

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Notice of Availability of the Mariana Islands Training and Testing Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Public Meetings (EIS ID# EISX-007-17-USN-1744382878)

AGENCY: Department of the Navy (DoN), Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Presidential Executive Order 12114, the DoN (lead agency), including both the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps; the U.S. Air Force; the U.S. Army; and the U.S. Coast Guard (collectively referred to as "Action Proponents"), have prepared the Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) to assess the potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Action to continue military readiness activities at sea and on Farallon de Medinilla (FDM) within the MITT Study Area. Military readiness activities include training; research, development, testing, and evaluation

(collectively referred to as "testing"); and range modernization and sustainment. The Draft SEIS/OEIS supplements the 2015 MITT Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/OEIS and the 2020 MITT SEIS/OEIS.

DATES: The 60-day public review and comment period begins March 2 and ends May 1, 2026, Chamorro Standard Time (ChST). The comment period includes an additional 15 calendar days (from the typical 45 days to 60 days) to allow the public more time to review and comment on the document. In support of NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 guidelines and regulations, public meetings on Guam and Saipan will be held to provide an overview of the Draft SEIS/OEIS and answer questions from the public during the open-house portion of the meeting. Each meeting will also provide an opportunity for the public to learn how the Action Proponents are complying with the Section 106 process of the NHPA and comment on the potential effects of the Proposed Action on historic properties. The public can submit comments during the Draft SEIS/OEIS public review and comment period at one of the public meetings, via the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/mitteis, or via U.S. postal mail. Public comments on the Draft SEIS/OEIS must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. ChST on Friday,

May 1, 2026, for consideration in the preparation of the Final SEIS/OEIS.

Two public meetings will be held as follows:

1. March 18, 2026, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Dededo Senior Center, 319 Iglesias Circle, Dededo, Guam.
2. March 19, 2026, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Crowne Plaza Resort, Coral Tree Ave., Garapan, Saipan.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the Draft SEIS/OEIS may be provided at the public meetings, via the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/mitteis, or by U.S. postal mail to: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific; Attention: MITT SEIS/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/mitteis.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Proposed training and testing activities are similar to those previously analyzed and are representative of activities occurring around the Mariana Islands for decades, with some updates to the type, frequency, duration, intensity, and location. The DoN identified 10 military readiness activities to be analyzed

as "new" in the SEIS/OEIS for the purposes of consolidating existing environmental analyses, reclassifying ongoing activities, or refining testing factors to ensure a comprehensive and consistent analysis. At-sea military readiness activities may include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of sound. The Action Proponents would continue to implement measures intended to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential environmental effects during at-sea military readiness activities. Range modernization and sustainment includes placement and maintenance of subsurface targets, such as training minefields, and the placement of temporary instrumentation in the Study Area.

The Draft SEIS/OEIS includes 1) new information to address previously analyzed military readiness activities; 2) an updated compilation of activities deemed necessary to accomplish military readiness requirements; 3) a revised acoustic effects model; 4) updated marine mammal density data and acoustic effects criteria and thresholds; 5) best available science (new publications and emergent studies) since the previous MITT environmental analysis; 6) and necessary range modernization and sustainment activities.

The MITT Study Area remains unchanged from that presented in the 2020 environmental analysis and includes

the at-sea areas of the Mariana Islands Range Complex (MIRC); additional areas on the high seas north and west of the MIRC; the transit corridor between the MIRC and the Hawaii Range Complex; pierside locations on Guam in Apra Harbor; nearshore areas of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI); and the land-based training area on FDM. Because the MITT SES/OEIS Proposed Action does not include any changes to the land-based activities on Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and Rota previously analyzed in 2015, the Action Proponents will not reanalyze land-based activities on these islands in this SEIS/OEIS. As was done in the 2020 SEIS/OEIS, the Action Proponents are updating the analysis for activities proposed to occur on and around FDM.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to ensure the Action Proponents can organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions.

The Action Proponents evaluated the potential environmental effects of two action alternatives and a No Action Alternative on sediments and water quality, air resources, marine habitats, marine mammals, sea turtles, sea birds, marine vegetation, marine invertebrates, fishes, terrestrial species and habitats, cultural resources,

socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety. The Draft SEIS/OEIS also includes an analysis of measures intended to avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects potentially resulting from military readiness activities.

The Action Proponents are committed to complying with applicable federal laws and regulations. The DoN is seeking reissuance of an authorization under the Marine Mammal Protection Act to support at-sea military readiness requirements within the Study Area beyond July 2027, when the current authorization expires. Therefore, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the SEIS/OEIS and will consider the potential effects of the Proposed Action on marine mammals and other protected marine species. The Action Proponents will also consult, as appropriate, with Guam and CNMI agencies under the Coastal Zone Management Act; with NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding effects on listed marine species under the Endangered Species Act; with NMFS on essential fish habitat under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; and with historic preservation offices of Guam and the CNMI under the NHPA.

The Action Proponents distributed the Draft SEIS/OEIS to federal and local government agencies with which they are consulting and other stakeholders. The Draft SEIS/OEIS is available for public review and download at www.nepa.navy.mil/mitteis; printed copies are available at these public libraries:

1. Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Library, University of Guam, UOG Station, Mangilao, GU 96923-1871.
2. Nieves M. Flores Memorial Library, 254 Martyr St., Hagåtña, GU 96910-5141.
3. Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Insatto St. and Beach Road, Saipan, MP 96950-9996.
4. Tinian Public Library, San Jose Village, Tinian, MP 96952-9997.
5. Antonio C. Atalig Memorial Library (Rota Public Library), Rota, MP 96951-9997.

To improve and strengthen the SEIS/OEIS, the Action Proponents welcome, value, and appreciate the public's participation during the Draft SEIS/OEIS public review and comment period. The public and stakeholders are encouraged to provide substantive comments on the Proposed Action, the environmental analysis, and the project's potential to affect historic properties in line with Section 106 of the NHPA. Substantive comments provided at the public meetings,

via the project website, or mailed to the address provided in the ADDRESSES section will be considered during the preparation of the Final SEIS/OEIS.

Public meetings will include an open-house information session, a brief presentation by Action Proponent representatives, and a public oral comment session. The presentation will begin at approximately 6:00 p.m. local time. Project representatives will be available during the open-house information sessions to answer questions and clarify information related to the Draft SEIS/OEIS. Attendees will be able to submit oral and written comments during the public meetings. Each speaker will be limited to three (3) minutes to provide their comments verbally. Equal weight will be given to oral and written statements. Language interpreters for CHamoru (Guam meeting) and Chamorro and Carolinian (Saipan meeting) will be available during the meetings.

A virtual presentation is also 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 presentation

on the project website anytime during the Draft SEIS/OEIS public review and comment period.