting directly via email to ensure it is received. Please confirm receipt and let me know how this issue will be addressed. The no action alternative that prevents the Navy from military testing and extensive training in Hawaiian waters has been grossly misinterpreted and should be reevaluated on benefits of stopping harmful military activity and not just the absence of harm alone. Over 7,400 activities are held under the EIS according to G-16 and G-17. Expanding these activities will only further the harm of marine life and ecosystems for near shore animals and Hawaiian cultural practices on the land. Most notably is the coral reef which is already under proven stress from climate change and holds a significant risk to spreading further pollution if damaged.	On February 10, 2025, while the comment period was open, members of the public that entered comments on the project website were given a warning that their submission was not received. However, comments were still being received, this warning was given in error. The website administrators found the problem and resolved it on the same day. The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 military readiness activities. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would logically remain unchanged or improve slightly.
Drake, M	I strongly support additional oversight to navy endeavors. I have personally seen unaddressed oil spills at naval bases here in San Diego along with trash and other waste left by members of the military. It is embarrassing that the people tasked with the protection of our nation do not even take the care to clean up after themselves.	Thank you for your comment.
Duenez, B	Hello there I am writing to discourage the Navy from increasing military activities in Hawaiis waters. There are many many reasons why this is problematic and should not not come to fruition. I wanted to specifically mention the endangered species that will suffer because of increased activity. If endangered birds, Hawaiian monk seals, humpback whales, and green sea turtles are not subjected to thousands of harmful interactions with the Navy each year, they have a far greater chance of recovery. The Hawaiian monk seal, with only 1,600 individuals remaining, is highly sensitive to	Thank you for your comment. Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not

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	disturbances. In a 7 year period, they would avoid 9,228 instances of harm from the NAVY. Humpback whales, which migrate through Hawaiian waters annually, and green sea turtles, which depend on nearshore habitats, are also at risk with thousands of harmful interactions. Stopping military activities would allow these species to thrive. Coral Reefs are also at stake here and they impact the oceans health directly and are vital to its survival. I urge you all to consider the damage being done to our planet and ultimately the human race/	affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Dumalan, L	I do not support the navy increasing their activities as it will have negative effects on the waters and the species that live in those waters. We rely on these waters for recreational and commercial purposes. Pollution from increased navy activities will harm the people of Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
E		
Eagans, K	It is so important to keep the oceans clean and marine life safe. Without either of those things there will be detrimental consequences and losses for the planet we all share and live on.	Thank you for your comment.
Eagleton, R	Biodiversity is national security.	Thank you for your comment.
Ela	Dear Committee, It might seem strange that a resident of Washington is submitting a comment AGAINST this proposal, but as someone who is from an island, I have seen time and time again that actions which negatively impact the oceans have far reaching consequences. For example, the Trans Mountain Pipeline in Burnaby, BC will kill our already at risk orcas and we in	Thank you for your comment.

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	Washington had no say over the completion of the project. Bringing this back to Hawaii, the US has colonized, exploited, and weaken the indigenous people of Hawaii to the extent that they are dependent on food from the mainland, for example. Increasing naval activity will further endanger both their culture, way of life, as well as the environment itself. It is high time that the government and military pay reparations and not pursuing this proposal to increase naval activity is one step in the right direction. We are not at war with anyone but ourselves right now, and those who pay are marginalized people and the environment. You must stand up to protect them.	
Elaine	Protect the marine animal life. We don't need navy ships killing the marine animals life.	Thank you for your comment.
Eldon, C	These tests are detrimental to the environment and all the wildlife in the testing areas. 73% of wildlife has died since the 1970's, which is already a catastrophe. Without biodiversity and flourishing food chains, our planet will be thrown into even further chaos and destruction. Nature is perfectly designed in balance with itself, but our human interference is killing it. There is absolutely no need to test these weapons except as an intimidation tactic to other nations. It's not actually that intimidating to see the largest most unstoppable military on the planet kill its own natural resources and poison all the land water and air of its citizens and military.	Thank you for your comment.
Elliston, H	The world is already dying At an even faster speed due to the disgusting actions of the military as of recently. At the very least, stop killing the part of the world that you have forced yourself on.	Thank you for your comment.
Elovitz, R-01	Rose Ellovitz testified as follows: MS. ELLOVITZ: Aloha mai kakou. My name is Rose Ellovitz. I'm a representative with Jewish Voice for Peace. I'm freestyling here today, so stick with me. And first things first, I just want to say that this EIS is severely incomplete. The artificial boxes that you put around Hawaii, that you put around this Southern California and the central coast of California, do not even start to quantify the level of violence that RIMPAC inflicts on the entire world, because the war games and the actual warfare that you enforce upon the people of Hawaii and the people of California and all of the land and animals	Thank you for your comment.

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	and fish inside as well are just the beginning to the level -- to the imperialist project that the U.S. military has. And one example of that is that Israel is a participant of RIMPAC and has been since 2018. This year, 2024, Israel, while committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, were invited to train with the U.S. military. And I think this just demonstrates what the intention of RIMPAC is actually for, and it is to kill and maim and destroy every living being on this planet. And to everyone here that just sits and thinks that this EIS has any gravity to it, I'm so angry with you because our world is on fire. And as our home, our only home, is become scorched and flooded, you're sitting here lying about what you're actually doing to take home a paycheck. I feel sorry for you because it is not just us who burn and perish. It is not just the whales. It is you It is the children, it is your grandchildren, it is your great-grandchildren who are going to be impacted by your decisions here today. A'ole RIMPAC. MS. TURNER: Thank you.	
Elovitz, R-02	This EIS is a disgrace to our ʻāina and to the safety of our future generations. As someone who has the privilege to call both California and Hawaiʻi home, I firmly protest the lies put forth by this document that claim the US Navy promotes any form of protection and care to moananui. STOP DESECRATING OUR MOTHER EARTH. YOU ARE KILLING US ALL, YOURSELVES INCLUDED. all those who promote and protect these lies should be ashamed of themselves. due to the US Navy's perpetual violence, we will, unfortunately, be in touch. FREE HAWAIʻI FREE PALESTINE. FREE CONGO FREE SUDAN! FREE THE WORLD FROM THE GRIPS OF US TERRORISM DOWN WITH OCCUPATION. OLA I KA WAI!	Thank you for your comment.
Em	Do not remove protections that keep our marine life safe!! This will have devastating impacts on the environment. Protect the animals, protect life, protect EARTH. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Emily-01	Good Evening. My name is Emily, and I'm very upset and concerned about this draft the Navy is proposing. People within the Navy HAVE to know how damaged the ocean is due to climate change. And it's a fact that Navies pollute the waters with not just physical trash, but also noise pollutant. We are in a period where we are teetering towards unreversable climate change.	Thank you for your comment.

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	We NEED to care more about what the Navies damage does to the ocean. And making Navy productivity go up by 50% is nonsensical and will only speed up the damage the Navy is already doing. If the ocean becomes damaged beyond repair, WE the people and everything on land are going to suffer big time. The ocean is a CO2 sink, and is also our BIGGEST source of oxygen. People need to care more about that fact. There is, of course, also the fact the Navy damages marine life, whether it be reefs, or killing whales and other marine life with sonar. And then there's the biggest, most blaring issue I find with this, is the complete further lack of care and humanity towards indigenous hawaiians, aka Kanaka Maoli. These people have suffered enough under US rule. They DO NOT NEED any more meddling from US military. Best case scenario would the US packing up and leaving and leaving them alone for the rest of earth's time, but I know the US would rather have Hawaii ripped from it's cold dead hands than rather have a single DROP of empathy, and try for once to take back it's colonization hold on indigenous territory. But yes, these people do not want you there, let along you guys furthering the damage to their native land and surrounding oceans, which has already been run through the wringer and has become so hostile towards actual indigenous hawaiians, with whatever needless military expansion plan you guys have in mind. You guys need to care about your inner workings anyways. Stopping self defense classes against SA is a WILD thing to do. Really shows priorities and how much you guys actually care for your own people. Have a lovely day.	
Emily-02	Don’t disturb Hawaii’s marine life.	Thank you for your comment.
Emma	Endangered animals and wildlife need to be prioritized over the expansion of naval bases and boundaries. The people of Hawaii and California have spoken out about how dangerous this change could be to their culture, their environment, and their future, listen to them!	Thank you for your comment.
Engels, J	I am writing to express my strong opposition to the U.S. Navy application for authorization from the National Marine Fisheries Service to conduct testing and training activities for 7 years (2025 to 2032) in the waters off Hawai'i and California. NMFS authorization under the Marine Mammal Protection Act will give the U.S. Navy permission to have an "incidental take" (meaning injury or death) of ~33.7 million marine mammals due to the cumulative harmful effects of deploying acoustics and explosives. The magnitude of this	It is inaccurate to state that the proposed activities would result in more than 33 million instances of harm to marine mammal species. The training and testing activities proposed in the Study Area would result in Level B and Level A takes. However, the estimated number of takes, although large, is conservative; and more importantly, it does not

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	harm to marine mammal populations is unconscionable, unacceptable, and unnecessary. I have confidence that the brightest minds in the U.S. Navy can find less damaging ways of conducting testing, including via simulations, with support from the University of Hawai'i Applied Research Lab and other academic and scientific partners.	equate to long-term population-level impact on affected species. Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
England, B	I completely oppose what is going on here! This action will be devastating to marine life as well as the lives and livelihoods of the people of these regions. We need to keep our waters clean and protected not only for ourselves, but for future generations!	Thank you for your comment.
Eric	MS. TURNER: Eric and then Misty Pegram. Eric testified as follows:	Please see the analysis in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS. The Navy continues to conduct its

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	ERIC: Aloha. My name is Eric. I'm here to stand up for the ocean, this island, and all the creatures on them and in them from the Hawaiian native sea turtles to monk seals near our islands to the whales that travel the Pacific from Hawaii to California. The military's done enough training between Hawaii and California, building warplanes, explosives, and other equipments. They say they'll try not to harm the marine mammals, but how can that be true if their activities are so loud and destructive? These actions are already causing harm. One, the military does explosions. The loud sounds from warplanes and explosives travel far underwater and in the air. The turtles rely on sound to navigate and communicate. These sounds – these noises confuse and stress them, making it hard for them to survive. For birds like the albatross and shearwater that fly thousands of miles between Hawaii and California, warplanes can disrupt their migration. Birds may abandon nests or use up the energy they need to survive, all because of these military activities. Two, destroying their homes. The military is damaging coral reefs near Hawaii and the coast off California. These places are homes for fish, turtles, and birds that depend on the ocean for food. When the military harms these habitats, they harm entire ecosystems. Three, breaking the law. The military says they're careful, but their actions are violating the environment and putting endangered animals like the Hawaiian monk seal and migratory birds at greater risk. Laws like the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act are supposed to protect these poor creatures but yet these activities continue to harm them. Four, polluting our ocean and sky. Warplanes release harmful chemicals and fuel which can poison the water and air. The animals and people who depend on a clean ocean are left to deal with the consequences even if we didn't cause the problem. We need to demand the military to stop causing harm and start protecting what's left of our environment. The ocean and sky don't belong to the military. They belong to all of us, including the animals that live there. If they continue these harmful practices, we will lose species that are already struggling to survive like the Hawaiian monk seal and many migratory birds. Mahalo for listening, and I urge you to take actions to protect these species because they cannot protect themselves. We need to	proposed activities in compliance with NEPA, the MMPA, and the ESA.

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	make sure the Pacific stays a safe home for species' generations, not a place of destruction. Mahalo. MS. TURNER: Thank you	
Erica	We demand any and all activities that negatively affect the environment, people or animals in any way be stopped immediately. We demand that all any and all future functions be made with no negative impact on the environment, people or animals in any way. Do better.	Thank you for your comment.
Escandon, R	I grew up in California and the Pacific Ocean is of such importance to so many communities. We need to protect it and the endangered species that call it home.	Thank you for your comment.
Esparza, R	I visited Hawaii Maui back in 2007 and was sent a packet from the navy if how the sonar would not harm our wildlife but we must protect more waters where our wildlife flourish. Do the training elsewhere.	Thank you for your comment.
Espinoza, A	DO NOT ENDANGER MARINE LIFE!	Thank you for your comment.
Evan	Don’t go through with the increase, it’s just not necessary.	Thank you for your comment.
Eve	We cannot continue to harm the earth, as above so below. Karma always comes back, it is a receiving and giving energy. It doesn’t care who you are.	Thank you for your comment.
F		
Facundo, C	NO TO FURTHERING MILITARY ACTIVITIES THAT WILL POLLUTE HAWAII’S OCEANS, WREAK HAVOC ON THE OCEAN ECOSYSTEM AND MARINE LIFE, AND HARM THEIR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND WAY OF LIFE.	Thank you for your comment.
Facundo, P	We need to preserve nature, stop damaging and polluting	Thank you for your comment.
Falinski, K	Hello I am an ocean lover and a scientist studying marine life in Hawaii. The proposed EIS is devastating for our people and for our marine world. Increasing bombing sites is unacceptable. Hawaii is a protected place, isolated - it is not the right place to be increasing military activity. Increasing the number of soldiers in the islands displaces local people who do not have the benefit of subsidized housing, food and fuel. The EIS proposes major training activities that will put pressure on Hawaiian land resources - requiring us to house, feed and provide water for more people. Our infrastructure cannot handle the increased traffic and utility use. I do not	The Proposed Action does not include land activities nor does it include requirements to increase personnel based in Hawaii.

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	support this. How will you mitigate the increase in noise in our airspace? The increase in traffic on our roads from foreign training coming here? Increasing missile training on an island archipelago is absurd. We are still dealing with the past effects of this - see Kaho'olawe as case in point. It is impossible to "warn" our marine life that they are being bombed. Increased ship traffic means more invasive species. Pearl Harbor is covered in octocorals, brought in by ballast water. Our island suffers from coconut rhinoceros beetle, brought by military from Guam. Please include details on how all foreign ships will prevent new invasive species. Did the Navy help to control CRB early? Do you not let us dive in Pearl Harbor so now the soft coral outbreak is out of control? The Navy only ruins things. It should cut back on its training and testing activities, not increase. The EIS does not address invasive species, overload to infrastructure on the island, how to prevent true harm to marine life. Sincerely, Dr. Kim Falinski	
Farsakh, Y	The United States has a strong duty to protect the people of Hawaii and ensure they experience no more subjection than what has already occurred in stripping them of their island. I am vehemently opposed to expanding military activity on the coast of Hawaii both for the environment and people who live there. DO NOT embark on another selfish military escapade at the expense of the people of Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Felicia	We need our wild life, ocean wild life, and clean water. The ecosystem is slowly being put on the back burner. With out our ecosystem. Humans are nothing on this land. With the coral population declining as years past. We DO NOT need this on the Hawaiian coast. We are doing more damage to this earth. Without even thinking about the consequences it can cause. May not see or feel a difference of your actions in your lifetime. But remember your family line is still growing. Think about their life when they have to deal with the repercussions on your actions. When you dismantle the ocean wildlife slowly but surely. Stop the pollution, harm, and no thoughts with the wildlife and world around you.	Thank you for your comment.
Fernandez-Kekahu, D	I oppose more military practice around Hawaii. I am against the destruction of our islands that military practices cause.	Thank you for your comment.
Ferraro, L	Dont downplay it. We do t want this to happen	Thank you for your comment.

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Finnegan, C	Please stop harming the environment and humanity	Thank you for your comment.
Fitzhugh, L	I vehemently disagree with the conduct and intention of this project. Hawai'i belongs to the indigenous people and the right to a clean and safe environment is a right to everyone, especially indigenous Hawaiians who have long been the victims of environmental harm by the US Navy.	Thank you for your comment.
F, Kawanne	I submit the following attached piece to enlighten pur leaders on the harm the are causing to the environment and the Local Americans!	Thank you for your comment.
Flippen, C	As an onlooker and advocate that stands with Hawaiian people, I cannot stand by and say that an increase in US Military actions on Hawaiian soil should no longer considered. The effect already that the booming tourist industry brings to the native Hawaiians life is already a threat not just to their property water sources but to their natural water resources as well. This threat is also increased by the already ever present military action on their land, less water to native homes and a threat to the natural water supply. The ocean, the canals, the rivers, the creeks are all effected heavily and dangerously by what is already on the land, adding more could be detrimental to the people of Hawaii and the island itself.	Thank you for your comment.
Flores, D	The island deserves respect, recognition and appreciation for its resources to be left for the civilians who have originally lived there as well as wild life that has already been threatened by constant colonization and tourism. The US military has enough land in the continental US and providences in the gulf.	Thank you for your comment.
Fowler, N	I live on Kaneohe Bay and I am really upset with the plans to bring more noise and disruption to my family and neighborhood! We already suffer from far too much noise coming from Kaneohe Marine Corps Air Station. We have helicopters, C-130s and small jets flying in and out constantly. Pilots practice landings and take offs all day, often until 10:00 at night. We also have to listen to what I believe are visiting F-18's, which are quite loud. I know, it's the "sound of freedom", however there are a few other issues to consider before bringing even more noise to our bay. Kaneohe Bay is surrounded by mountains and sound bounces off of them making aircraft noise much louder than normal. The noise is so much more extreme than people realize. Many of our homes are single wall construction and often shake from much of the	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action does not include aircraft take-off and landing activities from land bases. In addition, Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH) has a website (https://www.mcbhawaii.marines.mil/Offices-Staff/Communication-Strategy-Operations/Noise-Concerns/) where community members can address directly with MCBH.

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	airplane noise. I am pleading with you to not increase military activity with any more noise and pollution of our beloved, sacred waters!	
Freenan, M	It is our duty to protect our environment and respect our land and waters. Increased navy activity would have a detrimental effect to the wellbeing of or waters and for the world we hope to leave behind for our children.	Thank you for your comment.
Frey, M	Stop the destruction and harm to occupied land!	Thank you for your comment.
Fulton, M	We have to protect our oceans for ourselves and future generations.	Thank you for your comment.
Fung, K	Keala Fung testified as follows: MS. FUNG:· Aloha.· My name is Keala, and I live here on Oahu, and I'm a fisherperson.· So I am one of these people who are -- who get their sustenance directly from the ocean.· I don't buy fish because I don't support the commercial fishing.· So if I don't catch fish, I don't eat fish. So all these animals, the fish, the living creatures near shore are directly food for those animals and creatures slightly away from shore who is food directly for those other animals farther away from shore.· And what happens in the deep oceans directly affects not just me, not just all the other braddahs that go fishing but also all of the living entities near shore. So what we do when we go fish is we feed and we give to the ocean.· Then we ask the ocean. And then we take.· And if there is a "no" anywhere along that line, we don't take. And trust me, I've been at the ocean on days when she said "no."· And that's food; right? I go home.· I come back another day, and I ask and I give again.· And if the answer is "no," I don't take. The answer has been a resounding "no" from all these testimonies that I've been hearing.· The answer has been a resounding "no" for decades. Nonconsent is pretty much it.· Kahoolawe never consented to have the water table cracked. Makua never consented to having exploded ordnances. Those families never consented to be evicted, raped. To continue this, to ask for more, to take when the answer has been a resounding "no" is rape. I hope the military will do the correct thing and stop this legacy of rape.· The people, and more so, the aina and the ocean has had enough. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.

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G		
Gabriela	this could deeply affect our ocean ecosystem and the current ways that animals live therefor effecting things like the cycle of different forms of lives in and outside the ocean, therefor directly affecting our daily lives	Thank you for your comment.
Galang, D	Related to Historic Preservation of military property, please consider the significant of 1) Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego in the La Jolla original aquarium, pier, Camp Matthews 2) Liberty Station (former Naval Training Center) esp. administrative building, flag plaza, main entrances (off Rosecrans, and Laning) 3) Original Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital - in La Jolla off Gilman Drive - (NMCST) Balboa Hospital Page 2 1) Please consider notification of civilian academic institutions (e.g. UC San Diego) and federal agencies (e.g. FEMA) 2) when trainings/testing will occur. Inter-juristrictional cooperation to coordinate drills (tsunami, eathquake, wildfire, and other disasters) 3) Emphisize the priority of global ecosystem sustainability. Page 3 Thank you for the in-person meeting located in San Diego/Point Loma. Please consider the following: 1) International waters and cooperation with our North American neighbors (Mexico & Canada) 2) Water quality standards. Please maintain clean water standards for the United States and the United Nations 3) Please consider animal migration periods and avoid testing/training when whales, sea birds and other fish will be adversely affected.	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action is for at-sea activities only, so any locations on land are outside the scope and Study Area of this project. Please see Appendix L (Public Involvement) for a list of federal, state, and local agencies provided notification letters. Note that the Navy frequently partners with academic institutions for Navy-funded marine research related to this project. Please see Section 3.2 for the analysis of water quality effects. The military services currently do coordinate with local governments and agencies for disaster relief. Animal migrations are considered in the analysis of effects included throughout Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS.
Gallo, S	See Form Letter comment and response	See Form Letter response
Garcia, Aa	Living in Hawaii, especially being close to Maui, I've always had a deep appreciation for the ocean and everything it provides. It's not just a beautiful part of our environment—it's a lifeline for marine life, local culture, and the	Thank you for your comment.

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	community. That's why protecting our oceans should always be a priority. Some military training exercises and chemicals used in operations can have long-term effects on marine ecosystems. While defense and preparedness are important, they shouldn't come at the cost of the environment. There needs to be a balance—stronger regulations, safer alternatives, and accountability to ensure that military practices don't endanger the very waters we rely on.	
Garcia, An	Listen to the people of that nation. Just because that horrible being that's in the office right now removed the US out of the Paris agreement does not mean to oblige by it. We need to find a way to co exist and not take over because the U.S. government has done it for so long starting with native Americans, starting with the 13 colonies where they COLONIZED. When does it stop. As humans start being empathetic to the creatures, water, and the land the earth has provided.	Thank you for your comment.
Garcia, Ru	FREE HAWAII STOP MODERN COLONIZATION	Thank you for your comment.
Garcia-Yamamura, K	No more expansion of military exercises in our Moana. No more.	Thank you for your comment.
Gardner, M	I'd really love to see the coral reefs of Hawaii one day and I cannot do that if they're all gone. The navy is to protect the people of the United States and that includes protecting the things that impact us day to day. Do not forget it's not just this life we need to look out for the the future for our children and their children	Thank you for your comment.
Garner, E	It is important that when looking at any change in regulation of naval operations that we evaluate the implications they may have on the environment. Expanding operations will cause extensive damage to the reefs and sea life surrounding Hawaii. Please listen to NATIVE Hawaiian people and environmental scientists when it comes to how we can best protect the sea environment while maintaining necessary naval operations.	Thank you for your comment.
Gaylord, C	Aloha, I am trying to submit my testimony for the Hawaii-California Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement before February 11, 2025 deadline. However, the website in not allowing submissions. I am still within the allowed timeframe and I would like assistance resolving this problem. Please take my statement here as my testimony. I am opposed to the expansion of US Navy expanding military	Thank you for your comment. On February 10, 2025, while the comment period was open, members of the public that entered comments on the project website were given a warning that their submission was not received. However, comments were still being received, this warning was given in

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	training in Hawaiian waters. I am particularly concerned by devastation of Hawaiian marine life, reefs and harm to Hawaiians by preventing cultural practices. Mahalo, Carol Gaylord 808-690-1178	error. The website administrators found the problem and resolved it on the same day.
G, Casey	Protect and prioritize our earths health, especially our marine life and local environment. Increasing military and expanding the navy will cause harm that shouldn't be overlooked.	Thank you for your comment.
Gebb, A	We need to protect the ocean and the reefs first future generations to enjoy ! Respectfully !! The Hawaiian people depend on both to survive Show ALOHA	Thank you for your comment.
Gibbs, R	Protecting marine life is something the affects all of us equally. All of the military might, power, and resources will mean nothing if we face extinction due to climate destruction.	Thank you for your comment.
Gilbert, G	I oppose the expansion of the Navy presence in Hawaii if it will cause damage to the ecosystem.	Thank you for your comment.
G, Mackenzie	I have had the wonderful privilege of living on these beautiful island now for a few years and would hate to see and of its beauty destroyed along with any of the wildlife that has been here long before we ever were. We should continue to keep the environment and local traditions in mind when considering projects like this.	Thank you for your comment.
G, Martha	Our oceans need protection, the animals are part of a delicate ecosystem that affect us all.	Thank you for your comment.
Go, J	See attached.	Thank you for your comment.
Goddard, A	I oppose the expansion of military activity anywhere near Hawaii. There will be disastrous impacts on the wildlife, coral reefs, local environment, and will negatively impact tourism. America will lose value if Hawaii is harmed.	Thank you for your comment.
Gold, J	There are better ways to do this. Destruction of OUR earth is not the answer. You can use AI for most of it. Please have mercy on our planet.	Thank you for your comment.
Gonzalez, A	The U.S. Navy's impact on the environment and native peoples of Hawaii has been extensive and disgraceful. The harm to endangered species and the	Thank you for your comment.

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	unique culture of Hawaii cannot be justified by military expansion and their activity in this region should stop immediately.	
Gorman-Chang, S-01	Seafloor Disturbance: California coast Figure ES-1: Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area Notes: HCTT = Hawaii-California Training and Testing, TOA = Temporary Operating Area shows the length of coastline of California where the Navy is proposing training to occur. This includes the area off the coast between southern California coast and the inhabited island of Santa Catalina and this area was mapped by the UC San Diego Scripps Institute of Oceanography and contains as many as 25,000 barrels of DDT dumped onto the ocean floor. https://scripps.ucsd.edu/ddtcoastaldumpsite 1) Please describe the steps taken to ensure that these leaking barrels of DDT are not further disturbed by the training described in the EIS, including in regards to, but not limited to, military applications of explosives that include bombs, mines, missiles, rockets, torpedoes, and projectiles as well as the installation and use of seafloor cables and platforms. Please describe what steps have been taken to map out the location of all barrels of toxic waste, including but not limited to DDT, those that are known to be in the area as well as steps taken to discover any heretofore unknown locations of barrels of toxic chemicals and toxic waste in the training areas. Below is a map of the known ocean dumping area and a picture of one of the DDT drums in the area already leaking. 2) Please describe the plan complete with a timeline, to report to the EPA, California EPA and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health any further deterioration or harm done to these barrels in the course of the 7 years of this training. 3) Please describe what steps you have taken, or will take in case there is a release of DDT from these containers, to prevent harm to all ocean life from DDT, a known poison that impacts creatures for generations and moves up the food chain to human beings.	The proposed activities do not include bottom-disturbing actions in the area of the dump site.
Gorman-Chang, S-02	Endangered Marine Life& Production of Oxygen: California & Hawaii I am concerned about the “taking” aka killing of the endangered marine life including but not limited to: Hawaiian Monk Seal, Humpback Whales, Green Sea Turtles, Blue Whales and coral reefs. Less than 1,600 Hawaiian Monk	The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our

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	Seals are left, while humpback whales are threatened by sonar and ship strikes and these training exercises will produce both. Underwater noise and collisions impact blue whales and green sea turtles are disturbed and/or deafened by training activities and vessel traffic. Our oceans are already on the brink, and human beings cannot live on Earth without a healthy ocean, which accounts for at least 50% of our planet's oxygen and absorbs 30% of our CO2 emissions. The cumulative impacts of climate change together with these training exercises will further cripple our oceans that are barely surviving as it is. We've destroyed 50% of all marine in the last 40 years. We have virtually no margin of error and these ocean military trainings will work along with other forces to eventually push us over the brink.	consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. Utilizing the latest science and technology, the services completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species. These and similar activities have been authorized under MMPA and subject to ESA Biological Opinions. The Navy uses the reasoning that if the proposed activities would not have significant negative effects, then we can conclude that ceasing these same activities would not result in significant positive effects..
Gorman-Chang, S-03	Seafloor and Habitat Disturbance: Hawaii In Volume II, page A-240, it shows a map of where trainings will take place on Oahu. Note that this area includes Puualoa, which has already been impacted by lead from the firing range there, not only in the water but also has been found in the air. Further pollution of this area by this training is not warranted.	All activities around Oahu would occur in nearshore locations (in-water only, no on-land activities) that have been used in a similar manner for decades. None of the scenarios described in the comment have happened in these areas in the past and are not anticipated in the future.

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	The area off Iroquois Point/Kapilina Beach Homes appears to be zoned on page A-240 for "non-explosive" training use. This is a fragile area, as it already has unexploded ordinances embedded in the coral reef offshore, dumped there sometime before/after WWII. The military has decided to do nothing, except post the sign seen below, and let the ordinances lay where they are in the coral reefs. See sign below. 4) Please explain the risk of any non-explosive work, such as the installation of seafloor cables and platforms, shaking, jarring and in any way disturbing the unexploded ordinances in the coral reefs just offshore. 5) How will you mitigate this risk? 5) How will you mitigate this risk? 6) Please describe how you will handle any unintended consequences of any of the training off Iroquois Point/Kapilina Beach Homes that could/would dislodge any ordinances or toxins from the items dumped there and now embedded in the coral reef. Who would you notify and when? What regulatory agencies would you notify and when? How/when would you notify the public? 7) Please explain the risk of any explosives near to or actually in this area on the unexploded ordinances referenced in the sign above.	
Gorman-Chang, S-04	8) Finally, please provide the total greenhouse gases produced over these 7 years due to these training exercises and all construction, transportation and other uses of fossil fuels associated with such training. As you compartmentalize the impact of this training over the next seven years spanning from Hawaii to California, please keep in mind that your job of protection of the United States becomes irrelevant on a planet you have helped destroy, killing human and all other life forms alike. In trying to "protect" you are slowly destroying. How ironic.	Please see Section 3.1.10.3 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) of the Draft EIS/OEIS.
Grace-01	testing in waters is so cruel to the marine life, our beautiful blue waters, and literally those who rely on the food it provides. this is so disgusting and polluting our waters	Thank you for your comment.
Grace-02	so we are like already dealing with pollution, climate change, species on the verge of extinction and you wanna do all this for what? this is so cruel	Thank you for your comment.

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Greene, T	Hello, I am writing on behalf of the Hawaiian people, who have been so hospitable to me and my family when we have traveled to their beautiful islands. The increased activity in Hawaiian waters is very concerning, and the ecological impact may cause irreversible damage. Please consult with the local communities on what a more reasonable request might be, their islands have already been impacted so much by existing military activity. Hugs and fishes, Tiffany	Thank you for your comment.
Gregory, R	The US military is inherently destructive. "No action" is always the preferred alternative.	Thank you for your comment.
Griffin-Noyes, E	Ka'ula is incredibly important wildlife habitat, both above and below the ocean surface. It provides critical nesting habitat for nesting birds, and is the only northwestern Hawaiian island that is projected to survive sea level rise. The coral reefs surround Ka'ula are some of the most incredible in the world. Despite talk of mitigation and applied conservation restoration efforts, there are not examples of bringing back ecosystems to the health and diversity they were held before areas were impacted. The Navy has not shown the ability / resources to restore Hawaiian systems. Our natural resources are critically important and need to be treated as such. Do not allow the destruction of such pristine areas.	Thank you for your comment. The activities on Kaula Island are not part of the Proposed Action because the EIS/OEIS analyzes the potential environmental effects of at-sea activities. The Environmental Assessment Pacific Range Facility Land-Based Training and Testing is still ongoing and addresses concerns about seabird habitat at Kaula.
Grijalva, M	THIS IS NOTTT ITTT . This will RUIN THE ENVIRONMENT PLEASE STOPR THIS IS NOT WHAT SHOULD BE DONE AT ALLL !!!!!!!!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Grimm, A	Expanding military zones and endangering Hawaii’s oceans and native indigenous populations with these harmful acts is cruelty. Hawaii is home to ocean populations that further the health of our oceans and planet. Encroaching closer to the shores and adding more military operations by 50% is a death sentence to all ocean life and will directly impact the native people of Hawaii. As a concerned American citizen, I urge our military to do the right thing and stop this madness.	Thank you for your comment.
Gross, M	Makamae Cassandra Gross testified as follows: MS. GROSS:· How many times has Hawaii told you "No"?· I come to you as Cassandra, as Makamae, malahini to Hawaii.· I moved here three years ago. You have been uninvited guests on this land for how many years?· How many years?· And still you have not learned.	Thank you for your comment.

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	How many times must Hawaii tell you "No"? I'm so proud of the members of the lahui who have stood up here, whether their voices shake or ring very loud and clear over and over again. How can you ignore these wise human voices? The only correct way forward is no action. The only correct way forward is only peace.· But I thought for a moment -- although I wish I had two hands, maybe we can accept the creaking -- let me examine the document which maybe you've forgotten you're supposed to sell this to us. So if you have it with you maybe you'll follow along with me a little bit.· And it starts on Page 1. I've marked up a little bit.· We have: "Technologies must be tested and evaluated before military personnel can rely on them in real-world situations." I feel like that's a little horrifying, testing untold technologies on marine life before you can test it in the real world.· The ocean is the real world. And on Page 2, really frightening -- I'm sorry, Page 3 at the top, there's a little diagram, and our beautiful pae aina is right in the middle of what is called the Hawaii Range Complex Boundary. We're all in that right now.· That's the real world, too. On Page 5, there's a summary of the environmental analysis which concludes that "the number of individual invertebrates" would --"affected...would be small."· But how many will die? "Population-level effects are unlikely," but not impossible.· "Behavioral effects from most activities" should be "temporary and minor." Now, let me pause and just say I understand you think you're doing this to protect us, but we have to evaluate the whole condition here. "Marine mammals in most stocks would be affected by exposure to sonar, explosives...no more than a few times a year." There's a picture of a beautiful baby seal. One of my favorite songs that comes on the radio is about a man who observed a mother seal and its baby in a bay and wishes one day to see them again. If it was your baby, how many times a year would you want to expose them to sonar and explosives?· How many times?· That's the real world, too.	

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	And just on Page 6, I could go on, but this whole chart about the estimated marine mammal annual takes -- and I understand the negative condition of "take" does not mean "death" -- however, it does not make me feel comforted.· Just basically, it's trying to assuage us that all that's really going to happen is some lawful clearing, some minor death, Level B harassment. So I'm just going to stop here and say that I'm the family of quite a few service members.· My brother was honorably discharged for his death at 29 years old.· He was a U.S. Naval Academy graduate. I have another sister who's a U.S. Naval Academy graduate.· My beloved great-grandfather served in the war. After living -- World War II -- after living his entire life in a small valley in southwest Virginia, he came to see Hawaii and other places in service to the military. We each have the capacity, you each have the responsibility, and you each have the right, regardless of whether you are in service or not, just like all of us here, to contribute to the deescalation and demilitarization of our planet, the country that I once called home, and I once was proud to call home, although the years that have passed have made that less and less so. Everyone here who has spoken before me spoke from their heart and is asking me to do that from a position of power as well.· Thank you. MS. TURNER:· Okay.	
Guadagnoli, A	Protect our seas! Protect our home!! We need it just as much as every other living thing does.	Thank you for your comment.
Gualpa, J	The U.S. government is fully aware of the devastating effects they have on Hawaii culture, people, and local marine life and the general environment. Get out of their oceans and stop destroying people's livelihoods and cultural knowledge. Sincerely, I hope if you read this you can understand the damage that is being done to the people and environment and you learn to appreciate what already exists instead of destroying it.	Thank you for your comment.
Gudschinsky, L	Aloha, I am writing in opposition to the proposed increased military weapons testing and training activities described in this draft environmental assessment, and to highlight the significant impacts that the proposed actions will have on the environment, including native wildlife, cultural and subsistence practices, and the well-being of Kānaka ʻŌiwi with cultural and ancestral ties to Kaʻula. I also protest the extremely limited time provided to	Activities on Kaula Island are not part of this Proposed Action. This EIS/OEIS analyzes environmental effects of at-sea activities. The Cumulative Impacts analysis is found in Chapter 4.

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	review and comment on this document, which incorporates thousands of pages of referenced reports and studies, while simultaneously ignoring a wide range of pressing environmental and cultural concerns. Ka'ula is a sacred landscape that is both culturally and ecologically important and should not be continually used for military target practice, let alone increased bombardment with "inert" ordnance and munitions. The findings of this draft environmental assessment do not accurately portray the significant and irreparable environmental, cultural, and transgenerational impacts that would arise from the US Navy's proposed activities. These impacts include, but are not limited to: Restricted Cultural Access: The proposal restricts Native Hawaiian access to Ka'ula, preventing traditional cultural practices such as fishing and the stewardship of natural and cultural resources and sites, and further exacerbating the generations-long loss of connection to ancestral lands. Decades of Past Desecration Compounded By Future Proposed Harm: Using the destruction of past military activities to justify further desecration is unacceptable. Each new impact from military weapons testing compounds the damage already inflicted to the land and surrounding waters of Ka'ula, and the cumulative impacts of past, continued, and increased future bombardment must be assessed as a whole. These impacts include the prevention of the restoration and recovery of this sacred landscape for entire generations into the future, necessary to begin healing the harms inflicted on both 'āina and Kānaka 'Ōiwi whose health and well-being are "intrinsically tied to their deep feelings and attachment to the land." (U.S. Pub. L. 103-150) Wildlife Impacts: Insufficient wildlife surveys ignore potential impacts on native seabirds and other wildlife, including endangered species that may roost on or under the ground, and that may not be evidenced by the aerial survey methods used. The continued restriction of access due to UXO and the continued lack of remediation will also prevent effective invasive species control measures that require on-the-ground management, also threatening native wildlife. No Cumulative Impact Analysis: The EA fails to address cumulative environmental, cultural, and human health impacts, including environmental justice impacts disproportionately impacting Kānaka 'Ōiwi, resulting from historic, ongoing and proposed future military target practice and other activities. Incomplete Cultural Consultation: The lack of Section 106 consultation with Native Hawaiian organizations, much less an assessment of Native Hawaiian	Regarding Cultural Consultation: The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been

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	traditional and customary practices protected under the Hawai'i State Constitution, means there can be no good faith finding of no significant cultural impacts. Furthermore, the short comment period provided for this draft EA, which incorporates thousands upon thousands of pages of referenced reports and studies, fails to provide for any meaningful community participation and input. The comment period for this draft EA must be extended to ensure that the spirit of the NEPA law is upheld, and the community is given a true opportunity to have their knowledge and concerns be heard. Sincerely, Laura Gudschinsky	taken into account and considered in analyses and findings.
Guttman, S	We must protect our reefs and wildlife in Hawaii. It is not sustainable to continue our military testing and training on those islands.	Thank you for your comment.
H		
Hakim, D	A comment against the military expansion as it damages Hawaii's delicate ecosystem beyond repair. See attachment. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Hanacek, J	What will you "protect" with these weapons if you poison the ocean? What purpose was there to take over Hawaii if you will only destroy it. The Navy must become better than this. It cannot revert to worse than before. Rise up and embrace the role of Stewardship as the only real Defense. earthstar111.substack.com	Thank you for your comment.
Hancock, C	I strongly go against the At-Sea training for the military!	Thank you for your comment.
Hane, A	Our country and military have caused enough damage to Hawaiian land, wildlife and people. Let this madness stop before even more is destroyed and lost to future generations.	Thank you for your comment.
Hanley, M	I strongly oppose the dumping of SpaceX rocket debris in the sacrifice zone surrounding Papahānaumokuākea, the Pacific Islands Heritage Monument, and the Main Hawaiian Islands. This area holds immense cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, and it is unacceptable to treat it as a dumping ground for corporate space waste. I demand that the FAA conduct a full and detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which they have illegally refused to do. The failure to carry out this necessary review disregards legal obligations and the protection of our marine environment, endangered species, and Indigenous cultural sites. Additionally, I call for full public	Activities related to SpaceX are not part of this Proposed Action. The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and

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	consultations in Hawai'i and with Hawaiian institutions, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), which is a co-trustee and manager of Papahānaumokuākea. Decisions impacting Hawai'i's sacred spaces should not be made without the direct involvement of Native Hawaiian organizations and the people who have protected these lands and waters for generations. Hawai'i is not a dumping ground. The FAA must uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities. Stop this reckless proposal now.	consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
Hanner-Gomez, M	THIS IS BIGGER THAN US. We humans have only been on this planet for a blip of time when compared to the timeline of this planet but we have done a SIGNIFICANT amount of damage to the planet since our time here. YOU have the choice to withhold from causing more harm. Hawai'i's ecosystem is more than beautiful, it's tied to the Hawai'ian people and it's the US's responsibility to respect and protect their land for them. If not, that makes us no better than parasites praying off their home and abusing their land for our own gain. PLEASE! For our future children. For our future history books. Do something to make future Americans proud of. PRESERVE HAWAI'I. REFRAIN FROM OCCUPYING EVEN MORE THAN WE ALREADY ARE.	Thank you for your comment.
Hanohano, K	Aloha, The Proposed Action to expand the Hawaii-California Training and Testing area will cause irreparable damages upon the environment. The negative impacts will be seen in the future. Kanaka Hawaii have seen similar impacts upon the Hawaiian Islands. The priorities of Military Readiness is placing the cost upon Hawaii and its true people. Research and statistics will show that the US military has historically displayed gross negligence upon taking care of the people and place it resides. The indigenous people of Hawaii, its culture, its lifestyle, and the true authenticity of Aloha is the very last priority of the US military. I oppose any expansion of Military Readiness Activities within the Hawaiian Islands, the many outlying islands, and at-sea between Hawaii and California. Mahalo	Thank you for your comment.
Hart, Al	I am vehemently opposed to the expansion of the Military Industrial complex and the continued misuse and abuse of the lands and waters of and surrounding Hawaii. I distrust the EIS and the Navy's proposals and false choices provided. There is a legacy of waste and destruction that is	Thank you for your comment.

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	objectively imposible to truly clean up and restore. Altruism is antithetical to military operations. Appreciate the opportunity to comment but it must be so very clear that the people cannot accept any more desecration. These war games wouldn't be necessary if the US paid more attention in restoration and communication. It's a big picture that one citizen, one city, one occupied kingdom can't hope to influence. It is the political, military, industry leaders that must make that decision to deny crisis elevation and shift to restoration and sustainability. Ola i ka wai.	
Hart, Am	Hawaii is an ecological hotspot for species diversity and productivity! It's also extremely culturally significant to Hawaiians. Hurting the ocean will also hurt the land. This military testing is irresponsible and offensive. It says that America doesn't care about people or their future.	Thank you for your comment.
Hatun, O	Stop the destruction of crucial marine ecosystems at the hands of the US military.	Thank you for your comment.
Hauie-Grace, M	Mahealani Hauie-Grace MS. GRACE:· (Hawaiian phrase spoken.)· So, braddah Skippy over there had mentioned earlier that his impact assessment mentioned there's no animals being harmed, that it's only temporarily; what they said stated in the 2018 EIS and said that mostly, it's not going to be different. But I was bartending right across the street at Harbor Mall during that time.· And I don't know if you guys remember this because if you guys were living here, you would know that there was a Navy ship impact that year that impacted six of our planet whales.· That I had to walk across the street during my lunch -- actually, brah, our manager let me walk across the street because they knew how much we were so sad that our kupunas, that you guys are preaching about, malama so much, was crying on the beaches, going with their own towels, the tourists coming out of their hotel room, coming out with their own towels, brah. I've never seen one bridge between us and manuhiri before, coming together because our whales are trying to run away.· And we didn't know what it is because we're not akamai like you guys.· We know more your guys' educational background and the qualities that you guys are claiming that the military has in our waters.· But what we have is our kupunas, and those days, we had to watch them go in and out of that ocean with one towel, brah.·	Thank you for your comment.

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	Coming out for just malama the pile of whales that died, mind you, six at least. Skippy over there saying that only had hurt them little bit, only had disrupt their hearing for a couple of minutes.· Let them swim the other direction, you claim, for a little bit.· And nothing has been changed.· You said since the 2018 EIS.· So as of right now in 2025, with nothing being changed, that textbook back there, brah, we got to read them with one dictionary. What is the difference, my dogs?· Because I don't see any as of right now.· And like the beautiful Lana said, in the State of Hawaii in 2025 with what is going on already, how is it for us for continue for give aloha to the military, who is the one's saying that they is here for malama aina.· Malama the ohana.· Malama kou ka kou honua.· Malama kou ka kou lahui.· As their main priority with aloha, with ho'okupus from malau on our kupuni.· For give you guys more land.· For hurt our iwi kupuna.· For desecrate our living kupunas. We have a marine biologist, Terry Lilly, that's been doing studies in our waters for 30 years who had got electrocuted during their EIS statement in 2018 that you said nothing is different.· Braddah stay in the hospital. One marine biologist, one haole from California that was helping us for the past 30 years fight you guys, and you guys continuously banning him from going because that buggah is akamai.· And if you guys like (Hawaiian phrase spoken.)· Aole.· Aole.· The aloha is fading in our state. If you guys like continue the aloha, you guys have to start showing some because it's dwindling in our communities, but you guys continuously helping your aina, your people, your ohana, that generation is being successful while our homeless is mainly Hawaiians. All the Maui fire victims, over a year later is still fighting while your guys' own governor that is being backed up by your military is allowing them for enter our waters, in free hotel rooms while our kupunas living, and you guys' claiming, you guys' here, you guys' protecting, that you guys' malama nei o kou (indiscernible.)· Aole.· Aole, military.· Deoccupy Hawaii or no more aloha.· (Hawaiian chanting.) MS. TURNER:· Thank you for your comment.	
Hawkinson, C	Ione, a snorkeling tour company on the island of Kauai. I am very concerned about the impacts that the US naval operations have had and continue to	Thank you for your comment.

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	have on the marine animals, Coral reefs, and coastal marine zones around the islands of Hawai'i. These naval operations have negative impacts on all marine creatures in Hawaiian waters. I do not support the Navy, expanding their naval operations in Hawaii. I would like to see the Navy be more accountable for their negative impacts.	
Hayden	Respect the peoples land and do not pollute their water. This is wrong.	Thank you for your comment.
Hayley	The ocean surrounding Hawaii is one of the most biodiverse and ecologically significant marine environments on the planet, playing a crucial role in global climate regulation, oceanic health, and the livelihoods of countless species—including humans. It supports vital coral reefs, sustains fisheries, and acts as a carbon sink that helps mitigate climate change. However, U.S. Navy activities, including sonar testing, live-fire exercises, and potential fuel leaks, pose serious threats to this delicate ecosystem. These disruptions can harm marine life, particularly whales and dolphins that rely on echolocation, damage fragile coral reefs, and contribute to pollution that spreads far beyond Hawaii's waters. The degradation of this marine environment is not just a local issue—it has global consequences, as the health of the ocean directly impacts weather patterns, food security, and biodiversity worldwide. Protecting Hawaii's waters from military interference is not only a matter of environmental conservation but also a crucial step in ensuring a sustainable future for the planet.	Thank you for your comment.
Heidy	DO NOT ENDANGER SEA LIFE!!!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Hendrickson, C	Any diver knows that shockwaves and noise travels for miles under water. There will be unintended circumstances to marine life and divers. These proposed locations fall within marine sanctuaries. These tests should not be held.	Please see Appendix D and Appendix E.
Herman, L	This is an unacceptable abuse of our nature. I urge you not to continue.	Thank you for your comment.
Hernandez, F-01	Increasing naval activities when marine life is desperate for a helping hand is a slap in the face to the islands and their native inhabitants on land and at sea.	Thank you for your comment.
Hernandez, F-02	Introduction To Whom It May Concern, I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, as well as in solidarity with Native Hawaiians,	Thank you for your comment.

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	environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana (ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities. Here is an outline of some of the issues in the documents, hereafter called the EIS or OEIS. It is not comprehensive, because despite regulations that the maximum size of an EIS is 300 pages, this document is 4 volumes long with the first volume alone being over 700 pages. It is a blatant violation of the regulation and makes the document unreadable to community members, but here are some highlights.	
Hibara, A	Please stop polluting the environment by expanding activity in Hawaii waters/shores. In the same energy as Okinawa STOP polluting, introducing more PFAs into the environment. I immediately oppose this potential decision.	Thank you for your comment.
Hilda	Knock it off. What you're doing is wrong	Thank you for your comment.
Hinshaw	Please do the right thing and protect the ocean	Thank you for your comment.
H, Jake	This is idiotic on several levels that you already know, don’t do this	Thank you for your comment.
Ho, E	I am a high school student at Waiʻanae High. I am writing to say you must stop practicing war games in our oceans. You have never cleaned up your mess and you want to still continue to destroy. This type of sick selfish practice is illegal/unlawful/gross/wrong/selfish/disrespectful to our ocean and life and food it supplies all of us in the pacific. Your military practices must stop...i oppose this practice and demand that it stops today and forever!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Hobbs, H	https://www.kalahuihawaii.net/protectourmoana	Thank you for your comment.
Holmes, L	Stop your colonialism *[expletive deleted]*. You've already taken enough, so why the hell do you continue? To please Uncle Sam? Your expansion is not wanted nor is it needed.	Thank you for your comment.

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Hopkins, L	Hawaii and its marine life should be protected from the detrimental effects of the increase of navy presence in its waters. Other avenues should be explored	Thank you for your comment.
Horsen, K-01	(see attachments) Us Army GWOT Veteran Hawaii Social worker Macro Policy, Graduate Scholar Turtle Clan / Water Clan Iroquois / Navajo Native Tribal Nations Hawaiian Studies A.A.	Thank you for your comment.
Horsen, K-02	Aloha mai kakou. Aloha. I want to go quickly. I don't want to take too long but I have a lot to say. I just want to say that the slides are a bit off. So I got all my information from the orca -- it's called orca dot -- www.orcanetwork.com [sic] and it has extensive research on sonar and the impact it has, like in -- all over places, UK, here in Hawaii, Molokai, California, all over the place. Yeah? So if the sonar that the submarines use to track enemy submarines is causing whales -- it's harassing, harming, or killing the whales -- yeah, they're big whales; right? These whales are huge; right Just think what it can do to us, our families, our ohanas. Yeah? What it can do to the biodiversity of the biosphere. Yeah? All the – all the animals. I will introduce myself. I'm sorry. E kala mai. I didn't introduce myself. I am Kimmer Horsen, Bighorse. Yeah? I'm a Native American from New York Iroquois and also Arizona. I'm a water clan so I'm turtle. Yeah? The Hawaiians hanaied me, and they gave me the name Nahoa (phonetic). Yeah? So I'm here to speak for the animals that don't have a voice. I'm here to speak for the Kanaloa. I'm here to speak for the sailors, even, that use the ocean, that are going to be ordered to go out on these dangerous missions as submariners. Yeah? So sonar has been linked to the death of whales and dolphins, and this is all extensive research. You guys can look this up yourself. Fatalities, the dumping	Thank you for your comment.

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	-- the missiles they're testing and the dumping of depleted uranium hurts the whales. Yes? Thousands of rounds of spent ammunition and unexploded ordnance contain chromium. Chromium gives us humans kidney -- kidney damage. It damages our kidneys. And that will be expelled from uranium into the ocean waters as pollution contamination. Yeah? Just like the Navy here has stored the fuel in Red Hill and contaminated our freshwater supply. It affects -- like I said, it affects their behavior. Yeah? The whales and all the -- no, I have more than that -- with their behavior. It affects their brain development, gives them brain damage, depresses their reproductive rates. I'm also a social worker. So I did – I heard a feedback from a young Native Hawaiian on Kauai that saw a whale, a fatal beached whale from sonar. And it's affecting our Native Hawaiian population. And I want to go through the violations that the Navy has caused for the U.N. Declaration of Indigenous Rights. Yeah? This is higher than U.S. domestic law. Yeah? It's higher than that. It's international law. Yeah? So violation, Article 10. Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories and, in this case, oceans due to sonar testing, fishing, and dependence on ocean life. And then the Hawaiian monk seals, beaked whales, mano sharks, stingray, turtles, fish, coral, limu, seaweed, Hawaiian salt, and there's so much more life. Yeah? Article 12 violation. Kanaka maoli are expert sea navigators. That includes wa'a navigators, fishermen. They have the right to manifest, protest, practice, develop, teach their spiritual customs, ceremonies to maintain, protect, and have access to their cultural sites, their oceans, islands, and airspace. Article 24 violation of the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Rights. Hawaiian and California tribes have the right to their traditional medicines, health practices, conservation of their plants, animals, and minerals and they have equal right to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Navy sonar is causing our Native Hawaiian population here on Oahu and all across the pae aina vast suicide, major depressive disorder, anxiety disorder -	

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	- generalized anxiety disorder, substance abuse, suicide. The youth suicide epidemic here on Oahu -- like I said, the young -- I wrote a paper in my social work class, my master's class, about a young keiki in Hawaii that saw a whale on the beach from the sonar dead, yeah, and how it affected him as a Native Hawaiian. That's a violation. Another violation. Tribal nations, also in California, they have the right to maintain and strengthen their spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned, occupied lands, territories, waters, seas to uphold the seventh generation. That means their children. Yeah? We are allowed that. We are allowed to look out for our keiki and our posterity. Article 26 violation. Kanaka maoli and tribal California nations have the right to use, own the seas, and control the seas by reason of traditional ownership. Okay? States shall give legal recognition and protection of these laws and resources. It shall be conducted with due respect for the customs, traditions, and land tenure systems of the kanaka maoli and California state tribes, the indigenous peoples, by their land system, not the American land system. Yeah? Almost pau. Article 29 violation. The right to conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of the lands and territories and resources. They demand that they are allowed to go on Pearl Harbor Hickam, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Makua, Schofield, Ka'ala Mountain to access their wahi pana, yeah, their cultural sites. And make sure the military's cleaning up their soils, their contamination, their pollution, their hazardous -- hazardous materials. Yeah? Just for that -- Kahuku also as well, right, Bellows Beach, Barking Sands, Pearl Harbor, all that, Pohakuloa, Big Island. One more -- two more violations, then I'm pau. The military -- so what we're -- what I'm proposing -- I don't know if -- I think the military should demilitarize. Yeah? That's -- that's the consensus of most indigenous populations. I'm not saying everybody. But the consensus is that we demilitarize, that this is not going anywhere. This is war posturing and war games. Yeah? That -- we shall undertake that the procedures of their	

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	lands and territories that they be allowed to go onto the military bases and access their sacred, cultural places and practice their ceremonies and use the sites. Every Native Hawaiian should have access to the military installations. That is also a violation. Violation, last violation. States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and effective redress of any activities. Appropriate measures taken to mitigate the environmental, economic, social, cultural, or spiritual impact. Some of the other sicknesses that the whales have is decompression sickness, the bends. Yeah? They come up from the sound from the sonar. They come up to the top of the ocean and they lose their hearing. They go deaf and they get the bends. Yeah? It's deadly. Deadly. I want to make sure that all these facts get out there. I just want to say that a lot of whales have died, 630,000 off the coast of California; 60,000 in Washington, Oregon; 140,000 here in Hawaii; 500,000 off Florida. They're facing extinction. That's what the note said. It was not going to face extinction. It is. Whales are facing extinction. All right? So it's not correct. You guys aren't giving a correct report and that's not pono. It's not integrity. I'm sure you would. But this is the Kingdom of Hawaii. You need to address their indigenous populations. You're violating international law. You're violating the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Rights. Onipa'a. AUDIENCE: Onipa'a. MS. HORSEN: Aloha. MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.	
Horsen, K-03	VIOLATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION OF NDGNS rights Article 10 VIOLATION Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands, or territories (in this case, oceans) due to sonar testing, fishing and dependence on ocean life: endemic hawaiian monk seals, beaked whales, mano sharks, stingray, honu sea turtles, vast species of fish, choral reef, limu seaweed, Hawaiian salt WITI-IOUT their consent Article 12 VIOLATION	The proposed training and testing does not forcibly remove indigenous people from their lands or the ocean. As discussed in Section 3.11.3.1.3, these activities will not foreclose other uses of the ocean space to include use of the ocean for traditional cultural practices. Additionally, Navy activities at sea are episodic and temporary, and extensive efforts are made to deconflict sea space usage whenever possible. This includes consideration for

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	Kanaka Maoli are expert sea navigators and canoe wa'a navigators, fishermen. They have a right to manifest, practise, develop teach their spiritual customs, ceremonies, to maintain, protect, and have access to their cultural sites i.e. their ocean territories, islands, and air space Article 24 VIOLATION !)Hawaiians and California Tribes have the right to their traditional medicines, health practices, conservation of their medicinal plants, animals and minerals. 2)Hawaiians and California tribals nations have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The presence of NA VY SONAR testing increases Kanaka Maoli major depressive disorder, harmful psychological disorders such as anxiety and suicidal ideation, substance abuse as a result of their territories and sacred relationship to the ocean being polluted, harmed, and destroyed by SONAR testing and NA VY drills, air and lands mostly for their youth suicide epidemic Article 25 VIOLATION Hawaiians, Kanaka Maoli and California tribal nations have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied lands, territories, waters, and coastal seas, to uphold their future responsibilities to the seventh generation, their children posterity Article 26 VIOLATION (2) Kanaka Maolia and California tribal nations have the right to own, use, and control the seas they possess by reason of traditional ownership (3) States shall give legal recognition and protection to these landsw, territories, and resources SUch recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions, and land tenure systems of the Kanaka Maoli and California tribes Article 29 VIOLATION KM and CTN have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands and territories resources. KM and CTN demand access to all military bases, their beaches, vegetation, water resources, and lands to ensure the military is properly cleaning up and disposing of UX:Os, contamination, pollution, hazardous materials for that purpose. Also they demand that they be allowed to access	Tribal and Native Hawaiian seafaring practices such as canoe navigation and fishing. The Navy acknowledges United States recognition of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and is committed to aligning the activities in the Proposed Action with the declaration's principles where appropriate and feasible. In support of this commitment, the Navy followed the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). As part of the Section 106 process, the Navy invited input on the project's potential to affect historic properties from over 600 organizations and individuals, including Native Hawaiian Organizations and California Native American Tribes. Based on these consultations, the Navy determined that the proposed activities would not affect any historic properties, including those of interest to NHOs such as Hawaiian fishponds and to Native American Tribes in California. See Section 3.10 for more information, and see Appendix J (Agency Correspondence) for the Action Proponents compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act.

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	sacred wahi pana, kuahiwi such as KoleKole pass, Bellows Beach, Makua Valley for cultural and ceremonial purposes Pearl Harbor and Hickam AFB, KMB MCBH, Pohakuloa, Barking Sands Article 30 VIOLATION (1) Military activities shall not take place in the lands and territories of KM and CTN unless freely agreed with or requested by the indigenous peoples concerned (2) States shall undertake effective consultations with NDGNS peoples concerned through procedures, prior to using their lands territories for military purposes ARTICLE 32 VIOLATION States shall provide effective mechanism for just and effective redress of any such activities, appropriate measures taken to mitigate environmental, economic, social cultural or spiritual impact.	
Horsen, K-04	www.orcanetwork.com Cause of whale stranding under investigation August 2, 2008 (Molokai Times) Navy sonar transmissions responsible, says organization The beaching of a whale off Molokai's coast has some pointing fingers at the U.S. Navy and its use of mid-frequency sonar transmissions. The 15-foot male - a Cuvier's beaked whale - was found close to the Kawela shore early morning on July 28. National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) officials flew to Molokai to assess the whale's condition. Although the animal attempted to return to the open water a couple of times, it kept swimming back to the shore, said Chris Yates, head of the Protected Resources Division for NOAA Fisheries. Those present at the scene, including a veterinarian from Honolulu, decided euthanizing the whale would be the most humane thing to do, said Yates. NOAA officials conducted a necropsy on the whale on July 29. "It's impossible to say conclusively at this point but all the indications are that it was connected," said Earthjustice attorney Paul Architoff. "If there was ever a circumstance where it appeared that sonar was responsible, this is it." The effect of sonar transmissions on beaked whales has been the subject of much research, especially after 13 beached themselves during Navy	The Navy fully acknowledged and considered all relevant and applicable research regarding strandings. Section D.4.7.1.3 (Strandings Associated with Sonar) lists the specific mass stranding events for which sonar use during exercises involving the U.S. Navy has been identified as a contributing cause or factor. Additional details on these events are provided in the Marine Mammal Stranding Report is included on the project website: https://www.nepa.navy.mil/Completed-Projects/At-Sea-Ranges/Hawaii-Southern-California-Training-and-Testing-Environmental-Planning/Documents/. On the Documents page, navigate to NEPA Documents > 2018 Final EIS/OEIS Supporting Technical Documents.

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	exercises in the Bahamas in 2000, according to the Center for Whale Research. Colin Crosby, a Maui-resident who came to Molokai with his son during the July 26 weekend, was at Papohaku Beach the day before the whale beached itself. He said he and his fellow campers heard an electronic sounding screech when they dove into the water. Crosby said the noise started off soft and kept getting louder until a very loud pitch could be heard both in and out of the water. It then died down a bit and echoed through the water before the sequence started up again. Whale stranding provokes claims of a sonar injury July 30, 2008 (Maui News) A coalition of opponents of the Navy's use of sonar in training around Hawaii charged on Tuesday that a 15-foot whale stranded on Molokai was injured by sonar use during the Navy's RIMPAC exercises. A necropsy and a magnetic resonance imaging examination were performed on the whale Tuesday after it was flown to Oahu and examined at a laboratory at Hawaii Pacific University, she said. It quoted a whale researcher, Robin Baird of Cascadia Research, in charging that Cuvier's beaked whales "appear to be particularly susceptible to harm from midfrequency active sonar." "The exact mechanism of harm is not known, but whales stranded in association with naval exercises have exhibited gas bubble lesions, somewhat similar to the bends that human divers experience when they rise too quickly from a long dive," Baird said. (June 9, 2008) Dozens of dolphins die, stranded on Madagascar beach (June 10, 2008) Navy ships' sonar may have led to death of 26 dolphins as rescuers continue search (June 10, 2008) Grim recovery of trapped dolphins (June 10, 2008) Navy in area before dolphins died (June 10, 2008) Why do dolphins beach en masse? (June 11, 2008) Dolphins found dead off Cornish coast 'committed suicide'. wildlife expert claims	

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	(June 11, 2008) Dolphin disaster: Why we must learn from this before it's too late Their report suggested the sonar waves confuse the animals' sense of depth, causing them to surface quickly and suffer blood clots and fatal decompression sickness	
Horsen, K-05	Unmitigated sonar use violates U.S. environmental laws The Navy's use of mid-frequency sonar violates the National Environmental Policy Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act, according to the lawsuit filed today. Those laws require the Navy to assess and mitigate the damage its activities cause; to obtain "take" permits for the animals its activities will necessarily harass, harm or kill; and to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service on the potential effects of mid-frequency sonar exercises on threatened or endangered species. The decision, released late Friday night, is the latest in a string of legal defeats for the Navy in Los Angeles and Hawaii as it tries to avoid court-ordered restraints on how it trains sailors to hunt for submarines with a type that has been linked to the death of whales and dolphins. After the last training in January, a northern right whale dolphin washed up on Navy-owned San Nicolas Island with blood in its ears--a symptom seen in the fatalities of deep-diving whales that washed ashore in the Canary Islands and the Bahamas after military sonar exercises. Opponents fear that missile and sonar testing and the dumping of depleted uranium could hurt the whales. The Natural Resources Defense Council worries the Navy will release hazardous materials into coastal waters, including "thousands of rounds of spent ammunition and unexploded ordnance containing chromium, chromium compounds, depleted uranium" and more. The council also believes the midfrequency sonar used to detect submarines and underwater objects interferes with whales' ability to navigate and communicate, and that the chronic noise can interfere with whales' brain development and depress reproductive rates. These exercises would take place in the midst of multiple ships and aircraft, sometimes operating at high speeds, deploying high-powered and explosive	The Navy continues to conduct its proposed activities in compliance with NEPA, the MMPA, and the ESA. The military services' analysis was completed using the best available, peer-reviewed science. Appendix D summarizes the best available science on acoustic impacts to marine mammals, including the types and severity of impacts observed in response to acoustic stressors and the population consequences of disturbance. We continue to pursue new scientific data, collected through professional studies and verified through credible, recognized sources. The military services work proactively with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state, federal, and non-profit environmental organizations to ensure its operations are safe and minimize impact on marine life. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, mitigation measures are implemented with the aim of achieving the least practicable adverse impacts on marine mammal species or stocks, ensuring a negligible impact on marine mammal species and stocks (as required under the MMPA), and ensures that Navy training and testing activities do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species, or result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat (as required under the ESA).

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	sonars and detonating munitions, often making detection or recognition impossible. The Navy should demonstrate a means to respond to environmental consequences of a maritime incident such as a toxic spill in all their operating areas including interactions between their ships and commercial vessels. The responsibility lies with the office of the President of the United States, the State Department and Congress to prevent this immanent danger to marine life by fostering improved international relations and thereby reducing hostilities. The training exercises deal with anti-submarine warfare and include the use of mid- and high-frequency sonar and detonation of explosives The best way to detect something as quiet as a submarine running nearly entirely on battery power - as opposed to a noisy nuclear sub - is with high-intensity active sonar, which sends pulses of mid-frequency sound as loud as a rocket blast underwater. The general consensus, with which courts over the past decade have largely agreed, says high-intensity mid-frequency sonar can kill whales and dolphins. A new study offers evidence to support the theory that beaked whales get the bends when they surface rapidly, possibly after being startled by naval sonar. "It provides more evidence that beaked whales that are being found dead in association with naval sonar activities are likely to be getting decompression sickness," said Robin Baird, a marine biologist at Cascadia Research Collective and one of the report's authors. The regulations allow approximately 11.7 million instances of harassment, injury, or even death (the legal term is "take") to marine mammals by exposing them to high-intensity military sonar training in coastal waters around the United States. These estimates - the Navy's own - include 9.7 million takes along the Atlantic Coast and the Gulf of Mexico; 630,000 off the coast of southern California; 650,000 along the coast of Washington and Oregon; 140,000 in Hawaii; and another 500,000 off the coast of Florida. Sonar exposure is not, as the Navy suggests, a mere matter of annoyance to whales and dolphins. In fact, the harm ranges from significand disturbance to	

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	important behaviors - feeding, breeding, migrating, communicating, finding mates - to hearing damage and even mass stranding and death. According to government scientists, the "loss of even a single individual right whale may contribute to the extinction of the species." The UK military report details observations of whale activity during Operation Anglo-Saxon 06, a submarine war-games exercise in 2006. Produced for the UK's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, it states the results are "potentially very significant". The study used an array of hydrophones to listen for whale sounds during the war games. Across the course of the exercise, the number of whale recordings dropped from over 200 to less than 50. Beaked whale species appear to cease vocalizing and foraging for food in the area around active sonar transmissions," said the report. The report also references a second military document from 2005, which explains that these second- and third-order effects could include starvation and then death, depending on the severity of the sonar's initial effect on the whales. Navy/NRDC Sonar Debate by Jim Cummings AEI Executive Director NAVY pro-active: These steps include posting trained personnel to serve as lookouts for marine mammals, surveying the area to ensure no animals are present before training starts, and reducing power or shutting down sonar when marine mammals are sighted within mitigation zones. GOAL: Seeking a strengthened partnership and relationship between indigenous peoples and the United States military officials, no nuclear capabilites Acknowledging the charter of the United Nations, Intl covenant on economic, social and cultural rights and the INTL covenant on civil and political rights right to self-determination and autonomy conforming to international law, enhancing harmonious and cooperative relations between the state and indigenous peoples, acknowledging that Hawaii is belligerently United States military occupied Hawaiian Kingdom, country State.	

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	Based on the principles of justice, democracy, respect, non-discrimination and good faith The United States military has an obligation to effectively implement all their obligations in consultation, cooperation, promotion and protection as they apply to indigenous peoples of California and Hawaii, promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples indispensable for their existence Article 9 UN Declaration (b) any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories, or resources (d) any form of forced assimilation-Kanaka Maolia and those of Polynesian decent are forced to assimilate to an overpopulated tourism military and tourism industry that exploits their culture: music and hula specifically, diet, food, natural resources, fish, fresh water resources, relationship with the land, sea, air and fresh water	
Hosfeld, B	Please see the attached document.	Thank you for your comment.
Hughes, L	Our oceans and marine life are already undergoing huge stresses due to climate changes induced acidification and warming. As an environment scientist I feel it is my duty to speak out against the navy's plan to expand reach in Hawaii and add more stress to the endangered ecosystems there. Find another, better way.	Thank you for your comment.
Hummingbird, N	PROTECT OUR OCEANS!!! OCEANS ARE A CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM THAT WE RELY ON.	Thank you for your comment.
Hunkin, R	This project is inhumane and cannot be proceeded with. I stand in strong opposition of this project on the grounds of endangering invasive species, the possible global impact on climate change, contributing more pollution to the oceans deriving from Navy activity, and, perhaps most importantly, lack of consultation with Kānaka Maoli. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Hunter, M	I grew up in Hawai'i and heard stories of my uncle's family being forced off their land to make way for the Kaneohe Marine Corps Base, stories of community efforts to free Kaho'olawe from US military control and the devastation US military target practice caused to the island. So it comes to no surprise to me that the US military is once again attempting to expand their reach in the Hawaiian islands. Their encroachment must be stopped. It has already caused irreparable harm to the 'āina and to the Hawaiian people,	Thank you for your comment.

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	and if not kept in check the US military's greed will destroy these islands. I cannot stand by while this happens.	
Hurst, A	To enact your dangerous policy is to deprive people [and all divinely created] of an innate right to freely exist. It is selfish and destructive. I demand a pullback of set plans to devastate the Hawaiian waters and a call to acknowledge the sovereignty of Hawaiian peoples.	Thank you for your comment.
Hussain, K	I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, as well as in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana (ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities.	Thank you for your comment.
I		
I, Heidi	The United States (U.S.) Navy needs to leave Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Ikeda, J-01	Hi, I'm Jasmine Ikeda. I'm born and raised on the island of Kauai. And I don't think that, you know, this California-Hawaii testing and training is going to have irreversible damage to the marine life; that there's going to be a degradation of the marine ecosystem, and won't be able to get it back. Or if it does come back, it's, like, going to take time. And the exasperation -- climate change is already significant with carbon emission being over 383 metric tons and contradicts Hawaii's climate goals. And it's worsening, I think, global warming impacts. As far as health and safety goes, it's releasing harmful chemicals, heavy metals, and explosive residues, and I just don't think that any of these things are good for the ocean. It's cumulatively very damaging. And I think that if the military is thinking it should be more proactive about maybe de-escalation and less, like, fear-based defense mechanisms because the more that they are arming themselves to defend, the more that there's going to be needing to defend against. I do hear that there is some indigenous consultation, but if you ask any indigenous person, they're going to tell you that, you know, any indigenous	Thank you for your comment.

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	person that cares about Hawaii, and the land, and aina, that they're going to say "no" to the testings and bombings. Yeah, I definitely oppose the expansion of this military at-sea training. And I think that we'd be better off, like, helping our climate instead of adding to the destruction. Thank you.	
Ikeda, J-02	MS. IKEA:· Aloha, I'm Jasmine Ikeda, and my ohana has been here for generations, since before statehood.· And as a keiki o ka aina and child of Hawaii nationals, I know that these environmental impacts are negative; therefore, the permits for such testing need to expire and stay expired. The Hawaii-California Testing and Training and all the violent military needs to stop.· Instead we must start thinking, visualizing, and paving proactive ways that align the earth instead of destroying human beings and our environment.· So much military fear-based activity will create a self-fulfilling prophecy, so stop now. If the military wants to be good sea and land stewards, as they claim, then the answer to these trainings and testings is obvious.· The answer, if you need to hear it is, "Don't do it."· No more permits, but the military shouldn't need civilians to tell them what's right and what's wrong.· That's plain stupid behavior makes the military look dumb.· So, please, start acting smarter. We love Hawaii, and if you do too, just do what's right.· Stand up for our home.· Stand up and speak for our Mother Earth.· We're all connected.· It'snot just for Hawaii, but for everywhere, but let's start here.· Free Palestine. MS. TURNER:· Thank you for your comment.	Thank you for your comment.
Infante, A	Our planet comes first	Thank you for your comment.
Isabella	As a Christian woman I think it's just horrible that the navy wants to harm God's creatures shame on you	Thank you for your comment.
Iuli, T	Don’t ruin our oceans we need the oceans to survive this’ll only lead to a lot of other problems	Thank you for your comment.
J		

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Jae	Passing this would ultimately lead to the demise of Hawaii. We, as Americans have already done so much damage to the island and its recipients, its natives and wildlife. Passing this bill puts lives and the ecosystem in danger.	Thank you for your comment.
James, T	Comment missing from email. Multiple emails sent to solicit resubmission	No response required.
Janedoe	We need to protect our wildlife and cultural practices as much as humanly possible & this would be more damaging then successfully protecting what needs protection within Hawaiian island waters.	Thank you for your comment.
Jasmin	The U.S. government might not care about the future generations to come or the environment but we do! Stay out of Hawaii's oceans and resources. The U.S. government has colonized and destroyed enough! Not everything should be for capital gain or war!	Thank you for your comment.
Jasmine	I saw a girl on Instagram passionately calling people to make a comment to protect the land and its animals from the harmful effects of military procedures. I hope that there won't be more actions taken on the land by the military, at the expense of the endangered species and the harmful effect that could have on the island's economy	Thank you for your comment.
Jenkins, H-01	From an Active Duty sailor please accept and read/hear my statement. I look forward to seeing this made publicly available WITHOUT change. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Jenkins, H-02	See Form Letter comment and response I am currently an active-duty sailor with the United States Navy. As someone who has worked many years on the islands of Hawaii, I am appalled by this draft. The fact that this has come from a place where I work and the damage it will bring here is added weight on the heavy pressures of wearing this uniform and what it SHOULD mean vs the laughingstock it is slowly becoming. I have seen the damage and destruction our Navy has brought upon the lifestyle of the Hawaiian people and culture, the waters that they depend on and the environment as a whole. Marine life has drastically reduced in the small 5 years I've spent on the islands. The waste and spills of our equipment and ships that are seamlessly just a part of the everyday is an absolute nightmare and disgusting representation of what our military and country should represent.	Thank you for your comment.

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	The video states it will be inline and work heavily with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration(NOAA). An organization, that through the President of the United State's Project 2025 Conservative Policy Proposal, will be severely defunded as well as potentially dismantled. Currently there is no back up or plan of action to who will protect what this organization does worldwide, let alone Hawaii. This would lead to mass oversight or under sight in the US Navy's actions. A division of the government that I have seen with my own two eyes to not care about the environment around it or the people they come in contact with. Then: See Form Letter comment and response.	
Jennifer-01	We must protect the waters!	Thank you for your comment.
Jennifer-02	The military presence in Hawai'i has caused significant harm across environmental, cultural, and social dimensions. Some of the most pressing issues include: Environmental Destruction •Toxic Contamination: The military has been responsible for widespread environmental contamination, most notably the Red Hill fuel leak, where over 19,000 gallons of jet fuel from a Navy facility leaked into O'ahu's water supply, endangering thousands of residents. •Ecosystem Damage: Military exercises such as RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific) disrupt marine life with sonar testing, ship strikes, and explosions, harming endangered species like Hawaiian monk seals, sea turtles, and humpback whales. Unexploded ordnance and chemical pollutants from military training also degrade ecosystems. •Land Misuse and Destruction: Places like Pōhakuloa Training Area on Hawai'i Island and Mākua Valley on O'ahu have been bombed and used for live-fire training, leaving lands scarred, polluted, and inaccessible to local communities. Cultural and Indigenous Disrespect •Desecration of Sacred Sites: The military has built bases and conducted exercises on lands that are culturally and spiritually significant to Native Hawaiians, including burial grounds and ancestral sites. •Loss of Sovereignty: The ongoing occupation of Hawai'i by the U.S. military is a reminder of the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893, contributing to continued struggles for self-determination. Displacement and Economic Burdens •Loss of Land: The military controls nearly 25% of O'ahu's land, displacing communities and limiting access to public spaces. •Housing Crisis: Military families receive high housing allowances, inflating rental prices and contributing to the affordability crisis for local residents.	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the environmental effects of the proposed activities, which include RIMPAC. However, the other issues noted in the comment are outside the scope of this EIS/OEIS.

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	•Tourism-Military Complex: The militarization of Hawai‘i fuels an economy that prioritizes military interests over sustainable, local industries, deepening dependence on external forces rather than self-sufficient economic models. Geopolitical Risk and Militarization •Targeting Hawai‘i in Global Conflicts: The military presence makes Hawai‘i a strategic military target rather than a place of peace. As tensions rise in the Pacific, increased military activity puts residents at greater risk. •Involvement in Foreign Conflicts: Hawai‘i’s location is used to train forces for wars abroad, reinforcing imperialist policies rather than focusing on peacebuilding and regional cooperation. In short, the military’s presence has come at a significant cost to Hawai‘i’s environment, culture, and people. Instead of further militarization, efforts should be focused on environmental restoration, Indigenous sovereignty, and sustainable economic alternatives that respect the land and its people.	
Jennifer-03	Stop the advancements. Its time that the u.s government starts respecting the land, its life and the people. Everything you think you own depends on them. The land can live without you, however you cannot.	Thank you for your comment.
Jeraj, A	My name is Alia, and I live and work on O'ahu. I have been fortunate enough to spend time as a naturalist aboard a humpback whale watching boat, and have experienced the majesty of these creatures up close. I now work at a wildlife refuge, where Hawaiian monk seals will come on shore as a safe place for their offspring. Knowing there are only around 1500 of them left, watching them attempt to grow their population with new pups is heartbreakingly beautiful. I understand deeply how precarious their lives are, and how their precarity is so closely related to our own. Because of this, I would like to contribute substantive comments on the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement / Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS).	Please see your comment and response in Table L.2-6.
Jesse	Hey. Stop ruining our earth. You won’t live here long enough to enjoy it with all the pollution and endangerment of the chain of animals that keep us alive. Oh and also, the president sucks so do your job and protect us. Thanks	Thank you for your comment.
Jessica-01	I urge you to consider the impacts that an increased military presence would have on the people of Hawaii, the native species, and their ecosystem. Increased boat activity in the area will increase the frequency of boat strike injuries, degrade water and coral quality and health, and put a further strain	Thank you for your comment.

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	on resources for a people recovering from the consequences of massive fires. An increased Navy presence in the area will be more detrimental than any positive impact being considered.	
Jessica-02	The ocean doesn't deserve so much pollution. We're supposed to be saving the oceans not polluting them.	Thank you for your comment.
J, Audrey	You go through with this you hit the people you are sworn to protect. Harming the one thing in this entire universe that holds our life, our planet's ocean, will kill us. It will kill you. Do NOT do this.	Thank you for your comment.
Joel	Your effects on the environment are sickening please do not expand operations off the coast of Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Johnson-01	I oppose increased military activity in the waters off Hawaii and California. Our marine life are being suffocated. The balance is required for all food (life) on the planet. I don't think humans are paying attention to how close we are getting to tipping this balance to a devastating place for humanity. Please do not increase military activity.	Thank you for your comment.
Johnson-02	Please do not increase military activity in the waters surrounding Hawaii and California. I could say it's for environmental reasons, and I'm guessing no one will care. The Pacific is literally suffocating under the most recent climate catastrophe, on top of so many others, please give it a fighting chance to heal. Not just for the sea life (although yes, that too), but for the entire ecosystem humans literally need to survive on this planet.	Thank you for your comment.
Johnson, D	I strongly oppose the dumping of SpaceX rocket debris in the sacrifice zone surrounding Papahānaumokuākea, the Pacific Islands Heritage Monument, and the Main Hawaiian Islands. This area holds immense cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, and it is unacceptable to treat it as a dumping ground for corporate space waste. I demand that the FAA conduct a full and detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which they have illegally refused to do. The failure to carry out this necessary review disregards legal obligations and the protection of our marine environment, endangered species, and Indigenous cultural sites. Additionally, I call for full public consultations in Hawai'i and with Hawaiian institutions, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), which is a co-trustee and manager of Papahānaumokuākea. Decisions impacting Hawai'i's sacred spaces should	Activities related to SpaceX are not part of this Proposed Action. The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and

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	not be made without the direct involvement of Native Hawaiian organizations and the people who have protected these lands and waters for generations. Hawai'i is not a dumping ground. The FAA must uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities. Stop this reckless proposal now.	testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
Johnson, K	The military does NOT belong in Hawaii. We the people stand for protection of native marine species, Moana/Ocean Health, and the protection of native Hawaiian practices. We do not want you here. The people will rise up. Tap into your heart, into your senses, have integrity in this decision, and do the right thing. It is up to all the stakeholders in this decision to remember their humanity, listen to the cries of the people, and make the right decision. Remember your integrity.	Thank you for your comment.
Johnson, S	Do not ruin this planet more than you already have. We don't have a second planet and all the weapons in the world won't keep us safe from climate change	Thank you for your comment.
Jones	Protect marine life, cultural practices, and reduce naval activity in Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Jordan	None og the "Proposed actions" give real choice or options for community members. Why is there no "proposed action" that REDUCES testing & training? Why are there no "proposed actions" that detail what the military is going to give rather than take? This performative public comment period does not provide adequate infromation or real opportunity for input on military decisions. DO NOT EXPAND THE HAWAII-CALIFORNIA TRAINING AND TESTING. Recommend "proposed actions" that will clean up Red Hill fuel leak and other harmful actions perpetrated by the United States Military.	The Navy's selection and analysis of alternatives in the EIS/OEIS meets all NEPA requirements. The Alternatives carried forward meet the Navy's purpose and need to ensure that it can fulfill its obligation under Title 10.
Jorgensen, E	it is reckless, irresponsible, and disrespectful to continue to exploit the land and water of Hawaii for US military/naval purposes.	Thank you for your comment.
Joy	Hi	Thank you for your comment.
J, Audrey	Do. Not. Do. This. You have no right to hurt the oceans on the ONLY planet that hosts human life. It you harm our oceans, you harm mankind. The	Thank you for your comment.

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	people who you are sworn to protect will die because of these insensitive actions. Do not increase. You will kill us.	
Judy	No get out of their land and waters, you do not belong there.	Thank you for your comment.
Julia	Greetings To Whom It May Concern, I ask you to please consider the environment moving forward. Hawaii is such a beautiful space with a rich ecological system. Please help the people of the local communities in preserving the treasure that is the environment wether on land or on water we need to take drastic measures to preserve what we have left. Everything is interconnected and our environment will determine how we survive as a species or parish with it. Kindly, A Concerned Citizen	Thank you for your comment.
K		
Kahumoku, S	Shar Kahumoku testified as follows: MS. KAHUMOKU:· Aloha, everyone. AUDIENCE:· Aloha. MS. KAHUMOKU:· Thank you for allowing our native people to have a voice to speak, and I pray that it doesn't go unheard.· Our kingdom and our -- the crown, many of the crown is still here today, the descendants of Kamehameha, all local families.· But yet the military is supposed to protect us and not harm us. In the 1892 Highways Act, Queen Liliuokalani used our crown money to build highways here.· And, yet, the State of Hawaii puts tickets on people.· They make registration.· They get parking tickets.· And that's to fund the United States. Everything that we pay for, our taxes and everything, funds another country.· The continued treason upon our country is continual.· And I think it's important. And I'm glad that this is being spoken about, because you guys are being put on notice that our kingdom is still here, and we should be able to move forward and honor the people of Hawaii that are still here.· There is no reason our water table should be cracked, our water is being polluted, it's being 90 percent diverted.	Thank you for your comment.

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	And yet when we ask questions, we don't get the answers.· The de facto State of Hawaii still runs today as we continue to put them on notice.· The federal is supposed to be protecting our people, not desecrating them anymore. Moving forward, that's -- you guys have an obligation to protect our people.· We shouldn't have so many homelessness.· We shouldn't be having people shipped from another country into our country because they're homeless, something you'll see.· That money that you guys are using should be put towards putting people in homes, whether in the United States or here. And I know that somewhere up there, the ones that are pulling the buttons can hear us speaking because we've served numerous people over and over.· We've gone to the back of Schofield Barracks.· We've seen what the live ammunitions are doing.· It's desecrating our iwis, the heiaus, the water table. I'm in agreement with all of this opposition from our own people because we don't need this in our place.· We do not need more military. Our country was a peaceful country that didn't even need a passport to go to other countries. Look at the ratings that we had beforehand. Our grandfather had a treaty with America in 1826 signed by his guardians.· And yet, in 1893, our queen was kidnapped and held under gunpoint. But did the United States even attempt to fix it?· You guys decided to continue in de facto and imprison our queen, it's a kidnapping because we are not part of your country. We stand before you to represent thousands of us that do not want to be held in occupation if it is under the nonprotection of our people, the continual genocide, the kicking off of our people of our lands that every generation that we fight for a piece of land to call home, and yet, given to us under allodium, forever titles. Every land here in Hawaii was already spoken for because it was in the Great Mahele.· No one who was not a lineal descendant or in the rights of the Great Mahele is supposed to have a piece of land here.· And every land map that has a LCA or RP has a number that's connected to it, but you guys continue to put taxes on it, the TMKs.	

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	Many of us put you -- we put you guys on notice to let you know that we're still here.· Has that been honored?· When you take us to court, we fighting individually, but we still are a nation. You are attacking our nation continuously. You should take those bombs and every live ammunition that you have and take it away from our people, not be shipping other people here, not going to other peoples' islands and then shipping them here and paying them and letting us live in poverty continuously. I live on the land that my grandfather willed to his wife, Queen Kalama, and yet I have to stand here and fight for it.· But I have the lineal descent in more than one way, and that is for many of us when I say that. The pain that our kupunas have suffered, years and years of the overthrow -- not overthrow, the kidnapping -- we need to use the right word because that's what really happened -- and the many people that were hired to help with that, it's documented.· The many families that came in and were hired gunmen, and yet America didn't stop it.· They condoned it by continuing. What did they do?· They made us pay for permits.· They made -- they closed us.· They put us under martial law.· If you guys want to know the truth, years and years martial law.· The bombing of Pearl Harbor, you put us under martial law, took away our rights, never returned it in the continuum. Every time a lineal descendant stood up, we were put in harm's way.· We were actually -- we had to go into hiding because we became targets. Last year, I fought a court case for my brother as a lineal descendant.· I walked into Abercrombie's courthouse and showed them my lineal descendancy documents, and one week later he was dead.· And this continuously happen over and over. And that should never be because your guys -- you guys being here was supposed to protect us, not in the other direction.· Not to harm us, not to take away our lands, not to make our water spoiled. And, right now, you guys have a lot of testimony against it.· And the testimonies were people that are from here and lineal descendants. And I'm not just saying it for me.· There are many here today.· And not only tonight here, but many, many other meetings that we've gone to to say our voice, to say how we feel.	

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	And it should not go unnoticed anymore because we're still here.· The people of Hawaii, the kanaka maoli are still here.· I watched the kupunas. They cry because why?· Because we live in poverty. Why?· Maybe because land keeps taking -- getting taken from us without our consent over and over.· The generations, the genocide. You guys are all put on notice this evening.· And if you continue to move forward, you're still doing acts of genocide upon our people.· And I appreciate that I can voice myself in freedom because not every one of us were given a voice to speak in freedom. You look at our crown.· They all died young.· Why?· Poisoned.· Why?· Because of a de facto group, Sanford Dole who claimed himself to be president with no votes, not a single vote, on the kanaka people. How could someone vote back then?· They had to own land, they had to make a certain amount of money, and they could not support the hosting country. I speak only on behalf of our people for the right to do what is right.· You guys came in and you guys are the generation that already am here, things already happened. But you guys can make it right by honoring our wishes, by giving back lands to the lineal descendants, not putting people on wait lists to have a home when we already own our land outright under allodium. I asked the question in one of the meetings, how much of our water is being diverted? I never got an answer back.· Why do our waters have to be polluted?· We have a right to be able to gather. We have a right to be able to plant our own things to eat.· But, yet, there's a law that says we cannot plant edible fruits on public land. Well, this is a notice:· No land here is public.· Crown lands cannot be ceded.· Our Queen Liliuokalani contested the land that was being stolen.· It's all on record.· Thank you.	
Kale’a	We need to take care of our land. Testing is harmful and she be reconsidered and abolished.	Thank you for your comment.
Kalehua, W	The us navy shall stop ALL military training in and around ALL the Hawaiian Islands. The us navy can practice killing humans somewhere else. There is a	Thank you for your comment.

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	long history of desecration of ‘aina and kai by the us navy. Hawai’i nei has suffered enough by the us navy. The us navy should take their training to the south pacific where the Chinese have built submarine bases. The us navy can take their training to Taiwan. A’ole. he ola pono.	
Kaleigh	Do not expand any military operations in Hawaii. The detriment to the environment is irreparable and the impact on indigenous cultures and peoples is as well.	Thank you for your comment.
Kane, K	Please cease the increased military activity that risks Hawaiian wildlife and culture.	Thank you for your comment.
Kanekoa-Gentzler, C	The illegally occupied kingdom of Hawaii rejects the US Navy’s proposal to continue using our lands and waters for weapon testing/training.	Thank you for your comment.
Kate	Hawaii is a beautiful state with a diverse ecosystem. Expanding military operations there is not wanted by locals and will do more damage than good. Our marine life is already being constantly hurt/affected by humans. Cultural practices of native Hawaiians will also be affected. Please think of the marine life and what’s best for the planet.	Thank you for your comment.
Katie	We can't live if YOU KILL the Earth.	Thank you for your comment.
Katrina	Coral reefs, already under immense stress from climate change, would have a chance to recover if not constantly harmed by Navy activities. Healthy reefs support subsistence fishing, wildlife, and the overall health of our oceans, which produce over 50% of the Earth’s oxygen and absorb 30% of global CO2 emissions. The No Action Alternative should be re-evaluated to reflect these significant benefits, not dismissed as “unchanged or slightly improved.”	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 military readiness activities. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would logically remain unchanged or improve slightly.
Kauloaiwi, N	Leave our Moana alone! Go do military exercises in America and leave our resources alone! As a native Hawaiian we have always had a connection with the ocean and everything in it! The ocean provides us food nutrients and spiritual ocean therapy.	Thank you for your comment.
Kawehilani	How dare do you! Don’t you think that Hawaii has suffered enough. Now you want to destroy the beautiful waters and endangered species of Hawaii! It’s	Thank you for your comment.

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	bad enough that Hawaii was taken from the Hawaiians! LEAVE OUR OCEAN ALONE! Mahalo you your time.	
Kayla-01	Do not go through with this you are destroying the natural environment and we do not need this.	Thank you for your comment.
Kayla-02	Hawaiian waters need to be protected. Furthering the desecration that has been happening for the past 66 years must slow. There have been countless things that the military occupation has done to slowly kill the land and its people. From Kaho'olawe and the atrocities committed there, to the dumping of hundreds of tons of oil down the side of Haleakalā. We cannot continue to allow the water to be polluted and the land to be destroyed.	Thank you for your comment.
Kazanjian, P	Please, reconsider your actions in paradise. The Hawaiian Islands should be left free of mines, flames, and military practice devastation physically, acoustically, and other abuse. The wonderful animals suffer quietly because they cannot tell you of their pain. Do not hurt them. Do not destroy more of our diminishing nature and wildlife. Let it be wild. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Kealiaki, M	[email was blank, no comment given]	No response required.
Keaton	Hi; I understand why you all do what you do, and why you see it is fit to undergo such demands and desires. Please, for just a moment, reflect. Consider. Is this what is right for me? Am I on the right path? Am I embarking on the will of the highest good for myself and humanity? Please consider the effects. We have the power here. We can be boulders of light, creating tsunami waves of beauty and healing throughout the earth. Or we can be boulders of death and destruction. We have the choice. I beseech you to fall in love with love. Fall in love with the land and people around you. Enter into into sacred secrets. Respect it. Each footstep shakes the earth. What more will this do. Consider the voices of those afraid. Those worried about their homes and about the waters and lands. Listen . Please listen to the voices. Do not be a force of domination, lest you wish to be dominated over. Thank you for hearing me. I see the God in you.	Thank you for your comment.
Keira	I oppose this measure. It would affect wildlife, and the delicate ecosystem of Hawai'i!	Thank you for your comment.
Keke	Stop the navy from ruining the crops and native people	Thank you for your comment.

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Keliikoa-Kamai, K-01	Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai testified as follows: MS. KELIIKOA-KAMAI:· Aloha (speaking Hawaiian).· Mahalo for having us here although I think the both of us know that this is a farce, that we are just walking through the motions, taking the steps. You know, change is needed.· There's so much going on in this world that we as individuals, in our own small, little ways, can make that change. And the alternative that I did not see in the packet was a reduced action, was the stop the action which many of my kanaka ohana had already shared.· Because there is so much destruction, not that only America inflicts upon others but the threat of destruction that America inflicts upon others. Wouldn't it be so great if, instead of using all of this money for destruction, death, desecration, if we used it in an aloha manner in which we helped other countries, we helped our own people.· Not bribe them, but just give them the aloha. And, obviously, America has the money because much of these signs and the information here talks about mitigation of the destruction that you've already caused.· But if you put that money towards rebuilding, towards repopulating, towards helping our reef, helping our mammals, helping our people, helping our aina, and stop destroying it and the people that live in and on it. You know, so there are summaries that David was talking about.· It would have been good to have a chart that had a summary of what the destruction is, what the death is, of the various mammals, and not limit it, like he said, to what America inflicts, but to the whole exercise participants. You know, it is so sad that America continues to use Hawaii as its testing area.· You know, tests for bombs, tests for GMOs, tests for chemicals, testing for everything that you wouldn't want in your own home in your own community.· It's on the continent. And I recognize it's above your pay grade, but wouldn't it be so great if we all started to put our mindset towards more peaceful connections amongst the world, amongst the people?· How much more receptive would that be? And, of course, everybody's not going to buy into that, but you would be -- overwhelmingly have the majority of the people in other countries who say, Yes, let's help us to help each other.· Not help me because I need this, this, and that, or I'm going to help you because I want this, this, and that. I think if	Thank you for your comment.

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	we stop the backscratching, stop the bribing, stop a lot of what so-called "first worlds" are doing, first countries like America to other countries, I think you'd have a better world. And that's what we ought to be working towards is a better world. It'll take decades, but I think if we start looking at it in -- and saying, What else could we do to help each other?· Instead of destroy the ocean and especially destroy my Hawaiian Kingdom.· Because our kingdom still exists.· This is a fake state, you know. And one day -- one day, America is going to see it, this fake state is going to see it. Hopefully, we see it. But if we don't rise up and say something towards it, it will never happen. So let's speak for building up bridges, building up populations of the mammals, building up the reef, building up what's in our ocean because we've already polluted a lot that's on the land as well as on the ocean. So let's look at repairing it, restoring it, correcting it, making it a better place for our descendants because what you don't want in your yard, in your ocean, in your lake, in your river, in your stream, we don't want it here either.· Mahalo. MS. TURNER:· Thank you.·	
Keliikoa-Kamai-02	I support the alternative that's not listed A'ole RIMPAC NO RIMPAC!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Kelleher, C	Please don't do this!!!! Protect our waters!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Kelling, K	Kalehuakea Kelling testified as follows: MS. KELLING: Aloha mai kakou. AUDIENCE: Aloha. MS. KELLING: My name is Kalehuakea Kelling. I'm a (speaking Hawaiian). I'm a kamaaina of (speaking Hawaiian). I'm here today to voice my firm opposition to the proposed expansion of the U.S. Navy's at-sea training operations and, in Hawaii and California, all sacred lands. This proposal is nothing short of an assault on our marine ecosystems, our aina, and our communities.	The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, and in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. Utilizing the latest science and technology, the services completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the

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	The danger it poses to our oceans and the living creatures within them are catastrophic, irreversible, and completely unacceptable. To proceed with this expansion is to prioritize the interests of the military industrial complex over the well-being of our ecosystems, indigenous peoples, and our future generations. First, these exercises pose irreparable damage to marine life, particularly the use of mid-frequency sonar in the waters of the ocean which have devastating irreversible consequences. The use of mid-frequency sonar disrupts communication and navigation of marine mammals, including whales and dolphins. The noise pollution created by the sonar has been directly linked to vast damage and fatalities which we've already seen. This disruption has -- it's only a matter of time before the scale of this tragedy worsens. Underwater explosions from military exercises causes severe -- severe trauma to fish and marine mammals and sea turtles, resulting in ruptured organs, loss of hearing, and massive fatalities. Additionally, the explosions and other disruptive activities associated with the military training will devastate coral reefs, which are not only critical to marine biodiversity but also act as natural barriers against storm surges. Coral reefs are already under threat from the climate catastrophe and further damage caused by Navy exercises would set back the recovery by decades if not completely eradicated. This destruction threatens the very species that depend on these ecosystems including fish stocks that Native Hawaiians communities rely on for its existence. Loss of these ecosystems would have far-reaching consequences, decimating food sources. Second, this is infuriating to think that while we struggle with the existential crisis of climate change, the U.S. military is one of the largest polluters in the world, contributing over 59 million metric tons of carbon emission and annually. Furthermore, the destruction of coastal ecosystems such as seagrass beds will eliminate the vital carbon-trapping mechanisms that help to mitigate the effects of climate change.	potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its military readiness training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity and increases in the number of some species. These and similar activities have been authorized under MMPA and subject to ESA Biological Opinions. The Navy uses the reasoning that if the proposed activities would not have significant negative effects, then we can conclude that ceasing these same activities would not result in significant positive effects. The EIS/OEIS (see Chapter 3, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) does analyze near shore activities and considered all applicable environmental effects, including potential effects on marine resources. Please see Section 3.3, Section 3.6, Section 3.7, and Section 3.8 for the analysis of proposed activities on those resources.

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	Third, the expansion and conducting of military training activities in the first place represent a blatant violation of indigenous rights. The military's failure to adequately consult with indigenous peoples in honor of free and informed consent is a clear disregard for the communities that have ancestral ties to these lands and the communities that have cared for them for generations. Indigenous voices, concerns, and rights have been systemically ignored in these decisions that impact the health and relationships with the lands and waters that they cherish. It is unconscionable that the U.S. Navy continues to prioritize national security over the well-being of the communities. (Speaking Hawaiian). I urge you all to please stop and think before it's too late.(Speaking Hawaiian).	
Kelsey, K	Aloha! This email is to welcome the Navy into a new era of peacekeeping. We welcome all you beautiful protectors to protect what is most precious for life. Our oceans are the source of water, clean air, filtration, food abundance and spiritual renewal for all cultures! It is time for the militaries to come together to protect life! Think of all the beach clean ups and ghost net clean ups that could happen with the military spending that has gone towards wasted fuel and efforts to perpetuate war games. We need humanity to honor the gifts of the Earth and water and align our efforts to caring for life now. What you do with your energies will come back to you forever so please choose life and care and listen to the hearts of indigenous people who understand the life support systems of nature! Thank you for stopping all war games and refocusing on life games! All of life thanks you for making the better choices today!	Thank you for your comment.
Kenny, K	Comment is attached	Thank you for your comment.
Kent, I	This will harm the local climate, including the ecosystem, plants, animals and people! I strongly oppose this as it will increase pollution	Thank you for your comment.
Khadija	The US Navy has no place in Hawaii and is killing the flora and fauna and harming the indigenous population. We demand you remove their presence, the navy is not wanted there!	Thank you for your comment.
Kidani, K	I do not want this is any ocean. Near or far the oceans and ecosystems are fragile. They deserve respect.	Thank you for your comment.

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Kilinoe	Hasn’t Amelika done enough?	Thank you for your comment.
Kimmy	Preserve Hawaii don’t hurt it more	Thank you for your comment.
Kipelani	Naval operations across Hawai’i are destroying the ecosystem and ruining the sanctity of native Hawaiian life. Coral reefs, Monk Seals, and water pollution levels all suffer and have a clear connection to the United States military activities. Get out of our waters.	Thank you for your comment.
Kirtikar, O	This project will further destroy the marine ecosystem in Hawaii and I strongly oppose it.	Thank you for your comment.
Kolo, L	Aloha, My name is Lilia Kolo. I am a Native Hawaiian and I have a strong belief that Hawai’i lands should only be sold to Hawaiians. Also the military needs to find a new base out of Hawai’i’s land. I DO NOT WANT NO MILITARY HERE. All you guys do is make it harder not easier	Thank you for your comment.
Kraus, M	Please leave the area Please leave the ocean alone It doesn't need your presence	Thank you for your comment.
Kroetch, E	I believe we should not have more navy activities around hawaii because it is damaging to cultural practices, marine life, and the ocean in general	Thank you for your comment.
Krusemark, M	Protect this sacred land! The US Navy has already caused immense damages to our lands and oceans and needs to hold itself accountable for said damages, as well as the impact on people’s lives and cultural sites, practices and values.	Thank you for your comment.
Kuloloio, M	Manuel Kuloloio testified as follows: MR. KULOLOIO:· Good evening.· Gentlemen, it was over 15 years ago I remember standing at McKinley High School -- MALE SPEAKER:· Honolulu High School. MR. KULOLOIO:· -- and you were deliberating about the same training range.· There weren't many speakers that evening.· In fact, I think there was only two.· There was myself and then Representative Bob McDermott. But, tonight, I humbly stand here in this sacred space and place and in honor of all the veterans that have served and continue to serve.	Thank you for your comment.

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	I'm the son of a proud veteran, a cryptologist for the United States Army.· All my first cousins served in the United States Air Force, Marine Corps. But I came tonight because you getting it too easy, United States Navy.· And why do I say this? When I came in here, I walked straight looking for the submarine training range, Kahoolawe, Lanai, Maui, and Molokai. And I don't know about any of you, any of you from Molokai right now?· You flew from Molokai? You flew from Molokai to be here? FEMALE SPEAKER:· I live here but -- MR. KULOLOIO:· Okay.· Anybody from Lanai? I'm from Maui. I came here because I'm -- I expected more, to at least have a forum on the island of Maui like how you once did many, many years ago at the Henry Perrine Baldwin High School which is my alma mater. And why do I say that's important?· Because it's going to affect them. But I want to thank the two gentlemen, Ben and Ben -- Brian, for treating me with class. I'm the youngest guy of the PTO that knows the full story, how you -- George Helm and Kimo Mitchell got murdered or disappeared or assassinated by the CIA.· I don't know, Stansfield Turner comes to mind, or Zbigniew Brzezinsky.· He asked my dad to lead the water safety for protect the (speaking Hawaiian). And I was trained by Greenpeace Zodiac drivers.· Why do I say this?· Because the bombing got stopped on my birthday, October 22nd, by President George -- the father. Mr. Henkin, I'm looking forward to your lawsuit.· What concerns me to my brothers and sisters or my community fellow residents is the people that are absent tonight.· I want you to know that because me, I take notice.· They like write letters.· Easy. I told someone, the gentleman in the back, when Red Hill happened, my daughter was watching Joe Moore on TV, watching girls cry.· And she says,	

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	"Hey, Daddy, don't you work for the U.S. Navy?· Hey, Dad, aren't you a QA manager?· What you gonna do about it?" Well, you want something done that's never been done, you got to do something that you've never done before.· And that's exactly what I did. So we all have friends.· I never compromise my integrity yet or sell my soul like Haunani-Kay Trask challenged me (speaking Hawaiian).· But I want every one of you know, contractors, this is a big deal because my children going inherit this. I probably die within the next -- I'm like a monk seal. I'm -- the impacts are cumulative, Mr. Henkin; right? When I went to Kauai, they call it a real estate lease nowadays.· It was for the Pacific Missile Range Facility, increasing some state lease lands, and the NASA facility. And I hope it wasn't you, manpower.· I know the answer, but I no like see any of you would work for them. You know how embarrassing when I went to show up on the exact same meeting like this?· Instead of having public comment, you know what they did, Mr. Henkin? They said, "Yeah, here's your cards.· You can go to that table and you can write your comments."· You know how insulting that was to me? And I flew to Kauai, by the way. So at a minimum, thank you for allowing us to speak and for extending beyond seven o'clock because I think, Sister, the U.S. Navy can pay for your overtime to be here tonight. And you know why I did this, ma'am, sir? I do this in the juxtaposition of what's going on in Hawaii. Besides the long-term lease, Haleakala, Space Force, they want to do things up there.· It hurts too much.· I wasn't going to talk because I might lose my job tomorrow. Sister, I heard you talk.· You remind me when I was a young kid. FEMALE SPEAKER:· Son, long hair. MR. KULOLOIO:· Pardon me? MALE SPEAKER:· Kane.· Kane. FEMALE SPEAKER:· Son, long hair.	

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	MR. KULOLOIO:· Yeah.· My children drink the water, Red Hill.· Everybody in authority went let us down.· They let us down.· I got trained by the Navy. I was asked by people.· Go read all those documents and what I read.· That's the trust you got to build. Marine Corps, you lucky, brah.· You lucky.I leave you alone.· Coast Guard, I saw you guys. I bypassed you.· Remember?· I bypassed you guys. I just have high expectation, and I expect nothing but the best of the best of the best. And if you not the best, David Henkin is going to shake you down.· I use that word -- sorry, might be the wrong word, because you know why? Ma'am, thank you for your patience for allowing people to speak.· Because if you went cut me off, Brian, ho-ho, you wouldn't hear the end of it. You want to see a lawsuit?· We don't lose. My family, we don't lose. So last night -- I don't know, yesterday -- I don't know how many of you ever watched the Senate Armed Services Committee before Abercrombie was the chair.· You know, I was the representative; right? Yesterday, the Secretary of Defense-Elect gets a question about do you do audits?· Anyway. I've been told that the DOD has still many, many, many audits. So if you can pass one audit, I will champion this thing for you.· I will be the greatest apologist. But I just like say, and when one day you become a ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, you can have a destroyer named after you. I wear this because it was given to me. But the love is there.· Don't let us down, and no [expletive deleted].· So Brian, Ben, and Ben, you were transparent with me.· I know my answers. So if I did not speak up, I would fail my father, my grandmother, my children, John M. Kelly and Aunty Marion Kelly, who I lived with at Black Point Road.· John Kelly, the lead trainer of the United States Navy's UDT in Navy SEAL.· I was raised with that kind of guy that headed up Save Our Surf. So I say that in that spirit of all of you in the Navy.· I've done my time behind the scenes. You can always do better.	

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	And I'm hoping we can maybe ask Mr. Schatz or Mazie Hirono -- maybe we can have a meeting on Maui.· I don't know, ask -- what her name?· Who's our representative?· Tokuda -- to see what they say.· I'd like to see what they say.· Okay.· Thank you.	
Kyriakakis, K	The harm that imposing baby jurisdiction in Hawaiian waters will lead to devastating environmental damage.	Thank you for your comment.
L		
L, Cynthia	The United States Navy should NOT be involving and interfering with the natural habitat of Hawaii any more than they already do. They will bring nothing but destruction and waste in their path.	Thank you for your comment.
Lacoda	You know what this is for. Do not pollute Hawaii with more military and blood than you already have. Do you have no shame or morals? Are you "just following orders" like so many monsters before you?	Thank you for your comment.
LaMountain, J	To whom it may concern, I'm a concerned constituent making contact regarding extending naval operations in Hawaii. Given the history of the state of Hawaii, the state of ocean ecology, and the US military's presence in the state, I do not want naval operations to be extended.	Thank you for your comment.
Lamping, L	We need to prioritize protecting our environment and marine life, especially when Indigenous people that steward the land and waters are calling on us desperately to do so.	Thank you for your comment.
Lauren	don’t touch my ocean or my coral teefs stop downplaying it like it’s not a problem or like it’s not important bc i’m gonna make it a problem. We deserve to keep our oceans protected and you’re failing us. you are failures and a disgrace to the american people	Thank you for your comment.
Lee, A	Hawai'i has been absolutely desecrated by American capitalist interests. The drilling and extracting of natural resources, of no benefit and actually to the detriment of native peoples in the area, is inconscionable and must be stopped. As a citizen of not only America but Earth, the short-sighted misuse of funds, political power, and energy must cease immediately. Land back to the indigenous stewards, and reparations too. Cease all actions as soon as possible, for the sake of the people and the planet you stand on right now.	Thank you for your comment.

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	Feel your feet touch the floor, feel your wrists on the desk. You're human too, and I implore you see others this way.	
Lee, M	Please protect our oceans and the many endangered species that live there. This increased activity will do irreparable harm to our planet. It will also further harm the Hawaiian people and impact their cultural practices. Do not colonize their land any further!	Thank you for your comment.
Lei, A	Stop! Enough already. No more.	Thank you for your comment.
Lemus, M	I strongly oppose the dumping of SpaceX rocket debris in the sacrifice zone surrounding Papahānaumokuākea, the Pacific Islands Heritage Monument, and the Main Hawaiian Islands. This area holds immense cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, and it is unacceptable to treat it as a dumping ground for corporate space waste. I demand that the FAA conduct a full and detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which they have illegally refused to do. The failure to carry out this necessary review disregards legal obligations and the protection of our marine environment, endangered species, and Indigenous cultural sites. Additionally, I call for full public consultations in Hawai‘i and with Hawaiian institutions, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), which is a co-trustee and manager of Papahānaumokuākea. Decisions impacting Hawai‘i’s sacred spaces should not be made without the direct involvement of Native Hawaiian organizations and the people who have protected these lands and waters for generations. Hawai‘i is not a dumping ground. The FAA must uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities. Stop this reckless proposal now.	Activities related to SpaceX are not part of this Proposed Action. The Navy’s Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated. The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in

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		December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings.
Lenington, M	As a land owner in Hawaii i am deeply concerned about the expansion of military operations in the waters and call for it to be stopped. These operations are harmful to protected marine life, the quality if our waters and are a waste of taxpayers dollars.	Thank you for your comment.
Leoiki-Drino, J	I oppose the navy using the ocean at the detriment of marine life. These actions need to be stopped and not expanded. It is time we care for our earth and stop abusing and destroying our natural resources.	Thank you for your comment.
Leon	This has devastating impacts on marine life, the coral reefs native Hawaiian cultural practices. 33.7 million instances of harm marine mammals authorized over 7 years. Humpback whales 52,470 “takes” hearing loss, ship strikes and disruption. Explosion, sonar, and ship activity damages fragile reef ecosystems. Military mine warfare in near shore, waters destroys critical fish habitats. Coral reefs protect coastline and marine biodiversity - destruction leads to food insecurity.	Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons:

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		• Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Lia, T	Mass Release of Experimental Mosquitoes to Begin on Kaua'i This Month With no study of the serious risks of these mosquitoes and no data showing any results on Maui, agencies target the next island Hawaiiunites.org Feb 5,2025 Despite the fact that agency partners releasing millions of bacteriaminfected mosquitoes in the fragile ecosystems of East Maui have done no studies on the potential significant impacts of the project and have produced no data on the eff~cts of these invasive insects, plans are already underway to unleash this travesty on the next island. Kaua'i Forest Bird Recovery Project (KFBRP) has announced that "landscape-releases" are beginning on Kaua'i this month. The Hawaiian Islands have become testing grounds for dangerous biotech experiments, and the agenda is escalating. The money keeps rolling in, and the agencies involved appear solely focused on assuring that their budgets continue to benefit from this cash cow of funding. Our communities have voiced overwhelming opposition to these mosquito releases. Serious risks to the health of Hawai'i's people, wildlife, and 'aina	Thank you for your comment. The issues raised in the comment are not within the scope of this EIS/OEIS.

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	have not been addressed. Still, the Birds, Not Mosquitoes (BNM) partnership continues plowing ahead with reckless disregard. Hawaii Unites is a reader-supported publication. To receive new posts and support our work, consider becoming a free or paid subscriber. In November 2023, BNM began the release of millions of Wo/bachia-bacteria-infected mosquitoes in the 64,666-acre project area of East Maui. Our active court case to stop the mosquito releases and require an environmental impact statement (EIS) was already in progress. We brought forward several significant concerns, including: • Accidental release of female mosquitoes that bite, breed, and spread disease (EPA guidelines allow for the weekly release on Maui of over 3,000 females) • Peer-reviewed studies showing Wolbachia bacteria can cause increased pathogen infection and disease-spreading capability in mosquitoes • Horizontal transmission of Wolbachia bacteria to wild mosquitoes and other insect vectors of disease • Population replacement of wild mosquitoes with lab-altered mosquitoes • Wind drift of released mosquitoes to unintended areas • Lack of documented biosecurity protocols and pathogen screenings for mosquitoes • Risks to the health of people and animals, and the potential for the plan to cause the extinction of the native birds it is meant to protect Numerous additional issues are raised in our case. Perhaps most alarming is the lack of study of the potential risks of this project by the agencies involved. During testimony at our TRO and preliminary injunction hearing, tropical disease expert and witness Dr. Lorrin Pang was asked by our attorney, "As it is currently being proposed, in your expert opinion, has this experiment been studied enough for the State and its agency partners to move forward?" Pang, a leader in mitigating mosquito-borne diseases for decades who has authored over 75 publications in peer-reviewed medical journals, over 40 of which are focused specifically on mosquito-borne illnesses, responded with a clear and resounding "No."	

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	The mosquitoes currently being released in the millions on Maui and starting mass release on Kaua'i this month are experimental. Southern house mosquitoes lab-infected with Wolbachia bacteria have never been documented as used for stand-alone field release anywhere in the world. The East Maui project area is the largest Wo/bachia mosquito release of any kind globally to date. Kaua'i's 59,204-acre project area will be the second largest, covering almost ~7% of the entire island. Kaua'i 59,204-acre mosquito release project area (IIT: Incompatible Insect Technique – Wo/bachia-bacteria-infected mosquitoes) (Kaua'i Final Environmental Assessment) Millions of dollars in federal funding are driving this mosquito agenda (over $33 million and counting), along with plans for additional funds through grants, public-private partnerships, and state budget line-item funding. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) also has an insectary on O'ahu where they intend to mass produce lab-altered mosquitoes for release on the islands into perpetuity (forever). Future plans include more bacteria-infected mosquitoes, mosquito gene drives, precision-guided Sterile Insect Technique (pgSIT} CRISPR gene-edited mosquitoes, and the release of lab-altered mosquitoes throughout the islands to "control mosquitoes of public health concern." The DLNR recently announced that real estate, said to be state-owned, near Hanapepe Bay on the island of Kaua'i will be handed over to their BNM partners through a no-cost 25-year lease. "The property will be utilized for the benefit of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, College of Natural Sciences, Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU) on behalf of the Kaua'i Forest Bird Recovery Project (KFBRP), the Kaua'i Endangered Seabird Recovery Project (KESRP), and the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i (RCUH)." Once all "squatters" and their personal effects are removed, the takeover can begin. According to the DLNR announcement, KFBRP is bringing in big money through this biotech mosquito experimentation agenda: "Due to the recent dramatic declines in forest bird populations on Kaua'i and new advances in technologies to address their primary threat, mosquito-	

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	borne diseases, KFBRP's budget and staff have recently increased almost two-fold." According to joint testimony submitted to the BLNR by KFBRP's program manager, a propaganda campaign ("outreach") is being planned for the site, and future funding plans for the property are also in the works: "Our programs, particularly KFBRP, are rapidly growing given the magnitude and speed of the declines in native bird species, and the new promise of the Incompatible Insect Technique to combat the main threat to Hawaiian Honeycreepers, mosquito-borne diseases" "The Dog Pound is on a well-traveled road and we plan to hold outreach events and/or provide an outreach display to help bring awareness about the threats facing the birds and potential solutions ('what you can do')" "The value of the lease will provide an important in-kind match for federal grants that support both these projects" "Both projects have already secured some funding to help improve and maintain the property and will work with DOFAW and other partners to bring in other funding." Grant funding has been pouring in. Just one of the grants announced gives KFBRP a whopping $644,758 to "support on-the-ground efforts in its battle against avian malaria." BNM partners are all cashing in on the opportunity to use sacred lands as a petri dish for dangerous labaltered insect experiments. "A like amount of grant funding was also awarded to the University of Hawai'i and the US Geological Survey for continued research to improve mosquito breeding to create nonviable offspring to reduce the disease transmission to Hawaiian honeycreeper forest birds." As KFBRP's and their BNM partners' budgets grow, so does the excitement of these agencies' spokespeople. Rather than focusing on ensuring that Hawai'i's fragile ecosystems and native bird habitats are protected from risky products like these bacteria-infected mosquitoes, cash "We are very excited to be involved in this effort to use top-notch science to help us advance conservation of critically endangered forest bird species through reduction of mosquito-borne disease. Funding from the Partnership to Advance Conservation and Practice program will allow KFBRP to better monitor and refine the application and efficacy of a new tool, the	

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	Incompatible Insect Technique, to suppress mosquitoes in Hawaiian forest bird habitat." New Kaua'i bird facility site near Hanapepe Bay (BLNR Meeting 1/10/25 agenda item D11 submittal) Meanwhile, deviations from the already dangerous approved plan have been transpiring on Maui for over a year now. As stated in our court case, mosquitoes are being released solely by helicopter rather than by drone, exacerbating concerns about noise disturbances, disruptions to wildlife habitat, and the potential for collisions, accidents, and wildland fires. We've also pointed out that the helicopter longline release system described in the environmental assessment is not the system being used, and that helicopters appear to be flying closer to the tree canopy than the approved distance, increasing the potential for adverse impacts. There's been no indication that these issues have been addressed on Maui. As we continue to fight this in court, we anticipate that these kinds of deviations will likely be occurring on Kaua'i. So far, the "top-notch science" touted by advocates of these mosquito releases has produced no data to indicate that their suppression technique is even working. In fact, BNM partners have been further deviating from their stated plans by spraying another bacterium into the environment in an apparent attempt to fix the problem of lack of effectiveness of the experimental mosquitoes. Aerial spraying of Bti larvicide on Maui and Kaua'i in combination with the aerial release of bacteria-infected mosquitoes is now part of the ever-changing narrative. The agencies involved have yet to answer serious questions \ about how they intend to prevent data falsification while using two different mosquito suppression products within each project area, nor have they done any studies on the impacts . this onslaught may have on our environment. In October 2023, Hawai'i Unites contested the Board of Land and Natural Resources' (BLNR's) approval of these mosquito releases on Kaua'i. We filed a petition for a contested case hearing at that time, but the BLNR has yet to include our petition as an agenda item in any of their twice-monthly meetings. In November 2023, prose plaintiffs on Kaua'i filed their own flow is the focus, and recipients are all in on shilling for the biotech industry and their novel	

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	"Incompatible Insect Technique" Wolbachia-infected southern house mosquitoes. "We are very excited to be involved in this effort to use top-notch science to help us advance conservation of critically endangered forest bird species through reduction of mosquito-borne disease. Funding from the Partnership to Advance Conservation and Practice program will allow KFBRP to better monitor and refine the application and efficacy of a new tool, the Incompatible Insect Technique, to suppress mosquitoes in Hawaiian forest bird habitat." New Kaua'i bird facility site near Hanapepe Bay (BLNR Meeting 1/10/25 agenda item D11 submittal) Meanwhile, deviations from the already dangerous approved plan have been transpiring on Maui for over a year now. As stated in our court case, mosquitoes are being released solely by helicopter rather than by drone, exacerbating concerns about noise disturbances, disruptions to wildlife habitat, and the potential for collisions, accidents, and wildland fires. We've also pointed out that the helicopter longline release system described in the environmental assessment is not the system being used, and that helicopters appear to be flying closer to the tree canopy than the approved distance, increasing the potential for adverse impacts. There's been no indication that these issues have been addressed on Maui. As we continue to fight this in court, we anticipate that these kinds of deviations will likely be occurring on Kaua'i. So far, the "top-notch science" touted by advocates of these mosquito releases has produced no data to indicate that their suppression technique is even working. In fact, BNM partners have been further deviating from their stated plans by spraying another bacterium into the environment in an apparent attempt to fix the problem of latk of effectiveness of the experimental mosquitoes. Aerial spraying of Bti larvicide on Maui and Kaua'i in combination with the aerial release of bacteria-infected mosquitoes is now part of the ever-changing narrative. The agencies involved have yet to answer serious questions about how they intend to prevent data falsification while using two different mosquito suppression products within each project area, nor have they done any studies on the impacts this onslaught may have on our environment.	

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	As this disgraceful money-making scheme carries on under the guise of "conservation," Hawai'i Unites is urging everyone who cares about the health of these islands to continue speaking out against these dangerous biotech experiments on sacred lands. Question why the agencies involved don't refocus on more environmentally sound approaches like habitat and stream flow restoration, which would honor the 'aina, the culture, and the ancestral connections of the native birds rather than putting them at further risk of extinction. Hawai'i Unites has taken state agencies to court to stop the release of bacteria-infected mosquitoes on Maui, ground zero for these dangerous biotech experiments. This case is so strong that the defendants are afraid to face us in court again, and they certainly don't want the discovery process to resume. We're currently in appeals court seeking a ruling that the case be remanded back to the circuit court and go to trial. We are determined to set a precedent to strengthen environmental laws for all islands and impact the course of this agenda worldwide. Your tax-deductible donations support the work that we're doing to protect the 'aina and help us continue to move our active court case forward. Mahalo, Tina Lia Founder Hawai'i Unites HawaiiUnites.org Hawai'i Unites is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation and protection of our environment and natural resources. Your tax-deductible donations help us to fulfill our mission of honoring and protecting our sacred connection to the natural world.	
Lilley, T	I am a marine biologist living in Oahu and Kauai. I have over 1000 scuba dives in Hawaii documenting our coral reefs. I have personally observed and documented Navy submarines discharging an electrical current into the reef killing corals. Why is there no study about the effects of electromagnetic radiation in the EIS? I wish to bring this up in the public meeting.	The Navy's analysis was completed using the best available, peer-reviewed science. The Navy continues to pursue new scientific data, collected through professional studies and verified through credible, recognized sources. The Navy works proactively with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state, federal, and

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		non-profit environmental organizations to ensure its operations are safe and minimize impact to marine life. There has been no evidence to indicate a correlation between electromagnetic emissions and coral reef disease. The Navy is only one of many sources of electromagnetic emissions, a term that covers a wide range of electrical signals including cell phones, Wi-Fi, commercial broadcast, and communications transmissions.
Lily	Please don't do this. We need our oceans. The whole planet is dying, we can't keep killing it. WE ALL LIVE HERE.	Thank you for your comment.
Lindsey, E	To Whom It May Concern, My name is Ekini Lindsey, and I am honored to submit this testimony in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all individuals who share a profound commitment to ocean health, marine life conservation, and preserving cultural and sacred practices tied to our precious ocean. The opportunities for enhancement in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii Training and Testing (HCTT) activities can contribute to a more informed and effective decision-making process with proper protocols on human and marine life protection. Can we envision a future where we prioritize the well-being of people, the land, and our oceans, and work towards eliminating destructive weapons that harm them? I know you only want the best for your grandchildren!! Mahalo nui loa	Thank you for your comment.
Liszanckie, L	I urge you to not allow further US Navy activity in Hawaiian waters. Native Hawaiians have spoken and they want their land, waters, and communities protected, not polluted.	Thank you for your comment.
Livie, R	I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT)	Thank you for your comment.

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	activities. I do not support the Navy expanding and increasing it's activities on and around Hawaii. I am disappointed to see these plans.	
Lo, Q	The effects of destruction of the environment and native culture, are not always felt right away. But, it is our descendants that will reap what we sow now. What kind of people wish that upon their future?	Thank you for your comment.
Lopez, L-01	I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, as well as in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana (ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities.	Thank you for your comment.
Lopez, L-02	The navy has done enough destruction. Please respect the land and the wishes of the Hawaiian community.	Thank you for your comment.
Lopez, M-01	Testimony Regarding the Hawai'i-California Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) To Whom It May Concern, I recently had the privilege of visiting Hawai'i, and I can confidently say that it is the most beautiful state in the United States. From the lush green mountains to the crystal-clear waters, Hawai'i is a place of unmatched natural beauty, cultural significance, and deep spiritual connection for those who call it home. The idea of destroying any part of this paradise for military purposes is not only heartbreaking but entirely unnecessary. The ocean is vast—there are countless areas where naval operations can take place without disrupting Hawai'i's delicate ecosystems and communities. Why must this destruction happen in a place so rich in history, biodiversity, and cultural heritage when there are so many other options? The military has access to endless stretches of open ocean where training can occur without threatening the lands and waters that sustain the people of Hawai'i. Hawai'i is not just another piece of land—it is a living, breathing home to many, and its protection should be prioritized. I urge you to reconsider any	As discussed in Section 2.4.1.1, there are no other potential locations in the Pacific where land ranges, Operating Areas (OPAREAs), undersea terrain and ranges, and military airspace combine to provide the areas necessary for training and testing realism and effectiveness required to train and certify naval forces for combat operations. Specifically for mine warfare training, areas are chosen based on proximity to ports or land that would be similar to potential mission areas.

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	actions that would damage this irreplaceable environment and seek alternatives that do not come at the cost of Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources. Respectfully, Mirella lopez	
Lopez, M-02	Out of respect for the people of Hawaii and their land, the U.S. Navy should not increase its involvement and activities in the waters near Hawaii given the devastating impact it will have on marine life and the cultural practices of native Hawaiians.	Thank you for your comment.
Lopez, S	We as a country need to be more aware of our actions and how they can ripple forth and create destruction to those around us. We have the technology and knowledge to now know better. The military is killing of marine life near the area. There are other and better locations to take place if need be.	Thank you for your comment.
Lukashevsky, A	Ashley Lukashevsky testified as follows: MS. LUKASHEVSKY: It's hard to follow Uncle Kaukaohu. MR. WAHILANI: Sorry, yeah? MS. LUKASHEVSKY: Aloha mai kakou. AUDIENCE: Aloha. MS. LUKASHEVSKY: My name is Ashley Lukashevsky. I just want to ground us into this moment. This Friday is (speaking Hawaiian) which marks the 132nd year of illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii. I want us to ground in the reality that all of this discussion is happening on land that is and has never been rightfully part of the United States. Kanaka maoli and other indigenous voices have not been adequately represented or heeded in the planning of military activities that directly impact our lands and waters. Not only is all of this an affront to Hawaiian sovereignty but you are trying to figure out what level of desecration of Hawaii's land, ocean, and air is acceptable. The answer is no level; it is all unacceptable.	Thank you for your comment. The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting

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	You spoke earlier in your presentation that the United States is responding to crisis and that -- how that necessitates the training of armed forces in Hawaii and in the Pacific. The only reason that you find this necessary is because of the way that the United States, in its constant quest for power and domination, provokes nations and militaries around the world, and in doing so, needs to continue to grow and grow and exacerbate its power. But when does it end? How much of our world needs to be bombed? How many people need to be murdered by the United States military? I know that the majority of people here who aren't speaking out in opposition are employed by the United States Army Forces or Navy. I actually don't blame you because I know that you want to provide a life for yourselves and your families, but I ask for you to please consider what kind of legacy you're leaving. Are you leaving one that perpetuates the unrestrained need for power through violence, a violence that will kill your children's future, too? Or are you leaving one where you support divestment from the militarization of our land and clean air and water and a future for your own children? What kind of world do you want to leave your own descendants? I ask you to please look into your hearts and think about your complicity in a system that is built for nothing but death. The speaker mentioned that your studies don't show population level impacts on oceanic species but do your studies account for the climate crisis that we are currently in? The immense effect that the United States military's bombs, explosive, and ammunition have on our rapidly heating planet from the Pacific here to Palestine, how can you say that the bombing effects of -- that beyond the effects of sonar and bombing the ocean floor, detonating bombs and chemicals for years to come with no end will not abuse the larger environmental calamities? We are seeing the result right now of our climate crisis that's been exacerbated by the U.S. military. We're seeing it here and we're seeing it in the rapidly growing wildfires in Southern California. There just is no	parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings.

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	protecting the environment while continuous training. The only solution is a demilitarized Hawaii. Thank you. MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment	
Lyric	Allowing the Navy to train in Hawaii will damage marine life. I ask you to reconsider shipping out more navy soldiers to train. Their explosive training kills marine life and pollutes the water. We need marine life, and so do our upcoming generation of children and families.	Thank you for your comment.
M		
Macas, S	Please stop adding to the devastation our waters have already endured!	Thank you for your comment.
Mack, M	February 11, 2025 To HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager, As a resident of Kaneohe, a member of the Kaneohe Yacht Club and a frequent boater, kayaker and paddler on Kaneohe Bay, I am very concerned about the lack of definitive information regarding mines and underwater mine counter measures in the draft EIS/OEIS for the Hawaii California Testing and Training document. Kaneohe Bay is a relatively small, sheltered area with a great deal of ongoing recreational activity so to my layperson mind, setting underwater mines isn't in the best interests of folks who use this bay. I would like to know how this would be done safely. How often? Are we talking the detonation of explosives in the bay? What measures would be in place to protect people and sea life as well? Will we be notified of a training exercise? Is there a particular area of the bay where this testing/training will take place? I truly understand and appreciate your mission and I know you will understand and appreciate my concern for this as well. Thank you for addressing these questions. Respectfully,	The proposed mine warfare activities in Kaneohe Bay would not involve any explosives. The exact location within the bay would be determined just prior to any exercise based on learning objectives. No prior notice would be given, but the training personnel would conduct the activity to avoid non-participants.
Macy, C	The Navy needs to stop their training exercises on the sacred lands and waters of Ha'waii, the pollution and detrimental damage to the environment has been off the charts. The navy has done enough damage to last our future generations, multiple lifetimes, of clean up and environmental damage we cannot repair due to the negligence and selfishness of the military complex.	Thank you for your comment.

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	STOP TRAINING AND USING SACRED LANDS FOR YOUR SLFISH GENOCIDAL AND ECOCIDAL WAYS!!	
Madrigal, S	Stop polluting the oceans! Enough with the military destroying everything in their path!	Thank you for your comment.
Madyson	As someone about to graduate with a bachelor's degree in environmental science and anthropology, hearing and reading about the negative impacts this draft would have on the folks of Hawaii, their environment, and their wildlife, I find it impossible not to submit this comment. The components of this draft would further fuel climate change, habitat destruction, pollution, and more in a world where we are already struggling to rectify previous damages. Millions of species around the globe are suffering from the detrimental effects of climate change, including but not limited to— more severe natural disasters- like Hurricane Helene and the fires of Hawaii and California (which absolutely reshaped entire areas, displaced people and wildlife, and more), soil pollution and erosion- this not only affects wildlife and crop yield, but can also shape natural disasters and destroy natural habitats (worse flooding, mud/landslides), ocean acidification and coral reef bleaching, which both have massive effects on marine life and ecosystems, and much, much more. All of this to say, I strongly encourage the United States Navy to pause its actions regarding this draft.	Thank you for your comment.
Maisey	I do not support the destruction of the ocean and our planet for any purpose but especially not this one. Neither should you or anyone.	Thank you for your comment.
Major, J	Stop harming our ocean ecosystems! Do not ramp up naval activity in these waters!	Thank you for your comment.
Maldonado, A	Protect our marine life and the sustainable life style of the people of Hawaii!!	Thank you for your comment.
Mallory, M	Hawaii doesn't want the US here. The US steal their land. Us colonized their land plant military on their land. Now destroying their islands and water for the occupation of the military. The US are the villains in most people story. We suck as a nation I'm ashamed to live here.	Thank you for your comment.
Marie, T	MS. MARIE:· Aloha.· My name is Tia Marie.· I'm here representing myself as an individual, as well as Hawaii Peace and Justice, the organization.	Thank you for your comment.

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	I'd like to open with how the analogy shows how out of touch all of you are, comparing a sacred union and the University football game to the desecration of our homemade lands, viewing the range as a stadium.· But what true jurisdiction does the US military really have in our Hawaii nei pae aina, the Kingdom of Hawaii, which still stands from the sea floor to outer space. The analogy of the Pacific Range Missile Facility as ohana, and I'd like to state that the values of that so-called family are theft, death, and desecration.· Bringing up iwi kupuna when you guys are the same ones, literally, desecrating our ancestor's final resting places.· If you want to fully understand the impact -- US military impact has on Hawaii, then understand yourselves as the occupiers, and the people of this land as those under illegal occupation and duress. Words that were used -- other words that were used like "consider" and "heavily impact the decision-makers," I feel like hold no true value in the history of the US military, and their actions and (indiscernible.)· Ko Hawaii pae aina. I'd like to state that no action is, what I believe and a lot of kanaka maoli believe, is the best action or of if it's EIS's plan.· And I'd like to leave with, I think you folks have bigger energies to answer to than us.· Mahalo.	
Marlene	To whomever it may concern, I strongly oppose HCCT or any sort of testing. It would bring harm to the ocean, it's biodiversity, and culture tied to the land and ocean in this area. It's impact would be devastating, and would take forever to repair perhaps even exceeding our lifetime. Please reconsider any type of testing and how the damage could have a ripple effect world wide.	Thank you for your comment.
Marriott, C	Sonar tests and other tests that cause sound waves underwater are a known cause of severe health issues for many sea mammals and other sea creatures sometimes leading to fatality of these animals. It is also well known that these mammals are protected under the Marine Animal Protection Act. These animals are crucial to Hawai'i's marine biodiversity. Whales are crucial to maintaining nutritious content in the water for other animals to feed off as well as other porpoises. Their excrement releases high amounts of nitrogen which is absolutely crucial to maintaining the amount of microscopic organisms which help the ocean retain carbon. Whales and	Utilizing the latest science and technology, the Navy completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the potential environmental effects from military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described

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	other sea animals are crucial to not only general health of reefs and biodiversity but also air quality and other ecosystem services provided to us by the ocean. It is also very well understood that the survivorship of marine mammals is an explicit demonstration of ocean health. When these animals suffer it is no question that other parts of our marine ecosystem will suffer as well. Blatantly harming our ocean and the creatures within it is not only morally flawed but poses risk for fairly significant economic consequences. On top of this, the United States Navy had already previously acknowledged many times and even affirmed the harm that most of their sonar and explosive testing has done to marine life. There is no disagreement on the fact that military expansion is incredibly harmful to marine ecosystems. The people of Hawai'i heavily rely on the ocean not only for economic benefits but also to survive. It is absolutely essential that we continue to protect our ocean which means preventing the United States military from further damaging the ecosystems present in Hawai'i. https://www.nrdc.org/stories/please-silence-your-sonar https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/marine-mammal-protection https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/whales-and-carbon-sequestration-can-whales-store-carbon#:~:text=Whales%20efficiently%20digest%20and%20store,carbon%20dioxide%20over%20its%20lifespan. https://www.napaliriders.com/blog/the-hawaiian-monk-seal-everything-to-know/#:~:text=As%20a%20top%20predator%20in,in%20maintaining%20a%20balanced%20ecosystem. https://news.ucsc.edu/2024/10/dolphins-sense-sonar.html https://www.science.org/content/article/navy-admits-sonar-killed-whales	in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life. In addition, please see Appendix D and Appendix E.
Martha	Our oceans need protection, marine life is part of a delicate ecosystem and it is up to us to make sure it stays healthy for future generations, the health of the ocean impacts the entire world. It is not a playground, it needs to be treated with respect.	Thank you for your comment.
Martorano, M	How will real time monitoring of the maritime environment be performed for range safety as well as security.	The military participants in each training or testing activity choose a location that avoids conflicts with non-participants (civilians) and marine species. If people or marine life entered an area where a potentially hazardous activity was taking place, the

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		activity would be halted until the area was once again clear.
Martyn, K-01	Hawaii-California Training and Testing Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement Hawaii's Thousand Friends, is a non-profit dedicated to good land use planning, protecting natural and cultural resources and human health, has the following concerns that were not adequately addressed in this FEIS. We were unable to find information in the DEIS about the number of new service personnel and their families that will be homeported at either Pearl Harbor or Marine Base Hawaii in connection with this action. A U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) 2023 report concerning the U.S. military's impact on Oahu's housing shortage confirms that the military has a major impact on Oahu's housing supply, the availability of housing for Hawaii residents and affordability. The report finds that while DoD is aware that the housing crisis in Hawaii will only abate when DoD builds more housing on Hawaii military bases. The report states that there are 42,000 service members on Oahu, 25,000 reside on military installations with about 14,700 living off-base in rental housing and 2,150 service members purchase d homes. The 40% of service members living off base represents 1 in 10 private rental propertiE3Son Oahu not available to residents of the island. According to a 2019 state study and Honolulu's Housing Plan, the five-year demand for rental housing is 11,857 units or 53.5% of the total housing demand on Oahu. The 2023 DoD report puts the demand for on-base housing at 13,614. We realize that the purpose of this DEIS is to conduct military readiness and training activities but along with these purposes comes impacts to not only our islands land and ocean environment but to Oahu's residents. The FEIS must factor in the need for on-base housing for existing and new service personnel and their families that will be stationed on Oahu in connection with this Action.	The comment is beyond the scope of the Proposed Action. Home basing and home porting decisions that could result in movement of personnel to or from Hawaii would be analyzed in other NEPA documents. While training and testing evaluated in this analysis may bring units to Hawaii and they may have in-port opportunities off vessels, those episodes will be infrequent, short and temporary. Most units training in the Hawaii Range Complex will continue their transit after training or testing, to include deployment.

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	In the FEIS provide the number of new personnel and their families that will be homeported at both Pearl Harbor and Marne Corp Base Hawaii. In the FEIS provide information on the number of new housing units that are needed to accommodate new service personnel and their families. In the FE IIS provide information on how many single units and family housing units will be built on both bases to house inbound single service personnel and service personnel with families. If no new, housing units will be built either at Pearl Harbor or Marine Base Hawaii in the FEIS explain why. Oahu's mayor and the Governor have declared Oahu's lack of housing especially units that are affordable to local residents as a crisis. Oahu cannot continue to house military personnel off base at the expense of island residents In the FEIIS explain how many new structural facilities will be built on and off base to accommodate the new operations	
Martyn, K-02	The FEIS must explain how whale activity/presence will be determined by the Navy prior to potentially dangerous activities including the use of active sonar, explosives etc. Will the Navy rely only on visual observation or will the Navy supplement this with passive acoustic monitoring and other techniques?	Please see Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, which includes how the Navy employs Lookouts, passive acoustic monitoring, and other techniques to minimize effects on marine species.
Martyn, K-03	The FEIS must provide information on the location, number and dimensions of each off base or land structure that will be connected to the cables as they come on land.	None of the proposed cable projects would connect to land facilities; instead, all would connect to existing underwater junctions located offshore. Please see Appendix A, Section A.3.5.2.
Martyn, K-04	In the FEIS explain the methodology that will be used to assess the cumulative impacts or marine life from explosions in the ocean, physical disturbances and strikes from vessels, seafloor ,devices and pile driving.	Please see Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS.
Martyn, K-05	In the FEIS provide information on how often "seafloor devices" will be used in the Hawaii Study Area and describe each study area and anticipated impacts on marine life.	Please see Chapter 3, Section 3.0.3.3.4.3. Table 3.0-22 in this section provides the number of events within each Study Area that could include seafloor devices.

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Martyn, K-06	In the FEIS explain if the Study and Impact area includes the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. If so, explain why this archipelago in included.	The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands fall within the boundaries of the Temporary Operating Area (TOA), described in Appendix H, Section H.2.1.2. As stated in Section H.2.1.2, the TOA is used for RDT&E activities such as missile testing from the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF). Training in the TOA can include live missile firing associated with ballistic missile defense exercises, and vessel transits. Very few activities have historically occurred within the area around the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and that is expected to continue. No new activities are proposed to occur there. Types of events can be in the air, at the surface, or sub-surface. Activities conducted in this area are performed in compliance with applicable environmental laws.
Martyn, K-07	In the FEIS provide a full account of the combined effects of the proposed activities, existing and foreseeable future sources of air pollution on each area after explosive activities.	Please see Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1 of the EIS/OEIS.
Martyn, K-08	In the FEIS describe and define the “same area” where many in-water detonations would occur and the cumulative impacts on marine life from these continuing activities.	In-water detonations are proposed to occur in the same locations where they have been occurring for decades in the Hawaii Range Complex, at Pearl City Peninsula, Lima Landing, Barbers Point Underwater Range, Ewa Training Minefield, and the Puuloa Underwater Range. See Figure A-11 in Appendix A or Figure H-32 in Appendix H to see those locations.
Martyn, K-09	In the FEIS identify the areas considered "localized impact area" and define what is meant by "relatively low intensity."	"Relatively low intensity" means low relative to other sources. For example, the electromagnetic field generated by a proposed mine neutralization activity would be approximately 2,300 microteslas. This is a low-intensity source when compared to a refrigerator magnet, which could produce 15,000

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		to 20,000 microteslas. "Localized impact area" means that the stressor in question would not have effects over large areas of the ocean. Using the same mine neutralization activity as an example, a marine species sensitive to electromagnetic forces would have to be within feet of the mine neutralization source to be affected.
Martyn, K-10	Statements in this DEIS such as "Fishes located near the surface during the day would likely move av,1ay from mobile laser targets before lasers were fired..." are unrealistic and provide no comfort that thousands upon thousands of fish will be killed. In the FEIS explain how it is known that "fish will move away" when they are not aware that lasers will be fired'.	As stated in the EIS/OEIS in Section 3.6.3.3.2, activities that include the use of high-energy lasers would not have reasonably foreseeable adverse effects on fishes for several reasons, including: (1) the relatively low number of events (8 per year in Hawaii), (2) the very localized potentially affected area of the laser beam, and (3) the temporary duration of potential effects (seconds). The fourth reason has been revised in the Final EIS/OEIS to: (4) Fishes located near the surface during the day would likely move away from mobile laser targets due to the water disturbance of the moving target, decreasing the potential for exposure. In addition to those, the high-energy lasers are designed to automatically shut off if it loses lock on the target.
Martyn, K-11	The DEIS is unclear. Is the Navy asking for a "take" of ESA listed fishes? If so, in the FEIS explain how many of each species will be taken and over the period of time each species will be taken. **look up take	No takes of ESA-listed fish species are expected, and no takes have been requested.
Martyn, K-12	In the FEIS identify the circumstances under which a whale, shark or some other deep water marine species could become entangled in a decelerator or parachute and what procedures, if any, are in place to untangle the mammal.	The analysis explaining this for fishes is found in Section 3.6.3.5 and for marine mammals in Section 3.7.3.6 of the EIS/OEIS.
Martyn, K-13	In the FEIS identify each species of whale, the number of each species and the period of time that that each whale species can be killed.	The complete analysis of impacts on marine mammals is included in Section 3.7 of the EIS/OEIS. Additional supporting information can be found in Appendices C, E, and F.

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Martyn, K-14	In the FEIS explain what department or agency will keep track of each whale species killed and when and provide information when the "take" limit has been reached. In the FEIS explain the process should actions from this Action go beyond the "take" number for each marine species. Such as, does reaching the "take" limit on a single species during the allotted time mean that no more of that species may be killed? If so, identify the agency or agencies responsible for enforcing this limit. In the FEIS explain the consequences if the whale killings go beyond the allotted number of "takes."	NMFS tracks sick, injured, entangled, stranded, or dead animals. The U.S. Navy closely coordinates with NMFS in the investigation of marine mammal strandings that are potentially associated with Navy sonar activities to better understand the events surrounding the strandings. If any marine mammal injuries or mortalities are determined by NMFS to be the result of activities covered under a permit issued by NMFS, and that injury or mortality exceeds the permitted takes then the responsible agency may have to reconsult with NMFS.
Martyn, K-15	In the FE IS explain what "modernization and sustainment of ranges" means.	The military services require at-sea ranges for the efficient conduct of training and testing. Some ranges include submerged infrastructure such as undersea cables or simulated mine targets. Modernization and sustainment of ranges includes actions to upgrade or update range infrastructure, including installing seafloor cables and moving or replacing submerged mine warfare targets.
Martyn, K-16	In the FE IS identify the entity that is proposing critical habitat for the green sea turtle around all islands and when these critical habitat boundaries will be established.	Please see Appendix C, Section C.7.2.1.1, where the following information is provided: “On July 19, 2023, NMFS issued a proposed rule for critical habitat designation” for the green sea turtle. The critical habitat will be established upon publication of the Final Rule.
Martyn, K-17	In the FEIS provide information on what happens to a sea turtle when it forages around or on a stationary seafloor device.	Section 3.8.3.6 of the Draft and Final EIS/OEIS analyzes the effects of potential ingestion stressors to sea turtles from proposed activities. Seafloor devices are too large to be considered a potential ingestion risk so were not analyzed here. However, the potential of a physical disturbance or strike to a sea turtle from stationary seafloor devices was analyzed in Section 3.8.3.4.3. Additional background information related to ingestion risks

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		and seafloor devices is found in Appendix F, Section F.8.2 and F.8.4.
Martyn, K-18	In the FEIIS explain the purpose of identifying historic shipwrecks. Is it so that they can be used as targets?	Shipwrecks are avoided during proposed activities. Please see Table 5-8 in Chapter 5 for a description of the mitigation measures regarding shipwrecks.
Martyn, K-19	In the FEIS identify the areas where sinking exercises will take place and how often these exercises will occur.	Sinking exercises occur in different locations depending on the requirements for each specific exercise. As stated in Appendix A, Section A.1.10.15, each location is required to be greater than 50 nautical miles from shore. Navy is required, per the General permit held under the Ocean Dumping Act, to report location information to EPA after a sinking exercise.
Mary	Protect Hawaii. Do not destroy Hawaii. Do not expand military.	Thank you for your comment.
Mason, D	Too many times has the US government trampled over nature in the name of national security. Me and many would very much appreciate it if the US government would work better with nature, and this includes starting, instigating, or participating in any war with any part of human kind. We as humans are not better or more important than nature.	Thank you for your comment.
Mathews, P	I am against the expansion of training as described. I have read through the impact statement and believe it inaccurately minimizes the effects on marine life.	Thank you for your comment.
Matthews, A	The United States ruins the water and land of Hawaii and it is time for that to change NOW.	Thank you for your comment.
Maurice, T	I would like to understand options that were considered other than this. Are there other waters or other techniques to test capabilities for the military? Specially as there are endangered monk seals and this is the breeding grounds for humpback whales.	This EIS/OEIS includes alternatives that meet the Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action. Please see Section 2.4.1 for a discussion of other alternatives that were considered.
McCormick, J	As an ex card holding merchant marine sailor , diver, humanitarian, over 35 yrs Hawaiian tax paying resident ; I am speaking for those that cannot. The whale and dolphins, creatures of the sea cannot keep up, with your attempts to bomb away, and play war games, in their territories. The earth & ocean	Thank you for your comment.

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	cannot either. Only when we have done the final damage, to Hawaiian oceans, will you then feel you've sacrificed enough in the name of money and war games? Was not Ko'olawi a warning, islands have limits? The clean up was never enough to habitat again. The earth / oceans are already telling us enough, is enough. We stretched her to her limits. Damaging back to us , causing the fires, torrential weather, hurricanes, more lava. Empty the oceans, empty the land, empty the souls that care not. God IS watching. Please kokua (care) , for our aina(our land / oceans). Signed Julia McCormick	
McDonald, A	No more militarization of the area and pollution. Killing the planet is not what I served in the military for. Let the indigenous peoples have their sovereignty and land and ocean.	Thank you for your comment.
McEachern, K-01	I am deeply opposed to the expansion and renewal of the military work in the Hawaiian Island waters, including the actions of research, development, acquisition, and evaluation of weapons, use of explosives and sonar, mine warfare training, and manned and unmanned aircraft, surface ships, submarines, unmanned underwater vehicles, and other specialized technologies. The impacts to the native Hawaiian ecosystems and wildlife including endangered and threatened species like the endangered Hawaiian Monk seal who travels and feeds in a whole realm of depths of the ocean are critical and too costly. The use of military sonar has direct implications on marine animals' ability to communicate and has been shown through research to cause intense psychological and physiological detriments. The Humpback whales who travel to the Hawaiian archipelago to use the waters to raise and keep their young safe while they grow, would be gravely impacted by the continued and or increased use of sonar and the exploding of ordinances. This renewal of military activities within the Hawaiian waters has too adverse of an impact on critical endemic and endangered wildlife species. The impacts are significant, and I directly oppose the approval of expansion and renewal of this permitting. The most critical threats to the Hawaiian Islands are not warfare from other countries, but rather species extinction that help maintain the ecosystems of the islands, impacts from climate change, resource extraction and depletion from over development and the United	Please see Appendix D and Appendix E.

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	States' illegal occupation and takeover of the Hawaiian Kingdom, impacts to the land and oceans from the U.S. military actions, the U.S. colonization of the islands that has led to resource inequity for Hawaiians and locals, including lack of housing, jobs, and an adequate pay to support their families and stay in Hawai'i, and the re direction of natural resources away from Hawaiians and locals to support the tourism industries and private land developers and owners. I oppose these actions and do not want the Navy to renew its operating permit for training at sea around Hawai'i.	
McEachern, K-02	Aloha, I am deeply opposed to the expansion and renewal of the military work in the Hawaiian Island waters, including the actions of research, development, acquisition, and evaluation of weapons, use of explosives and sonar, mine warfare training, and manned and unmanned aircraft, surface ships, submarines, unmanned underwater vehicles, and other specialized technologies. The impacts to the native Hawaiian ecosystems and wildlife including endangered and threatened species like the endangered Hawaiian Monk seal who travels and feeds in a whole realm of depths of the ocean are critical and too costly. The use of military sonar has direct implications on marine animals' ability to communicate and has been shown through research to cause intense psychological and physiological detriments. The Humpback whales who travel to the Hawaiian archipelago to use the waters to raise and keep their young safe while they grow, would be gravely impacted by the continued and or increased use of sonar and the exploding of ordinances. This renewal of military activities within the Hawaiian waters has too adverse of an impact on critical endemic and endangered wildlife species. The impacts are significant, and I directly oppose the approval of expansion and renewal of this permitting. The most critical threats to the Hawaiian Islands are not warfare from other countries, but rather species extinction that help maintain the ecosystems of the islands, impacts from climate change, resource extraction and depletion from over development and the United States' illegal occupation and take over of the Hawaiian Kingdom, impacts to the land and oceans from the U.S. military actions, the U.S. colonization of the islands that has led to resource inequity for Hawaiians and locals, including lack of housing, jobs, and an adequate pay to support their families and stay in Hawai'i, and the re direction of natural	Please see Appendix D and Appendix E.

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	resources away from Hawaiians and locals to support the tourism industries and private land developers and owners. I oppose these actions and do not want the Navy to renew its operating permit for training at sea around Hawai'i. Thank you, Kinsley McEachern	
McKee, J	I think we all know that what the public thinks about the planned expansion of HCTT will have no sway in the matter. I think we all know that, in the eyes of the people that run this country, anything is justified in the name of expanding the ability to wage war, even when they can't think of a good person to wage war against. We know that civilian authorities will cow to whatever the DOD wants because they are spineless, and they know they will simply be ignored if they don't give the answer they are told to. I will lodge my complaints anyway. Attached is a letter detailing the bad analysis in the navy's proposal. The US military consistently ignores or underrepresents the severity of the environmental and cultural (they are one and the same) impacts that their testing in the Pacific has. It is high time that the amount of testing be curtailed significantly.	Thank you for your comment.
McKelvey, M	This is unacceptable. We must protect all marine life at all costs. This area has far too much innocent wildlife that will ALL be destroyed because of the USA. More blood on your hands. This needs to end.	Thank you for your comment.
McQuay, R	I don’t want any more land or water being taken away from Native People, regardless of where they are. The US military project is not more important than Native human rights to live.	Thank you for your comment.
McReynolds, N	Please protect our environment and stop ruining the oceans. The navy doesn’t need to expand. Our environment needs to be protected. This is the only home we have. Protect your children’s lives	Thank you for your comment.
M, Denisha	Military exercise has been shown to cause devastating on the ecosystem, flora and fauna and water table. The health of the Hawaiian islands and people are paramount and military exercise can’t be allowed to expand. We only have one planet. Once are resources are polluted they are gone forever.	Thank you for your comment.
M, Elizabeth	Hawaiian waters and native ecosystems are under threat by extensive military operations. Hawaii stands as an incredibly unique and diverse ecosystem home to many species that are under global endangerment. Any further involvement in the area by the US Navy stands to increase the	Thank you for your comment.

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	dangers these ecosystems face through pollution, habitat loss, and individual loss and harm through human involvement. It would be an egregious oversight to allow further environmental impacts from the US military by expanding Navy presence and zoning within these waters. Commercial developments already impact the area enough without the added damages from military runoff and contamination. Also, give Hawaii back to her people.	
Meadow	Leave the military out of hawaiian waters!!! I grew up on oahu because of the military and the amount of land taken from indigenous people there is disgusting!! Let native hawaiians live their life without the military and government ruining their land resources and general vibes of the hawaiian islands	Thank you for your comment.
Meeker, H	I regret that I lack the time, temperament and cognitive skills to address my comments to fit your definitlon of ·substantial". But I am compelled to share my thinkmg. I fully support the "No Action Alternative" because in the last 65 years in Hawaii, I have never seen the Navy conduct anything successfully. I have seen major errors, blunders, insensitivity and always incompetent efforts to deflect the blame for anything. It is time the Navy conduct its training elsewhere. Hawaii has grown too urban and too populated to serve as a training ground. The next time something goes wrong, and it will, the repercussions could be severe. It is time to to think about leaving and certainly time to stop extending your training in our waters.	Thank you for your comment.
Mehfoud, K	US military out of Hawaii !	Thank you for your comment.
Mehojah, K	Do not increase military activity - it will be detrimental to marine life and ecosystem that is already seeing disastrous levels of destruction from over militarization and climate change. Please do the right thing and stop this project. Even us landlocked citizens will feel the effects.	Thank you for your comment.
Meller	Please protect the waters, diversity and species in the ocean is beneficial for the long run. Protecting nature saves you money as well. Drastic changes would not only affect the area but could result in affecting ecosystems connected to our nation. Please reconsider this approach.	Thank you for your comment.
Melzack, D	hi, my name is David, i want to take this time to pray for life. eo ola. i send prayers to the most high that the beings of the ocean may be protected from	Thank you for your comment.

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	human influence, military violence and desecration. i pray for the tides to flow fast and many hands to remove trash from my ocean. i pray that in this time when one higher power's choice can impact hose without a human voice , we choose life and abundance for all. i pray the US military can end the poisoning of waters, that they could use the billions to fund the cleaning of our oceans. in this time when you seek to destroy her, i stand with my ocean.	
Mercedes	STOP THEM FROM HURTING THE MARINE LIFE AND POLLUTING THE OCEAN!!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Michelle	I care about the environment and the impact this will have on the native Hawaiians. Hawaii carries so much cultural and natural beauty. Let us protect it!	Thank you for your comment.
Miles, R	Please leave the water alone! You are going to be responsible for un-reversible aquatic damage ! I am "the people" and we do NOT WANT THIS!	Thank you for your comment.
Miller, E	our marine life is the backbone of our ecosystem. nobody is exempt from the devastation that lies with destroying our oceans. we are all human, we all live here and we'd all like to live here for while AND actually enjoy it. so much is being destroyed for the American people, do not take away our oceans more than you already have.	Thank you for your comment.
Miller, J	Hey Joshua here. As a Texan, who's land and enviroment has been ravaged by various man made mistakes, I do not approve of the military upping their [*expletive deleted*] that would cause several CATASTROPHIC collapses of the Hawaiian ecosystem. Seriously, ruining the land thats a hit tourist destination cause you need yhe military to be "perfect", nah get outta here	Thank you for your comment.
Mirka	PROTECT OUR CORAL REEFS	Thank you for your comment.
Misamore, B.	It is vital that the Navy reduce activities and protect our precious waters. Hawai'i deserves the same consideration as Right Whales	Thank you for your comment.
Mitchell, J	Overall, increasing military exercises in and around the waters of Hawai'i is detrimental to the marine life and coral reefs of these special islands. Since our tourism is so heavily dependent on water activities, this type of work would actually harm our ability to generate revenue. Given the current administrations efforts to make America prosperous, the government taking	Thank you for your comment.

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	action that limits our opportunity for prosperity seems to go against the message being communicated. I respectfully ask that you do not initiate these endeavors. Mahalo, Jon Mitchell	
Mitu, V	I propose that the military get out of Hawaii and out of every other place that doesn't want them due to them ruining everything they touch. Laundering preposterous amounts of money from the Pentagon just doesn't seem worth destroying Hawaii to me.	Thank you for your comment.
Mizula, J	Jason Mizula testified as follows: MR. MIZULA: As the U.S. -- I'm going to -- I'm here as a father of two young boys. As the husband of a woman who came to Hawaii in 1989 as a refugee from Iran and as a member of Veterans for Peace Hawaii, as the U.S. military seeks to expand its area of desecration, can they at least first give a statement on the environmental impact they have had on the island of Kahoolawe; or the impact on the tiny Kalaupapa peninsula on Molokai, which doubled as a hospital and a bombing range during World War II and is now littered with unexploded ordnance just like many other places on other islands; or the impact of the fuel oil spilled on Mount Haleakala; or the impact of the fuel oil leaking in Oahu's aquifer and God knows where else; or the impact of the raw sewage dumped repeatedly into a harbor already filled with eight decades of leaking oil; or the impact of Agent Orange, white phosphorus, and depleted uranium on the mountains and forests and everything else along the way to the ocean and reef; or the impact of the intentionally sunken ships and everything else we can't see beneath the surface of the sea; or the impact of the bombs dropped in dry, invasive grasses, igniting reckless and avoidable wildfires? Can you please speak to the impact of the invasive species like the coconut rhinoceros beetle brought to Hawaii on unchecked aircraft or the environmental impact of those -- the aircraft themselves as they fly uninhibited and noisily through Hawaiian skies training to kill? What is the environmental impact of those wanting to militarize and colonize space, pretending it's in the name of science while folks like Elon Musk reap billions and plan to discard the waste into the Hawaiian sea?	Thank you for your comment. The EIS/OEIS analyzes the potential environmental impacts of at-sea military readiness activities described in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS/OEIS. The issues raised in the comment are not within the scope of this EIS/OEIS.

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	Can there be a statement on the human impact the military's basic housing allowance has had on Hawaii's housing market and on the Native Hawaiians in particular, now the majority who live in the diaspora? Will there be a statement by the military about the violent crimes committed by its members stationed in Hawaii against local people, especially women and children? Has there been an environmental impact statement addressing the consistent target placed on Hawaii by the very presence of the U.S. military? Does the military have a statement about the impact they've had on Hawaii and na kanaka maoli since 1893 and the similarities between the audacity to request this expansion and the audacity of the sugar barons? Thank you.	
MJ	Trying to say you are protecting the land or any part of this earth, while actively trying to expand something that will kill the earth, says more about your character than you think it does. Stop trying to "protect" something or someone when no one asked you too. You aren't protecting anything, you are only killing and stealing. Don't you think any natives would have asked for help if they wanted it? Leave the ocean and Hawaii and any indigenous land or waters for that matter alone!! They don't need you! No more expanding! You have enough!	Thank you for your comment.
Moll, L	The Navy's Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) downplays its role in major ocean pollution events, shifting responsibility to municipalities and industry. Unmentioned in the report are three major Navy pollution events in Hawaiian waters. The 5-million-gallon underground oil plume beneath Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, resulting from decades of Navy fuel storage failures, is described by the Navy as a "historical release of petroleum products" rather than an ongoing contamination crisis. Similarly, the recent 1.89-million-gallon wastewater spill into the ocean near Pearl Harbor is attributed to "heavy rains damaging a transformer," ignoring the Navy's history of regulatory violations, including a $9 million fine for prior infractions. Also not considered are the implications of the jet fuel leaks at Red Hill, which can affect the ocean quality because the underground aquifers and water sources are connected to the ocean. These recurring pollution events violate federal and state environmental standards and	While the events mentioned in the comment are not part of the Proposed Action and therefore not analyzed as direct impacts, they are considered under cumulative effects in Chapter 4. The EIS/OEIS considered the stress of fibropapillomatosis in the analysis of effects on sea turtles (see Appendix C, Sections C.7.1.3.3 and C.7.2.1.4; and Appendix F, Section F.8.5.3). The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 military readiness activities. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable.

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	threaten Hawaii's fragile marine ecosystems. The OEIS fails to adequately assess the long-term ocean impacts of these spills, particularly their effect on endangered species. Research from the University of Hawai'i and NOAA links nitrogen pollution from wastewater to the proliferation of invasive algae, which elevates arginine levels and fuels fibropapillomatosis (FP), a tumor-causing disease devastating Hawaii's green sea turtles. NOAA has credited this as the leading cause of death in endangered green sea turtles. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life.	
Moore, C	Leave the marine life alone. Your killing marine life and people due to greed	Thank you for your comment.
Moore, K	This is disgusting. We don't need more weapons or bombs. We don't need more funding for the military or to expand operations in Hawaii. What we need is more trees, clean drinking water, and to reduce carbon emissions. This is immoral and catastrophic for our planet and species.	Thank you for your comment.
Moore, M	Please consider the devastating impacts that Navy activity has on our marine wildlife! I have a lot of respect and admiration for the US Navy. I have many friends who are serving or have served, I've spent a lot of time at Oak Harbor, and my own grandfather served in the US Navy during World War II. Your services are essential, and under the current administration, it would be incredibly easy to expand your reaches further into our oceans without much consideration for the ocean life that you're impacting. However, I urge you to put our ocean's health at the very forefront of all you do! The increase in naval activity proposed would have devastating impacts on whale populations, whose communications are already tremendously negatively impacted by naval activity. Navy activities, such as anti-submarine warfare training, can harm whales through vessel strikes, sonar, and explosions. These activities can injure, deafen, and kill whales, as well as disrupt their feeding, breeding, and migration patterns. If these activities were to increase near their traditional breeding grounds, the impacts would be disastrous. That's not to mention the impact these activities have on other sensitive marine life, especially vulnerable shark and sea turtle populations, and coral reefs. Nothing is more important than protecting our oceans. If the oceans die, we die. As many of you are lovers of the seas, I hope this and other	Please see Section 3.4, Section 3.6, Section 3.7, and Section 3.8 of the EIS/OEIS for the analysis of all proposed activities on those resources.

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	comments if a similar nature resonate with you. Thank you for considering what I have to say.	
Moretti, G	Now more than ever is the time to protect land and prevent further destruction and catapulting this planet in a further climate crisis. Give land make to indigenous people!	Thank you for your comment.
Morgan, C	This is simply unacceptable. This would devastate wildlife ecosystems and the fragile coral reefs along Hawaiian coast lines. Hawaii is not a testing ground. It's a special and unique ecosystem that deserves respect and care. Not to mention Hawaii is a huge tourist industry and if you destroy it natural beauty that everyone travels to see and bask in then you destroy that industry as well. So if your own morality and sense of responsibility to Mother Nature isn't enough then think of the ramifications from the money lost in tourism when the all the coral reefs die and the ecosystems break down.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Section 3.4 and Section 3.6 of the EIS/OEIS for the analysis of all proposed activities on those resources.
Morgan	The detrimental affects that more military activity could pose to not only the water and the wildlife, but to the people of Hawaii could be devastating. There is absolutely no need for increased military activity. These very delicate ecosystems can be easily disrupted by such egregious actions and should not take place. Hawaii has some of the most diverse wildlife and further activity by the Navy and other military operations could pose significant harm. Furthermore, there should be accountability taken for the needless destruction of marine life and assurances that conservational efforts will be put in place to ensure the continued growth and safety of these protected species.	Thank you for your comment. As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life.
Morris, R	Expanding military presence on Hawaii's shores is only going to cause more strenuous relations between native islanders and occupational forces. The navy has no business doubling its hold on the islands. We implore you to reconsider.	Thank you for your comment.
M, William	Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) downplays its role in major ocean pollution events, shifting responsibility to municipalities and industry. Unmentioned in the report are three major Navy pollution events in Hawaiian waters. The 5-million-gallon underground oil plume beneath Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, resulting from decades of Navy fuel storage failures, is described by the Navy as a "historical release of petroleum	While the events mentioned in the comment are not part of the Proposed Action and therefore not analyzed as direct impacts, they are considered under cumulative effects in Chapter 4.

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	products" rather than an ongoing contamination crisis. Similarly, the recent 1.89-million-gallon wastewater spill into the ocean near Pearl Harbor is attributed to "heavy rains damaging a transformer," ignoring the Navy's history of regulatory violations, including a $9 million fine for prior infractions. Also not considered are the implications of the jet fuel leaks at Red Hill, which can affect the ocean quality because the underground aquifers and water sources are connected to the ocean. These recurring pollution events violate federal and state environmental standards and threaten Hawaii's fragile marine ecosystems. The OEIS fails to adequately assess the long-term ocean impacts of these spills, particularly their effect on endangered species. Research from the University of Hawai'i and NOAA links nitrogen pollution from wastewater to the proliferation of invasive algae, which elevates arginine levels and fuels fibropapillomatosis (FP), a tumor-causing disease devastating Hawaii's green sea turtles. NOAA has credited this as the leading cause of death in endangered green sea turtles. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life. Conclusion The Draft EIS/OEIS for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing activities fails to adequately address the significant and substantive concerns of Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, and water protectors. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life and people. Additionally, the No Action Alternative must be re-evaluated to reflect the benefits of stopping harmful military activities, and the Navy must prioritize the protection of marine life, cultural practices, and the health of the oceans over military readiness. The US military, and it's destruction of people and the environment, is the largest ongoing threat to Hawai'i for decades. This report is another instance of that threat and real, ongoing damage to Hawaii and her people, being dismissed as insignificant when it is actually extremely significant. The health of our communities and our oceans, the survival of endangered species, and the rights of Native Hawaiians depend on the people holding the Navy accountable as they attempt to deceive and mislead us about the harm they do. We will hold you accountable. Stop prioritizing	The EIS/OEIS considered the stress of fibropapillomatosis in the analysis of effects on sea turtles (see Appendix C, Sections C.7.1.3.3 and C.7.2.1.4; and Appendix F, Section F.8.5.3). The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 military readiness activities. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would logically remain unchanged or improve slightly.

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	war over the planet’s health and choose a path that honors and PROTECTS OUR MOANA and all who depend on it.	
Mya	keep our oceans safe	Thank you for your comment.
N		
Nadia	Save yall	Thank you for your comment.
Nani	Nani testified as follows: NANI:· (Chanting in Hawaiian).· Aloha mai kakou. AUDIENCE:· Aloha. NANI:· I'm tired.· Today's January 17th, our Legislature's opening.· And you guys know that. Why the heck you make the fricking meeting on this day? We're not here enough to represent ourself. That's not -- don't do it again.· January 17th, never, ever make a meeting.· I'm sorry, Legislature Day and January 17th, never, ever make a meeting again.· (Speaking Hawaiian).· That is nasty. And mahalo nui loa for being the leader that you are, for being smarter than a lot of -- e kala mai -- the people that stand here today to understanding relationship to our aina. He's just a little kid.· Please take lessons from him because in our culture, it doesn't matter what age you are, he get ike, and that's mana. Why -- why are you guys okay with destroying our earth?· (Speaking Hawaiian).· This small earth, too.· Why? You heard all of us say "No," say "No."· We say "No."· That should be enough.· I'm not going to say "no" just because everybody did. Please don't come again with a half-assed presentation with no facts of all the destruction that you are causing.· That's a waste of my time. That's a waste of our time. I'm young in this movement.· I'm 50.· And I'm young in this movement.· I know kanaka that's been in this movement way longer than me.· And there's people that still don't know the truth about what everybody spoke about today.	Thank you for your comment.

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	Do you know the truth?· Do you know the truth?· Have you been in aina?· I'm asking all of you that are for this, please raise your hand and respond. Have you been in land before?· Have you been in the aina with any of us here in Hawaii? Please raise your hand. Have you been in the ocean with any of us, kanaka from this land?· Please raise your hand. Not one of you.· No ke aha.· Why? We don't come to your house and no get to know you.· The aina helps you to understand why we stand so fricking strong in protecting our seas and our place.· Not for us, for our babies, for our kupunas that are still in the aina, mauka to makai, in the heavens, in the earth, and all around us, kakou. This is going out to you guys because I'm so tired of fricking fighting.· We tired already.· We need to find solutions, and this is not a solution. This is not a solution.· You doing this for what? For this. We stand in here not get paid.· Why? Because we get familial ties to everything in Hawaii, everything.· That's my kupuna you destroying in every way, killing opportunity for my kids and my grandkids to have a future.· You killing the opportunity for your kids and your grandkids for have one future. Enough is enough.· Work with us.· I promise you, you work with us, brah, we all going thrive, not just you guys.· Not just you guys.· We all going thrive. But you not going understand that until you come and build relationships with us.· I speaking from my heart right now.· That's the way about relationships because relationships build deep connections and those deep connections remind us of what our kuleana is, our responsibility is to the heavens, to the earth, to each other, to our past, to our future. It's the new year.· Stop killing our aina. Stop killing us.· Help save us or we all going be done, all of us, including you. And if you know this, please do this with me.· It speaks about the connection that we have to everything, everything.· And in that is our deep aloha for everything. (Chanting in Hawaiian).· I am somebody. I'm connected to every bit of this earth.· I'm connected to you somehow, somewhere.· (Chanting in Hawaiian).· From the east to the west.· (Chanting in Hawaiian).· From the mountains to the ocean.	

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	(Chanting in Hawaiian.)· That's not the one. That's our many akuas that we don't control, our sun, our clouds, our wind, our ocean, our plants, our earth.· That's our akua.· You may not understand that and you no need to, but don't push us down anymore because this our land, not yours.· This our land.· Not yours.· (Chanting in Hawaiian). We all need that enlightenment, kakou, including you guys, definitely you guys, the enlightenment, and I going come again from us, us, kanaka, of this place, from this place.· (Chanting in Hawaiian). Aloha.· That's one hard word, but it just don't mean "aloha," "hello," and "good-bye."· There's a depth in that word alone.· You're not going to understand that unless you build your relationship with us. Come and learn what aloha really means, and you going to understand how to aloha our aina together with us.· Not for your agenda.· Please don't.· We're done.· We're tired.· And we just want to live.· Aloha.	
Natalia	The navy's use of the waters in Hawaii is dangerous for the ecosystem and can have catastrophic effects on climate.this must be stopped.	Thank you for your comment.
Natalie	The No Action Alternative is Misrepresented Under § 1502.14, the alternatives section is the heart of the EIS. The No Action Alternative, where the Navy stops military testing and training activities in our waters, is described in the document as resulting in conditions "unchanged or slightly improved from baseline conditions." This is a gross misrepresentation. The No Action Alternative should be evaluated based on the BENEFITS of stopping harmful military activities, not just the absence of harm. Currently the NAVY is running 7,432 activities per year under this EIS in Hawaii alone, according to tables G-16 and G-17.	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with military readiness activities under Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would logically remain unchanged or improve slightly.
Nations, V	Stop polluting Hawaiian waters and disrupting the local wildlife	Thank you for your comment.
Needels, T	Question: will there be an increase in artillery and rocket fire on the Windward side? Will these be fired in the evening? Have these been noise modeled for MCBH or other areas?	Land-based artillery and rocket fire on Oahu are not part of this action. At-sea gunnery and missile firing would occur in the Hawaii Study Area, but not within 12 NM of land.

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Nichols, T	Stop destroying our planet!!! There is nothing more essential to our continued existence than the health of our planet!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Nina	The oceans in Hawaii must be protected, military activities should be prohibited as much as possible. Protecting wildlife, sustaining clean water and it's environment is vital for protecting the people and ensuring a better future.	Thank you for your comment.
Nolan	No to the ongoing testing in Hawaiian waters!!! We (as a kanaka maoli) are done with the US military, their bombing and raping of our natural resources and pollution of our lands!!! Leave Hawaii!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Nunez, M	We need to protect this environment.	Thank you for your comment.
O		
Obannon, N	Inceasing the activity of the Navy in Hawaiian waters will cause damage to the many endangered species that call it home. Hawaiian monk seals, humpback whales, green sea turtles, and coral reefs are negatively affected by underwater explosives, pollution, and live fire exercises conducted during Navy activities. The Navy is a vital part of our American military and their training is important, but America is in a time of peace. There is no reason to escalate, 7,432 activities annually is enough.	Please see Section 3.4, Section 3.7, and Section 3.8 of the EIS/OEIS for the analysis of all proposed activities on those resources.
Oslonian, P	As much as i support our grand military of the United States, I fear this is impending on the civil rights and native rights. Also the damages from coral reefs, valuable wildlife and even the cultural practices of the people of Hawaii. Please don't pass this! Listen to us, the people and hear our voices!	Please see Section 3.4, Section 3.7, Section 3.8, and Section 3.10 of the EIS/OEIS for the analysis of all proposed activities on those biological and cultural resources.
Owens, R	I may live across the nation from Hawaii, but I have heard from those living there how strongly they oppose this move. Beyond that, I care about our impact on the environment and this choice affects not only Americans now but our global community in this generation and generations to come.	Thank you for your comment.
P		
P, L	The US military has already inflicted enough upon the Hawaiian islands, their people and their waters. Increasing military presence and activity can only serve to further harm the community and the environment to an extent which outweighs any theoretical strategic gain. Why take away more from	Thank you for your comment.

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	whom so much has already been irreparably lost due to actions such as those being proposed alongside the draft EIS. Others with more intimate knowledge of the personal and biological loss will surely be testifying alongside me. I hope the Navy will heard these voiced and withdraw the current draft EIS and associated expansion of activities. I hope the Navy will take a moment to reflect and then build a better plan, this time with respect for and guidance from the Hawaiian people at the forefront of the planning process.	
Padilla, L	This project will onky cause more irreversible damage to an already deteriorating ecosystem. We must protect what little of the working environment we have left rather then speed up its destruction for corporate greed.	Thank you for your comment.
Pahia, L	Lena Pahia testified as follows: MS. PAHIA:· Aloha kakou. AUDIENCE:· Aloha. MS. PAHIA:· I told myself I wasn't coming up here, and here we are.· Everybody's touched on a lot of subjects so I'm not going to go ahead and repeat that.· (Inaudible). We're against (inaudible) because of what it does. MS. TURNER:· Could you speak a little louder? MS. PAHIA:· So a'ole RIMPAC and the effects that it has on the marine life and the people in the ocean.· Yes, they're our people.· They're not animals, they're not things.· They're people. I'm going to jump around a little bit.· Why demilitarize?· You guys aren't very good guests.· You make a mess.· You leave it.· You want some more.· You make another mess.· You leave it. I have a shirt on.· I represent PKO when I'm in Kahoolawe.· People have mentioned her, that there's still ordnances on her that you have not cleaned up. But they have not said that you broke the water table.· She can no longer hold water.· So there is no way that we can ever go back to her.· But you want us to give you more land?· A'ole.	Thank you for your comment.

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	All right.· So everybody's talking about the effects on wildlife.· And, yes, there is an effect on wildlife. Meet Kilo (phonetic) here after you guys leave, after your two years.· And six to seven months after you guys leave, we'll clean up your mess.· We reroute the babies that come on the beach.· Then the mamas, we watch them die.· We bury them.· A'ole. So, question, these surroundings that you use in these training exercises, these missiles -- you know, in Waianae, on Facebook, me and my braddah over there called Kaohu (phonetic) was watching you guys' outgoing boat, one ship, look like one fast frigate, just in time for RIMPAC. We asked each other the question, What they going do with that boat?· And then we saw what you guys do with the boat.· You use it as target practice. You sink it in our oceans where we fish, where some people depend on the food that come out of that ocean to feed their family.· On Molokai, they call it their refrigerator. I understand training. I do.· We do it as kanaka.· I understand the entitlement of your country.· Fighting for your country, I understand that.· But this is not your country.· This is the Kingdom of Hawaii.	
Paradea, A	The No Action Alternative is the only reasonable solution towards ensuring that our oceans remain safe and healthy for current and future generations. I care about the cultural and ecological legacies of this expansive region, and the damage already being done by the US military results in significant harm. Please do what is right and choose the No Action Alternative.	Thank you for your comment.
Parlin, C	To Whom It May Concern: I am Chris Parlin, a Mental Health Therapist/Counselor on Oahu, and I am writing to express my concerns about this proposal. I believe that is does not adequately address the potential impacts on Native Hawaiian practices and is not be fully compliant with NEPA and related regulations. 1. Insufficient Consultation: There is absolutely no evidence of meaningful consultation with Native Hawaiian organizations and cultural practitioners and that is made apparent simply by lack of description and references.	The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has

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	2. Lack of Cultural Impact Assessment: Does not include a CIA that evaluates the effects of the proposed actions on Native Hawaiian cultural practices, as required by state law. 3. Mitigation Measures: Does not include specific mitigation measures to address potential adverse effects on cultural resources and practices. Recommendations: 1. Conduct a Comprehensive Cultural Impact Assessment: Engage with qualified professionals to perform a CIA that evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed activities on Native Hawaiian cultural practices. 2. Meaningful Consultation: Initiate and document meaningful consultation with NH orgs, cultural practitioners. 3. Develop Mitigation Measures: Based on the CIA and consultations, develop mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on NH cultural and historic resources. By taking these steps, the Navy can uphold its obligations under federal and state laws, show respect of the cultural heritage of Native Hawaiians, and try to promote a more responsible relationship with the local communities. Thank you for considering these concerns. I look forward to your response and to the incorporation of these recommendations into the final EIS. Sincerely, Chris Parlin	continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings. Please see Chapter 5 for a description of mitigation measures. The Action Proponents proposed mitigation measures to address effects that would be significant. As determined in the analysis contained in Section 3.10 of the EIS/OEIS, the effects would be less than significant and mitigation measures would not be needed.
Paulison, M	Protect marine life	Thank you for your comment.
Paulson, R	This is absolutely unnecessary to everyone in America.	Thank you for your comment.

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Pegram, M	Misty Pegram testified as follows: MS. PEGRAM: Aloha mai kakou. My name is Misty Pegram, and I'm a member of (inaudible). We're a national Democratic organization that stands in solidarity with the Hawaiian people in calling for Hawaiian lands to return to Hawaiian hands. The Draft EIS, that thick book over there which they only gave us about a month to read, Lord knows that in the midst of working two jobs and school and everything else that the people have going on in their lives, they don't have time to read a thousand-page-plus-plus-plus document. So they gave us this one which I just want to point out that's really in a historical context. First of all, at the risk of adding to those thousands of pages, you don't mention -- or it is never mentioned by the U.S. military their role in the illegal overthrow and occupation of the Hawaiian Kingdom. It is never acknowledged by the U.S. Navy -- first off, they're poisoning -- where if they do, it's -- you know, they're trying to clean their hands with whatever they can -- the poisoning of Kapukaki, or Red Hill as it's more known, I guess. And at the -- and, overall, the U.S. Navy's impact to the people -- as has already been mentioned, the U.S. military is the largest polluter on the planet. That's not something we're just saying up here. That's fact. That's been studied. It's been researched by scientists across the world, especially in the ongoing genocide in Gaza, how that has not only claimed the lives and killed thousands of Palestinians but it has also exacerbated the effects of climate change. You guys talked about here in the first page of this document is that you are ready to respond to any situation that may arise ranging from engaging in large-scale conflict, providing humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. Yet when Lahaina was burning, who was the one who responded? When Lahaina was burning, who was the one who answered to the needs of the people in trying to recover, if not the community? When -- even now as Southern California is burning, as L.A. is burning, who is responding to these fires except firefighters, many of whom are incarcerated? Where is the military, as they so came to be, in protecting the	Thank you for your comment.

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	people that they're supposed to be protecting? Where is this idea of serving and protecting? So I come from the Philippines. That is my background. I grew up hearing about how the military destroyed Tubbataha Reef which is a very protected and very important marine ecosystem in the Philippines, and how they gave a measly 1.97 million to restore it alongside every other effect that they've had in the Philippines since then and has continuously been occupying there as well. And you mentioned here how you guys provide $20 million each year in research and monitoring for marine species. Yet when we look at the military budget, you guys send thousands upon – not thousands -- you guys spend billions of dollars towards the genocide in Gaza. And yet you applaud yourself and you give yourself a pat on the back for $20 million in marine animal research? That is the bare [expletive deleted] minimum that you guys should be doing in cleaning up the mess that you have made over the past century that you guys have been illegally occupying these lands. And so, you know, I don't want to take too much more time, but just to reiterate that this no alternative -- this no action alternative that you guys can do here is also the bare [expletive deleted] minimum in what you are doing. And, if anything, you guys should be cleaning up your mess. Do nothing else except clean up your mess and get the hell out of Hawaii.	
Peisher, A	The health of our oceans is the responsibility of all people. The United States must correct the violent colonization of Hawaii, and we can easily begin with this. The destruction of Hawaiian lands, coasts, waters, ecosystems, culture, and lives is genocide. We cannot allow this dangerous increasr in naval activity. Both my parents were enlisted in the US Navy. Both of their fathers, and their grandfathers were too. I cannot be quiet about the harm my bloodline has contributed to the great people of Hawaii. We must stop this!	Thank you for your comment.
P, Erin	Leave our coastlines alone, this will be detrimental to our environment and our economy.	Thank you for your comment.
Perkins, A-01	I strongly oppose the dumping of SpaceX rocket debris in the sacrifice zone surrounding Papahānaumokuākea, the Pacific Islands Heritage Monument, and the Main Hawaiian Islands. This area holds immense cultural, ecological,	Activities related to SpaceX are not part of this Proposed Action.

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	and spiritual significance, and it is unacceptable to treat it as a dumping ground for corporate space waste. I demand that the FAA conduct a full and detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which they have illegally refused to do. The failure to carry out this necessary review disregards legal obligations and the protection of our marine environment, endangered species, and Indigenous cultural sites. Additionally, I call for full public consultations in Hawai'i and with Hawaiian institutions, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), which is a co-trustee and manager of Papahānaumokuākea. Decisions impacting Hawai'i's sacred spaces should not be made without the direct involvement of Native Hawaiian organizations and the people who have protected these lands and waters for generations. Hawai'i is not a dumping ground. The FAA must uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities. Stop this reckless proposal now.	The Navy's proposed action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
Perkins, A-02	quit polluting the earth it's the only one we got, elon not finna take us to mars when earth is shriveled up and dead. Leave the waters alone	Thank you for your comment.
Peterson, A	Expanding military presence in Hawaii would be devastating to an already fragile and weakened environment. War is useless and only damages everyone and everything involved. As a purportedly smart species, we should not take actions that would push us further to extinction. We are in the 7th mass extinction of the planet, and we need to be doing things to heal the planet- not hurt it even more.	Thank you for your comment.
Peterson, N	This message is to say, NO to anymore Military war practice or any kind of military activity in the Pacific Ocean, or any ocean for that matter. You have NO right!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Phillips, A	We must STOP harming our precious wildlife and disrespecting native practices. There's no need for naval activity in Hawaii it's not welcome nor is it warranted.	Thank you for your comment.
Pierson, T	Our oceans and ocean life are sacred and this needs to stop at all costs!!! It is unacceptable!!!	Thank you for your comment.

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Pluas, A	For Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), the ocean creatures are not just a resource but a relative, as described in the Kumulipo. Constant harm to marine life and intrusions on cultural practices, such as fishing and traditional ceremonies, have profound spiritual and community impacts. Ending military activities would restore the ability of Native Hawaiians to malama ocean relatives and practice cultural traditions.	Thank you for your comment.
Posey, K	Protecting Hawaii's wildlife and oceans affects all costal areas in the United States. We have felt impacts from damage to endangered populations and reefs. In many areas of the ocean it has been proven that the Navys activities have harmful effects on the wildlife so it is important to keethose activities to less ecosystem rich and vulnerable areas. Do NOT increase Navy activities in Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Potter, S	I do not consent to the destruction of our Earth and Waters for military purposes or for any governmental purposes. This is affecting the health of the people you serve, the animals and planet. We can not eat money. When are we done destroying the planet? When are we done putting profits over people? Now would be a great time	Thank you for your comment.
Prisco, A	We need to do better for not tomorrow, but for the generation to come. We should leave this earth better than we found it and humanity has been way off that mark, but we can shift and change course.	Thank you for your comment.
Pritchard, L	I love Hawaii I was stationed at Pearl Harbor Subbase in the early 1980's Why escalate what you're already accomplishing in Hawaii & the Pacific Ocean? Maintain what already is & rest assured that it is enough! It has been enough! Why endanger people, plant, animal, & the ocean in the name of profit & so - called progress? Be humane! because humanity depends on it. Sincerely, Leslie Pritchard	Thank you for your comment.
Q		
Quimby, A	Thank you for sharing.	Thank you for your comment.
R		
R, Devon	Protecting our oceans and resources is vital rn. As a born and raised Californian and as someone with family on the islands, please do not ruin our	Thank you for your comment.

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	oceans more with unnecessary military activity. We spend too much on military activity as it is.	
Rachael	Save our marine life.	Thank you for your comment.
Rachel	LEAVE THE OCEAN ALONE YOU STUPID *[expletive deleted]*!!!! YOU DONT HAVE TO TERRORIZE EVERY SQUARE INCH OF THIS PLANET!!!	Thank you for your comment.
Raffaelli, D	I am writing to demand that you take accountability and cease your increased Navy activities/expansion on Hawaai. They are having a devastating impact on aquatic wildlife, the barrier reefs, and native Hawaii'n cultural practices. I am begging and urging to please stop polluting our oceans and waters and to leave indigenous peoples alone.	Thank you for your comment.
Raman, N	Our military forces are essentially unchecked in their spending and environmental damages; this needs to stop for a responsible nation to survive.	Thank you for your comment.
Ramos, V	This should not be allowed as the people are more then aware of the danger and overwhelming and damaging issues that the increased activity of our navy in these waters will cause, not only locally but world wide. Do not make light of the destruction that this will cause.	Thank you for your comment.
Rapan, J	The biodiversity and ecological balance on both ocean and land are crucial to the well being and healthy of indigenous and non indigenous peoples of both California and Hawaii. The major trading hubs would become desolate in the lack of biodiversity and environmental issues that would wreck havoc on the two states in which so much of our agricultural in America and the world are reliant on. I oppose all future exploitation or destruction of both the Hawaiian isles and California coast and lands.	Thank you for your comment.
Rapan, T	Leave the native Hawaiian land alone. It belong to native Hawaiians. Leave ocean life alone	Thank you for your comment.
Rappaport, J	You all need to stop it. How much shame can one military carry right now before it collapses? Our supposed leaders are making us less safe and destroying the world to do it, and I’m just wondering how long it is going to take for anyone meant to protect people to actually care about something. Is there a line too far?	Thank you for your comment.

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Razo, P	SAVE THE REEFS AND WILDLIFE	Thank you for your comment.
Rebecca	Please protect the sacred lands of Hawaii and do not dump hazard waste material or occupy with military. I have a dream that someday I'll be able to experience Hawaii. I want to experience the healing beauty of the land. Please do not destroy what is not yours. The land belongs to all.	Thank you for your comment.
Recaido, B	To Whom It May Concern, Please help protect the ocean and ocean life from further harm due to the Navy's activities. There is already so much harm being done to the environment and to wildlife because of the Navy's activities. If anything, the Navy needs to be limited! The harm to coral, fish, marine animals, beaches, etc. is unacceptable! Please do not allow further harm to happen. Stop this now.	Thank you for your comment.
Redding, V	Leave the natives and their land alone.	Thank you for your comment.
Redoble, L	Did you know that Hawaii is the endangered species capital of the world? Our islands have already lost so many special and unique animals that are never going to be able to bless us with their presence again. Many of our special animals will be threatened further if the navy moves forward with this plan. Please consider the people and animals that this will have a negative impact on. Please DO NOT move forward with this plan. The islands have hurt enough. Protect the 'aina.	Thank you for your comment.
Reeves, M-01	The proposed draft EIS is inadequate and unacceptable, and as a lifelong Hawai'i resident and cultural practitioner I reject it.	Thank you for your comment.
Reeves, M-02	As a lifelong resident and cultural practitioner I find the draft EIS inadequate, misleading and unacceptable.	Thank you for your comment.
Regina	Hi! While I understand and appreciate the work of the Navy, I would hate to see the indigenous people, lands, and waters of Hawaii harmed in the name of expansion. The domino affect this will create could be catastrophic to the marine life, locals, etc. The indigenous people of Hawaii have expressed immense concern and I hope their concerned are validated and listened to. Please reconsider this expansion into Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Reid, N	Take responsibility and save the wildlife	Thank you for your comment.

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Rendon, A	We must make our country take full accountability for the damage they are causing to marine life. We will soon have nothing left. there are boundaries being crossed left and right. we will be our own demise	Thank you for your comment.
Rickles-Young, E	I am worried about the environmental impact of additional navy projects in Hawaii. I have visited Hawaii and would hate to see the beautiful nature and wildlife destroyed, not to mention the impacts on the indigenous Hawaiians still on the land.	Thank you for your comment.
River, D	Please do not destroy Hawaii anymore. Leave those waters alone. The impact will be too much for the ecosystems and m Marine life.	Thank you for your comment.
Robbins, J	The overbearing weight the U.S places onto Hawaii for its own gain to the detriment of the global environmental diversity has historically been awful, as well as the living conditions for the population of the beautiful islands being destroyed over time. The proposal to increase Naval and governmental forces and operations in the Hawaiian territory is strictly negative as the united states policies for naval waste is negligent and heavily polluted. We cannot replace what we destroy once it is gone and it is to be shamed by the witnesses to this blatant disregard for our planet.	Thank you for your comment.
Robinson, F	HCTT EIS COMMENT January 24, 2025 On 15 January I attended the public meeting on the Navy's draft environmental impact statement for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area. The EIS statement validates that the U S Government and its Military lacks any respect or concern for the most isolated, fragile State. Their map of the Hawaii Study Area shows that every single inch of our state is designated open game for the US Military training and testing. This training and testing that we have been exposed to for decades, validates the fact that the arrogance, disrespect, and destruction toward our Islands by the US and its Military cannot continue. I asked the representatives and presenters at the public meeting if there was another state in the United States that has every inch of its territory completely designated a tool for destructive training, damaging and poisonous testing. They confirmed there is no other state that has every inch so designated. Major issues are as follows:	Thank you for your comment. This EIS/OEIS analyzes at-sea military readiness activities as described in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives). The Navy training and testing ranges within the Hawaii Study Area where military readiness activities would occur do not include “every inch” of the state of Hawaii. The Hawaii Range Complex and Temporary Operating Area, which make up the Hawaii Study Area, are comprised of air-, sea-, and undersea space in the area surrounding the Hawaii Islands Please see Appendix H (Description of Systems and Ranges) for full descriptions and maps of these areas.

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	* It seems that this EIS and every EIS contracted by the US tries and does slant everything in favor of the US. The EIS tries to convince us that they have studied every aspect of the activity and everything is perfectly okay. They ignore the facts and history of the destruction in our state by the Military. This has to stop now. * The US Military ignores every law, rule, binding contract and proceeds as it wishes. * The Military has killed an entire Island, Kahoolawe. When ordered by their President to clear the Island of all exploded and unexploded materials, they cleared just 70% and continued as they wished. * They are using weaponry at Pohakuloa that.is so dangerous and poisonous that they admit that they will not clean it up. They had to have known this before they started using the dangerous materials. So the Military did not intend to ever clean it up. * Besides Kahoolawe, Pohakuloa, Makua, Kahuku, and many more, the Navy recently tried to poison the people in Honolulu between Aiea and Hawaii Kai and our economy, right in the middle, Waikiki. The Navy did this by not informing the head of our Board of Water Supply that they had shut down their Red Hill water well. They were very much aware that their fuel would then flow to the Honolulu water well in Halawa. * Again, the lack of respect, behavior and accountability toward the care of our land, fresh water and ocean is very apparent for everyone to see. Check the DODIG-2025-011 report regarding the Navy's reprehensible management of the Red Hill Fuel Tank Facility. * So is the end game, "If you can't kill all our land then kill our people?" I want, and strongly recommend no extension or expansion of the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Study Area. Go back to your continent to train, test and study. Fiona Robinson	
Robles, M	strongly oppose the dumping of SpaceX rocket debris in the sacrifice zone surrounding Papahānaumokuākea, the Pacific Islands Heritage Monument, and the Main Hawaiian Islands. This area holds immense cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, and it is unacceptable to treat it as a dumping ground for corporate space waste. I demand that the FAA conduct a full and	Activities related to SpaceX are not part of this Proposed Action. The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the

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	detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which they have illegally refused to do. The failure to carry out this necessary review disregards legal obligations and the protection of our marine environment, endangered species, and Indigenous cultural sites. Additionally, I call for full public consultations in Hawai'i and with Hawaiian institutions, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), which is a co-trustee and manager of Papahānaumokuākea. Decisions impacting Hawai'i's sacred spaces should not be made without the direct involvement of Native Hawaiian organizations and the people who have protected these lands and waters for generations. Hawai'i is not a dumping ground. The FAA must uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities. Stop this reckless proposal now.	eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
Rodrigues, A	Please keep our oceans safe and clean for both humans and marine life! Military testing will be detrimental to our beautiful Hawaiian waters and cause massive disturbance to the wonderful marine life; sea turtles, Hawaiian monk seals, Humpback whales, coral reefs, fish, etc. Test somewhere else!	Thank you for your comment.
Rogers, B	Hello, I believe expanding efforts on the already constrained lands of Hawaii to be an unnecessary use of government resources. It has been demonstrated repeatedly that increasing military presence will not improve land quality, tourism revenue, or safety for US citizens. I urge these plans to be scrapped and utilized for a better purpose. Thank you, Dr. Rogers	Thank you for your comment.
Rogers, G	Do not do this, as any further activity will lead to more ecological carnage in an already threatened region, particularly by that of climate change. The navy, despite its best preventive efforts, will mess up somewhere and the people of Hawaii, the environment and the animals plants that live in said environment will suffer the unmitigated consequences of this easily preventable disaster. Just don't do it.	Thank you for your comment.
Rojas, T-01	Subject: Public Comment on Navy Draft EIS for Expanded Training in Hawaiian Waters – "No Action" is the Only Option Aloha, I am a concerned citizen and community member, and I am putting this comment on the	Thank you for your comment. Please see Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS for the cumulative effects analysis

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	record and putting you on notice: the harmful impacts of increased Navy training in our Hawaiian waters are well documented—and they will only worsen if these plans move forward. Environmental & Public Trust Failures: For decades, the Navy's operations have left a toxic legacy. Contamination from lead at Pu'uloa and the unresolved issues at Red Hill, Makua, and Kaho'olawe demonstrate a pattern of neglect. Despite promises from your Remediation Advisory Board (R.A.B.), cleanup remains a distant dream while you propose to expand training activities that use sonar, explosives, live-fire exercises, mine, and torpedo practices. These activities directly harm our marine ecosystems by disrupting the habitats of whales, dolphins, and numerous other species that depend on these waters. Under NEPA, your EIS must fully disclose these cumulative impacts—and yet, it does not. Cultural and Community Harm: Our ocean, our wai, is not simply a training ground; it is our heritage, our resource, our "icebox" of life. The Navy's actions have repeatedly disregarded the public trust, cultural stewardship, and our community's right to a clean, safe environment. The use of sonar and explosives violates longstanding cultural practices and desecrates the sacredness of our waters and lands. We have witnessed firsthand the impacts: on Friday, from the shoreline we blew a conch shell—and each time, whales surfaced, spouting water as if responding to our call. Imagine those same whales enduring decades of constant noise from military training and further contamination of their habitat. On Training Readiness and the "No Action" Alternative: While you claim that training readiness is federally mandated, there is no necessity to conduct these activities in Hawai'i—especially when you have never fully addressed the contamination you've caused. Instead of expanding operations in an area where the Navy has continuously failed to remediate past damages, we demand a full "No Action" alternative. The Navy must first clean up its toxic legacy and prove it can mitigate existing harm before asking for more use of our lands and oceans. Legal and Moral Obligations: Our protections are enshrined not only in the Hawai'i State Constitution (Article XI, Section 1 on Conservation of Natural Resources) but also in Hawaiian Kingdom law, which holds these lands in public trust for the benefit of Native Hawaiians and all the people of Hawai'i. International law—including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS), and the Hague Conventions—also mandates that the rights of occupied peoples	which considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

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	and their natural resources be respected. Your proposed expansion disregards these legal and moral obligations. Final Message: The Navy's continued pursuit of expanded training in these sacred, already damaged waters is not acceptable. It is time to hold you accountable for decades of environmental destruction, cultural desecration, and community harm. Clean up your existing messes first—Red Hill, Pu'uloa, Makua, and Kaho'olawe—and then leave our oceans in peace. Our community will not accept further harm; we demand that you halt all plans for increased training until full remediation, transparent review, and genuine community consent are achieved. In summary, I demand: - A full "No Action" alternative to the proposed expansion, - Immediate and effective remediation of past contaminations, - Transparency and meaningful public involvement in every step of the process, and - That the Navy leave our precious waters and lands undisturbed until these conditions are met. Our ocean and our culture are not disposable. The answer is NO. Mahalo. Tara Rojas	
Rojas, T-02	*[Photo of the ocean with what appears to be a whale in the distance.]*	Thank you for your comment.
Roldan, G	The United States Government need to stop killing the environment and the animals of Hawaii	Thank you for your comment.
Roman, A	Our planet needs to be protected not destroyed. Keep your hands off Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Rose, H	Hawaiian land and water are sacred and any increase of military presence in Hawaii is a dangerous threat to the environment and Hawaiian culture. The US military has done enough damage as is. Please do not pollute our land and water any more.	Thank you for your comment.
Rossoff, L-01	Leonard Rossoff MD 44-317B Kaneohe Bay Drive Kaneohe, HI 96744 lrossoffmd@gmail.com 10th February 2025 Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager 258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100 Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134 To whom it may concern. In these uncertain times, we appreciate the Navy's concern in preserving national security needs while minimizing degradation of the environment, upon which all of our lives depend. I have several concerns about the 2024 Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) and some are listed below. Release of the draft DEIS just prior to the X-mas New Year holidays suggested the equivalent of a Friday night news	The comment period (December 13, 2024, to February 11, 2025) included an additional 15 calendar days (from the required 45 days to 60 days) to allow the public more time to review and comment during the holiday season.

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	dump to minimize public impact. After the Red Hill fiasco such a PR ploy further undermines the Navy's credibility. Community members and Boards previously advised the Navy not to employ this strategy in releasing a DEIS yet this is the third time I have confronted it. The DEIS is too voluminous, hard to access, with insufficient time for community review and comment. The actual options provided after discounting the "No Action Alternative" are an essentially unlimited Alternative 2 or the Navy's "preferred" Alternative 1 which still describes a dramatic increase in at sea and nearshore activity.	
Rossoff, L-02	The actual tempo of the increased activity is vague and the strong emphasis at the virtual meeting is that it would occur only at sea and that this DEIS does not encompass any land based activity. However the DEIS does refer to an increased nearshore activity at MCAS (my neighbor) and elsewhere. Does this mean that amphibious vehicles won't actually move onshore and aircraft will not leave or return from land based airstrips? Furthermore, at the virtual meeting it was stated that all/most of the additional activity would be limited to RIMPAC and that there would be no use of explosives to "neutralise" dummy mines in either Kaneohe or Kailua Bay. This should be clarified in the written DEIS. This marked increase in ship and aircraft other activity is described as having no significant immediate or cumulative worsening of air pollution. Will actual measurements to confirm this be made prior to and after launching these new activities? The Navy admits its activities will harm marine life and its precautions seem inadequate to limit this damage. As a resident of the Windward community I am concerned that this proposed increase of nearshore activity (boats, aircraft, amphibious activities) will result in ill effects both for marine animals and terrestrial humans. There appears to be very limited modelling of this increased noise and little reassurance that it will not occur late in the evening. There is no mention of any quiet hours. Sincerely, L. Rossoff MD	This EIS/OEIS analyzes impacts only of in-water or over water military readiness activities. In cases of amphibious landings, this EIS/OEIS covers the in-water portion and previous analyses cover the on-land portion. Activities that include MCBH or other land ranges show the area of the ocean where the activity would occur, in this case just outside the beach areas of MCBH. The number of events per year is given in Chapter 2, Tables 2-11 through 2-19. For additional details, such as number of events including aircraft and number of targets used per year, please see Section 3.0. In addition, MCBH has a website (https://www.mcbhawaii.marines.mil/Offices-Staff/Communication-Strategy-Operations/Noise-Concerns/) where community members can address noise concerns directly with MCBH. As shown on Figure A-11 in Appendix A and Figure H-32 in Appendix H, the only nearshore (less than 3 nm) in-water areas authorized for underwater detonations are the Victor Wharf on Pearl City Peninsula, Lima Landing, Barbers Point Underwater Range, Ewa Training Minefield, and the Puuloa Underwater Range. Descriptions of these areas are given in Table H-3. The Mine Warfare activities that could use explosives are described in Appendix A, Section A.1.

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Roxanne	We can not destroy Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
S		
S	Save Hawaii. Do not dump waste or effect the environment at all. By any methods.	Thank you for your comment.
S, Karen	Please don't ruin the environment of Hawaii with unnecessary Navy activity. Please protect the oceans and wildlife ecosystem of Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
S, L	Allowing the US Navy to further destroy our waters is absolutely unacceptable. Not only will this harm Hawai'i wild life but also the people of Hawai'i. Being a young adult who resides in Hawai'i I frequent the beaches here and I know dozens of people who are out on their boats every weekend diving, fishing, cleaning up , making sure that the land is being taken care of. Allowing these types of practices to proceed in our oceans will be absolutely devastating. Why should the civilians and the locals give up our waters so that the US Navy can practice their attacks on others. Why should the 50th state suffer because of an ignorant decision such as this one. Hawai'i and its people thrive off of the water and we do not take it for granted, so neither should you. Think about how this affects us as a community and how it could affect generation to come. Don't be selfish because you need somewhere to "practice" be reasonable, be thoughtful, be a human and have empathy.	Thank you for your comment.
S, Octavia	Save our sea!	Thank you for your comment.
S, Skylar	It is not speculation that Hawai'i has been and continues to be severely over-militarized, resulting in a deterioration of the natural environment, the culture, and the livable conditions on the islands. Further naval activity in the islands' waters is guaranteed to destroy coral reefs, infect oceans, and impede native peoples' way of life. There should be more efforts to protect and restore the ecosystem and culture of Hawai'i, and the HCCT Draft EIS directly works to counter those efforts.	Thank you for your comment.
Saavedra, E	The military operations and weaponry testing must cease in order to protect the marine life of Hawaii. With climate change affecting every aspect of human life, the last thing we need is man-made disruption of the environment. Destroying coral reefs will disrupt ecosystems which in turn will have a cascade of negative affects. Destroying habitats, kills the animals	Thank you for your comment.

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	living there, as well as the other animals that rely on those animals for sustenance.	
Saccomanno, S	The military on these islands has done nothing but damage and when they do damage the aina they do nothing to fix it. What makes Hawaii is the aina and how close the people who live here hold it to their hearts. This will only do more damage and I can't stand behind that.	Thank you for your comment.
Saffery, A	ALOHA ALL, NO EXPANDED MILITARY TRAINING AS IT THREATENS OUR OCEANS, CLIMATE AND MARINE LIFE. MAHALO, ANN V SAFFERY HONOLULU, HI	Thank you for your comment.
Sanchez, E	An increase of navy presents will have major negative effects on the environment.	Thank you for your comment.
Sanchez, S	The damage the military has already done on Hawaiian waters is irreversible. And unforgivable. They already take so much. This environment is sensitive and sacred. It is the only place in the US that looks like this and you want to destroy it. Harming animals and the Āina is detrimental to this island. You've done enough.	Thank you for your comment.
Sarah	We need to move forward in protecting our wildlife. We need to look to out indigenous communities and learn how to take care of our earth.	Thank you for your comment.
Saralis-Wheatley, H	I oppose all naval expansions in this region. There is no need for it, and the natural dangers it poses are too great to risk. Stop funnelling money into useless defence projects and put it into something that actually matters like healthcare, childcare and wage equality.	Thank you for your comment.
Sargent, K	By conducting military operations in the breeding waters of whales you are disrupting the ecosystem and marine life in the surrounding area and endangering species that are already declining. You contribute to their demise and endangerment by conducting your "drills" in their homes.	Thank you for your comment.
Saul, H	Hello, While I am not a direct stakeholder, I stand with Native Hawaiians in protecting their land from the degradation and destruction that will be	Thank you for your comment.

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	caused by increased Naval activity. The United States has already wreaked havoc on their islands and communities. As an American and someone who cares deeply about the environment, I will be watching and continue to fight for the planet and Native peoples.	
Savanah	Save the marine life? How dare you want to increase the naval practices by 50 percent?? Our ecosystem matters	Thank you for your comment.
Schlagel, M	The US military has shown on numerous occasions that it cannot responsibly conduct operations, up to and including training, without damaging Hawai'i's natural resources. Between 1994 and 1978, the US military dumped thousands of bombs - some filled with deadly chemicals - into the ocean off of Oahu. In 1944, 4,220 tons of unspecified toxics and hydrogen cyanide and approximately 16,000 M47A2 100-pound mustard bombs were dumped about five miles off Pearl Harbor. From October 17 to November 2, 1945, 20 M79 1000-pound hydrogen cyanide bombs, 1,100 M79 1000-pound cyanogen chloride bombs, 125 M78 500-pound cyanogen chloride bombs, 14,956 M70 114-pound mustard bombs and 30,917 4.2-inch mortar mustard shells were dumped off Waianae. From 1964-1978, 2,189 steel drums of radioactive waste, including clothing, tools and other materials contaminated from radioactive nuclear refueling of nuclear submarines at Pearl Harbor, were dumped 55 miles off Oahu. During this period, 4,843,000 gallons of low-level radioactive waste liquid was discharged into Pearl Harbor. Radioactive materials, including depleted uranium, were brought into Hawaii by the U.S. military in the 1960s Cold War. They were used in aiming rounds for the Davy Crockett, a 1960s nuclear weapon.The rounds were fired at Schofield Barracks Army base on Oahu and at the Pohakuloa Military Training Area on Hawaii island. In 1994, two DU rounds were accidentally fired by the USS Lake Erie while the ship was in Pearl Harbor and went up into the Koolau mountains above the Honolulu suburb of Aiea. They were never recovered. In the 1960s, in the Shipboard Hazard and Defense project, the U.S. military sprayed chemical agents on ships and their crews to determine how quickly the poisons could be detected and how rapidly they would disperse, as well as to test the effectiveness of protective gear and decontamination procedures. In 1964, a test named Flower Drum Phase I was conducted off the coast of Hawaii. The USS George Eastman, a Navy cargo ship, was sprayed with nerve agent sarin gas that went into the	Thank you for your comment. The issues raised in the comment are not within the scope of this EIS/OEIS.

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	ventilation system while the crew wore various levels of protective gear. Additionally, in 1965 and 1966, the U.S. military sprayed bacteria over Oahu to simulate a biological attack. In 1969, Deseret Test Center Test 69-32, a U.S. Air Force F-4 Phantom jet southwest of Oahu, sprayed five Navy tugboats using two germs. In 1967, the Army detonated 155-mm artillery shells and 115-mm rocket warheads filled with deadly sarin gas in the dense rainforest of the Upper Waiakea Forest Reserve on Hawaii island. Fifty-three years later, hunters are hesitant to go into that part of the forest reserve. In one of the most destructive periods of U.S. military history in Hawaii, from 1941 to 1990, a huge quantity of artillery, bombs, missiles and torpedoes was fired into the island of Kahoolawe, including three massive 500-ton TNT explosions intended to simulate nuclear blasts on ships. In 2019, the US military dumped over 630,000 pounds of nitrate compounds in the ocean off of Oahu. In 2022, the US military detonated bombs, conducted live fire training, and sunk ships off the coast of the Hawaiian islands in a display of irresponsible stewardship of natural resources and a disregard for local communities. As recent as 2024, families in Hawaii reported sickness because of the US military's jet fuel leakage into drinking water.	
Schmoll, A	regarding mitigation, there is a concern of when any has been done, the closure when it will be done, and transparency about how it will be completed and when. This needs to be addressed as ordinance mitigation is an issue that is not properly mitigated. 'Mitigation The Action Proponents have been mitigating the effects of military readiness activities on environmental and cultural resources throughout areas where it trains and tests for more than two decades. In coordination with the appropriate regulatory agencies, mitigation measures for the Proposed Action were developed to effectively avoid or reduce potential effects and that were determined practical to implement. Mitigation measures implemented under the Proposed Action are organized into two categories: activity-based mitigation and mitigation areas. Mitigation will be implemented whenever and wherever training or testing activities involving applicable acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance and strike stressors occur within the Study Area.	Temporary closing of areas within the Study Area for security and safety would not limit public access to surrounding areas. Areas that would be temporarily closed are re-opened at the completion of the activity. Analysis of other concerns expressed in the comment can be found in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) of the EIS/OEIS.
Schulte, B	The U.S. military and its practices have harmed the ecosystem and people of Hawai’i enough as it is, and an expansion of operations at the behest of a	Thank you for your comment.

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	mad tyrant for no other purpose than the inevitable result of "finding out" after "*[expletive deleted]* around" is both irresponsible and unnecessary.	
Schulz, A	Please do not expand military operations in/around Hawai'i. The USA already has the strongest military in the world, and preserving the environments and ecosystems that make up the USA is just as important as preserving the military. The coral reefs, marine life, and ecosystems of Hawai'i are already greatly impacted by military action, which has led to pollution and damage. This has also historically posed a risk for local populations that rely on Hawai'i for clean drinking water and a safe, livable place. Please do not expand operations—instead, focus on making operations safer for the ecosystems, environment, and people of Hawai'i. Hawai'i is a unique and spectacular place, and we must preserve it if we want it to continue to exist.	Thank you for your comment.
Segato-Figueroa, E	Aloha I would definitely like to put my signature and my wife's down against the expansion of military & naval operations on Kaua'i. I stand behind the environmental and biohazard concerns, the cultural and sociopolitical issues, as well as the pacific messages behind this counteraction. Please put our full names (Edoardo Segato-Figueroa - 11/29/1990 & Racquel Segato-Figueroa - 12/09/1990) and signatures if possible. We were sent this link a few minutes before midnight and couldn't do it in time. Thanks for leaving your email address and I hope these two votes still count. Mahalo nui loa	Thank you for your comment.
Seigel, L	We do not constant to Military Activities, testing, etc being done in or around the ocean. There is reportable harm being done to the Mammals of the sea, not to mention all of the already fragile eco systems. It is reckless, senseless, damaging, irresponsible, and the answer for the people who stand for the voiceless say NO! It is our job to be conscious stewards of the Aina and the Ocean.	Thank you for your comment.
Sepe, G	Please do NOT allow the expansion of Naval activities in Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.
Shala	Please do not do anymore damage to Hawaii then you already have	Thank you for your comment.

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Shandiin	Please reconsider this effort to infringe further upon Native Hawaiian rights, pollute sacred waters and injury aquatic life. The military's press is Hawai'i has already caused irreparable damage and that will forever be your legacy there. Stop expanding and start disbanding. Hawai'i is not the military's playground or science lab. The marine life and the people deserve better. Your impacts are hurting people, planet and economics in the Pacific. Enough is enough.	Thank you for your comment.
Shankar, E	This draft is well over regular size which means it is being made in bad faith. The only reason to submit a draft for comments that is 400 pages over regulations is so that the community can not actually fully review it. Additionally, I think the content of the draft its self is disingenuous. Hawaii is one of the most biologically diverse places and we are at risk of loosing many species due to pollutants in the air and water. And changes to military activities should be evaluated on the basis of whether those changes benefit endangered species, not if they don't substantially increase the amount of harm being done. This is because there is already substantial amounts of harm being done.	The page limit does not include tables, figures, or appendices. The main body of the EIS/OEIS (Chapters 1-6) is 300 pages of text when tables and figures are not included.
Shannon	Enough is enough. Protect hawai'i and her people	Thank you for your comment.
Shayan	Stop military activity in Hawaii. So hurting indigenous cultures and animal life.	Thank you for your comment.
Sheriff, I	This military expansion should not come at the expense of native Hawaiian cultural practices or wildlife.	Thank you for your comment.
Sherwood, J	The military can take a back seat in this one!	Thank you for your comment.
Silliman, J-01	Stewards of the Sea logo (.png file)	Thank you for your comment.
Silliman, J-02	Image of "EIMS" (.png file)	Thank you for your comment.
Silva, M	Aloha, my name is Makahiki Silva and I am writing in opposition of the US Navy's Proposed Action regarding increased readiness activities in the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area. I am in full support of the No Action Alternative, under which no expansion or increased training within this designated region will occur. I will not accept incidental killings of	Thank you for your comment.

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	koholā (humpback whales), naiʻa (dolphins), or ʻīlioholoikauaua (monk seals) as necessary for the Navy "to achieve their goals" (page ES-1).	
Sims, M	I do not support this at all! The impact this will have on our wildlife is terrible, we should be protecting the environment as much as possible. We need to protect indigenous people too. This would also be bad for them.	Thank you for your comment.
Six, M	Expanding military testing operations in the water of Hawai'i, will cause irreparable damage to the coral reefs, wildlife and the lands and lives of the indigenous Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders lives. Please reconsider	Thank you for your comment.
Smith, C	I oppose any kind of Military encroachment on Hawaii	Thank you for your comment.
Smith, D	The health of our communities and our oceans, the survival of endangered species, and the rights of Native Hawaiians depend on the people holding the Navy accountable as they attempt to deceive and mislead us about the harm they do. We will hold you accountable. Stop prioritizing war over the planet's health and choose a path that honors and PROTECTS OUR MOANA and all who depend on it.	Thank you for your comment.
Smith, E	Please this planet has only one life and changes we make can never truly be reversed. Let the earth and ALL of it's life live and give us a break on having to stop these horrible actions.	Thank you for your comment.
Smith, M	As someone who has had pleasure of experiencing the beauty of Hawai'i for myself, I solidly stand with the natives of Hawai'i in opposing the proposed increases in Navy/military activity offshore to promote the focus on the great ecosystems both in water and on land so negatively affected by said military activity, as is.	Thank you for your comment.
Snide, N	I oppose military occupancy in our holy water	Thank you for your comment.
Soliven, J	I am writing in opposition of the US Navy's proposals to expand training ranges for at-sea training. These proposals neglect to acknowledge the long-term impact on the well being of marine life and ecosystems for short-term gain. There are many endangered marine animals at risk with this expansion, and hearing loss and damage due to sonar systems and the use of underwater explosives may have a long-term impact on these animals, many of which communicate by sound. Proposals also mention use of underwater mines that would negatively impact reef health. We, in Hawaii, have seen for	Thank you for your comment.

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	decades the impact that the US Military has had on Hawaii and the egregious lack of accountability regarding the destruction of land and marine life and ecosystems. If these proposals are passed, we would expect more of the same abject abuse of the environment and all who feed from it. Undetonated mines on Kahoolawe were promised to be cleaned after missile testing and never were. There are still parts of this island that people cannot go because the land is polluted with heavy metals and explosives. There are sick people in Oahu, still suffering from being poisoned by the jet fuel in our aquifers that the US Navy refuses to be held accountable for. This range expansion for at-sea training is something that I cannot accept. We cannot afford to expand US military access to our water and land.	
Song lyrics	A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back Your environmental impact is too much for me A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back So hit the road Jack, so the ocean can be free We don't need your money and we don't need your wars We don't need your ego need to even up the score We we need is liberation and clean water too We might need a lot of things but we don't need you Palestine is occupied just like Hawaii Brutality and genocide are not okay with me Israel you are not welcome in our native land And since you won't stop killing now it's time to make a stand A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back Your environmental impact is too much for me A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back So Palestine can be free We rise up! In solidarity with the Philippines Guahan, Uchinā, Boriken and everywhere you been The whole world's over all your lies and rotten bullying It's time to get together people – everybody sing!	Thank you for your comment.

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	A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back Your environmental impact is too much for me A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back So hit the road Jack, so the PEOPLE can be free Well, I talked to the dolphins, whales, and some turtles, too The sharks and fish and everybody's all so over you Your bombing and pollution has no place in our kai Ku kia'i ka Moana e ola i ka wai! A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back Your environmental impact is too much for me A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back So hit the road, Jack, so the OCEAN can be free Auntie said that aloha will bring peace to this world Kū'ē aloha `ĀINA is how that aloha is unfurled Independent intentional PONO is what we're talking bout So now let's say it loud and clear, US OUT A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back Your environmental impact is too much for me A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back So hit the road jack so the WHOLE WORLD can be free	
Sonoda-Pale, H	Healani Sonoda-Pale testified as follows: MS. SONODA-PALE: I was born and raised here. My family lived here for 2,000 years. We traversed over the ocean to get here. We are very much connected to this land and the ocean as indigenous peoples here. The mammals of the ocean are our relatives. We consider them part of our ohana. And watching this presentation, all I could think, "Is this a joke?" Seriously, is this some kind of joke? The U.S. military is the largest emitter of CO2 and polluter. The U.S. military alone is one of the biggest drivers to climate change and rising seas that are resulting in the disappearing of our islands in the Pacific. And yet, you folks	Thank you for your comment.

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	have the nerve to come up here and talk about conservation and how you're going to protect, create these buffer zones for our relatives, the whales, the honu, the seal, so that you guys can practice blowing stuff up. And, you know -- and the other thing is in this Draft EIS, you folks are planning to increase -- you're proposing to increase your activities in our moana. Increasing shore mine exercises near the shore, that's something that's new, including in Southern California. And that's another thing that really bugs me. You come up here, you talk about how you're going to increase activities off the Southern California shoreline, and not even once did you mention the Southern California fires and the families that are suffering there. That bugs me, too. And we know, all of us here who have been to many meetings like this, that this is just another walk through the process. You guys are checking off a box. This is not about informing us because if it really was, you would be truthful here but you're not. You can't even answer a simple question, "Name one species that was -- that you folks helped take off the list." You won't answer it. Okay. But, yeah. So, you know, we know this is a process that they want us to walk through. But being here is important and I think we need to keep -- continue to speak and speak up about and protect our moana because as the indigenous peoples here, as the protectors of all that is sacred, all that is necessary for life here on our planet, we need to speak up. This, to me, seems insane in a time where we are living in -- you know, we are living in times where, like, whole cities are burning down. It just seems surreal to me that you guys can stand here and then, you know, literally treat us like we're robots, walk us through a process, and then talk about how you're going to be conservationists. It's -- you know, I just -- everybody here needs to provide their testimony for the record and we need to continue to speak up. We need to continue to stand up and say something about this because it's not just about us as kanaka anymore.	

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	It's not just about the indigenous peoples of this land. It's about all of us. It's about our survival here. I mean, they're increasing activities on our coral reefs. That's, like, the foundation of life on the planet. We need to -- all of us, if you are a human being who breathes air and drinks water and lives on land, you need to speak up. You all need to start speaking up. This is insane. We're going in the wrong direction. Don't believe them when they say they're conservationists and that they're helping our environment. Don't. That's all I have to say. Mahalo. MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.	
Sophia	It would be cruel and in character to continue military operations in Hawaii. The environmental impacts are devastating. You already know this. Please choose which consequences you would like your actions to have. Choosing to cease these operations would result in a more prosperous Hawaii and you being able to live with the knowledge that you did not perpetuate unnecessary suffering.	Thank you for your comment.
Souza, C-01	Hawaii is a hotspot for endangered, endemic species, and is extremely vulnerable to climate change, pollution, and human influence in general. Increased Naval activity will greatly impact and pollute the environment, making Hawaii at risk of all the aforementioned threats. Out of the nearly 2000 endangered flora and fauna of the United States, one third of them are found in Hawaii. Mismanagement and overuse of Naval Complexes in Hawaii have led to the contamination of the soils and waters in Hawaii. If the risk of losing around 600 species is not enough, the impacts on the residents of Hawaii should be. People cannot live somewhere where the water and land is poisoned and contaminated with chemicals and heavy metals.	Thank you for your comment.
Souza, C-02	Hello, My name is Cecilia Souza, and I am a college student majoring in Zoology. I am from Eureka, CA and attend Cal Poly Humboldt. The threat of increased Naval activity in Hawaii will have a terrible effect on the wildlife and people of Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.

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	With nearly 1800 endangered flora and fauna species in the United States, nearly one third of those are found in Hawaii. Hawaii is such a hotspot for endangered and endemic species, which is one of the many things that make is so beautiful and unique. Naval Complexes in Hawaii have a history of mismanagement, which has led to the pollution and poisoning of the waters and soils. Not only can these tragedies affect already vulnerable species populations, they can impact the people of Hawaii. How can people thrive while their waters and soils are poisoned with chemicals and heavy metals? How can plants grow, how can animals drink and eat, when everything around them is a risk to death? So many people love Hawaii, with us natural beauty and wonderful culture, but both of those will be short lived if the Navy decides to increase its operations on the islands. As a person entering the workforce in the biological sciences, it concerns me that there won't be much left to protect if we continue the way we are going. Thank you for your time and consideration, Cecilia	
Spires, E	Ni le akuaiba! Water is life!	Thank you for your comment.
St. Germain, J	We only have one planet and we need to protect our marine ecosystems. For example, plankton account for a very large amount of the oxygen that circulated through the planet in increasing military activity. Here could not only hurt marine life, but those of us on land as well.	Thank you for your comment.
Stacy	I swear your mamas did not raise you right if you keep hurting the already delicate ecosystem of Hawaii. Someone needs to smack some sense to your heads. Hawaii is a paradise that should have near been used to station any type of military whatsoever	Thank you for your comment.
Steinmetz, G	STAY OUT OF HAWAII! Protect the land and culture.	Thank you for your comment.
Stevens, H	Please leave the waters pure. There is already so must destruction. Environmental issues are a major concern here! How is this going to affect the environment?	Thank you for your comment.
Sugey	There is no need for the navy/government to go and put the whole environment in danger or ruin what is in Hawaii.	Thank you for your comment.

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Suleiman, K	Leave Hawaii alone! Her coral reef, water, and people are suffering already! The additional would cause devastation destruction.	Thank you for your comment.
T		
Takara	Save our ocean!!! As if we haven't taken enough from the world or the lands of the Hawaiian people you want to further ruin the ocean. Taking away their ties to the way way of life. Stop the Navy and give back the rights to people	Thank you for your comment.
Talley, S	Please do not continue Naval presence in Hawaii the land and the animals should be safe guarded by the indigenous peoples that live there. Our world needs those that cultivate the land and it's creatures more than we need increased defense spending.	Thank you for your comment.
Tara	Tara testified as follows: TARA: Aloha. Before I begin, again, you know what you're doing. So this is not part of my testimony. We have a three-minute testimony, and I didn't ask for permission. Does that sound familiar? But I wanted just to bring this and to point out the irony of this. These are our team's ground rules for meeting conduct. We ask for the same courtesy from those in attendance: be respectful and courteous, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Just a simple line, did you all ask for permission to come? Are you guys giving the same courtesy? What's the point of having rules and having this supposed EIS if it's just fluff? It means nothing. So I'm going to start my testimony now, and I hope I'm not -- I didn't time it for three minutes. But, again, that is unlawful. It's unlawful and that's just -- so I want to start off with this. So I'm here, of course, to show the Navy's proposal to extend the training in Hawaii and California, using explosives and sonar. And, again, let me make this clear. The effects you have caused and will continue to inflict are harmful, disruptive, and unacceptable. And it seems that the best way to learn is when you have to go through it yourself. (High-pitched squealing noise.) So can you see the reaction? I guess you've been trained to not react to anything; right?	Thank you for your comment.

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	But let's go ahead, and I'm going to put it down. But I'm going to put it down and try to make it so that it goes continuously at an acceptable level. Don't worry, it's not going to cause long-term, you know, effects. Don't worry, it's only temporary. So, again, what you're hearing is a small taste of the constant noise pollution you subject our ocean life to with sonar and explosives. Imagine enduring this for decades, 80 years to be exact. This is what marine life has suffered because of your actions, and now you want to continue with this expansion. Two, your own RAB. Do you know what the RAB is for? You're on that board. It's the Remediation [sic] Advisory Board. The past reports acknowledge the dangers of moving ordnance. I've been to your meetings. You acknowledge that the ordnances that are there, that you still have not cleaned up, cause harm and it's best to leave it. You advise leaving it in place. And, again, yet you continue to harm our oceans and communities as well, as other testifiers have mentioned. Puuloa, Pearl Harbor is a super fun site. It still continues to leak oil, and then you tell it as a remembrance, as a couple who have said -- because of the -- oh, excuse me -- resort. And it's going to continue to leave eight to nine quarts a day for the next 50 or so years or more. Right now, in Puuloa Beach Park, Pearl Harbor -- Puuloa, the Marines, another extension of the military, have their shooting range. And right now, we're still dealing with the lead contamination that the lead -- the casings in the ocean caused. They didn't show up to this past Ewa Beach meeting at all. We've been dealing with this for two years. There's been no action taken. They won't – after two years, they finally agreed to do a study. They haven't released the information yet, and they didn't show up. It's still there, lead contamination in our beach. Kaneohe Bay and the ocean around there has ordnance. And there was a contraption tried to be built to pick up these ordnance, but yet they acknowledge the dangers of it and also the continuous contamination It's all over the island, all over in our ocean. You don't -- you know the effects of these practices, and yet you continue. This negligence not only poisons our waters but also directly plants and marine life, ecosystems, the coral, and the health of our people.	

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	Let's also just go over trust. The Navy has a track record of failing to clean up its messes, Hamakua, Pohakuloa, ordered by the Supreme Court to clean up. Have they cleaned it up? No. Kahoolawe, you were supposed to clean it up. Have you cleaned it up? No, not completely. Leave Kaula alone. And Red Hill, did you all that know through the open house that the land lease is separate from the Red Hill remediation? And in their open house poster board like this -- that's how I found out -- it says, 2031-plus that the Navy plans to be here, as long as it takes to clean up. Are they cleaning up fast enough? Are they even showing up to the meetings? Are they even providing water to their own affected family members? No That's an example of what they continue to do. So, again, these are all -- and, again, these are all contaminated, desecrated, and violated without the proper remediation. You haven't even completed your work and you want permission to cause more harm and now to our ocean. This pattern of irresponsibility and inaction is unacceptable. Your use of explosives and sonar violates cultural, environmental, and public trust principles. The harm to marine life, from whales to the people of Hawaii who depend on these ecosystems for existence, culture, and survival, these practices perpetuate colonial exploitation of our aina which you are continuing to treat as expendable. We know that you will argue that training is essential, but how can you justify asking for more when you can't even clean up what you've already destroyed? Your actions have far-reaching and irreversible consequences for our lands and waters. And your claims of mitigation do not align with the reality that we face. So, again, let me make this clear. Your actions perpetuate colonial exploitation. We say "No" to your request. Option Number 1, no action, is the only acceptable path forward. Clean up your contamination everywhere, Puuloa, Makua, Pohakuloa, Kahoolawe. Again, leave Kaula alone and (speaking Hawaiian) Red Hill and everywhere you left destruction. Stop poisoning our water, killing marine life, and endangering the health of our communities.	

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	You are on notice these lands and waters are under Hawaii Kingdom law, the Hawaii State Constitution, and international law. Any further harm will be met with community resistance and legal action. Clean up first, fulfill your obligations, and stop asking for more. The answer is "No." Should I leave this on? Wasn't that a nice break from it? Wouldn't you like a nice break? Or should I leave this on to mimic what your explosives and sonar are doing? If there's no answer, I'll just take that as a -- yeah, I'll just take it as we'll just keep going then. We can do this for 80 years.I'm -- I'm willing to stand here for 80 years. But just to let you know, we all are saying the same thing. And just as there are ground rules as to meeting conduct, courtesy, that's what we're asking for, so the answer's no, option one. MS. TURNER: Thank you.	
Tarah		See Form Letter response
Tatiana	Protect Hawaii, protect its citizens, NO MILITARY IN THE WATERS OF HAWAII	Thank you for your comment.
Taubensee, K	Please keep these precious waters clean & the marine life alive and healthy. It is if vital importance. Thank you so much!	Thank you for your comment.
Teale, L	Laulani Teale testified as follows: MS. TEALE:· Before I start my testimony, I just want to do one thing really quick before I start the testimony.· So this is kind of a side note. Okay?· It's not my testimony itself. So this is the season of Lono.· And maybe you weren't aware of that when you scheduled this meeting, but this is Makahiki.· It's a sacred season of peace.· No war is allowed.· And that's why we brought the la'i here, the ti leaves, to symbolize Lono and peace and aloha because this is a time for rejuvenating ourselves. And so just before I start my testimony, I would -- I'd like to say that this is about bringing up the aloha.· And I hope that you folks can understand that your part in this is as -- quite honestly, it's a mistake that our people, by	Thank you for your comment.

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	correcting it, will hopefully be able to correct many of the wrongs in this world. So my prayer, and I hope your prayer, too, is that we triumph over what you're trying to do. And in that, we do this with aloha. So I would like to -- I'd like to just do a few acknowledgments.· First, I'd like to acknowledge Aunty Terri Kekoolani who is probably, I believe, our longest and eldest warrior here, including all of you who consider yourselves warriors.· She has fought on our front lines for our aina for many, many, many years.· And I would like to acknowledge her as a warrior and give her aloha. And I would like -- I would love to give our whole -- all of our people who showed up here, I want to give everybody, but then we'd be here all night.· I don't want to be here all night.· I really am concerned about sister being able to go home and close up. But I do want to -- you know, if can, I would like to acknowledge my sister over here who is responsible for this space -- MALE SPEAKER:· Leilani.· Leilani her name. MS. TEALE:· Leilani? MALE SPEAKER:· Yeah. MS. TEALE:· Leilani, I would like to acknowledge you.· Leilani, mahalo. And I'd like to acknowledge you for facilitating this because this is the history of our people.· That's what's going on here.· It's not about the -- you know, the Navy listening to us so much, but it is about the history of our people that we're making, and you're facilitating that history.· And so I would like to acknowledge you, Allison.· Mahalo. MS. TURNER:· Thank you. MS. TEALE:· And to you too, Breanna. Mahalo for doing all that you're doing.· It's very, very important in depth, this work.· Even though we are opposing you, it is the -- the act of overcoming the violence that this project represents is what world peace will actually be based upon.· It's based upon aloha.· That's the promise.	

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	I want to acknowledge you, and I want to acknowledge your work.· You're bringing that conversation forward because that's what's happening, so mahalo. And for you folks, you come here.· I see that you're doing your best to listen in a very limited job.· You know, I know it's not easy to be in a situation where you're hearing what you know very well is the truth from these many voices, and yet you can do nothing about it. You know that this project is destroying our land, destroying our ocean, destroying our future, putting us at risk of potential military threats from other countries. But what if what you are doing is -- you know, while the -- while what the United States military is doing is not pono, what you're doing here by being present with us here right now is building strength in this younger generation here that I'm so proud of. It's building their ability to stand strong. And for us as a nation, as a -- as the nation of Hawaii nei, we need to build that strength. And so we're learning from you. You know, you're helping us to build the strength that our future generations, that our generation right now needs, and that our future generations need in order to bring forth this -- the maika'i time to come that I hope you will stand with us someday when you can and build together with us. I pray that. So I -- I acknowledge your presence. I acknowledge your humanity.· And I mahalo you for what the -- the great lessons that you are teaching our lahui to be able to stand and speak in ways that we would never know how were it not for the messages that you bring that we need to respond to with pono and with aloha.· So mahalo nui loa.· Aloha. And you, too.· What was your name? MR. STONE:· Alex. MS. TEALE:· Alex, mahalo. So I don't have time to give to everybody. I don't know if somebody, maybe one volunteer from our lahui might be able to help me kind of continue while I do my testimony.· I just don't want to take up too much time.	

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	But -- oh, mahalo.· I want to acknowledge Cassandra because this is -- for all of you in the U.S. military, this is what malihini should be like. And I would acknowledge -- I would ask you to please follow her example. If you can give to the lovely military people and share that aloha while I get my stuff ready.· Mahalo.· Thank you so much. Okay.· So I could talk quite a long time about other aspects of this and how, you know, both the process, which is problematic, and the proposed action itself, which I can't even start to get into because there's just too much to say -- but instead, I would like to ask -- I think we have some folks who have some -- who have some song lyrics. And I think that I can say it better in song so we're going to do a three-minute song.· Okay? And then we're done.· Mahalo. Maybe I'll go over here so you can see and hear.· Is that okay?· And I invite to everybody to please sing along.· Make sure that we have -- oh, thank you.· Are you going to -- okay.· I need to change it when we get to this part.· Okay?· All right?· Okay.· Mahalo. I wrote this song but I can't necessarily be trusted to remember all the words.· So does everybody have the paper?· I'm slightly out of tune, but I ask for your forgiveness because it would take time because it's kind of loud in here.· Yeah? This song is called "A'ole RIMPAC" and I think that it's -- it captures our sentiment pretty well, you know, in terms of how we feel about the Hawaii-California training and testing, the training proposed project.· And I'd like to -- I'd like for everybody to sing together.· Okay? Can everybody hear me okay?· Okay.· All right. AUDIENCE:· (Singing) A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back.· Your environmental impact is too much for me.· A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back.· So hit the road, Jack, so Hawaii can be free. We don't need your money and we don't need your wars.· We don't need your ego need to even up the score.· What we need is liberation and clean water, too.· We might need a lot of things, but we don't need you. A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back. Your environmental impact is too much for me.· A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back.· So hit the road, Jack, so Hawaii can be free.	

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	Palestine is occupied just like Hawaii. Brutality and genocide are not okay with me.· Israel, you are not welcome in our native land.· And since you won't stop killing now, it's time to make a stand. A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back. Your environmental impact is too much for me.· A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back.· So hit the road, Jack, so Palestine can be free. We rise up in solidarity with the Philippines, Guahan, Uchina, Boriken, and everywhere you been.· The whole world's over all your lies and rotten bullying.· It's time to get together, people, everybody sing. A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back. Your environmental impact is too much for me.· A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back.· So hit the road, Jack, so the people can be free. Well, I talked to the dolphins, whales, and some turtles, too.· The sharks and fish and everybody's all so over you.· Your bombing and pollution has no place in our kai.· Ku kia'i ka Moana e ola i ka wai. A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back. Your environmental impact is too much for me.· A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back.· So hit the road, Jack, so the ocean can be free. Auntie said that aloha will bring peace to this world.· Ku'e aloha aina is how that aloha is unfurled.· Independent intentional pono is what we're talking about.· So now let's say it loud and clear, U.S. out. A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back. Your environmental impact is too much for me.· A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back.· So hit the road, Jack, so the whole world can be free. A'ole RIMPAC, please take your bombs back. Your environmental impact is too much for me.· A'ole RIMPAC, we need our country back.· So hit the road, Jack, so the whole world can be free. Mahalo nui loa.· Mahalo, mahalo, and much, much, much aloha.	
Teresa	I strongly oppose the Navy’s attempt to increase their jurisdiction in Hawaiian waters. The Navy already occupies Hawaii. The US Military has Hawaii in a vice grip. Hawaii’s fragile ecosystem cannot handle further exploitation. As a leader of extinction, this should not even be a conversation. The population, human and otherwise, CANNOT survive	Thank you for your comment.

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	further exploitation. The ocean surrounding Hawaii is a marine sanctuary - this should be illegal.	
Terra, J	Stop destroying our oceans! Consider your impacts on OUR earth.	Thank you for your comment.
Tessa	Do not damage our planet for the senseless gain of military knowledge. This is wholly unnecessary.	Thank you for your comment.
Theresa	hawaii has been dealing with the struggles of colonization from the american government for far too long, the least the american people can do is help support the freedom of their land AND OCEANS!! our government has no right to send the military to further pollute and disturb the precious soil and culture these people have been preserving for years.	Thank you for your comment.
Thomas, D	Hello from O'ahu, Hawai'i While I was a Navy wife I was introduced to a Navy officer who had a mission to sonar on one of the Navy planes. The reason to this meet was to hear this Navy officer's own eye witness account on damages sonar mission from Navy planes/Navy ships can cause. This Navy officer own oberservation would be so helpful to save my home Hawai'i from the Navy operative error to their sonar irresponsibility. On one of their missions out of San Diego, sonar was conducted. When all was done, the Navy aircraft done a fly over. It was then this Navy officer felt sadness for the first time than their other sonar mission. Where no emotions are to be expressed to handling such missions. According to this Navy officer this should not have happened but it can. According to this Navy officer eye view there were a trail of dead sea animals from small sized to medium to large. It was like a mile or so of a trail. I then named different sea life and this officer could just gaze into the san diego fire pit and nod yes or no with tears to their eyes. I said different sized fish (nod of yes), I said turtles (nod of yes) , I said dolphins (nod of yes), I said whales (nod of yes), I said migrating whales (unsure). The officer said a lot of sea life was gone and it sucked but it can happen. I asked where the hell were environmentalist?? The officer told me with tears in the officer eyes, "Why do you think to believe that all environmentalists are good heart to be trusted. There are environmentalist who helps cover up to keep the Navy and DOD looking	Thank you for your comment.

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	mighty sharp like nothing happened. For this sonar mission, those environmentalist were on the Navy side to cover up this trail of dead sea life". I then asked the Navy officer an OPSEC question. The officer told me I said enough so let it be. It would be an hour or 2 gone by and the officer gave me a late reply while looking me in the eye, "The location is Somewhere between West coast and Hawaii. That's all I can tell you to help save your precious Pacific islands and Hawai'i. Do know there are environmentalists who will always speak on behalf of the Navy missions to make the Navy look as if nothing happened". I share this with our Navy and beyond because I became an advocate within my 1st year as a Navy wife (now former due to RET life) who just wanted to learn to be a humbled military spouse for my mister's back bone and my children. Instead the Navy shown me not only a grand side but also a sinister side in their personal lives , in their commands and how military decision makers can speak to the hearts of their military community to being careful on interacting with peaceful local advocates/protestors whether it was on their host nation Japan who advocated to try to warn all who lived on Yokosuka Navy base Japan a part of 7th fleet that our soil , drinking water and their ocean life will be impacted by the USS George Washington soon to take home port to their shores. It was forbidden for any of us in the Navy community at the time who lived or worked on Yokosuka Navy base japan to engage with any of the peaceful demonstrators or else captain mass will pursue, loss of SOFA (status of forces agreement) will be taken away from dependents and consequences will occur upon DOD employees. To hear that within my 1st year as a Navy wife scared the daylights out of me!! Of course I chose to listen to our Navy commander at the time. I knew my own memories and in my heart, people of japan who comes to Hawaii over the decades respects and are kind to Hawaii as visitors to our home islands. For the Navy senior leadership to warn us Navy community and DOD employees to stay away from advocates had to have been a bigger picture why our Navy can place severe consequences on their own military community. Sad man. So we the military community do not hear the warnings to our health. Then we as a family PCS to JBPHH pearl harbor almost 10 years ago. I thought to tag along our youngest child to go support the mister who attended the week long Indoc briefing to welcome new sailors of different ranks . Because one amazing thing the Navy taught me and many to prevent in life is drinking and driving	

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	and heart break consequences that can result with Japan laws as well. And cost of life by learning from the mistake of military service members. This great safety briefing was shared during our welcome to Yokosuka Navy base Japan indoc briefing. I thought I could learn something new at Pearl harbor on Sub side indoc briefing. That is why I attended in 2015 with my son. Well on this day in 2015 the woman who spoke to teach sailors who PCS to JBPHH pearl harbor about life on Hawaii said something very ignorant that changed my life forever. Our Navy allowed such ignorance and hate to be shared to a room full of brand new Sailors who PCS'd to JBPHH. The woman began to raise her voice and became to sound so confident with bravery in her voice , "You all need to stay away from all Native Hawaiians as they hate America and our military. They are angry and blame America to taking their lands". She continued, "Stay away from all locals on the island as they are angry and will fight..." To hear such ugly - pissed me off. All I could do was sit silent while shaking my head (that silently gained the attention of the sailors to observe my reaction) while sitting on the side lines. My tears began to flow down my face. To be back home living in military housing that I respect and love, I feared many of our Hawai'i military community will suffer such brain wash tactics from military decision makers and this woman who was attached to MFSC who I respect MFSC so much. That I began to find ways to volunteer myself to a percentage of Hawaii military community by speaking about the greatness of our born and raised locals , Hawaiians by ancestry and our Hawaiian ancestors plus the proper history how all these lands under US Govt/DOD/military were taken . Why the percentage of Hawaiian people are not happy with military presence on Hawaiian islands. The wrong that was done to our islands, to the environment impact, to our pacific cousins in south pacific islands and far west. I also created amazing volunteer works to a percentage of our former Hawaii military community to show them how a born and raised local and Hawaiian ancestry (myself) shall never be feared of by our Hawaii military community or our locals and hawaiians to be treated like ignorance according to Navy decision makers who allowed such hate to be shared to hundreds of new sailors minds during indoc briefing to O'ahu, Hawai'i. My volunteer to a percentage of our former hawaii military community included neighborhood watch to me and my family military housing community and becoming a designated sober driver to ensure the mister's navy sailors got home /to their barracks safe after a	

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	night of drinking for they. And much more I helped do for a percentage of our hawaii military community. Sadly, under the watchful eye of Admiral Paparo (Commander to PACFLT) (Pacific Fleet) has caused operative error to allowing his own former Navy senior leaderships to cover up and treat Red Hill crisis as it was an OPSEC matter (to present) over the years. While many Hawaii military community plus our pets suffered with heart breaking health impacts. Plus kaplina beach homes residents where anyone on island could rent to live had suffered the same. To all the thousands of us who lived and worked , ate , drank, showered, wash laundry, grow a garden in toxic soil all over the interconnected Navy plumbing pipes. As me and my family plus our recent deceased dog of 9 years lives on their NAVFAC interconnected plumbing pipes almost a decade now here on my home O'ahu, Hawai'i. Admiral Paparo has not EVER approach each former and present Hawai'i military community (who lived/lives on Navy NAVFAC plumbing pipes affected by Navy red hill and the cover ups) ever apologized personally. He instead got ranked to become Commander to the PACFLT (Pacific Fleet). I known of another concern that takes place in San Diego. The Navy back in 2014 and prior requested to update their Defense Authorization Bill to say the endangered/protected sea otters of California if the sea otters are to become harmed, of death or iniured from their training/exercises, the Navy/DOD should not be held responsible. Fortunately, the bill died on the house floor. All thanks to environmentalists who were all over it. In actuality, the sea otters of California won the Navy to respect their living spaces. As a Navy wife I was, I stood up for the sea otters as well by writing my heart out to our law makers in DC. Thank you to allowing me to share openly through my typed testimony. Sincerely, D momilani Thomas Title: Navy Red Hill affected family/Former Navy wife spouse Pearl city. Hawai'i I heard of this project by social media, Hawaii news, word of mouth and environmental organization.	
Thomas, F	I am writing to urge to you to deny any more access to the US Navy for activities around the Hawaiian islands.	Thank you for your comment.

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	The environmental impact to the waters and wildlife will be terrible and possibly irreversibly so. There will also be harm to the Indigenous people of Hawaii. We don't need any more wartime practice of naval build up. We need to protect the only planet we have to live on and the original peoples and cultures of the world. Please, do not use my tax dollars for any more harm. Thank you, Francesca Thomas	
Thompson, M	Protect the ocean, the marine life, and the coral the water and native land	Thank you for your comment.
Tiana	Unacceptable guidelines moving forward as our reefs have incredibly fragile ecosystem that can no longer continue to sustain themselves without the help and care of our community. As global warming and other major factors continue to pollute and destroy ecosystems, this is just another legal form you're trying to issue to legally destroy our 'aina.	Thank you for your comment.
Tirupati, P	Please protect the ocean and the precious ocean life. Hawaii and the inhabitants consider their island and the waters sacred. We are fortunate to have these beautiful islands and their unique culture as part of the US. It cannot be destroyed or harmed. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Torres, A	The military should show more respect to the opinions of the people from Hawaii. They want to protect their coral reefs and endangered species which is not unreasonable.	Thank you for your comment.
Towles, J	This will harm endangered species in Hawaii. This will also be harmful for the people there.	Thank you for your comment.
Trinity	Not only do indigenous people deserve the rights to their own ocean and land, but they deserve to keep it alive. Without them, our environment is put at even greater risk and the time we have on this earth becomes slimmer. Our futures are not safe without indigenous rights.	Thank you for your comment.
Trish	the ocean is hurting because of the military	Thank you for your comment.
Tubbs, M	The military has no right to harm the state of Hawaii the way they are and giving them more power would be devastating.	Thank you for your comment.

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Tudichs, H	•There appears to be an inadequate analysis of long-term impacts by the minimal or sometimes absent usage of the designators“recurring” or “intermittent”. How can you write that there are potential adverse effects (short term?) from these exercises and then say there won’t long-term effects when they would be recurring over the years? •There is also a semantical tweak under marine mammals, where the writing goes from discussing marine mammals to marine mammal populations – technically, yes, there may not be notable effects to the population of these mammals, but that cannot possibly be the only way that marine mammal health is defined in the document? I feel that this is really just trying to squeeze by with understating any other negative effects by essentially saying “yeah the population won’t be affected though”. •Has the following research been analyzed and/or included in the EIS? It seems fishy to cite such minimal effects when much of the references are from the Navy. That gives “we investigated ourselves and found that we have done nothing wrong”. Independent research should be focused on as much as possible. oURL=https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/marine-science/articles/10.3389/fmars.2021.796849 oDOI=10.3389/fmars.2021.796849 •Kerr, A., and Scorse, J. (2018). The Use of Seal Bombs in California Fisheries: Unknown Impacts Point To An Urgent Need For More Research. Monterey, CA: Center for the Blue Economy, 1–14.	While the research mentioned in the comment was not specifically cited in the EIS/OEIS, the authors are familiar with it and the topic of seal bombs. In Appendix D, Section D.2.2.3, Krumpel et al., 2021 is cited as a similar source discussing the effects of seal bombs.
Turner, C	This will have major environmental impacts at what cost.	Thank you for your comment.
Turro, K	Hello, thank you for taking the time to address our comments and concerns. I was at the open house in Honolulu last month and it was nice to see how much the Navy is doing to protect wildlife in other areas. I was disappointed to hear about the environmental impact the explosives would have on Hawaii and her precious wildlife. It doesn't take very many explosives to rupture organs underwater or render animals completely deaf or stressed or too afraid to ever return. https://semspub.epa.gov/work/01/550560.pdf https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/science-data/ocean-noise I believe the military can do some good here and turn two problems into a solution instead. During the open house, I asked a representative why these explosives couldn't be tested in a lake instead. They responded that it had to be Salt water because the conditions are different and the tests needed to be accurate. In California, approximately 75 miles from the Pacific Ocean is a	Thank you for your comment and suggestion. Most of the explosives that are part of this action would involve Navy and Coast Guard surface ships. In addition to the inability to have these vessels moved to the Salton Sea, the maneuvering requirement for the vessels and the range of the weapons the vessels fire would exceed the size of the Salton Sea.

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	dried up lake called the Salton Sea. It's an undrinkable polluted lake that lost a good portion of its water. It used to be 45 miles long, 17 miles wide, and 83 feet deep, but today, the dry dust of the lake bed is toxic and gets blown up with the wind. Right now the government is using expensive resources to try to keep that dust in the ground. I propose The Navy could restore the Salton Sea and use that area for their testing instead. It is far from the ocean, but transporting that salt water would keep the toxic dust down and help the migratory birds who pass through. It does seem like an impossible task, but if the US built the 50 mile long Panama Canal in 1914, pumping 7 billion liters of water EVERY DAY; I believe the US can restore a dried lake and help a lot of people and do some real good here. Thank you for listening to all these comments and taking everyone's ideas into consideration. Please take care Kaitlynn	
U		
Uyemura, B	If this happens, there will be a revolt against it. Millions of people live on Oahu. We already know what happened to Kaho'olawe. You cannot systemically destroy vegetation and marine animals and say that it is okay because it's too protect people. This is outrageous and I will do everything in my power to prevent this from happening. Our water has already been compromised by the military. The problem is you cannot guarantee that people will indirectly be negatively impacted by doing this. I am highly against this and am angered by the thought.	Thank you for your comment.
V		
Van Belkum, H	Increasing military activity in our oceans puts all of us at risk. Protect our oceans!	Thank you for your comment.
van Bylaardt II, R	As a surfer I oppose the military degrading our oceans. There's already a surf spot, the best in Oahu's south shore off limits because of military training. That is absurd and must stop! Go training somewhere else.	Thank you for your comment.
Vanegas, P	I deeply oppose expanding military operations in and around Hawáii and its waters!	Thank you for your comment.
Vasquez, M	Indigenous communities need to be protected. This includes their land, people, animals, and animal habitats. Coral reefs are in danger, and they help	Thank you for your comment.

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	keep one of our most expansive ecosystems alive. Please do not increase military activity.	
Vianney	Marine life is more important and needs to be above all else.	Thank you for your comment.
Vickrey, E	I appreciate that Hawaii is an important strategic location for the US Navy, but the habitats in Hawaii must also be protected for equally pragmatic reasons. Biodiversity is one of our most important resources, as it allows us to develop new medicines and make scientific breakthroughs. Impacting Hawaii's environment further would be a grave misstep, as Hawaii is an island chain, and contains very different biodiversity than the mainland. It is uniquely valuable.	Thank you for your comment.
Victoria-01	This is insane, unnecessary, and unethical.	Thank you for your comment.
Victoria-02	Protect our Moana!	Thank you for your comment.
Victoria-03	The Navy is destroying sacred lands & marine life. Continuing to allow them in these spaces is inexcusable when it comes to protecting sacred lands and wildlife. Please do not allow anymore damage to be done. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
Villaflor, C	I am a lifelong resident of Hawai'i and Native Hawaiian. I am 100% absolutely against the United States military encroaching any more than it already has on our oceans. United States military and especially the United States Navy has done irreversible damage to our water, both fresh and salt. The longer they are here the more we are at risk of another catastrophe like Red Hill. This needs to stop.	Thank you for your comment.
Villatora, N-01	Nakai'elua Villatora. MS. VILLATORA:· Aloha, mai ka kou.· (Hawaiian phrase spoken.)· I wanted to start off with my testimony and on the record. It's quite ironic that the captain started off with the imagery of marriage.· And I find that a lot of the testifiers this evening also showed how irrelevant that is.· Or actually, how relevant, but irrelevant that is to show that kind of imagery. When you brought it up, the first thing I said to myself was, When you look at a marriage, it's like a union.· And what a union is, is unity.· It means unity at its core. When I look back at the history of the military in Hawaii, what kind of unity is that? Where's the transparency and the truth in where the military's	Thank you for your comment.

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	opposition or suppression to our people, kanaka maoli people, here in Hawaii? I can only attest for what I have known personally and in my family's story about the suppression and the -- really destruction, and the demilitarization of our kanaka people as that we're just nothing; that our manaos are not really important to the military and every other forces that's trying to paint this pretty picture that they are looking out for our security. And essentially, I'm a mother of two keikis, and I can tell you that I'm afraid for their future.I'm afraid for the future generations if we continue to be complicit and be, you know, not lazy, but be afraid of what it's like to speak out and to show the truth. So another comment I wanted to do before I kind of, like, segue is that you should really – the military should be really transparent to the "community" of where the status of Hawaii is with America and understanding that with this whole marriage, it really takes two.· And the relationship between Hawaii, kou pae aina Hawaii, the nation of Hawaii, because we still exist.· And the military will continue to kind of not agree with that.· It's the facts.· Check your guys' self. If you guys are a part of this.· I'm obviously not the only person that feels this way.· There are many of us.· And I think those who even are seeing this are not presently here to make yourselves involved and get yourselves educated of the facts.· Mahalo nui. MS. TURNER:· Thank you for your comment.	
Villatora, N-02	ʻO Nākaiʻelua Villatora koʻu inoa, he wahine Maoli, hoʻoilina o nā Kanaka ʻo Hawaiʻi nei, I am providing my testimony in opposition of the Hawaiʻi-California Training and Testing expansion proposal and all current and future proposals that will result in the destruction of Ko Pae ʻĀina Hawaiʻi and Papahānaumokuākea. I demand as a hoʻoilina of the first peoples of Hawaiʻi nei that all extension of the Military Occupation in Hawaiʻi nei be decommissioned, deoccupied and remedied to the return of all lands occupied to the rightful hoʻoilina ʻo Hawaiʻi nei. We no longer trust the Militarys presences in Hawaiʻi nei as a status of good standing and safety. They is no treaty between Hawaiʻi and America to allow the continued mismanagement of kumu waiwai (natural resources including ʻĀina,	Thank you for your comment.

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	kai/moana, etc.) that are vital to the health and well-being of nā Kanaka ʻo Hawaiʻi. It is blatantly misused by all extension of the American Armed Forces. E kūʻē ʻana i ka hewa a i ke aloha ʻĀina hope loa.	
Vinson-Dower, M	Navy expansion in this area isn't necessary, especially with the impacts it will have on native wildlife. The disastrous consequences on any human activity in this area outweigh any benefits the military will incur. It's time to care for more than just ourselves and our wallets.	Thank you for your comment.
Viveiros, K	Protect our ocean waters, and spirits beings of compassion	Thank you for your comment.
W		
Wahilani, K-01	Kaukaohu Wahilani testified as follows: MR. WAHILANI: (Chanting in Hawaiian). Aloha mai kakou.(Speaking in Hawaiian). That oli is a migrational chant of the hanai from Puuloa which is Pali Momi which is Pearl Harbor. It goes all the way to Nanakuli, Maili, Waianae. Waianae's named after mullet waters. Because of the military's been occupying Puuloa, you no more hanai. You no more hanai. Have the Navy ever asked instead of take? One fact, the Navy been here since January 16, 1893, and they never left. They came in uninvited. That's right, you guys. You guys came here uninvited to our country, the Hawaiian Kingdom, and never left. What you guys leave -- you guys leave us destruction and misery. The biggest aquifer is fricking tripping. And by the way, I against RIMPAC. Now we get (speaking Hawaiian), right, all the endangered (speaking Hawaiian), right, the honu. Kanaloa is desecrated. You guys going -- you no need, huh? Have you ever dived inside Puuloa? The waters over there still get oil leaking from fricking 1941 from the ship, from the misery -- Missouri -- "misery." When is enough is enough? Lahui Hawaii. Same like my tita Healani said, this is our aina. My -- my kupuna has been here from time immemorial, same as Healani. But so has	Thank you for your comment.

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	many other ethnicities that came to our country, and they went show allegiance. And their mo'opuna, they still here. All the top brass in every department in the military, they cycle out. I sit on the Waianae neighborhood board ten years. And in that ten years, fricking seven fricking majors we deal with, or seven colonels, because it's strategic. Everything -- you guys gotta think now -- the military, everything they do is strategic. This is all fluff. You guys get to go if something was to happen over here. You guys get to go back to the U.S. continent. And by the way, this is our mainland, everybody. This is our mainland. That mainland that we would refer to when we was growing up as the nationalized Pledge of Allegiance every day? Not anymore, because as the (speaking Hawaiian) Hawaii who truly love Hawaii, this is our mainland. Okay? So stop saying that. Military, you guys right; you guys fricking cycle out. But when the [expletive deleted] hit the ceiling, you guys can jet; but yet, me, I ain't going anywhere. My genealogy predates the first kanaka that came here from lahiki (phonetic) or even before that. Ke akua went give our kupuna the (speaking Hawaiian) and the confidence for traverse the largest ocean on the planet, who come to the most isolated islands in the middle of the largest ocean and thrive -- thrive for thousands and thousands of years. And one day in 1778 -- you guys know the narrative? Captain Cook came in, and ever since after that, [expletive deleted] went hit the ceiling for everybody in Hawaii. Well, not everybody, but mostly poor us as kanaka oiwi. I love every ethnicity. You no more -- you no more pilikia unless you beef, then we get pilikia. But for us as first people, the kanaka oiwi, we on the bottom, everything from -- socially, economically. The U.S. military complex has been one of those driving fricking forces. The -- Mauna Kea went show up. The lahui show up. The true power lies within the people. Every time we show up, Faith Noelani (phonetic), (speaking Hawaiian), for years -- for years show up and voice our -- voice our opinions, voice our voices. Yeah? But you know what? The true power lies within the people. Mauna Kea went show up -- went show that, because if the people	

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	never show up, fricking TMT would be built.So maybe -- maybe if we all become makoa, fearless, and we going fricking go to Puuloa and we fricking shot them down. In the words of Manono in the battle of Kuamo'o, she says, "Malama ko aloha." Kanaka was fighting kanaka. But she said, Never lose your love for one another. If you truly love this aina that you call your home, right, maybe it's time we don't talk anymore. Maybe we all got to be mohai because nothing changed without the mohai. Maybe we got todo that. But like you guys, the higher echelons in the military, you guys get to fricking cycle out and go back to where you from. I ain't going anywhere and so is my fricking mo'opunas and my great-great-grandchildren. We got to leave one Hawaii better than when we was here. So right now when the new books of Hawaiian history is written, hundred years from now, they going turn to the page in 2015, 2019, 2025, oh, there was my kupuna kane was there, there was my kupuna wahine was there. The true power lies within the people. A'ole, RIMPAC. The Navy, I sorry, but you guys going to be same like La Hoihoi Ea and Admiral Thomas came for fricking kick fricking Lord Paulet out and said, "Pack your bags and get the hell out of here. Before you guys leave, clean this [expletive deleted] up." Aloha. MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.	
Wahilani, K-02	I am totally in opposition to EIS Draft (A Hiki, Kealoha Ama Hope Loa)	Thank you for your comment.
Wainwright, B	Please keep our beautiful waters and Hawaii safe. There's so much destruction. We need our planet to stay healthy. Please.	Thank you for your comment.
Wakefield, S	I do not want Navy activity to increase in our waters because of the detrimental impact it has on marine and wildlife.	Thank you for your comment.
Walrod, H	I am deeply concerned by the expansion of military activities in the ocean around Hawaii and the environmental impacts on the marine life and people in the region. The US military is a top global polluter, and any operations in the ocean will result in exhaust pollution, as well as the risk of dumping, leaks, test detonations, which could decimate coral and marine habitats. This move would also affect food supply chains for Hawaiians and could cause	Thank you for your comment.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	considerable air pollution. Hawaiians should decide what happens on their coasts, and a proper environmental impact report must be made. I do not support the expansion of military operations around Hawaii.	
Warech, J	My name is Julie Warech, 10 year resident of Honolulu. I would like to contribute substantive comments on the Hawaii-California Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement / Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS).	Please see your comment and response in Table L.2-6.
Watson, H	Hema Watson testified as follows: MR. WATSON: My name is Hema Watson. I have a couple of points. I don't have to read the whole EIS to know this. Just off the pamphlet you guys give us trying to inform us about this, it's super, super misleading. You guys analyze three different alternatives, and it makes it seem like it's super useful, but it's really not. The three alternatives you give us is you guys drop everything and stop, which I would love, but you're not going to do or would never want to do; the second alternative is you do exactly what you want to do right now which is increase but only marginally, or so you say; or the last one is go balls to the wall and do everything you want, which none of these are real options. None -- not one single alternative said maybe we should halve what we're doing, maybe we should lower our take, maybe we should restrict our zoning. No, no, no, no. It's either we do exactly what we want, do more than what we want, or do nothing at all. I don't understand how that can be even portrayed as real options. The second thing, clean up. How can you guarantee -- I mean, you guys can't guarantee, you've shown that in the past -- but how can you guarantee to us, the public, that you're going to clean up what you're doing? Or are you just not going to do that? Are you going to drop bombs and then clean them? I've been on Kahoolawe. You guys don't have a fort. Even though you guys were instructed to clean that up, there's still tons left. It is ridiculous to assume that me dropping bombs, exploding vessels, using depleted uranium and chemicals would somehow have no effects at all when	The term “take,” as defined in Section 3 (16 U.S.C. section 1362 (13)) of the MMPA, means “to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.” “Harassment” was further defined in the 1994 amendments to the MMPA, which provided two levels of harassment: Level A (potential injury) and Level B (potential behavioral disturbance).The vast majority of Navy takes of marine mammals are relatively minor and temporary Level B behavioral reactions that do not have measurable long-term or permanent impacts on stocks or species.

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	we can definitely see effects from halfway across the world people's polluting can end up here. And yet your bomb does nothing? And you guys also want to tout that you guys are saving the wildlife. Mahalo for showing us the endangered species that are no longer in danger. I'm super happy about that, but I'm not really sure that's because of military actions. You're still bombing. Bombing, it's not like -- you know, if there's a construction crew across my house and they do a little bit less construction, it's still construction. I can still hear it. It's still disturbing. I don't know how to make my life any better. So I don't really think it's direct action through the military that's keeping the animals better. And if you guys are really saying you're protecting it, why are you asking for expansion takes? If you guys want to tout that you guys love the mammals so much, it feels like you expanding your take is just covering that up because not once in this pamphlet you guys say. You guys have the definition for the word "take" in it which means killing, permitted killing of these animals. But you don't once say how many animals you guys kill, what you guys are asking for with the permits, how much, which would then show the reality that you guys are asking for more killing of these animals while saying you guys somehow kill less of it. If I eat two slices of pie, do I only eat one? No. It's kind of ridiculous that you guys are showing us this information and then passing it off like you guys are being altruistic. You guys are really not. I don't have to read the EIS for that, I don't have to do none of that because your guys's actions have shown that you guys are not super trustworthy when it comes to showing us that you guys are going to clean up after your mess or even tell us what's happening. Red Hill, all the lands out at Kahuku, the military bases, Pohakuloa. I was there when you guys restarted doing artillery shelling and started the fire on the access road. It is ridiculous to assume you guys have our best interest at heart. And if you guys aren't even going to show the guests that you invited, their take numbers, what use are these numbers? If I kill one person but my friend	

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	kills 30, and I just say, "Well, I only killed one guy," you're kind of omitting the rest of the story which is what's happening. So, yeah. Thanks for having me up here. MS. TURNER: Thank you.	
Weakley, J	Have read proposal, no problem with contents, we need all we can do to protect america	Thank you for your comment.
Werlang, A	The United States (U.S.) Navy welcomes your comments on the HCTT Draft EIS Comments. Comments should describe specific issues or topics. Comments must be postmarked or received electronically by February 11, 2025 11:59 PM Hawaiian Time. U.S. Navy will consider each comment during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, and all comments become part of the public record and will be made publicly available without change. Comments, including all attachments, must not exceed a 20-megabyte file size. All personally identifiable information (for example name or address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. You may also submit a comment anonymously. Do not submit confidential, sensitive, or protected information. The Department of Defense is not responsible for comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period.	Thank you for your comment.
Wesslen, A	Please do not agree on the Navy's choice to expand near the shorelines of Hawaii. The islands are a beautiful place to visit and the ships and military action there could harm the environment and way of life for locals. If you allow the United States Navy more access to the Pacific Waters near the Islands there will be no more wildlife to eat. The majority of pineapples in Hawaii do end up in the American mainland. The Navy's request to more than 50% of the waters around Hawaii will be catastrophic economically and financially. Many investors and families would be lost to the poor sea life and waste washing ashore. I urge you to take into consideration both the sea life and the good people that support all ways of life, including the sea, that make such a beautiful place special.	Thank you for your comment.
Wheeler, M	OPPOSE to further desecration from the US military to our oceans and lands. OPPOSE the Draft EIS and OEIS that NO FURTHER Hawai'i-California Training and Testing activities continues.	Thank you for your comment.

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White, C	Native Hawaiian Cultural practices, and the environment need to be protected at all costs. Even entertaining the idea of increasing the military activity that has had consistent devastating effects of the environment of Hawaii is astonishing. Protect Hawaii, do not allow the US military to destroy our earth.	Thank you for your comment.
White, R	The DoD has a long standing history of causing disruption to the indigenous people of Hawai'i. The devastation it has on marine life, the native people of the land, and entire ecosystem has grown and increasing activities in the area will only be even more detrimental to the survival of the land. This should not stand and the fight will continue to protect and preserve the beautiful land and waters surrounding Hawai'i.	Thank you for your comment.
Whiteside, K	Military expansion into Hawaii will infringe on basic human rights to security and have a negative impact on our already fragile environment.	Thank you for your comment.
White, W	The Navy's proposed mine sweeping practice would inflict grave damage to O'ahu's reefs and marine life. Increased use of sonar has been proven to harm whales, targeting dummy mines would destroy habitat for countless species by destroying reef structures, and shore lines would become more vulnerable to erosion due to reef loss. Flooding in these times of sea level rise will accelerate without the protection of the reefs and a key pillar of island food security, coastal fishing, could be disrupted. The Navy's plan to enhance efforts to avoid fatal collisions and entanglement with whates, while appreciated, is offset by it's request for a greater " by catch" allowance. Killing more whales is unacceptable. The Hawai'i Constitution enshrines the "Spirit of Aloha" as a guiding principal for public life stating that Aloha means recognizing how every member of the community is essential to the well-being of all the others. In Hawai'i, we recognize that our community includes the land, ocean, the animals, and the marine life. We all depend upon each other for survival. The Navy's request to explode mines in our coastal waters is antithetical to aloha and can not be allowed.	Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) for a description of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action does not include exploding mines in coastal waters. Please see Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences) for the analysis of effects from the Proposed Action.
Whittington, H	I am against the HCTT Draft EIS. Please leave Hawaii alone.	Thank you for your comment.
Wida, E	I have noticed an increase of helicopter noise on Kaneohe bay at night past 9pm on school nights. It's really loud and keeps our kids up when they need to be sleeping for school the next morning. I know the military needs to train	Thank you for your comment. The Proposed Action does not include aircraft take-off and landing activities from land bases. Marine Corps Base

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	at night, but maybe out in the ocean away from homes and knock off at 9pm would be nice.	Hawaii (MCBH) has a website (https://www.mcbhawaii.marines.mil/Offices-Staff/Communication-Strategy-Operations/Noise-Concerns/) where community members can address noise concerns directly with MCBH.
Williams, J	We need to protect our natural resources including our water. I oppose the expansion of the navy's presence here.	Thank you for your comment.
Willman, A	Our oceans, despite continuous claims otherwise, cannot take much more human destruction. The Navy's proposition to increase drills off the coast of Hawaii will have consequences on the ocean, the wildlife, and the Hawaiian people. I oppose this proposition along with everyone else who has submitted a comment.	Thank you for your comment.
Wilson, J	To whom it may concern, Please, for the love of God, nature and all of humanity, I beg you to reconsider your push to compromise an entire ecosystem just for military advancement. I, an American citizen, would like my money to be spent on bettering the world and not just military expenses. I understand that the Pacific Ocean is an important military asset just as it was during World War Two. I understand that we have one of the best navies in the world! However in this global climate we need to be pushing for peace and prosperity. This means protecting our oceans and ocean wildlife. Our world is so sick, and she desperately needs us to make the right decisions. Choosing to protect the environment would make us stronger than Russia or China or North Korean could ever be. And when our grand children inevitably die hot, burning, scorching, thirsty deaths, because of our natural resources dying out and climate change, at least it will be our enemies to the west of us who are to blame. When you protect our oceans, forests, deserts and mountains, you protect us. Thank you!	Thank you for your comment.
Winn, A-01	The military should stop allowing themselves to be on Hawi'i, because it will harm the ocean, and and marine life and the land.	Thank you for your comment.
Winn, A-02	U.S. Navy should stay off Hawi'i, because it would allow the ocean, marine life and the land to be free of harm.	Thank you for your comment.

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Witwicky, A	This movement is a complete disgrace towards marine and human rights. Please cease this from proceeding as it will have impacts on both, Marine and Human lives that are beyond the fathomable scope.	Thank you for your comment.
Wood-Doughty, Z	The HCTT Draft EIS does not provide sufficient information about on-going dialogue with Tribal groups and Native Hawaiian Organizations. The proposed mitigation measures for protecting marine life should be subject to increases in scrutiny if and when adverse impact on marine life is documented. The stakes for threatened and endangered species such as sea turtles and Hawaiian monk seals is too great; wildlife advocates need means of recourse to alleviate harms as they arise.	The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA's implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also consulted with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that

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		have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings. Please see Chapter 5 for a description of mitigation measures. The Action Proponents proposed mitigation measures to address effects that would be significant. As determined in the analysis contained in Section 3.10 of the EIS/OEIS, the effects would be less than significant and mitigation measures would not be needed.
Woods, J	I strongly oppose the dumping of SpaceX rocket debris in the sacrifice zone surrounding Papahānaumokuākea, the Pacific Islands Heritage Monument, and the Main Hawaiian Islands. This area holds immense cultural, ecological, and spiritual significance, and it is unacceptable to treat it as a dumping ground for corporate space waste. I demand that the FAA conduct a full and detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which they have illegally refused to do. The failure to carry out this necessary review disregards legal obligations and the protection of our marine environment, endangered species, and Indigenous cultural sites. Additionally, I call for full public consultations in Hawai'i and with Hawaiian institutions, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), which is a co-trustee and manager of Papahānaumokuākea. Decisions impacting Hawai'i's sacred spaces should not be made without the direct involvement of Native Hawaiian organizations and the people who have protected these lands and waters for generations. Hawai'i is not a dumping ground. The FAA must uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities. Stop this reckless proposal now.	Activities related to SpaceX are not part of this Proposed Action. The Navy's Proposed Action includes activities conducted east of Nihoa Island and inside the eastern edge of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument (now also a National Marine Sanctuary) boundaries. As stated in Table 6-2 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy conducts activities in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, effects on Sanctuary resources and qualities. Vessels and aircraft used in the conduct of military training and testing would be operated in a manner consistent with the requirements of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 9478, so far as is practicable. As analyzed in Section 3.10, no adverse effects on cultural resources would occur as a result of the Proposed Action; additionally, adverse effects on biological resources are not anticipated.
Worawongwasu, A-01	I am writing to express my strong opposition to the continuation of the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) military exercises, as outlined in the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The document reveals significant risks to the environment and surrounding communities that cannot be mitigated by the proposed measures. I ask the	The Navy's analysis was completed using the best available, peer-reviewed science. The Navy continues to pursue new scientific data, collected through professional studies and verified through credible, recognized sources. The Navy works

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	US Navy to address the following questions: The EIS acknowledges that marine mammals and reptiles will experience "incremental stressors," but downplays long-term impacts by emphasizing mitigation. It does not provide robust population-level impact data or model the cumulative effects of stressors such as mid-frequency active sonar, vessel strikes, and explosions over multiple years. How does the Navy reconcile the documented harm caused by sonar and explosions to marine mammals, such as hearing loss and behavioral disruption, with its claim that population-level impacts will be insignificant?	proactively with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state, federal, and non-profit environmental organizations to ensure its operations are safe and minimize impact to marine life. Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented in Section 6 of the LOA Application represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity and increases in the number of some species.
Worawongwasu, A-02	The EIS lacks quantitative assessment of greenhouse gas emissions in relation to broader climate change goals. While effects are labeled "incremental," their significance in the context of the climate crisis is not addressed. Why does the Navy not include a lifecycle analysis of its greenhouse gas emissions, and how does it ensure compliance with Hawai‘i and California’s climate goals?	A life cycle analysis of Navy’s overall GHG emissions is not within the scope of this EIS/OEIS. The EIS/OEIS presents a detailed quantitative analysis of the increase in GHG emissions associated for the Proposed Action.

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Worawongwasu, A-03	The EIS highlights protected areas but allows activities in "designated" zones within these areas, creating loopholes. This undermines the stated protections. How does the Navy justify allowing activities in mitigation areas labeled as critical habitats, and what safeguards exist to prevent unintended harm?	As stated in Appendix K, Section K.2.1 of the EIS/OEIS, "In developing mitigation areas, the Action Proponents considered the manner and degree to which a potential mitigation measure was likely to reduce effects on species and stocks, while still being practical and safe to implement, and not impacting the effectiveness of military readiness activity in an impractical manner." The resulting mitigation areas and mitigation measures meet the goals of mitigation as stated in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS to "completely avoid, partially reduce, or minimize the potential for a stressor to impact a resource," without significantly impacting the effectiveness of military training and testing.
Worawongwasu, A-04	The assertion of no significant effects on subsistence fishing or environmental justice communities is not backed by a detailed demographic or economic study. What specific outreach has the Navy conducted with Indigenous and coastal communities to assess the socioeconomic impacts of RIMPAC, and what data supports its conclusion of no significant effects?	The proposed activities are for the most part, a continuation of activities that have been conducted in the same area for decades, with no reported instances of adverse economic impacts. The Navy received input from NHOs regarding traditional cultural practices associated with the ocean, including voyaging and fishing, the sacredness of the ocean and marine life, which may be considered ʻaumākua (personal or family god as a deified ancestor). This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings.
Worawongwasu, A-05	Are the claims in the EIS about "no significant long-term impacts" to marine habitats, fish, and invertebrates supported by independent research or prior RIMPAC impact studies?	Please see Chapter 3, specifically sections 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6, and Appendices C, D, and F for the analysis of effects from the Proposed Action. In these sections are the hundreds of citations of the independent research considered in the analysis and effects determinations.
Worawongwasu, A-06	Is the "No Action Alternative" fairly evaluated as a reasonable option, or is it dismissed prematurely? Why does the Navy consider the "No Action	As stated in Section 2.4.2.1 (No Action Alternative), "the No Action Alternative of not conducting the

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	Alternative" unreasonable while using it as a baseline for environmental impact analysis? Does this not bias the evaluation in favor of the action alternatives?	proposed live, at-sea training and testing in the Study Area is inherently unreasonable in that it does not meet the purpose and need. However, the analysis associated with the No Action Alternative is carried forward in order to compare the magnitude of the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action with the conditions that would exist if the Proposed Action did not occur."
Worawongwasu, A-07	How does RIMPAC align with Hawai'i's 2045 Zero Emissions Green Energy Target, especially considering greenhouse gas emissions directly resulting from RIMPAC? With potential risks outlined in the EIS, including in-water explosives and vessel strikes, how are Kanaka Maoli and local communities' health and safety being safeguarded during RIMPAC exercises? What independent monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance with environmental regulations during RIMPAC?	Estimated greenhouse gas emissions are shown in Table 3.1-31 in Section 3.1.10.3 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) in the Final EIS/OEIS. Our analysis indicates that although GHG emissions from testing and training activities would add incrementally to the global total, the scale of the contribution is negligible and unlikely to result in any measurable impact. The testing and training activities would comply with applicable air quality requirements that are designed to protect public health and safety. These include emission standards, operating restrictions, and associated record-keeping and reporting requirements to ensure compliance. Further, the activities would be subject to regulatory agencies' periodic inspections, as applicable, as an independent mechanism to ensure compliance with environmental regulations.
Wu, A	We do NOT need more military activities, especially those that negatively impact the environment.	Thank you for your comment.
Wys, A	We need to stop. Rebuilding the small bits of good news we have left is vital to the survival of the ecosystems we have already depleted. Nature is trying to thrive and we continue to deplete its resources without giving it time. The navy has been doing its job for long enough in those areas effectively.	Thank you for your comment.
X		
Xiong, X	Free Hawaii from U.S. colonial occupation!	Thank you for your comment.

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Y		
Yamara	Coral reefs, already under immense stress from climate change, would have a chance to recover if not constantly harmed by Navy activities. Healthy reefs support subsistence fishing, wildlife, and the overall health of our oceans, which produce over 50% of the Earth's oxygen and absorb 30% of global CO2 emissions. The No Action Alternative should be re-evaluated to reflect these significant benefits, not dismissed as "unchanged or slightly improved."	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 military readiness activities. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would logically remain unchanged or improve slightly. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, and in the conduct of military readiness activities. Utilizing the best available science and technology, the services completed extensive analyses and computer-based modeling to determine impacts and develop science-based protective measures to reduce or avoid potential impacts to marine life. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Specifically, the analysis of impacts to coral reefs can be found in Section 3.4. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements to the maximum extent practicable, activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training and testing activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine species. Therefore, given that the proposed activities would not have significant negative effects, ceasing the activities would not result in significant positive effects.

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Yannacone, M	I say NO to the expansion of at-sea training and testing across Hawaii. Let the MMPA permits expire in 12/2025. Thank you for your time in considering the voice of the people.	Thank you for your comment.
Yates, G	Hello, After today's numerous near critical collisions at Kaimana beach the issue has really crystallized for me. I propose a simpler approach to addressing challenges facing surf lineups in the islands. Born and Raised on the Northshore nearly 60 years ago, I 've been involved in ocean activities since birth. Incredibly fortunate to have been mentored by legendary Hawaiian Watersports Legends like Eddie Aikau, Barry Kanaiaupini, and Mark Cunningham. I was among the first foilers on Oahu eight years ago and have since tried prone foil, standup foil, tow foil, and now downwind standup foil. Many popular surf spots throughout the islands face issues with motorized crafts, foil drive assistance, and E(lectric) foils. The surf spots and channel outside of Kaimana Beach is one of the most obvious. I was there today and witnessed many near serious injuries. As an owner and operator of the Foil Drive, I'm confident these motorized crafts pose a significant risk due to their increased weight, speed, and angles of approach. The number of people on them is staggering and growing rapidly. These motorized vessels also bring more older, less fit, and non-surfers to the water. Current regulations require motorized crafts to stay clear of swimmers and avoid lineups with non-motorized crafts. However, these regulations are disregarded or not enforced. Furthermore some of these Motorized craft operators believe they can operate in violation of these regulations due to pending bills. Others believe they are the 'same' as other foilers even though they are motorized. Reaffirming motorized vessel definitions (including foil drives, e-foils, and boosted surfboards) and existing regulations regarding motorized crafts would go a long way to solve the current issues and provide a more effective solution for surf lineups in the islands.	The issues noted in the comment are outside the scope of this EIS/OEIS.

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	To ensure compliance and promote safety, we must clarify regulations and remind everyone of them. Encouraging lifeguards to be well-informed and posting signage at popular launch spots like Kaimana Beach are crucial steps. Maintaining a safe distance between motorized and non-motorized watercraft is essential. These measures will effectively address challenges and prevent further serious accidents. Mahalo George Yates	
Yokoyama, D	If you allow military forces to damage our ecosystem even more then before you know it there will be no Hawaii any longer. The people and the land cannot thrive without one another.	Thank you for your comment.
Yu, W	Please leave our oceans alone. Drop your attempts to do your business in the California and Hawaiian oceans. They must be protected.	Thank you for your comment.
Yuzawa, T	Military should not be allowed to do anything on this land without approval from the native council. They don't respect or care for the land and therefore should not be allowed to take land that is not theirs. Get military off this land and stop poisoning our waters.	Thank you for your comment.
Z		
Zara	Please do not increase Navy and other military activities in Hawai'i's waters. Do not further pollute and devastate the rich environment of coral reefs. Listen to Indigenous Hawaiian voices and protect marine life.	Thank you for your comment.
Zimmerman, M	Navy needs to train. Makes sense. When you are doing explosions in the water around the Hawaiian islands consider scheduling that tranining only when the humpback whales are not present in the Hawaiian waters. Common sense approach to limiting the impact of in water explosions.	Thank you for your comment. As described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, there are two geographic mitigations specific to humpback whales in the Hawaii Study Area; the Hawaii Humpback Whale Special Reporting Mitigation Area, and the Hawaii Humpback Whale Awareness Messages. The Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, these geographic mitigations as well as other activity-based, geographic, and temporal mitigation measures during its training

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		and testing activities to reduce potential impacts on marine life.
Zoe-01	To Whom It May Concern, I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, as well as in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana (ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities.	Thank you for your comment.
Zoe-02	Please understand that polluting and killing the earth means it will be uninhabitable by *humans* we are poisoning the ecosystem that sustains us. Every leg of an ecosystem we take out on its own won't kill us, but with how many we have destroyed and continue to, do you really think we can risk this one too?	Thank you for your comment.

L.2.4 Form Letters

More than 1,000 individuals submitted as their comment one of three form letters, a portion of a form letter, or issues and concerns aligned with those in one of the form letters. The first form letter has been separated into nine parts below in Table L.2-4 and includes responses from the Action Proponents. The names of those who submitted this form letter are in Table L.2-5. In addition, 44 individuals provided this comment anonymously. The second form letter and the names of those who submitted it are in Table L.2-6. The third form letter and the names of those who submitted it are in Table L.2-7.

Table L.2-4: Form Letter (1 of 3) Comments and Responses

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Part 1 of 9	"To Whom It May Concern, I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself, as well as in solidarity with Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, water protectors, and all who care deeply about the health of our oceans, the protection of marine life, and the preservation of cultural and sacred practices tied to the moana (ocean). I am deeply concerned about the inadequacies and misleading statements in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Overseas Environmental	Thank you for your comment. The length of the document is due to the complexity of some of issues involved and the requirement for the Action Proponents to take a hard look, using the best available science. To make the document more readable, much of the background information and

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	Impact Statement (OEIS) for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities. Here is an outline of some of the issues in the documents, hereafter called the EIS or OEIS. It is not comprehensive, because despite regulations that the maximum size of an EIS is 300 pages, this document is 4 volumes long with the first volume alone being over 700 pages. It is a blatant violation of the regulation and makes the document unreadable to community members, but here are some highlights.	scientific details have been moved into appendices, still available for those interested. The remaining main body of the EIS/OEIS, less tables and figures, is 300 pages in length.
Part 2 of 9	**The No Action Alternative is Misrepresented** Under § 1502.14, the alternatives section is the heart of the EIS. The No Action Alternative, where the Navy stops military testing and training activities in our waters, is described in the document as resulting in conditions "unchanged or slightly improved from baseline conditions." This is a gross misrepresentation. The No Action Alternative should be evaluated based on the BENEFITS of stopping harmful military activities, not just the absence of harm. Currently the NAVY is running 7,432 activities per year under this EIS in Hawaii alone, according to tables G-16 and G-17. For example: Endangered Species Recovery: If endangered birds, Hawaiian monk seals, humpback whales, and green sea turtles are not subjected to thousands of harmful interactions with the Navy each year, they have a far greater chance of recovery. The Hawaiian monk seal, with only 1,600 individuals remaining, is highly sensitive to disturbances. In a 7 year period, they would avoid 9,228 instances of harm from the NAVY. Humpback whales, which migrate through Hawaiian waters annually, and green sea turtles, which depend on nearshore habitats, are also at risk with thousands of harmful interactions (see below). Stopping military activities would allow these species to thrive. Cultural and Community Benefits: For Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), the ocean creatures are not just a resource but a relative, as described in the Kumulipo. Constant harm to marine life and intrusions on cultural practices, such as fishing and traditional ceremonies, have profound spiritual and community impacts. Ending military activities would restore the ability of Native Hawaiians to malama ocean relatives and practice cultural traditions. Reef and Ocean Health: Coral reefs, already under immense stress from climate change, would have a chance to recover if not constantly harmed by Navy activities. Healthy reefs support subsistence fishing, wildlife, and the	The Draft EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with military readiness activities under Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. The Navy complied with the requirements of NEPA in the development and consideration of alternatives. Section 2.4 (Action Alternatives Development), more specifically, Section 2.4.2 (Alternatives Carried Forward) includes a discussion of the No Action Alternative which is provided to compare the magnitude of potential effects, but which is inherently unreasonable in that it does not meet the purpose and need (see Section 1.5) or the Action Proponent's statutory requirements under Title 10. The well-being of marine life and the marine environment is a significant factor in the military services' decision making, in the conduct of military readiness activities, and is the mission of our consulting partners (NMFS and USFWS) and regulations Navy is complying with. All of the potential environmental effects from proposed military readiness activities were analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, the Navy implements, to the maximum extent practicable, mitigation measures during its military readiness activities to reduce potential impacts to marine life. This scientific-based analysis indicates that with utilization of the Navy's protective mitigations, there is not a significant impact on marine

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	overall health of our oceans, which produce over 50% of the Earth's oxygen and absorb 30% of global CO2 emissions. The No Action Alternative should be re-evaluated to reflect these significant benefits, not dismissed as "unchanged or slightly improved."	species. Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species. Given that the impacts from the action alternatives were anticipated to be less than significant and in most cases minimal to undetectable, it was determined that impacts associated with the No Action Alternative would remain unchanged or slightly improved.
Part 3 of 9	**Endangered Species & Marine Mammal Harm** We are in a mass extinction event, and Hawaii is one of the epicenters as one of the most biologically diverse places in the world. The NAVY has applied to the government to be allowed to "take" via acoustic or explosive sources, 33.7 million instances of harm to marine mammals in the training area in 7 years. Despite this, the NAVY concludes that their impact on marine mammals is not significant or can be mitigated through their operational procedures. This includes, in 7 years from NAVY alone: 52,470 "takes" on kohola, humpback whales, including 19,028 in Hawaii alone 9,228 "takes on endangered 'īlio holo i ka uaua, Hawaiian Monk Seals 349,184 "takes" on bottlenose dolphins in Hawaiian waters alone 982 "takes" on endangered False Killer Whales in Hawaii waters, and 25,700 on all false killer whale populations in Hawaii (not all populations are endangered) 63,569 "takes" on spinner dolphins in Hawaiian waters alone 93,784 "takes" on threatened or endangered blue and fin whales across the pacific These are arguably significant adverse effects to endangered and threatened species, as well as to those who are not listed but are still valuable relatives of our communities. Some of these "takes" are also happening in unique and ecologically critical areas, such as Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument and offshore at Kaula Island. These areas are also home to endangered birds such as 'Ake'ake (Band rumped storm petrel), Ua'u (Hawaiian petrel), A'o (Newell Shearwater).	Based on best available science, the Navy and NMFS, through consultation under the MMPA and the ESA, concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed military readiness activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.

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	Regular disturbances for training and testing have and will increase disruption for the protected birds for generations, the impacts are likely significant. Despite receiving testimony about it previously, the NAVY did not discuss the abandonment of eggs when startled as one of the impacts of their exercises. This needs to be included, as well as the impacts on the birds being subject to disruptions in all stages of life across generations. For a discussion of the harm the NAVY does to honu (turtle) that is not addressed adequately in this OEIS, see "Navy Ocean Pollutants and Their Environmental Impact." Impacts on endangered species and marine mammals are discounted in the OEIS in completely inappropriate ways and need to be reevaluated for their significance determination under paragraphs (d)(vi) and (d)(ii).	This EIS/OEIS covers at-sea activities and therefore does not analyze terrestrial impacts. The EIS/OEIS (see Chapter 3) does analyze near shore activities and considered all applicable environmental effects, including potential effects on marine resources. Please see Section 3.7, Section 3.8, and Section 3.9 for the analysis of proposed activities on those resources.
Part 4 of 9	**Expansion of Military Activities** In Hawaii waters under this OEIS, the NAVY is currently conducting 7,432 activities annually. Under Alternative 1, they want to increase that by 43% to 10,641 activities annually. Under Alternative 2, they want to increase it by 49% to 11,104 activities. (Tables G-16 and G-17). 24%, or 1,812, of current activities happen in the near shore, at 0-3 Nautical Miles (nm). This includes almost all of the mine warfare testing and training. This is where our reefs are, and where honu feed and pull out to rest. Under Alternative 2, that would increase to 2,708 activities annually. This is unacceptable, and there's no way that it has an insignificant long term impact. The website states that "Nearshore areas, such as Kaneohe Bay or Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, are proposed to be used more frequently or for new training or testing activities, such as mine warfare training." On Oahu this includes Naval Defense Sea Area, Puuloa Underwater Range, Ewa Beach Training Minefield, Barbers Point Underwater Range, Barbers Point Harbor to Lighthouse Training Area (potential), Kaneohe Bay (potential), Bellows Beach (potential). On Maui it includes Kahoolawe Sub Training Minefield, Penguin Bank, Pailolo Channel, Maui Basin, Alalakeiki Channel, and Kalohi Channel. On Kauai it includes the PMRF Training Area (potential), Waiapuaa Beach (potential), and Niihau Kingfisher Range. The use of active sonar, underwater explosives, and live-fire exercises will have devastating impacts on marine life, including marine mammals, endangered birds, and coral reefs. communities. Some of these "takes" are	While some activities are new or increasing, other activities are decreasing or ceasing. The overall activity level will remain similar to current levels. Activities would continue to be conducted in previously established locations and in a manner that minimizes effects to marine species, including sea turtles, coral, and other endangered species. The Navy has conducted mine warfare training in Hawaii for decades. The only locations where explosives would be used are in the same areas they've been used previously. The new mine warfare areas, such as Kaneohe Bay and Bellows Beach would be used only for non-explosive training activities. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, mitigation measures are implemented with the aim of achieving the least practicable adverse impacts to marine mammal species or stocks, ensuring a negligible impact on marine mammal species and stocks (as required under the MMPA), and ensures that Navy military readiness activities do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species, or result in destruction or adverse

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	also happening in unique and ecologically critical areas, such as Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument and offshore at Kaula Island. These areas are also home to endangered birds such as ʻAkeʻake (Band rumped storm petrel), Uaʻu (Hawaiian petrel), Aʻo (Newell Shearwater). Regular disturbances for training and testing have and will increase disruption for the protected birds for generations, the impacts are likely significant. Despite receiving testimony about it previously, the NAVY did not discuss the abandonment of eggs when startled as one of the impacts of their exercises. This needs to be included, as well as the impacts on the birds being subject to disruptions in all stages of life across generations.	modification of critical habitat (as required under the ESA). Please see Section 3.3, Section 3.4, Section 3.5, Section 3.8, and Section 3.9 for the analysis of all proposed activities on those resources.
Part 5 of 9	**Lack of Consultation with Kanaka Maoli** When considering a significance determination under paragraphs (d)(vii) and (d)(ii), the EIS does not significantly account for tribal sacred sites or the degree to which the action may adversely affect communities with environmental concerns. As many comments during the public scoping meetings reflected, the NAVY has a profound misunderstanding and Lack of Consultation with Kanaka Maoli When considering a significance determination under paragraphs (d)(vii) and (d)(ii), the EIS does not significantly account for tribal sacred sites or the degree to which the action may adversely affect communities with environmental concerns. As many comments during the public scoping meetings reflected, the NAVY has a profound misunderstanding and misalignment with the Native Hawaiian community on their abuse of sacred spaces, relationship with aina and moana. The EIS and presentations demonstrated a profound lack of consultation with Kanaka Maoli and a failure to understand the significance of marine life to Native Hawaiian culture and values. The ocean is not just a resource to be sacrificed for “military readiness”—it is a sacred space that sustains life, culture, and spirituality. The Navy’s activities disrupt traditional practices, such as fishing, navigation, and ceremonies, and violate the rights of Native Hawaiians to care for and protect their ancestral waters. The Navy must engage in meaningful consultation with Kanaka Maoli and incorporate their knowledge and values into the decision-making process. This includes recognizing the cultural significance of marine mammals, reefs, and other ocean resources and ensuring that military activities do not infringe on Native Hawaiian rights.	The Navy has followed the consultation process in compliance with the NHPA’s implementing regulations for Section 106 (36 CFR 800). The Navy has made meaningful efforts to consult with Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) with a demonstrated interest in the proposed project. The Navy also engaged with Hawaiian civic clubs, Hawaiian fishing groups, and the public. The Navy initially reached out to approximately 200 NHOs in December 2023 and engagement has continued throughout the process. The Navy shared information on participating in the NHPA Section 106 process and requested information on the identification of historic properties. Navy efforts also included identifying NHOs that might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the Study Area and inviting NHOs to participate as consulting parties. As part of engagement with NHOs, the Navy provided a comprehensive description of the proposed activities, extent of the Study Area, existing data on identified historic properties, and the planned approach to seek out additional relevant information. In December 2024, NHOs were notified of the

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		availability of the Draft HCTT EIS/OEIS along with the schedule of in-person and virtual public meetings. The Navy has received comments from NHOs in writing and at meetings. Consultation with NHOs provided important information about cultural perspectives regarding a variety of resources that have religious and cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. This information from NHOs has been taken into account and considered in analyses and findings.
Part 6 of 9	**Cumulative and Global Impacts** The EIS/OEIS fails to adequately address the cumulative and global impacts of military activities. It regularly dismisses NAVY impacts as insignificant to the scale of the global issue, but that argument is a classic example of the fallacy of trivialization. The NAVY and US armed services consistently use this argument in EISs to avoid responsibility for climate impacts. This argument is not acceptable, particularly when talking about ocean impacts. The EIS needs to be rewritten to accurately account for this harm without dismissing it. The oceans are Earth's lungs, producing over 50% of the planet's oxygen and absorbing 30% of global CO2 emissions. Billions of people rely on healthy oceans for food, livelihoods, and cultural practices. Military expansion threatens this delicate balance, prioritizing war over the health of the planet. Additionally, prior pollution of chemicals being dumped into the ocean like DDT barrels persist in the environment, accumulate in marine life, and exacerbates the harm caused by military activities. Additionally, the proposed operations in Hawaii are taking place on Hawaiian Kingdom waters. The US military has no right to be here in the first place, as it is illegally occupying the Hawaiian Kingdom and has no treaty with the Hawaiian Kingdom to use the waters for this purpose. It is a dangerous erosion of international norms for the US to be doing military operations in Hawaii without a treaty. Increasing military operations also decreases the safety of the world at large. This perspective is not considered at all in the EIS. This OEIS also includes increasing international exercises. Militaries participating in previous exercises, including Israel and Indonesia in the 2024 RIMPAC war games, are actively breaking international law by committing genocide. This has substantial normalization impacts on the global	Please see Chapter 4 of the EIS/OEIS for an analysis of Cumulative Effects, including corals and wastewater spills. We appreciate and acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the historical context of the Hawaiian Islands and the military's presence. The U.S. military is committed to conducting its activities in Hawaii with the utmost respect for the local communities, cultures, and histories that define these islands. The HCTT Study Area plays a crucial role in ensuring national security and supporting global peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. Military readiness activities are designed to maintain readiness and effectiveness, which are essential for responding to various challenges and threats in the Pacific. In planning and performing these activities, we strictly follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This includes conducting comprehensive environmental assessments and impact statements, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These processes involve thorough evaluations of potential effects on the environment, cultural sites, and local communities. Public participation is a cornerstone of NEPA, and we actively seek and

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	community, that rogue states are allowed to participate in US led training, degrading the value of international law and making everyone less safe. These impacts also need to be considered.	consider input from all stakeholders to inform our decisions.
Part 7 of 9	**Climate Change and Coral Reefs** The EIS/OEIS must address the intersection of military activities and climate change. Coral reefs are already under immense stress from rising ocean temperatures, acidification, and pollution. The use of explosives, sonar, and other military stressors will further harm these critical ecosystems, which are essential for biodiversity, coastal protection, and cultural practices. 24%, or 1,812, of current activities happen in the near shore, at 0-3 Nautical Miles (nm). This includes almost all of the mine warfare testing and training. This is where our reefs are, and where honu feed and pull out to rest. Under Alternative 2, that would increase to 2,708 activities annually. This is unacceptable, and there's no way that it has an insignificant long term impact. Placing and moving the targets for the mine activities, exploding ordinance, laying and relaying cable, and many other listed activities will disturb these ecosystems that are heavily disrupted by ongoing military use and other stressors, and therefore at higher risk. The Navy must take responsibility for its role in exacerbating climate change and prioritize the protection of coral reefs and other marine ecosystems.	The EIS/OEIS analyzed effects of the Proposed Action consistent with NEPA and relevant case law, including effects on coral in Section 3.4 and sea turtles in Section 3.8. To reduce or avoid impacts to coral and other hard bottom areas, mitigation measures detailed in Section 5.7.1 and Section 5.7.2 of the EIS/OEIS are followed.
Part 8 of 9	**Navy Ocean Pollutants and Their Environmental Impact** The Navy's Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) downplays its role in major ocean pollution events, shifting responsibility to municipalities and industry. Unmentioned in the report are three major Navy pollution events in Hawaiian waters. The 5-million-gallon underground oil plume beneath Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, resulting from decades of Navy fuel storage failures, is described by the Navy as a "historical release of petroleum products" rather than an ongoing contamination crisis. Similarly, the recent 1.89-million-gallon wastewater spill into the ocean near Pearl Harbor is attributed to "heavy rains damaging a transformer," ignoring the Navy's history of regulatory violations, including a $9 million fine for prior infractions. Also not considered are the implications of the jet fuel leaks at Red Hill, which can affect the ocean quality because the underground aquifers and water sources are connected to the ocean. These recurring pollution events violate federal and state environmental standards and threaten Hawaii's fragile marine ecosystems.	While the events mentioned in the comment are not part of the Proposed Action and therefore not analyzed as direct impacts, they are considered under cumulative effects in Chapter 4. The EIS/OEIS considered the stress of fibropapillomatosis in the analysis of effects on sea turtles (see Appendix C, Sections C.7.1.3.3 and C.7.2.1.4, and Appendix F, Section F.8.5.3).

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	The OEIS fails to adequately assess the long-term ocean impacts of these spills, particularly their effect on endangered species. Research from the University of Hawai'i and NOAA links nitrogen pollution from wastewater to the proliferation of invasive algae, which elevates arginine levels and fuels fibropapillomatosis (FP), a tumor-causing disease devastating Hawaii's green sea turtles. NOAA has credited this as the leading cause of death in endangered green sea turtles. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life.	
Part 9 of 9	**Conclusion** The Draft EIS/OEIS for the Hawaii-California Training and Testing activities fails to adequately address the significant and substantive concerns of Native Hawaiians, environmentalists, and water protectors. By neglecting the full context and intensity of these impacts, the Navy's OEIS does not meet the standard for significance determination and fails to acknowledge the long-term harm posed to Hawaii's marine life and people. Additionally, the No Action Alternative must be re-evaluated to reflect the benefits of stopping harmful military activities, and the Navy must prioritize the protection of marine life, cultural practices, and the health of the oceans over military readiness. The US military, and it's destruction of people and the environment, is the largest ongoing threat to Hawai'i for decades. This report is another instance of that threat and real, ongoing damage to Hawaii and her people, being dismissed as insignificant when it is actually extremely significant. The health of our communities and our oceans, the survival of endangered species, and the rights of Native Hawaiians depend on the people holding the Navy accountable as they attempt to deceive and mislead us about the harm they do. We will hold you accountable. Stop prioritizing war over the planet's health and choose a path that honors and PROTECTS OUR MOANA and all who depend on it.	The military services' analysis was completed using the best available, peer-reviewed science. We continue to pursue new scientific data, collected through professional studies and verified through credible, recognized sources. The military services work proactively with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and state, federal, and non-profit environmental organizations to ensure its operations are safe and minimize impact to marine life. Also, as described in Chapter 5 of the EIS/OEIS, mitigation measures are implemented with the aim of achieving the least practicable adverse impacts to marine mammal species or stocks, ensuring a negligible impact on marine mammal species and stocks (as required under the MMPA), and ensures that Navy military readiness activities do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species, or result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat (as required under the ESA).

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter (1 of 3) Comments

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name
A.	Cyn	Alvarado	Larisa	Ayuluk	Temyka	Berggren	Kyra
A.	Katherine	Alvarez	Alex	B	Maia	Bergquist	Maria
Aaliyah		Alysa	Claire	B	Natalie	Bethke	Megan
Abdallah	Rana	Alyssa	Alyssa	B	Steve	Betschart	Stephanie
Ace	Ace	Amanda		B	Veronica	Bhatt	Mahima
Acohido	Alexis Ann	Amber	Amber	Babloyan	Eleen	Bianca	Bianca
Acosta	Elizabeth	Ambonisye	Ntosake	Baccetti	Kailyn	Biggerstaff	Z
Acuna	Amber	Amoguisq	Marne	Bahlman	Richard	Bogusz	Molly
Acuna	Ashley	Amy	Amy	Bahlman	Suzie	Bojaca	Maria Fernanda
Ada	Ada	Andrade	Bree	Bahney	Hannah	Bolanos	Elaina
Adrian	Adrian	Angel	Angel	Balat	Sandy	Bond	Vivian
Agate	Sarah	Angelina	Angelina	Banks	Jessica	Borst	Hannah
Aguayo	Viviana	Anisha	Anisha	Barclay	Olive	Bosket	Tracie
Aguilar	Ashley	Anjo	Kelly	Barnes	Roselyn Owens	Bradley	Blair
Ahia	Noelani	Anna	Anna	Baron	Michelle	Brander	Trevor
Ainsley	T	Anneli	Anneli	Barron	Valeria	Brewer	Emily
Ajoulani	Aya	Annika		Bartels	Victoria E	Bridges	Victoria
Aksteter	Amanda	Araki	Kanani	Barth	Sam	Briony	Briony
Alana	Sue	Archer	Katenik	Basso	Paige	Brisco	Maliya
Alarcon	Lucia	Arias	Jayline	Bastida	Maria	Brooks	Tesla
Albis	Juan	Armstrong	Kelsey	Batz	Stacey	Brown	Cheylane
Albright	Aidan	Arriaga	Mery	Bauer	Manga	Brown	Elliott
Albright	Christon	Arsyn		Baugh	Caylen	Brown	Shantee
Aleaga	Sam	Ashley	Catherine	Bayever	Panina	Browne	Alina
Alexandra	Alexandra	Assi	Mariam	Baysa	Noelani	Bruckner	Danielle
Alexis	Alexis	Augherton	Kelly	BB	BB	Brunt	Isaac
Alfaro	Alexa	Aughey	Anna	Beach	Becca	Bryce-Nunley	Vivian
Ali	Ismi	Aurora	Aurora	Begay	Kimmer	Buffington	PandyAna
Alissa	Alissa	Austin	Ashley	Ben	Ben	Buntin	Malina
Allen	Elizabeth	Austin	Austin	Bena	Bella	Burke	Kevin
Alo-Chu	Lani	Auttezz		Benitez	Mabelyn	Burnett	Eva
Alondra	Alondra	Avalos	Alina	Benjamin	Benjamin	Burns	Timothy
Alston	Dej'Sheron	Avierra	Avierra	Berg	Emilee	C	Grace
Alvarado	Kaitlyn	Ayirabia	Ayirabia	Berger	Karen	C	Savvy

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter Comments (continued)

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name
C		Colette	Serita	de Batista	Jacquelyn	Enriquez	Genavie
Calderwood	Dashiell	Collins	Shair	De Jesus	Alyssa	Erkfritz	Kristen
Calhoun	Riley Wolf	Conleay	Carlin	Dean	CR	Esparza	Noemi
Camargo	Paola	Cook	Megan	Dean	Madelyn	Espinoza	Susan
Campbell	Isabella	Cooley	Caryn	Deauna	Dianne	Esteban	Shayna
Campbell	Serena	Coon	Courtney	DelPizzo	Nicole	Estrada	Adriana
Canon	Brooklyn	Cork e	Alexa Ortiz	Deng	Ada	Ezran	
Capps	Brenda	Cornuelle-Marks	Kimberly	DeNight	Katelyn	F	Aia
Carper	Logan	Corona	K	Denisa	Denisa	F.	Alayah
Casias	Angelina	Corpuz	Isabelle	Detwiler	Alyssa	F.	Kawanne
Castillo	Zaide	Cortez	Christopher	Dewberry	Rebecca	Farrell	Olivia
Castro	Justine	Costa	Monica D	Dimalanta	Danialle	Favell	James
Cat		Councell	Cherokee	DiMauro	Santina	Feehan	Caspian
Catalan	Zuri	Courtnot		Dominguez	Michael	Feria	Lucero
Cataneda	Melissa	Cox	Natalia T.	Dotson	Dove	Fick	Serena
Cederberg	Erin	Cox	Raina	Dowd	Amber	Fielding	Sophie
Centorrino	Lisa	Coyote	Tara	Drake	Gemma	Fierro	Eliana
Chamberlain	Baily	Crawford	Jenelle	Drake	Nathaniel	Figueredo	Ashley
Chanel		Crawford	ZaQuira	Dreux	Lea	Fingerhut	Lynn
Chapman	Jennifer	Cristin Lee	Cristin	Dryden	TK	Finn	Jayelyn
Charity		Crow	Berry J.	Dsouza-Anjo	Kelly	Fischer	Coralee
Chavez	Amber	Crow	Dana	Duarte	Giselle Lagarda	Fitzhugh	Logan
Chen	Mingjia	Cruz	Nancy	Dulguun		Fitzpatrick	Tia
Chey		Cuartero	Jessica	Dullanty	Malianlani	Flagg	Gillian
Chloe		Cubas	Casey	Dunham	Maalika	Flaxer	Melanie
Chong	Si-Min	Cuellar	Sara	Durista	Gabriella	Floyd	Amber
Chow	Angie	Curiel	Cynthia	Dutcher	Alex	Fonttenaus	Sayje
Christensen-Levy	Hannah			E	Addy	Foster	Elizabeth
Christman	Camille	Czajka	Jackson	E	Haley	Francis	Andria
Chudley	Mary	Czarnecki	Jill	Eiferd	Calvin	Francis	Inde
Cider	Amari	D		Eileen	Morigan	Franco	Valerie
Clayborn	Emily	D B		Elliot	Desiree	Freeman	Felix
Cochran	Sheila	Dal Porto	Madelyn	Ellison	Hannah	Freeman	Sean
Coday	Abigail	Davis	Iris	Emi'janeia		Fregoso	Isabella

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter Comments (continued)

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name
Frisella	Janet	Greenhalgh	Chelsea	Henricks	Gregory	Jaid	Calista
Esparza	Noemi	Greer	Zoey	Hernandez	Cruz	Jaime	Jannine
G	Colleen	Groll	Kate	Hernandez	Jennifer De Jesus	Janal	Francesca
G	Gaby	Grudier	Tiana	Hernandez	Summer E Sanchez	Jardines	Diego
G	Rachel	Gubler	Paige	Herold	Kelsey	Jasmin	Jasmin
G.	C.	Guel	Mya	Herrmann	Peter	Jenkins	Herbert
G.	Gaby	Guerrero	ʻEkolu Leon	Hicks	Tracey	Jenkins	T.
Gabriel	Diane	Guinan	Kylie	Hierro	Jessica	Jentri	
Gaia	Ashley	Guo	Sheron	Higgins	Maddie	Jeraj	Alia
Gallo	Sora	Guzman	Britnee	Hiraga	Malisa	JI	
Garcia	Isabella	H	Alyssa	Hobbs	Haley	Jimenez	Sabrina
Garcia	Miranda	H	Brayden	Hogan	Lucia	Johnson	Cameren
Garcia	Paola	H	Nate	Holmes	Liz	Johnson	Corrine
Garcia	Riley	H	Kat	Hoopii	Torie	Johnson	Lia
Garner	Grace	Hacker	Courtney	Horsen	Kimmer	Johnson	Nadia
Garner	Nico	Hadley	Nicolle	Hosfeld	Brooks	Johnson	Reaven
Gary	Amanda	Haglund	Clayton	Hostetter	Mary	Johnson	Rowan
Gauronskas	Claire	Hakim	Deena	Hostetter	Tess	Johnson-Kirsten	Alexia
Gauvin	Erika	Hamakawa	Micaela	Hradek	Katie	Johnston	Lottie
Gavalchik	Rebecca	Hammond	Anastasia	Huang	Gina	Jones	Samantha
Gibbs	Jason	Haney	Samantha	Hudson	Julia	Jordan	Jordan
Go	Jamaica	Haralabakis	Themelina	Hudspeth	Maleah	Juncaj	Renee
Godwin	Jennifer	Harangody	Michelle	Huerta	Esmeralda	June	Nicole
Goeller	William	Harris	Grace	Hummingbird	Nicole	K.	Christine
Golroy	Cassidy	Hassell	Allyson	Hunter	Lena	Kaʻiakapu	Holy
Gomez	Fatima	Hatch	Brittney	Husbands	Samantha	Kailiuli	Justine
Gomez	Sky	Hawkins	Edwin	Hussain	Keith	Kaina	Kaui
Gonzalez	Mary	Haynes	Abeni	I	Imey	Kakelaka	Jessica
Gonzalez	Natalie	Haynes	Corryn	Ing	Brandon	Kaloustian	Julia
Gonzalez		Heaven		J	J	Kama	E. Kaualilinoe
Gorman-Chang	Susan	Hebron	Ayisat	J	Ren	Kanani	
Gormley	Kapa	Heinson	Laura	Jackson	Arianna	Kapri	Kapri
Graves	Julia	Hendrix	Gracie	Jacobs	Autumn	Karkehabadi	Ozra
Greene	Chesa	Hendrix	J	Jacovini	Rebecca	Katz	Samantha

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter Comments (continued)

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name
Kawana	Cade	Lavik	Madalyn	Mahlert	AJ	Medina	Odette
Kawelo	Jacob	Law	Jacqueline	Mahone	Alisha	Meek	Sarah
Kay	Jazzlyn	Lawrence	Harley	Maija		Meheula-Solomon	DalDalyn
Keith	Tara	Lawton	Hannah	Maile		Mei	Ashley
Keliikuli	Kamalani	Le	Manfred	Maitland	Joelle	Mellows	Rachael
Kelly	Paszionique	Leah	Lauren	Maldonado	Leslie	Melnicoff	Dorothea
Kelso	Brittnee	Lee	Allia	Maldonado	Susana	Mendizabal	Katrina
Kenny	Kaiyah	Lee	Cristin	Maneafaiga	Joewylin	Mendoza	Estrella
Kiai	Tarahawaii	Lee	Hannah	Mangiaforte	Hillary	Mendoza	June
Kihoi	Marissa	Lee	Montana J	Manglona	Monica	Mendoza	Ytalia
Kilmana	Olivia	Leila		Manshel	Hannah	Merrill	Kainani
Kinard	Landon	Lewis	Brooklynn	Mansour	Anna	Messer	Danielle
Kirk	Leenie	Lewis	Emily	Marina	Marina	Messing	Ben
Kirtikar	Ojasi	Lewis	Jaysen	Markarian	Lucine	Meza	Sofia
Kiyak	Larissa	Lewis	Megan	Marquez	Nathalie	Michener	Brenna
Klein	Jordan	Li	Ella	Marshall		Mikaere	Debbie
Knight	Ryan	Lichtenstein	Rachmiel	Martin	Katie	Milligan	Amber
Ko	Sarah	Lin	Cori	Martin	Kaylin	Millirons	Liz
Kohalea	Kahe	Lindsey	Emelia	Martindale	Jes	Min	Mel
Kolanu	Abhiram	Logan	Lisa	Martinez	Braelyn	Minchew	Kona
Konick	Jordan	Long	Krystal-Elaine	Martinez	Isabella	Mintz	Kalaya
Konrad	Megan	Lopez	Alyssa	Martinez	Melissa	Mireles	Tiffany
Korieuna		Lopez	Lauren	Martyusheva	Ekaterina	Misch	Kristina
Krauss	Miel	Lopez	Leilani	Mauai	Alina	Mistica	Mistica
Krishna		Lopez	Thailyea	Maurer	Reagan	Mitchell	
Kuhr	Erika	Losee	Emma	McDonald	Alexander	Moan	Aztrid
Kunst	Chloe	Lozano	Yolanda	McGhee		Moan	Nicole
Kunst	Chris	Luis	Lyric	McGinnis	Jacqualynn	Moffett	Matthew
Kylie	Kylie	Lumi	Xaio	McKenzie	Maya	Molina	Armando
Laetz	Christina	Lynch	Thomas	McLaury	Carly	Moll	Leila
Lamb	Jaymie	M	Thomas	McNair	Thora J.	Monka	Julia
Landis	Melissa	Maddocks	Alexis	McPherson	Gabrielle	Monkovic	Kate
Lani	Wai	Madengue	Oston Jemba	McPherson	Kylie	Monterrey	Johanna
Lasalde	Alexsandra	Magaly		Mcveigh	Sierra	Montoya	Vanessa

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter Comments (continued)

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name
Mooney	Crista	Norton	River	Payero	Monica	Redoble	Leila
Morado	Isabella	Nunzya	Elowyn	Payne-Bradley	Dolly	Reem	
MoraVeracruz	Gabriella	Okimura	Chazz	Pearson	Tiana	Reeves	Faythe
Morgan	Taylor	Okimura	Lily	Perez	Eva	Reezer	Stone
Morkowski	Anika	Oletha	Leo	Perez	Suly	Reid	Janeen
Munar	Jeff Mark	Oliveira	Paige	Perricone	Michael	Rengii	Elilai
Murphy	Gillian	Olmos	Mikalah	Person	Phillip	Rexfoth	Abby
Myers	Kit	Olson	Lexie	Peter	Rebekah	Rexhaj	Labeat
Nahoolewa	Brandon	Olson	Nicolai	Peterson	Petunia	Reyes	Cindy
Nakama	Gretchen	Omnes	Daniella Faith	Petry	Matthew	Reyes	Cynthia
Nakamura	Malia	Ondrea	Ondrea	Phetsomphou	Jasmein	Reynolds	Kristen
Nakata	Nicole	Onofre-Ibarra	Elias	Pillen	Michelle	Ridge	Natasha
Napoleon	Noelan	Openi	Lala	Piphus	LaTierra	Rihani	Nawal
Napoleon	Noelani	Orr	Ana	Pittsley	Robie	Ritchie	Diana
Narantsetseg	Nomin	Osteen	Laura	Pohl	Steven	Rivera	Joel Gonzalez
Nasau	Jerious	Oston		Polizotto	Elena	Rivera	Julian
Navarro	Monique	Otsuka	Kiana	Prichard	James	Rivera	Jullian
Neddeau	Deanah	Ottengheime	Shelby Meiko	Prince	Danielle	Roberts	Julia
Nee		Owens	Faith	Pujalt	Kiara	Robey	Brandi
Neiva	Mo	Owens	Madison	Pujol	Sully	Robles	Roberto
Nelson	Bobbie Leigh	P	Chris	Purdy	Iopaka	Rocio	Melissa
Neyen	Kristen	P	Teria	Quinones	Jacinda	Rockwell	Katrina
Ng	Maya	Pacheco	Julienne	Quintanilla	Isiquiel	Rodriguez	Alejandra
Nguyen	Antoinette	Padilla	Lorraine	R	Sofia	Rodriguez	Emily
Nguyen	Helen	Paice	Meaghan	Rabi	Madeleine	Rodriguez	Janely
Nguyen	Julia	Paloma	Paloma	Racsa	Sarah	Rodriguez	Madison
Nicholson	Natasha	Panora	Vanessa	Raelene	Bethany	Rodriguez	Veronica
Nieto	Natalie	Paola		Rami	Nadia	Rohlf	Lindsey
Nihimo	Nihimo	Paradis	Alex	Ramirez	Jamie	Romero	Ali
Noel	Tatiana	Parlin	Chris	Ramirez	Jasmine	Roney	Victoria
Noland	Summer	Parodi	Megan	Ramirez	Shane	Rosa	Crystal
Nole	Ryan	Patel	Diya	Raquinio	Phyllis	Rosas	Samantha
Noordhoff	Helena	Patel	Spencer	Rawlins	Grace	Rose	Delaney
Norrell	Brenna	Patterson	Ariel	Rayne	Amaya	Rosenstein	Deborah

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter Comments (continued)

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name
Ruby	Ruby	Shipley	Alex	Tangreti	Cristina	Umeno	Jasmine
Rumsey	Teren	Sieben	Sierra	Tasaddaq	Sakina	Valasquez	Katherine
Runion	Emily	Sifferlen	Dove	Tasker	Miranda	Valles	Ricardo
Russette	Tashina	Sippola	McKinzie	Tatianna	Tatianna	Vallet	Carla
Ruthe	Erin	Sippola	McKinzie	Taylor	Danielle	Vanderveer	
Ryser	Elijah	Skyy	Brittany	Taylor	Paige	Vane	Rachael
Ryser	Emili	Slaymaker	Jacie Wach	Tecson	Trysten	Varela	Raphael
S	Sara	Sleightholm	Sara	Tellei	Diliaur	Vargas	Priscilla
Salgado	Savannah	Sloan	Iana	Thomas	Alexis	Varner	Bronwyn
Salinas	Madison	Smith	Dakota	Thomlinson	Melissa	Vaughn	Crissia
Sallee	Melissa	Smith	Kaaina	Thompson	Igneous	Vega	Frances
Sanchez	Jacqueline	Smith	Madison	Thompson	Serenity	Vega	Moira
Sanchez	Yanina Gonzalez	Smith	Nicole	Thornell	Amanda	Velasquez	Marla
Sandoval	D'Andre	SNB		Thornton	Nancy	Velasquez	Miranda
Sandoval	Domenique	Sonoda	Erin	Tilghman-Paczesny	Angela	Velesz	Michael
Santana	Alani	Soriano	David	Timmerman	Nicole	Verdugo	Julian
Santiago	Rio	Sorita	Robert	Tinei	Krista	Verre	Jasmine
Santiago		Spahn	Kailani	Tobolt	Pam	Vidal	Isabella
Scat	Hammah	Squires	Aeran	Tomakin	Erik	Viray	Rachelle
Scatolini	Nicole	Sroo		Ton	Kristine	Viviane	Viviane
Schiff	Jennifer	Stefany	Maria	Torres	Alejandra	Vm	
Schlachter	Chloe	Stephan	Samantha	Torres	Itzel Lozano	Wachter	Kayleigh
Schulte	Kathy	Stoner	Nohea	Torres	Marylin	Waddell	Lotus
Scullary	Suzanne	Strauss	Joanna	Torres	Paola	Wade	Alexandria
Seeley	Allison	Suarez	Milan	Trevino	Ariana	Walker	Jaidyn
Sekharan	Chandra	Sumedha	Sumedha	Trotter	Ansley	Walker	Sadira
Sena	Amy	Swiger	Elizabeth	Trujillo	Karol	Walkup	Kat
Sepulveda	Jennifer	Swink	Jazzy	Tsang	Amanda	Wallace	Dylan
Sexton	Rhiannon	Switzer	Olivia	Tseng	Claire	Wallace	Vanessa
Shamblin	Hailey	T.	Riana	Tsushima	Daijiro	Wallendal	Michelle
Shanay	Shanay	Tam	Emily	Tucker	Natalie	Wandasan	H.
Shanaya	Shanaya	Tan	Samantha	Tulika	Tulika	Wang	Steven
Shehata	Sohaylah	Tanaka	Quincee	Tumanuvao	Diedre	Warech	Julie
Sherlock	Samantha	Tango	Alyssa	Turner	Caterina	Warlick	Taylor

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter Comments (continued)

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name	Last Name	First Name
Warren	Brianna	Youngblood	Suzanne	No last name	Emmely	No last name	Julia
Wasiewski	Emilee Ann	Yovino	Lauryn	No last name	Erika	No last name	K
Watagoda	Chathurya	Zerylnick	Alex	No last name	Erin	No last name	Karina
Weigel	Logan	Zevallos	Vanessa	No last name	Esa	No last name	Katie
West	Danielle	Zirkle	Taylor	No last name	Ethan	No last name	Katy
Westbrooks	Joel	No last name	Ada	No last name	Eva	No last name	Kawehi
Wheeler	Momi	No last name	Anna	No last name	Gabby	No last name	Kaya
White	Jamie	No last name	Anneli	No last name	Gabriela	No last name	Kayla
Wiggins	Christine	No last name	Bri	No last name	Gayle	No last name	Kelsey
Wilkins	Renee	No last name	Brianna	No last name	Genesis	No last name	Kensy
Williams	Domonique	No last name	Chey	No last name	Haley	No last name	Kiah
Williams	Jadyn	No last name	Chloe	No last name	Henry	No last name	Kianna
Wilroy	Evelyn	No last name	Chris	No last name	Holli	No last name	Kiara
Wilson	Delaney	No last name	Christine	No last name	Indy	No last name	Killian
Wilson	Remi	No last name	Courtney	No last name	Irene	No last name	Krista
Winns	Dani	No last name	Cynthia	No last name	Isabella	No last name	Kristina
Wolford	Miranda	No last name	Danny	No last name	Isabelle	No last name	Lauren
Wologo	Pamela	No last name	Dany	No last name	Jade	No last name	Layla
Wong	Chloe	No last name	Daphyne	No last name	Jasmine	No last name	Leila
Wood	M	No last name	Dara	No last name	Jax	No last name	Mackenzie
Woods	Julie	No last name	Darian	No last name	Jayla	No last name	Madeline
Worden	Brianna	No last name	Darla	No last name	Jen	No last name	Madelyn
Worsham	Tyler	No last name	David	No last name	Jennee	No last name	Madison
Yalzadeh	Ty	No last name	Dema	No last name	Jennifer	No last name	Maggie
Yamasaki	Sachi	No last name	Diana	No last name	Jessica	No last name	Mariah
Yamashiro	Lindsey	No last name	Dora	No last name	Jo	No last name	Marie
Yan	Hannah	No last name	Ebony	No last name	Joann	No last name	Marina
Yang	Alice	No last name	Elianna	No last name	Joanne	No last name	Marisol
Yang	Yu	No last name	Elias	No last name	Joel	No last name	Mary
Yao	Caitlyn	No last name	Elizabeth	No last name	Jordan	No last name	Maryam
Yap	Clinton	No last name	Emem	No last name	Josie	No last name	Maryanne
Yee	Stephanie	No last name	Emi	No last name	Judith	No last name	Maya
Yogeshwar	Max	No last name	Emily	No last name	Judy	No last name	Megan
Yosa	Karin	No last name	Emma	No last name	Juli	No last name	Melissa

Table L.2-5: Individuals Who Provided Form Letter Comments (continued)

If your name is in this table, please see the response to your comment in Table L.2-4.

Last Name	First Name		Last Name	First Name
No last name	Mia		No last name	Steph
No last name	Michelle		No last name	Stephanie
No last name	Mike		No last name	Stephany
No last name	Miranda		No last name	Sydney
No last name	Mónica		No last name	Tatum
No last name	Morgan		No last name	Terry
No last name	Nadia		No last name	Trinity
No last name	Niani		No last name	Tris
No last name	Nicole		No last name	Tyler
No last name	Nikki		No last name	Una
No last name	Nina		No last name	Valeria
No last name	Priscilla		No last name	Vanessa
No last name	Raquel		No last name	Veronica
No last name	Rat		No last name	Vic
No last name	Rhandell		No last name	Victoria
No last name	Rita		No last name	Zena
No last name	Rose			
No last name	Rowan			
No last name	Ruby			
No last name	Russell			
No last name	Ryan			
No last name	Sable			
No last name	Sam			
No last name	Samuel			
No last name	Sara			
No last name	Sarah			
No last name	Savannah			
No last name	Sel			
No last name	Sissy			
No last name	Sky			
No last name	Skylar			
No last name	Sophia			

Table L.2-6: Form Letter (2 of 3) Comments and Responses

Comment ID	Comment	Response
The following comment was submitted by Dianne Deauna, Alia Jeraj, Jack McKee, Ryan Vande Linde, and Julie Warech.		
Part 1 of 11	Section 1. Motivation of the Draft EIS/OEIS The National Marine Fisheries Service will be evaluating the Navy's consolidated request for regulations and the issuance of four Letters of Authorization valid from December 2025 to December 2032, "for the incidental taking of marine mammals during the conduct of military readiness activities within the Hawai'i-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Study Area". At present, the Draft EIS/OEIS does not indicate the number of marine mammals that would be affected by "incidental takes". The U.S. Navy is also explicitly "requesting authorization of 146 takes by mortality of 11 marine mammal species from explosives during Navy training exercises, 27 takes by mortality of 7 marine mammal species from explosives (including ship shock trials) during Navy testing activities, and 9 takes of large whales by serious injury or mortality from vessel strikes over the 7-year period of the LOAs: 5 takes incidental to the Navy's training and testing activities, and 4 takes incidental to the Coast Guard's training activities."	Please see Appendix E, Section 2.4.5 for summary tables of estimated takes of marine mammals.
Part 2 of 11	Section 2. Proposed Military Training and Testing Activities from 2025 to 2032 and its Environmental Impacts The Draft EIS/OEIS describes an expansion of the at-sea military training and testing area from the Hawai'i-Southern California Training and Testing region (2018 to 2025) to the Hawai'i-California Training and Testing Region (2025 to 2032) by including an expanded Southern California (SOCAL) Range Complex, new testing sea space north of SOCAL to the Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR), two existing training and testing at-sea range areas (PMSR and the Northern California Range Complex), and ocean areas along the Southern California coastline from approximately Dana Point to Port Hueneme. The Hawai'i Range Complex will also be expanded to included a Temporary Operation Area (TOA) extending from 180oW, 18oN in the southwest to 150oW, 40oN in the northeast. The TOA includes the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument within its boundaries (Figure ES-1). In the Draft EIS/OEIS, the U.S. Navy has three Proposed Actions: (1) No Action Alternative, where no military readiness activities will be conducted, (2) Alternative 1 or the Preferred Alternative and Environmentally Preferable	The Navy complied with the requirements of NEPA in the development and consideration of alternatives. Section 2.4 (Action Alternatives Development), more specifically, Section 2.4.2 (Alternatives Carried Forward) includes a discussion of the No Action Alternative which is provided to compare the magnitude of potential effects, but which is inherently unreasonable in that it does not meet the purpose and need (see Section 1.5) or the Action Proponent's statutory requirements under Title 10. Given that the impacts of the action alternatives are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would remain unchanged or improve slightly. The proposed activities would not result in long-term population-level impact on affected species. Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	Action Alternative, and (3) Alternative 2, where the maximum number of training and testing activities will be conducted within any given year, and where the maximum activity levels will be applied over a period of 7 years. In the Draft EIS/OEIS, the Navy declares its preference for Alternative 1, and does not include any discussion of the possible impacts of the No Action Alternative. Under Alternative 1, using the estimated total maximum number of annual training and testing events, a total of 52,941 will be conducted over 7 years in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, the Army, the Air Force and the U.S. Marine Corps. These events fall under categories such as amphibious warfare, anti-submarine warfare, expeditionary warfare, mine warfare, surface warfare, air guns and pile driving and removal, all of which might affect marine mammals due to in-water detonations and the deployment of sonar and other transducers. The Draft EIS/OEIS evaluated the possible adverse effects of this level of training and testing in the region on the following resources: Physical (air quality and sediments and water quality), Biological (vegetation, invertebrates, habitats, fishes, marine mammals, reptiles, birds), and Human Resources (cultural resources, socioeconomic resources and environmental justice, and public health and safety). For each of these categories, the U.S. Navy declared that the training and testing activities would have less than significant or no reasonably foreseeable adverse effects under Alternative 1. Section 3a. Pertaining to missing and incomplete information in the Draft EIS/OEIS in relation to marine mammals ● The application form submitted by the military to the NMFS (Request for regulations and letters of authorization for the incidental taking of marine mammals resulting from military readiness activities in the Hawai'i-California Training and Testing area) contains Table 5-1: Summary of Annual and Seven-year Take Request from Acoustic and Explosive Sources for HCTT Military Readiness Activities (reproduced below). This table contains an incidental take request of 33.7 million marine mammals over 7 years, a number that is not mentioned in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Section 3.7 of the Draft EIS/OEIS states: "Although individual marine mammals would be affected, no adverse effects to marine mammal populations are anticipated." The Final EIS/OEIS must provide peer reviewed-literature on how a proposed incidental take of 33.7 million marine mammals over 7 years, which if granted, the Letter of	associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	Authorization from the NMFS will allow, will have "no adverse effects to marine mammal populations".	
Part 3 of 11	● The Draft EIS/OEIS does not mention that from 2015 to 2017, 15 incident reports were filed by NOAA Fisheries in relation to injured or dead marine mammals found within the vicinity of California Navy testing and training facilities1. The Final EIS/OEIS must include these historical incident reports over only two years of training to give context to the possible effects of 7 years of military training and testing in this region, especially since the proposed training area for 2025 to 2032 represents a huge increase in the seascape that will now be available for military training (i.e., expanding from Hawai'i-Southern California to the Hawai'i-California region). These areas include crucial breeding and feeding grounds for marine mammals, as mentioned in Section 3.7 of the Draft EIS/OEIS.	The EIS/OEIS did consider all current data of reported strandings and none were connected to Navy activities. This includes a recent report that contains 2,072 cases of human-caused significant injury and non-significant injury of marine mammals occurring in U.S. West Coast waters during 2018–2022. NMFS will also consider this in their negligible impact determination. The Navy has a robust communication plan and provides NMFS information related to Navy activities when requested. At no point has NMFS or Navy concluded that whales stranded in Southern California were the result of Navy activities. The Final EIS/OEIS has been updated to include the most current stranding information.
Part 4 of 11	● The Final EIS/OEIS must also document how the previous Letter of Authorization needed revision because the Action Proponents hit their maximum allowable limit of marine mammal death by vessel striking before the current LoA expired. Robust characterization of how marine mammal vessel striking deaths will be affected by the No Action Alternative should also be included.	A complete discussion of the potential for vessel strikes of marine mammals is found in Section 3.7.3.5.1 of the Draft and Final EIS/OEIS. The Action Proponents have consulted with NMFS to ensure compliance with our authorization.
Part 5 of 11	Section 3b. Pertaining to the lack of information on the environmental impacts of a No Action Alternative Section ES.3.1 of the Draft EIS/OEIS states that under the No Action Alternative, no military training and testing will occur due to NMFS denial of the Navy's application for incidental take authorization. This Alternative is also seemingly dismissed as "inherently unreasonable in that it does not meet the purpose and need (Section 1.51)". Table ES-1 summarizes the environmental effects for the No Action Alternative only as "unchanged or slightly improved from baseline conditions" for all physical, biological and human resources. Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences, which goes into more detail for each resource for Alternatives 1 and 2 (e.g., Chapter 3.1 Air Quality and Climate Change) does not provide detailed information on environmental outcomes, including possible benefits, under a No Action Alternative2. In its present form, the	The EIS/OEIS analyzed the impacts associated with Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 military readiness activities. In many cases, impacts are anticipated to range from minimal to undetectable. Given that the impacts are anticipated to be minimal to undetectable, conclusions regarding the impacts of the No Action Alternative would logically remain unchanged or improve slightly. On April 11, 2025, the CEQ implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508) for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq., were rescinded and are no longer in effect.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	Draft EIS/OEIS does not meet the standard set by Federal Regulations for Environmental Impact Statements Section 1502.143, which requires a rigorous exploration and objection evaluation of all the alternatives, by dismissing the No Action Alternative as outright "unreasonable", and the FInal EIS/OEIS must address this.	
Part 6 of 11	Section 3c. Pertaining to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change In multiple sections of the Draft EIS/OEIS1 the U.S. Navy concedes that greenhouse gas emissions will be released as a result of 7 years of training and testing in the area, to the total amount of 4,081,371 metric tons2 . However, the report states that the environmental impacts of these GHG releases will only be discussed in the context of cumulative impacts, stating that emissions from these exercises alone do not cause global warming and the adverse effects of climate change3. The U.S. Navy recognizes the threat of climate change on Navy operations4 and the need to act decisively and urgently on the matter, with reducing its greenhouse gas emissions as one of its main agenda points (as presented in Department of the Navy Climate Action 2030). Given that the U.S. Air Force, the Navy and the Army collectively consume hydrocarbons and emit GHGs equivalent to that of a medium-sized country (Belcher et al., 2019), and they are all Action Proponents in this Draft EIS/OEIS, the Final EIS should make an assessment of specific operational steps to be undertaken by all parties involved (the Navy, Marine Corps, Coastal Guard, Army and the Air Force) to reduce emissions over the course of the 7-year program. In the Draft EIS/OEIS there is a vague allusion by the Navy to mitigation measures such as reducing hydrocarbon consumption and switching to alternative energy sources5, however given the devastating effects of climate change, which is expected to escalate over the time period the trainings will be conducted (from 2025 to 2032, Eriksen et al., 2024), and the need to maximize cross-collaboration efforts in order to protect physical, biological and human resources (Singh et al., 2024), a detailed inventory similar to the work done by Belcher et al., 2019, coupled with specific operational actions from the Action Proponents on how the projected emissions will be reduced and by how much with each action is urgently needed. The GHG emissions that would result from the No Action Alternative and its corresponding environmental impacts should also be thoroughly considered in the Final EIS6.	The increase in air pollutants and GHG emissions were estimated in detail and presented in the applicable sections. Effects from the estimated emissions are discussed and deemed to be less than significant based on the relatively small magnitude of emissions.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
Part 7 of 11	Section 3d. Pertaining to EIS/OEIS statements that training and testing activities will have less than significant or no reasonably foreseeable adverse effects on physical and biological resources Broadly speaking, the Draft EIS/OEIS concludes that no reasonably foreseeable adverse effects on physical and biological resources will occur due to the training and testing activities. Presented herein are additional considerations that the Final EIS/OEIS must include to thoroughly characterize the impacts of Alternative 1. Robust characterization of the environmental impacts on physical and biological resources by the No Alternative Action should be included. ● The introduction of plastics and chemicals into the marine environment due to explosive detonations and other military paraphernalia was concluded by the Draft EIS/OEIS to only affect a limited patch surrounding any affected area (Section 3.2 Sediments and water quality), however, research which evaluated the North Pacific Garbage Patch, located north of the training and testing area, found that microplastic debris and its harmful effects can travel great horizontal and vertical depths across the ocean from its initial source of surface macroplastics (Egger et al., 2020).	Effects from plastics expended from Proposed Activities were analyzed using the best available science. Plastics expended under the proposed activities would be vastly dispersed making it unlikely to measurably accumulate in the North Pacific Garbage Patch.
Part 8 of 11	● In summary, Section 3.3 Vegetation contends that: effects on vegetation from explosive and physical disturbance and strike would be less than significant, with no persistent or large-scale effects on the growth, survival, distribution or structure of vegetation. There are no marine vegetation species listed as endangered, threatened, candidate, or proposed under the ESA in the Study Area. Alvarado et al., 2022 and Cabrera et al., 2024 point to novel, endemic algal species and genera that are continually being discovered in the mesophotic regions (30 to > 150 m) of the Hawaiian chain of islands, including within Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument Park, which is covered under the proposed Temporary Operating Area. The Draft EIS/OEIS makes mention of how explosives are expected to have low impact since they will be conducted at water depths deeper than 30 m, without mention of mesophotic species. The Final EIS/OEIS must include an assessment of how mesophotic vegetative species that have not yet been characterized, can only be found in Hawai'i, and are likely of great ecological importance given the unique biogeography of Hawai'i (Alvarado et al., 2022 & Cabrera et al., 2024) will be protected under Alternative 1.	The placement of underwater detonation technology (UNDETs) by divers would primarily occur in shallow, soft-bottom areas, away from algal habitats. Explosions detonated at the surface in offshore areas would typically occur at depths greater than 150 m, thus not affecting mesophotic species. Furthermore, no explosives would be detonated within the Temporary Operating Area (TOA) that includes Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
Part 9 of 11	Section 3e. Pertaining to EIS/OEIS statements that training and testing activities will have less than significant or no reasonably foreseeable adverse effects on human resources Broadly speaking, the Draft EIS/OEIS concludes that no reasonably foreseeable adverse effects on human resources such as cultural and socioeconomic resources, environmental justice, and public health and safety will occur due to the training and testing activities. Presented herein are additional considerations that the Final EIS/OEIS must include to thoroughly characterize the impacts of Alternative 1. Robust characterization of the environmental impacts on physical and biological resources by the No Alternative Action should be included. ● In the application form submitted by the military to the NMFS (Request for regulations and letters of authorization for the incidental taking of marine mammals resulting from military readiness activities in the Hawai'i-California Training and Testing area), Section 2.1 Hawai'i Study Area, states that "Some ballistic missile defense exercises could include missile and target debris falling within the broad ocean area of the TOA boundaries", where TOA refers to the "Temporary Operating Area, extending north and west from the island of Kauai and comprising over 2 million NM2 of air and sea space, is used for Research, Development, Test & Evaluation activities such as missile testing from PMRF (the Pacific Missile Range Facility in the island of Kauai)". The Final EIS should include this information, which is not mentioned in the Draft EIS, and to include reasonable estimates of the range by which missile debris can fall within the TOA. As TOA includes the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, the Final EIS must include mitigation plans to ensure that any missile testing carried out within range of the TOA is “carried out in a manner that avoids, to the extent practicable and consistent with operational requirements, adverse impacts on monument resources and qualities.” (Section 6 Regulatory Considerations)	Please see Appendix A, Section A.1.3.3 for a description of the Integrated Air Missile Defense Exercise. As described in that section, the exercises would occur over the open ocean portion of the Hawaii Study Area, including the Monument. Those factors were considered in the analysis of effects in Chapter 3. Please also see Appendix I for the analysis of the effects of military expended materials.
Part 10 of 11	● Table 6-1 Summary of Environmental Compliance for the Proposed Action states: Papahanāumokuākea Marine National Monument plays a critical role for Native Hawaiians with regards to voyaging and wayfinding and is considered a sacred site (81 FR 60225). ...However, the Proposed Action may cause disruptions to cultural voyaging and wayfinding, but these would be considered temporary as both military and cultural voyaging activities are considered transitory and there would be minimal to no overlap. The Final	The Navy received input from NHOs regarding traditional cultural practices associated with the ocean, including voyaging and fishing, the sacredness of the ocean and marine life, which may be considered ‘aumākua (personal or family god as a deified ancestor) . This information from NHOs has been taken into

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	EIS/OEIS Report should include information on how cultural voyaging and wayfinding activities (which are strictly regulated), would not be hampered by any military training and testing activities (which are exempt from Papahanaumokuakea's access permitting program).	account and considered in analyses and the decision-making process.
Part 11 of 11	● The Draft EIS/OEIS refers to land use and children's health and safety as Resources and Issues Eliminated from Further Consideration (Section 3.0.3.2)1. As the Action Proponents are requesting authorization to conduct military training and testing in the Hawaiian Range Complex, in order to acknowledge the rich cultural heritage and uphold the principles of environmental justice, the Final EIS/OEIS must include the Hawaiian framework of mauka-to-makai (or ridge-to-reef) hydrologic connectivity, where ecosystems are looked at holistically through a lens of interconnected biogeochemical processes and socioecological functions across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine systems (Wilmot et al., 2022 and references herein). The Navy contends that they have fulfilled the conditions of Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks as "no child populations" will be present at the training and testing sites. In Hawai'i, the State Constitutional rights of Youth Plaintiffs (13 to 18 years of age) to a clean and healthful environment were recognized when the Hawai'i Supreme Court ruled that Hawai'i's Department of Transportation must commit to a GHG Emission Reduction and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan (Navahine vs the Department of Transportation). The Final EIS/OEIS must contain additional information on how children's health and safety are preserved under the larger context of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.	Cumulative effects on public health and safety were considered in Section 3.12 of the EIS/OEIS. It was determined the Proposed Action would not result in effects on public health and safety and thus would not contribute incrementally to or combine with other effects on health and safety within the Study Area.

Table L.2-7: Form Letter (3 of 3) Comments and Responses

Comment ID	Comment	Response
The following comment was submitted by Elizabeth Allen, Bree Andrade, River Barros, Kailikea Cummings, Corryn Haynes, Ella Istacado, Keola Kai, Mariana Monasi, Avalon Paradea, Areil Patterson, and Makahiki Silva.		
Part 1 of 5	I am writing in opposition of the US Navy's Proposed Action regarding increased readiness activities in the Hawai'i-California Training And Testing (HCTT) Study Area. I am in full support of the No Action Alternative, under which no expansion or increased training within this designated region will occur. Potential negative effects resulting from the actions proposed within the HCTT draft EIS are consistently downplayed throughout this document. Glaringly problematic examples include: - "[Negative chemical] effects would be localized to the immediate area of the source of chemicals/materials" (page ES-7). This is neither a guarantee, nor wholly consistent with how chemicals (a very broad category) function. Not all chemicals are created equal. Many chemicals and harmful substances can result in long-term damage and may gradually spread from an ostensibly "localized" region.	Thank you for your comment. The EIS/OEIS includes analysis of this issue in two sections: Section 3.2 and Section 3.6. In both sections, the conclusions indicate that all levels of metals, chemicals, and other byproducts would be either below detectable levels or at levels below existing standards, regulations, and guidelines. Section 3.2 concludes, based upon the best available science, that chemical, physical, and biological changes to sediment or water quality would be measurable but below applicable standards, regulations, and guidelines, and would be within the existing conditions or designated uses. The proposed military readiness activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of military expended materials and associated chemical constituents in the ocean environment.
Part 2 of 5	"Although individual marine mammals would be affected, no adverse effects to marine mammal populations are anticipated" (page ES-11). Individuals comprise populations; the latter does not exist without enough of the former. Considering the relatively slow maturation and low birth rates of many marine mammal species, combined with the increasing number of threats they face, even a seemingly small loss of life can have devastating consequences on overall population health.	The proposed activities would not result in long-term population-level effects on affected species. Based on best available science, the Navy concludes that exposures of marine mammal species and stocks associated with proposed training and testing activities would result in only short-term effects on most individual animals exposed and would not affect annual rates of recruitment or survival for the following reasons: • Most acoustic and explosive exposures are within the non-injurious temporary threshold shift or behavioral effects zones (Level B harassment). • Although the numbers presented represent estimated harassment under the MMPA, they are

Comment ID	Comment	Response
		conservative estimates (i.e., over predictions) of harassment, primarily by behavioral disturbance. • The mitigation measures are designed to avoid or reduce the potential for injury from acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance stressors to the maximum extent practicable. • Range complexes where intensive training and testing have been occurring for decades have populations of multiple species with strong site fidelity (including resident beaked whales at some locations) and increases in the number of some species.
Part 3 of 5	The claim that Cultural Resources will be avoided (page ES-15) fails to consider the reality that culturally important structures or areas often remain unknown to the military prior to engaging in readiness exercises. Resulting damages are generally deemed "accidental," yet proper steps towards mitigating such damages are, in truth, rarely taken.	Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on cultural resources listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. In accordance with NHPA's implementation regulations for Section 106 (36 C.F.R. Part 800), the Navy sought information on the identification of historic properties in the area where the project could have effects. The Navy made a reasonable and good faith effort to carry out identification efforts which included taking into account past planning and consultations, background research, previous studies, the magnitude and nature of the undertaking, and the likely nature and location of historic properties. The Navy also has processes in place to deal with inadvertent discoveries of unknown cultural resources.
Part 4 of 5	"If activities were to occur in areas where subsistence fishing takes place, closures would be temporary (lasting until the activity is complete). Communities would not be disproportionately affected by changes to accessibility of ocean areas when compared to others who fish in the Study Area" (page ES-16). Seeing as the duration of training activities are variable, the amount of time the Navy requires subsistence fisherfolk: to vacate an area may indeed cause serious issues socioeconomically. In addition, any Navy activities that involve potentially harmful chemicals, heavy metals,	As stated in Section 3.11.3.2.1 of the Draft EIS/OEIS, "Subsistence fishing typically occurs from the shore (e.g., pierside) or from small vessels within 3 NM or closer to shore. Military readiness activities, especially those that involving explosives or expended materials, generally occur farther from shore (beyond 12 NM) in waters where subsistence fishing typically does not occur." Also in this same section, specific subsistence

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	changes in fish populations, or environmental degradation will certainly impact subsistence fishing communities. Any claim otherwise is a flippant disregard for the wellbeing of these communities. The claim that environmental justice actions will not be impacted by increased military activity is highly inaccurate. No individuals or organizations who take environmental justice seriously will concede that increasing military activity, at the expense of marine health, is worth the risk.	fishing areas are discussed. Additionally, temporary closing of areas within the Study Area for security and safety would not limit public access to surrounding areas. Areas that would be temporarily closed are re-opened at the completion of the activity. Analysis of other concerns expressed in the comment can be found in Chapter 3 of the EIS/OEIS. Recent Presidential Executive Orders directed the removal of environmental justice analysis in NEPA documents, so that analysis is not included in the Final EIS/OEIS.
Part 5 of 5	Especially worrying is the explicit request on the Navy's end to be given authorization to "take marine mammals" in order to achieve their goals (page ES-I). The term "take" is here understood to mean the incidental killing of marine mammals, such as kohola (humpback whales), nai'a (dolphins), or 'ilioholoikauaua (monk seals). The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) prohibits the "take" of marine mammals, with few exceptions. I strongly urge the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to not, under any circumstance, permit the US Navy or other affiliated military branches to be given permission to incidentally kill, harm, or otherwise disrupt marine mammals through training activities. Likewise, I urge that the Navy and other military branches not be permitted any increase in the amount of take they might already be granted. Our marine mammals are already suffering from countless threats, including existing military activity, warming seas, and increased pollution. This harsh reality is acknowledged on page ES-18, though written in such a way as to inaccurately minimize the responsibility of the US military. In conclusion, I urge the US Navy, affiliated military branches, and numerous oceanic organizations to recognize that there is no reason to expand or increase activities within the existing HCTT Study Area. The US Navy has more than enough space to do what they claim is necessary in the interest of so-called "military preparedness." The No Action Alternative is the only reasonable solution towards ensuring that our oceans remain safe and healthy for current and future generations. I care about the cultural and ecological legacies of this expansive region, and the damage already being	The term “take,” as defined in Section 3 (16 U.S.C. section 1362 (13)) of the MMPA, means “to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.” “Harassment” was further defined in the 1994 amendments to the MMPA, which provided two levels of harassment: Level A (potential injury) and Level B (potential behavioral disturbance).The vast majority of Navy takes of marine mammals are relatively minor and temporary Level B behavioral reactions that do not have measurable long-term or permanent impacts on stocks or species.

Comment ID	Comment	Response
	done by the US military results in significant harm. Please do what is right and choose the No Action Alternative.	

Appendix M Federal Register Notices

Environmental Impact Statement/

Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

Hawaii-California Training and Testing

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APPENDIX M FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICES

M.1 NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE AN EIS/OEIS

Federal Register / Vol. 88, No. 240 / Friday, December 15, 2023 / Notices 86885

Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) F–15 fighter aircraft and constructing proposed infrastructure upgrades at Andersen AFB. The beddown of 12 RSAF F–15 fighter aircraft is in addition to what was previously proposed.

DATES: A public scoping period of 30 days, to update the public on changes to the DAF's proposal that have occurred since the original scoping period ended on May 30, 2021, will take place starting from the date of this NOI publication in the **Federal Register**. Comments will be accepted at any time during the environmental impact analysis process; however, to ensure the DAF has sufficient time to consider public scoping comments during preparation of the Draft EIS, please submit comments within the 30-day scoping period. The Draft EIS is anticipated mid-2024. The Final EIS and a decision on the Proposed Action are expected in early to mid-2025.

ADDRESSES: For EIS inquires or requests for printed or digital copies of scoping materials, please contact Mr. David Martin, phone: (210) 925–4266 or *david.martin.127@us.af.mil,* or postal address provided below. The project website (*www.AAFBInfraandF15EIS.com*) provides additional information on the EIS and can be used to submit scoping comments. Scoping comments may also be submitted via postal mail to 36th Civil Engineer Squadron, ATTN: CEV (AAFB F–15 and Infrastructure EIS), Unit 14007, APO, AP 96543–4007. For printed material requests, the standard U.S. Postal Service shipping timeline will apply. Please consider the environment before requesting printed material.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The DAF is proposing to beddown and support the mission of 12 RSAF F–15 fighter aircraft, and construct infrastructure upgrades at Andersen AFB, Guam. Following the initial scoping period conducted in April to May 2021 (86 FR 20487, April 20, 2021), the DAF placed the EIS on a strategic pause to further consider the scope of the EIS, including the requirements of evolving strategic initiatives in the Indo-Pacific region and how the Proposed Action could best support these initiatives. As a result of the strategic pause, the DAF revised the scope of the Proposed Action to include the beddown of 12 RSAF F–15 fighter aircraft and associated mission support. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide critical infrastructure that enhances U.S. posture west of the International Date Line. Additionally, the purpose of the Proposed Action is to beddown and operate Republic of Singapore Air Force fighter aircraft at Andersen AFB to support training requirements. The Proposed Action is needed to enhance DAF capability to support U.S. and partner nation forces within the Indo-Pacific region and strengthen the U.S.'s ability to respond regionally and worldwide, through construction of infrastructure upgrades and increased support of fighter aircraft, in alignment with evolving DAF and DoD strategies and initiatives for the region. Increasing and improving airfield and munitions infrastructure would address capability gaps and allow for greater efficiencies and agility in the way ground operations are conducted. The DAF is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) lead agency, and the U.S. Navy is a cooperating agency for this EIS process.

Under this proposal, the DAF is considering the beddown and mission support of 12 RSAF F–15 fighter aircraft, increase in annual airfield operations, increase in personnel to support the mission, and new infrastructure upgrades adjacent to the northwest corner of the airfield and within the munitions storage area at Andersen AFB. Construction would take place over approximately 3 to 7 years and would include airfield pavements, an aircraft hangar, maintenance and utilities buildings, fuel systems, fencing and utilities, roadways and parking, stormwater management infrastructure, and earth covered magazines. Approximately 209 total acres would be disturbed during construction, which would be either developed sites or maintained vegetation once construction is complete. The proposed infrastructure has multiple uses and could support both the RSAF F–15 beddown and other DAF, service component, and partner nation aircraft or missions operating from Andersen AFB now or in the future. The DAF reviewed requirements for strategic capabilities within the Indo-Pacific region and identified Andersen AFB for enhanced capabilities, including beddown of 12 RSAF F–15 aircraft and upgrade of operationally relevant infrastructure, dismissing five other potential alternative locations within the Pacific Air Forces area of responsibility from consideration. Once Andersen AFB was identified for enhanced strategic capabilities, the DAF considered other locations on Andersen AFB for construction of infrastructure upgrades; however, only the Proposed Action locations were determined to meet the criteria for the infrastructure upgrades. The No Action Alternative will also be addressed in the EIS.

Additional review and consultation which will be incorporated into the preparation of the Draft EIS will include, but are not necessarily limited to, consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The DAF will conduct cultural and natural resources surveys in the areas proposed for upgrades and consult with appropriate resource agencies to determine the potential for significant impacts on those resources. The Draft EIS will present the analysis of the potential effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, which may include effects on historic properties, sensitive species or habitat, socioeconomics, and the noise environment among other currently unknown potential effects. Any required permits or authorizations will be determined through the EIS analysis process and presented in the Draft EIS.

Scoping and Agency Coordination: To effectively define the full range of issues to be evaluated in the EIS, the DAF is soliciting comments from interested local, territorial, and federal elected officials and agencies, as well as interested members of the public and other stakeholders. Comments are requested on potential alternatives and impacts, and identification of any relevant information, studies, or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human environment. Concurrent with the publication of this Notice of Intent, public scoping notices will be announced locally. Public scoping updates will be accomplished via the project website at *www.AAFBInfraandF15EIS.com.* The website provides posters, an informational brochure, and other scoping materials, and the capability for the public to provide public scoping comments.

Tommy W. Lee,

Acting Air Force Federal Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2023–27166 Filed 12–14–23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Hawaii-California Training and Testing Activities

AGENCY: Department of the Navy (DoN), Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, and regulations implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality, the Department of the Navy (DoN)(including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps) in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, announces its intent to prepare the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS). The HCTT EIS/OEIS will include an analysis of range sustainment and modernization activities, training activities; and research, development, testing, and evaluation activities (hereafter referred to as "testing") that will be conducted in the HCTT Study Area. When discussed together, training and testing are also referred to as "military readiness activities." The DoN is initiating a 45-day public scoping process to receive comments on the scope of the EIS/OEIS including identification of potential alternatives and environmental concerns, information and analyses relevant to the Proposed Action, issues the public would like to see addressed in the EIS/OEIS, and the project's potential to affect historic properties pursuant to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966.

DATES: The 45-day public scoping period begins on December 15, 2023, and extends to January 29, 2024. The scoping period is extended 15 calendar days (from the usual 30-day period) since it overlaps with the holidays. Comments must be postmarked or submitted electronically via the website no later than 11:59 p.m. Pacific time on January 29, 2024 for consideration in the Draft EIS/OEIS. The DoN will host a virtual open house presentation on the project website during the scoping period to provide information related to the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, environmental resource areas to be analyzed in the EIS/OEIS, the NEPA process, the consultation under NHPA, and public involvement opportunities.

ADDRESSES: The DoN invites all interested parties to submit scoping comments on the EIS/OEIS or information regarding historic properties or section 106 consulting party interest through the project website at *http://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis* or by mail to: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Pacific, Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager, 258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100, Pearl Harbor, HI 96860–3134.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: U.S. Pacific Fleet Command, Attn: Mr. Sean Gano, Environmental Public Affairs Specialist, 808–474–8441, or visit the project website: *http://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet is the DoN's lead action proponent. Additional DoN action proponents include Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Information Warfare Systems Command, Office of Naval Research, Naval Facilities Engineering Expeditionary Warfare Center, and the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC). In addition, this EIS/OEIS includes certain activities by the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force when those activities are similar to Navy or Marine Corps activities and are scheduled on Navy controlled at-sea ranges.

Proposed military readiness activities are consistent with those analyzed in the 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) EIS/OEIS and the 2022 Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR) EIS/OEIS, and are representative of training and testing activities that have been conducted off Hawaii and California for more than 80 years.

The EIS/OEIS will include an analysis of military readiness activities using new information including an updated acoustic effects analysis, updated marine mammal density data, and evolving and emergent best available science.

The HCTT Study Area (hereafter referred to as the ("Study Area") is comprised of established operating and warning areas across the Pacific Ocean, from California west to Hawaii and the International Date Line. The HCTT Study Area differs from the HSTT Study Area in that HCTT includes an extended Southern California (SOCAL) Range Complex; special use airspace corresponding to the new extensions (Proposed W–293 and W–294); two existing training and testing ranges, the PMSR and Northern California (NOCAL) Range Complex; areas along the Southern California coastline from approximately Dana Point to Port Hueneme; and four amphibious approach lanes providing land access from the NOCAL Range Complex and PMSR. The Study Area also includes in-water areas of San Diego Bay, Port Hueneme, and Pearl Harbor, including select pierside facilities associated with DoN ports and naval shipyards and a transit corridor on the high seas and the channels and routes to and from those ports that are not part of the range complexes, where training and testing may occur during vessel transit.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions in accordance with their Congressionally mandated requirements [1] and advance joint interoperability in Navy led exercises with other military service.

The Proposed Action is to conduct at-sea military readiness activities and range modernization within HCTT the Study Area. Activities include the use of active sonar and explosives while employing marine species protective mitigation measures.

The Navy has identified two preliminary action alternatives to carry forward for analysis in the EIS/OEIS along with the No Action Alternative. Alternative 1 reflects a representative year of training and testing to account for the natural fluctuation of training cycles and deployment schedules that generally limit the maximum level of training occurring every year over any seven-year period. Alternative 2 reflects the maximum number of training and testing activities that could occur within a given year and assumes that the maximum level of activity would occur every year over any seven-year period. As required by NEPA for the purpose of establishing a baseline for analysis, a No Action Alternative will be evaluated which represents a scenario where no military readiness activities are conducted in the Study Area. The tempo and types of training and testing activities have fluctuated because of the introduction of new technologies, the evolving nature of international events, advances in war fighting doctrine and procedures, and changes in force structure (organization of ships, submarines, aircraft, weapons, and Sailors). Such developments influence the frequency, duration, intensity, and location of required training and testing activities. The HCTT EIS/OEIS will reflect the current compilation of training and testing activities required to fulfill the military readiness requirements, and therefore both action alternatives include the analysis of newly proposed activities and changes to previously analyzed activities. Additionally, both action alternatives will include modernization and sustainment of ranges necessary to support military readiness activities. Modernization and sustainment

[1] 10 United States Code (U.S.C.), sections 8062 (Navy), 8063 (USMC), 7062 (U.S. Army), 9062 (U.S. Air Force) and 14 U.S.C., sections 101 and 102 (USCG).

proposals include new special use airspace in Southern California, an expansion of an underwater training range near San Clemente Island, and installation and maintenance of mine training areas off Hawaii and California.

Environmental resources that are determined to be potentially affected are carried forward for full analysis. Resources to be evaluated include, but are not limited to, biological resources (including marine mammals, reptiles, fishes, vegetation, invertebrates, habitats, birds, and other protected species), sediments and water quality, air quality, cultural resources, socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety. The EIS/OEIS will also analyze measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects. The Navy will conduct all coordination and consultation activities required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NHPA, Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Marine Sanctuaries Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Clean Water Act, Rivers and Harbor Act, Coastal Zone Management Act, Clean Air Act, and other laws and regulations determined to be applicable to the project. As part of this process, the DoN will seek the issuance of regulatory permits and authorizations under MMPA and ESA to support at-sea mission readiness activities within the Study Area, beginning in December 2025.

Pursuant to 40 CFR 1501.8, the DoN invited the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Federal Aviation Administration to be cooperating agencies in preparation of the EIS/OEIS.

The scoping process invites comments on the scope of the EIS/OEIS including identification of potential alternatives, information and analyses relevant to the Proposed Action, identification of environmental concerns, issues the public would like to see addressed in the EIS/OEIS, and the projects potential to affect historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA. Parties with demonstrated interest in the undertaking and its effects on historic properties may request to become a consulting party in the section 106 process. Federal agencies, State agencies, local agencies, Native American Indian Tribes and Nations, Native Hawaiian Organizations, the public, and interested persons are encouraged to provide comments.

Comments must be postmarked or submitted electronically via the website no later than 11:59 p.m. Pacific time on January 29, 2024 for consideration during the development of the Draft EIS/OEIS. Comments can be submitted electronically via the project website at *http://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis* or mailed to the address noted above.

After the scoping period, DoN will coordinate with participating and cooperating agencies to develop a Draft EIS/OEIS. The DoN intends to release the Draft EIS/OEIS in the fall of 2024, release the Final EIS/OEIS in the fall of 2025, and sign a Record of Decision following the 30-day Final EIS/OEIS wait period.

Dated: December 4, 2023.

J.E. Koningisor,

Lieutenant Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2023–26905 Filed 12–14–23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3810–FF–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket No.: ED–2023–SCC–0212]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Comment Request; U.S. Department of Education Grant Performance Report Form (ED 524B)

AGENCY: Office of Finance and Operations (OFO), Department of Education (ED).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Department is proposing a revision of a currently approved information collection request (ICR).

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before February 13, 2024.

ADDRESSES: To access and review all the documents related to the information collection listed in this notice, please use *https://www.regulations.gov* by searching the Docket ID number ED–2023–SCC–0212. Comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at *http://www.regulations.gov* by selecting the Docket ID number or via postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery. If the regulations.gov site is not available to the public for any reason, the Department will temporarily accept comments at *ICDocketMgr@ed.gov.* Please include the docket ID number and the title of the information collection request when requesting documents or submitting comments. Please note that comments submitted after the comment period will not be accepted. Written requests for information or comments submitted by postal mail or delivery should be addressed to the Manager of the Strategic Collections and Clearance Governance and Strategy Division, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, LBJ, Room 6W203, Washington, DC 20202–8240.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For specific questions related to collection activities, please contact Cleveland Knight, 202–987–0064.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. The Department is soliciting comments on the proposed information collection request (ICR) that is described below. The Department is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

Title of Collection: U.S. Department of Education Grant Performance Report Form (ED 524B).

OMB Control Number: 1894–0003.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved ICR.

Respondents/Affected Public: State, Local, and Tribal Governments.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 13,300.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 297,800.

Abstract: The ED 524B form and instructions are used by many ED discretionary grant programs to enable grantees to meet ED deadline dates for submission of performance reports to the Department.

As an interim (usually annual) performance report, ED uses the information submitted by grantees in the ED 524B to evaluate grantee performance and progress and to

M.2 NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

100990 Federal Register / Vol. 89, No. 240 / Friday, December 13, 2024 / Notices

Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1114(b), the MERHC BoA reports annually to the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense on the actuarial status of the Fund and shall furnish its advice and opinion on matters referred to it by the Secretary of Defense. Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1114(c), the MERHC BoA reviews valuations of the Fund under 10 U.S.C. 1115(c) and reports periodically, not less than once every four years to the President and Congress on the status of the Fund. The MERHC BoA shall include in such reports recommendations for such changes as in the MERHC BoA's judgment are necessary to protect the public interest and maintain the Fund on a sound actuarial basis.

The MERHC BoA, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1114(a)(1) and (2), shall consist of three members who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense from among qualified professional actuaries who are members of the Society of Actuaries. MERHC BoA members will serve for a term of 15-years, except that a MERHC BoA member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the end of the term of which the predecessor was appointed shall serve only until the end of such term. A MERHC BoA member may serve after the end of the term until a successor has taken office. Of the members of the Board, one each shall be appointed for terms ending five, ten, and 15 years respectively, after the date of appointment, as designated by the Secretary of Defense at the time of appointment.

MERHC BoA members who are not full-time or permanent part-time Federal civilian officers or employees, or active-duty members of the Uniformed Services, shall be appointed as experts or consultants pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3109 to serve as special government employee members and are entitled, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1114(a)(3), to receive pay at the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay of the highest rate of basic pay under the General Schedule of subchapter 53 of title 5 U.S.C., for each day the member is engaged in the performance of duties vested in the MERHC BoA. MERHC BoA members who are full-time or permanent part-time Federal civilian officers or employees, or members of the uniformed Services, shall be appointed pursuant to 41 CFR 102–3.130(a) to serve as regular government employee members.

Each MERHC BoA member is appointed to exercise their own judgment on behalf of the DoD, without representing any particular point of view, and to discuss and deliberate in a manner that is free from conflict of interest.

The public or interested organizations may submit written statements to the MERHC BoA membership about its mission and functions. Written statements may be submitted at any time or in response to the stated agenda of planned meeting of the MERHC BoA. All written statements shall be submitted to the DFO for the MERHC BoA, and this individual will ensure that the written statements are provided to the membership for their consideration.

Dated: December 9, 2024.

Aaron T. Siegel,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 2024–29338 Filed 12–12–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6001–FR–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Notice of Public Meetings for Hawaii-California Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (ID# EISX–007–17–USN–1724283453)

AGENCY: Department of the Navy (DoN), Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality implementing regulations, and Presidential Executive Order 12114, the DoN (including both the United States [U.S.] Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps [USMC]), as the lead agency, jointly with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, has prepared and filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) activities. The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of the potential environmental effects associated with conducting at-sea training and testing activities, and modernization and sustainment of ranges (collectively referred to as "military readiness activities") within the HCTT Study Area.

DATES: The 60-day public comment period begins December 13, 2024, and ends February 11, 2025. The comment period includes an additional 15 calendar days (from the required 45 days) to allow the public more time to review and comment during the holiday season. In support of NEPA requirements, in-person public meetings in California and Hawaii and a virtual public meeting will be held in January 2025 to provide an overview of the Draft EIS/OEIS and answer questions from the public. Each meeting will also provide an opportunity to learn about how the military services are complying with the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and to comment on potential effects on historic properties. The public can submit comments during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period at one of the in-person public meetings, electronically via the project website (*www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/*), or via U.S. postal mail. Public comments on the Draft EIS/OEIS must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. Hawaii standard time (HST) Tuesday, February 11, 2025, for consideration in the Final EIS/OEIS.

Three in-person public meetings will be held as follows:

1. January 13, 2025, from 4 to 7 p.m. Pacific standard time (PST) at Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego, CA;
2. January 15, 2025, from 4 to 7 p.m. HST at Ke'ehi Lagoon Memorial, Weinberg Hall, 2685 N Nimitz Highway, Honolulu, HI;
3. January 16, 2025, from 4 to 7 p.m. HST at Kauai Veterans Center, 3215 Kauai Veterans Memorial Highway, Lihue, HI.

One virtual public meeting will be held on January 22, 2025, from 3 to 4 p.m. HST/5 to 6 p.m. PST/8 to 9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST).

ADDRESSES: Comments on the Draft EIS/OEIS may be provided at the in-person public meetings, electronically through the project website at: *www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/,* or by U.S. postal mail to: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific; Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager; 258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100, Pearl Harbor, HI 96860–3134.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: U.S. Pacific Fleet Command, Attention: Ms. Heather Paynter, Environmental Public Affairs Specialist, 808–474–8441, *CPF-Environmental-PA@us.navy.mil,* or visit the project website: *www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet is the DoN's lead action proponent. Additional DoN action proponents include Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Information Warfare Systems Command, Office of Naval Research, Naval

Facilities Engineering Expeditionary Warfare Center, and the USMC. In addition, the EIS/OEIS includes certain activities by the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force when those activities are similar to DoN or USMC activities and are scheduled on DoN-controlled at-sea ranges.

Proposed military readiness activities are similar to those analyzed in the 2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) EIS/OEIS and the at-sea activities in the 2022 Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR) EIS/OEIS and are consistent with activities that have been conducted off Hawaii and California for more than 80 years.

The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of military readiness activities using new information, including an updated acoustic analysis, updated marine mammal density data, and evolving and emergent best available science.

The HCTT Study Area (hereafter referred to as the "Study Area") consists primarily of the Hawaii Study Area, the California Study Area, and the transit corridor connecting the two. The Study Area includes the at-sea components of the range complexes (Hawaii Range Complex, Southern California [SOCAL] Range Complex, PMSR, Northern California [NOCAL] Range Complex), DoN pierside locations and port transit channels, bays, harbors, inshore waterways, amphibious approach lanes, and civilian ports where training and testing activities occur. The HCTT Study Area differs from the HSTT Study Area in that HCTT includes an expanded SOCAL Range Complex; special use airspace (Proposed Warning Area [W]-293 and Proposed W–294) corresponding to the expanded SOCAL Range Complex; new testing sea space between Proposed W–293 and PMSR; two existing training and testing ranges, the PMSR and NOCAL Range Complex; areas along the Southern California coastline from approximately Dana Point to Port Hueneme; and four amphibious approach lanes providing land access from the NOCAL Range Complex and PMSR. While the overall boundaries of the Hawaii portion of the Study Area have not changed from the 2018 HSTT EIS/OEIS, nearshore areas, such as Kaneohe Bay or Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, are proposed to be used more frequently or for new training or testing activities, such as mine warfare training.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to conduct military readiness activities, comprised of training, testing, and modernization and sustainment of ranges, within the Study Area to ensure U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel, needed to meet their respective national defense missions in accordance with their Congressionally mandated requirements.[1] Training and testing activities that include the use of active sonar, explosives, or other sources of underwater sound would employ mitigation measures to potentially reduce or avoid adverse effects on marine species. Range modernization and sustainment activities include new special use airspace in Southern California, installation and maintenance of underwater ranges in Southern California and Hawaii, deployment of seafloor cables and connected instrumentation south and west of San Clemente Island in the California Study Area and northeast of Oahu and west of Kauai in the Hawaii Study Area, installation and maintenance of mine warfare and other training areas offshore of Hawaii and Southern California, and installation and maintenance of underwater platforms in Hawaii and Southern California.

Potential effects on environmental resources resulting from activities included in the two Action Alternatives and the No Action Alternative were evaluated in accordance with 40 CFR 1502.16. Resources evaluated include, but are not limited to, biological (including marine mammals, reptiles, fishes, vegetation, invertebrates, habitats, birds, and other protected species), sediments and water quality, air quality, cultural, socioeconomics and environmental justice, and public health and safety. The Draft EIS/OEIS also includes an analysis of measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects potentially resulting from military readiness activities. Direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on these resource areas are analyzed in the Draft EIS/OEIS.

The DoN, as the lead action proponent, is coordinating and consulting with appropriate Federal agencies as required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NHPA, Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Marine Sanctuaries Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Clean Water Act, Rivers and Harbors Act, Coastal Zone Management Act, Clean Air Act, and other laws and regulations determined to be applicable to the project. As part of this process, the military services are seeking the issuance of regulatory permits and authorizations under MMPA and ESA to support at-sea military readiness activities within the Study Area, beginning in December 2025. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS/OEIS. In the rule-making process, NMFS will consider the potential effects of the Proposed Action on the marine environment. The EIS/OEIS will support NMFS' rule-making process to issue MMPA authorizations.

The military services distributed the Draft EIS/OEIS to government agencies they are consulting with and to federally recognized Tribes and other stakeholders. The Draft EIS/OEIS is available for public review on the project website at *www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/* and at these public libraries:

1. Billie Jean King Main Library, 200 W Broadway, Long Beach, CA 90802.
2. City of San Diego Central Library, 330 Park Blvd., San Diego, CA 92101.
3. Coast Community Branch of Mendocino County Library, 225 Main St., Point Arena, CA 95468.
4. Coronado Public Library, 640 Orange Ave., Coronado, CA 92118.
5. E.P. Foster Library, 651 E Main St., Ventura, CA 93001.
6. Los Angeles Central Library, 630 W 5th St., Los Angeles, CA 90071.
7. Monterey Public Library, 625 Pacific St., Monterey, CA 93940.
8. San Luis Obispo Library, 995 Palm St., San Luis Obispo, CA 93403.
9. Hawaii State Library, 478 S King St., Honolulu, HI 96813.
10. Hilo Public Library, 300 Waianuenue Ave., Hilo, HI 96720.
11. Kahului Public Library, 90 School St., Kahului, HI 96732.
12. Kailua-Kona Public Library, 75–138 Hualalai Road, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740.
13. Lihue Public Library, 4344 Hardy St., Lihue, HI 96766.
14. Molokai Public Library, 15 Ala Malama Ave., Kaunakakai, HI 96748.

The public involvement process is helpful in identifying public concerns and local issues to be considered during the development of the EIS/OEIS and encouraging comments on the environmental analysis. Federal, State, and local agencies; federally recognized Tribes and Tribal groups; Native Hawaiian Organizations; nongovernmental organizations; and interested persons are encouraged to provide substantive comments on the Proposed Action and the environmental analysis, as well as the project's potential to affect historic properties as it relates to Section 106 of the NHPA. All comments provided at the in-person public meetings, electronically via the

[1] 10 United States Code (U.S.C.), sections 8062 (Navy), 8063 (USMC), 7062 (U.S. Army), 9062 (U.S. Air Force) and 14 U.S.C. 101 and 102 (USCG).

project website, or mailed to the address provided in the ADDRESSES section will be considered during the development of the Final EIS/OEIS.

In-person public meetings will include an open-house information session, a short presentation by DoN representatives, and a public oral comment session. The presentation will begin at approximately 5 p.m. local time. DoN representatives will be available during the open-house information sessions to answer questions and clarify information related to the Draft EIS/OEIS. Attendees will be able to submit oral and written comments during the in-person public meetings. Oral comments from the public will be recorded by a court reporter and each speaker's comments will be limited to three (3) minutes. Equal weight will be given to oral and written statements.

During the virtual public meeting, DoN representatives will provide a short presentation and answer questions submitted by the public. Questions concerning the Draft EIS/OEIS will be accepted in advance through January 15, 2025, via the question form on the project website. Questions may also be submitted in writing during the meeting. Please note that questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session are not official public comments; public comments should be submitted at the in-person public meetings, electronically via the project website (*www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/*), or via U.S. postal mail. An audio-only option will be available for the virtual public meeting. The project website has more information on attending the virtual public meeting.

A virtual open house presentation will also be available on the project website to provide more information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, potential effects on environmental resource areas from the Proposed Action, the NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, and public involvement opportunities. The public can view the virtual open house presentation at the project website anytime during the Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period.

Dated: December 6, 2024.

A.J. Gioiello,

Lieutenant Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2024-29123 Filed 12-12-24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3810-FF-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket No.: ED-2024-SCC-0108]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Comment Request; School Pulse Panel 2024-25 Data Collection

AGENCY: Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Department of Education (ED).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Department is proposing a revision of a currently approved information collection request (ICR).

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 13, 2025.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and recommendations for proposed information collection requests should be submitted within 30 days of publication of this notice. Click on this link *www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain* to access the site. Find this information collection request (ICR) by selecting "Department of Education" under "Currently Under Review," then check the "Only Show ICR for Public Comment" checkbox. Reginfo.gov provides two links to view documents related to this information collection request. Information collection forms and instructions may be found by clicking on the "View Information Collection (IC) List" link. Supporting statements and other supporting documentation may be found by clicking on the "View Supporting Statement and Other Documents" link.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For specific questions related to collection activities, please contact Carrie Clarady, (202) 245-6347.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

Title of Collection: School Pulse Panel 2024-25 Data Collection.

OMB Control Number: 1850-0969.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved ICR.

Respondents/Affected Public: State, Local, and Tribal Governments.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 53,955.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 10,175.

Abstract: The School Pulse Panel is an ongoing study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), within the United States Department of Education, to collect extensive data on current and emerging issues concerning students and staff in U.S. public primary, middle, high, and combined-grade schools. Specifically, the survey will ask school leaders about topics such as staffing, college and career readiness, artificial intelligence, tutoring, summer and after-school programs, facilities, and learning strategies and recovery, among other topics. The SPP has become one of the nation's main sources of timely and reliable data on issues concerning the education environment, as reported by principals in U.S. public schools.

The preliminary activities for the 2024-25 data collection was formally cleared in January 2024 (OMB# 1850-0969 v.12) and the SPP monthly data collection package was formally cleared in June 2024 (OMB# 1850-0969 v.13). A change request (v.14) was cleared in June 2024 to make changes to the 2024-25 preliminary activities package in order to modify the July 2024 communication materials and screener survey. A change request (v.15) was cleared in August 2024 to make changes to the August 2024, September 2024, and October 2024 instruments, informed by cognitive testing results with school staff. A 30-day public comment period package (v.16) was cleared in October 2024 that included new items (within the scope of the research domains previously established) to be collected on the November 2024, December 2024, and January 2025 instruments, as well as planned items for the rest of the study year, through June 2025. A change request (v.17) was cleared in November 2024 to make changes to the December 2024, January 2025, and February 2025 instruments, informed by cognitive testing results with school staff.

The new revision (v.18) is focused on a 30-day public comment period on new items (within the scope of the research domains previously established) to be collected on the March 2025-June 2025 School Pulse Panels. These items are considered very close to final and will go through minimal testing with school personnel to examine any

M.3 NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT EIS/OEIS

Federal Register / Vol. 89, No. 240 / Friday, December 13, 2024 / Notices 100999

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[EPA–HQ–OAR–2020–0628; FRL–12490–01–OMS]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Comment Request; NSPS for Sulfuric Acid Plants (Renewal)

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has submitted an information collection request (ICR), NSPS for Sulfuric Acid Plants (EPA ICR Number 1057.16, OMB Control Number 2060–0041) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act. This is a proposed extension of the ICR, which is currently approved through December 31, 2024. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on May 18, 2023 during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

DATES: Additional comments may be submitted on or before January 13, 2025.

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, referencing Docket ID Number EPA–HQ–OAR–2020–0628, to EPA online using *https://www.regulations.gov/* (our preferred method), by email to *a-and-r-docket@epa.gov,* or by mail to: EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20460.

The EPA's policy is that all comments received will be included in the public docket without change including any personal information provided, unless the comment includes profanity, threats, information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute.

Submit written comments and recommendations to OMB for the proposed information collection within 30 days of publication of this notice to *www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain.* Find this particular information collection by selecting ''Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments'' or by using the search function.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Muntasir Ali, Sector Policies and Program Division (D243–05), Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, 27711; telephone number: (919) 541–0833; email address: *ali.muntasir@epa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Supporting documents which explain in detail the information that the EPA will be collecting are available in the public docket for this ICR. The docket can be viewed online at *https://www.regulations.gov* or in person at the EPA Docket Center, WJC West Building, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC. The telephone number for the Docket Center is 202–566–1744. For additional information about EPA's public docket, visit *http://www.epa.gov/dockets.*

Abstract: The New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for the regulations published at 40 CFR part 60, subpart H were proposed on August 17, 1971; promulgated on December 23, 1971; and amended most-recently on February 27, 2014 (79 FR 11250). These regulations apply to existing facilities and new facilities. New facilities include those that commenced construction, modification, or reconstruction after the date of proposal. A sulfuric acid plant is any facility producing sulfuric acid (H_2SO_4) by the contact process by burning elemental sulfur, alkylation acid, hydrogen sulfide, organic sulfides and mercaptans, or acid sludge. A sulfuric acid plant does not include facilities where conversion to sulfuric acid is used primarily as a means of preventing emissions to the atmosphere of sulfur dioxide (SO_2) or other sulfur compounds. This information is being collected to assure compliance with 40 CFR part 60, subpart H.

Form Numbers: None.

Respondents/affected entities: Sulfuric acid manufacturing plants.

Respondent's obligation to respond: Mandatory (40 CFR part 60, subpart H).

Estimated number of respondents: 53 (total).

Frequency of response: Semiannually.

Total estimated burden: 13,500 hours (per year). Burden is defined at 5 CFR 1320.3(b).

Total estimated cost: $2,110,000 (per year), includes $416,000 annualized capital or operation & maintenance costs.

Changes in the Estimates: There is no change in burden from the most recently approved ICR as currently identified in the OMB Inventory of Approved Burdens. This is due to two considerations. First, the regulations have not changed over the past three years and are not anticipated to change over the next three years. Second, the growth rate for this industry is very low or non-existent, so there is no significant change in the overall burden. There is an increase in capital and operation & maintenance costs due to an adjustment to increase from 2005 to 2022 $ using the CEPCI Equipment Cost Index.

Courtney Kerwin,

Director, Information Engagement Division.

[FR Doc. 2024–29112 Filed 12–12–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL OP–OFA–156]

Environmental Impact Statements; Notice of Availability

Responsible Agency: Office of Federal Activities, General Information 202–564–5632 or *https://www.epa.gov/nepa.*

Weekly receipt of Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)

Filed December 2, 2024 10 a.m. EST Through December 9, 2024 10 a.m. EST

Pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.9.

Notice: Section 309(a) of the Clean Air Act requires that EPA make public its comments on EISs issued by other Federal agencies. EPA's comment letters on EISs are available at: *https://cdxapps.epa.gov/cdx-enepa-II/public/action/eis/search.*

EIS No. 20240229, Final, DOE, NV, ADOPTION—Rhyolite Ridge Lithium-Boron Mine Project, Contact: David A. Oster 240–457–7973. The Department of Energy (DOE) has adopted the Bureau of Land Management's Final EIS No. 20240166 filed 09/13/2024 with the Environmental Protection Agency. The DOE was a cooperating agency on this project. Therefore, republication of the document is not necessary under Section 1506.3(b)(2) of the CEQ regulations.

EIS No. 20240230, Draft, USN, USCG, USA, USAF, HI, Hawaii-California Training and Testing, Comment Period Ends: 02/11/2025, Contact: Alex Stone 808–226–3896.

EIS No. 20240231, Draft, FTA, WA, Tacoma Dome Link Extension, Comment Period Ends: 02/11/2025, Contact: Erin Littauer 206–220–7521.

EIS No. 20240232, Final, NOAA, HI, Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Sanctuary, Review Period Ends: 01/13/2025, Contact: Eric Roberts 808–725–5807.

EIS No. 20240233, Final, NOAA, FL, Florida Keys National Marine

Sanctuary: Restoration, Review Period Ends: 01/13/2025, Contact: Beth Dieveney 305–797–6818.

EIS No. 20240234, Draft, BOEM, LA, Gulf of Mexico Regional OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales, Comment Period Ends: 01/27/2025, Contact: Helen Rucker 504–736–2421.

EIS No. 20240235, Final, USACE, NE, Nebraska Highway 12 Niobrara East and West, Review Period Ends: 01/27/2025, Contact: Lee Fuerst 720–922–3840.

Amended Notice

EIS No. 20240207, Final, USCG, WA, Expansion and Modernization of Base Seattle, Washington, Review Period Ends: 01/10/2025, Contact: Dean Amundson 510–637–5541. Revision to FR Notice Published 11/15/2024; Extending the Comment Period from 12/16/2024 to 01/10/2025.

Dated: December 9, 2024.

Mark Austin,

Acting Director, NEPA Compliance Division, Office of Federal Activities.

[FR Doc. 2024–29868 Filed 12–12–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[EPA–HQ–OW–2024–0481; FRL 11244–01–OW]

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) 2026 Issuance of the Multi-Sector General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated With Industrial Activity

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice; request for public comment.

SUMMARY: All 10 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Regions are proposing for public comment the 2026 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) general permit for stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity, also referred to as the "2026 Multi-Sector General Permit (MSGP)" or the "proposed permit." The proposed permit once finalized will replace the EPA's existing MSGP that expires on February 28, 2026. The EPA proposes to issue this permit for five (5) years. Once finalized, this permit will be available in areas where the EPA is the NPDES permitting authority. The EPA solicits comment on all aspects of the proposed general permit and seeks public comment on specific requests for information as described in of this document. The public is encouraged to read the proposed permit fact sheet to better understand the proposed permit requirements. The proposed permit and fact sheet can be found at *https://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-industrial-activities.*

DATES: Comments must be received on or before February 11, 2025. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act, comments on the information collection provisions must be received by OMB on or before January 13, 2025.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA–HQ–OW–2024–0481, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov/* (our preferred method). Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Mail:* U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA Docket Center, Office of Water Docket, Mail Code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20460.
- *Hand Delivery or Courier:* EPA Docket Center, WJC West Building, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20004. The Docket Center's hours of operations are 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday (except Federal holidays).

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket ID No. for this rulemaking. Comments received may be posted without change to *https://www.regulations.gov/,* including any personal information provided. For detailed instructions on sending comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the "Public Participation" heading of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Contact the appropriate EPA Regional office listed in section I.D of this document, or contact Alicia Denning, EPA Headquarters, Office of Water, Office of Wastewater Management, Mail Code 4203M, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: 202–564–0018; email address: *denning.alicia@epa.gov.* Electronic versions of the proposed permit and fact sheet are also available on EPA's NPDES website at *https://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-industrial-activities.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

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I. General Information

A. Does this action apply to me?

The proposed permit covers stormwater discharges from industrial facilities in the 30 sectors shown below:

Sector A Timber Products.
Sector B—Paper and Allied Products Manufacturing.
Sector C—Chemical and Allied Products Manufacturing.
Sector D—Asphalt Paving and Roofing Materials Manufactures and Lubricant Manufacturers.
Sector E—Glass, Clay, Cement, Concrete, and Gypsum Product Manufacturing.
Sector F—Primary Metals.
Sector G—Metal Mining (Ore Mining and Dressing).
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Appendix N List of Preparers

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