

Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Northwest Training and Testing

Project Identification Number: SEIS-007-17-USN-1757623448

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Presidential Executive Order 12114, the DoN and the USCG announce their intent to jointly prepare a supplement to the 2015 Northwest Training and Testing (NWTT) Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) and the 2020 NWTT Final Supplemental EIS (SEIS)/OEIS. The DoN is the lead agency and is responsible for the scope and content of the SEIS/OEIS and Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The USCG is participating as a joint lead agency due to the inclusion of its training activities, which are similar to proposed DoN activities.

The NWTT SEIS/OEIS will include an analysis of training; research, development, testing, and evaluation (referred to as “testing”) activities; and range modernization and sustainment in the NWTT Study Area (referred to as “Study Area”) beginning in November 2027. When discussed together, training and testing activities and range modernization and sustainment are referred to as “military readiness activities.” The Proposed Action is to continue at-sea military readiness activities in the Study Area. During a 45-day scoping process, the DoN and USCG are accepting comments on the scope of the SEIS/OEIS, including identifying potential alternatives or issues that should be addressed in the supplemental NEPA analysis, relaying environmental concerns, identifying historic properties, and providing information or analysis relevant to the Proposed Action or the project’s potential to affect historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA. The comment period includes an additional 15 calendar days (from the typical 30 days) to allow the public more time to review and comment during the holiday season.

DATES: The 45-day scoping period begins December 5, 2025, and ends January 19, 2026. The public, stakeholders, and federally recognized tribes can submit comments during the scoping period via the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis or by U.S. postal mail. Scoping comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) on January 19, 2025, for consideration in the Draft SEIS/OEIS. A virtual scoping presentation is available on the project website to provide additional project information.

ADDRESSES: Scoping comments may be submitted via the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis or by U.S. postal mail to: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Northwest, Attention: NWTT SEIS/OEIS Project Manager, 1101 Tautog Circle, Room 102, Silverdale, WA 98315-1101.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Northwest, Attention: Mr. Todd McConchie, Senior Environmental Planner, 360-564-

9873, todd.c.mcconchie.civ@us.navy.mil, or visit the project website: www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Action Proponents within the DoN include Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet; Naval Sea Systems Command; Naval Air Systems Command; and Office of Naval Research. The DoN is the lead agency and the USCG is participating as a joint lead agency.

The Proposed Action is to continue at-sea military readiness activities in the Study Area. Proposed at-sea military readiness activities may include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of sound. The DoN and USCG would continue to employ mitigation measures when conducting at-sea activities to reduce or avoid potential adverse effects on marine species.

Proposed at-sea training and testing activities are similar to those previously analyzed in the 2015 NWTT Final EIS/OEIS and the 2020 NWTT Final SEIS/OEIS and are representative of activities conducted in the Study Area for decades, with some updates to the type, frequency, duration, intensity, and location. The Navy also proposes the modernization and sustainment of the range capabilities which support those training and testing activities. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to conduct military readiness activities in the NWTT Study Area to ensure the U.S. Navy and USCG are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel needed to meet their respective Congressionally mandated requirements¹.

The Study Area considered in this SEIS/OEIS consists of the same waters and over-water airspace analyzed in the 2015 NWTT EIS/OEIS and 2020 NWTT SEIS/OEIS. The Study Area does not include any land or overland airspace. The Study Area consists of three areas: 1) areas offshore of the Washington, Oregon, and Northern California coasts; 2) inland waters of Washington; and 3) Western Behm Canal in Southeast Alaska.

The DoN and USCG have identified two preliminary action alternatives to carry forward for analysis in the SEIS/OEIS along with the No Action Alternative. Alternative 1 reflects a representative year of training and testing to account for the fluctuation of training cycles, testing programs, and deployment schedules that generally limit the maximum level of training and testing occurring every year. 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 for the reasonably foreseeable future. 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 military readiness activities have fluctuated because of the introduction of new technologies, the evolving nature of international events, advances in warfighting doctrine and procedures, and changes in force structure (organization and

¹ 10 United States Code (U.S.C.), sections 8062 (Navy) and 14 U.S.C. 101 and 102 (U.S. Coast Guard).

basing of ships, submarines, aircraft, and service members). Such developments influence the frequency, type, duration, intensity, and location of required military readiness activities. The SEIS/OEIS will reflect the most up-to-date compilation of military readiness activities deemed necessary to accomplish military readiness requirements. The SEIS/OEIS will include an analysis of those at-sea activities projected to meet readiness requirements beyond 2027 and into the reasonably foreseeable future and any changes to previously analyzed activities. Proposed range modernization and sustainment include the maintenance, replacement, and installation of in-water instrumentation and infrastructure for Southeast Alaska Acoustic Measurement Facility in Western Behm Canal near Ketchikan, Alaska, and replacement of in-water array towers and the installation of cables and hydrophones in Dabob Bay, Washington.

Environmental resources determined to be affected will be carried forward for full analysis. Potential resource areas to be evaluated include air quality, sediments and water quality, marine vegetation, marine invertebrates, marine habitats, fishes, marine mammals, sea turtles, marine birds, in-water cultural resources, American Indian and Alaska Native traditional resources, socioeconomics, and public health and safety. The DoN and USCG will also analyze measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects. The DoN and USCG will coordinate and consult as required by all laws and regulations determined to be applicable to the project. As part of this process, the DoN and USCG will seek the reissuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations under MMPA and consultations under ESA to support at-sea military readiness requirements within the Study Area beyond November 2027, which is when these permits and authorizations will expire.

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4336a(a)(3), the DoN and USCG invited the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service to be a cooperating agency in preparation of the SEIS/OEIS.

A virtual scoping presentation is available on the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis to provide more information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, NEPA and NHPA Section 106 processes, and consulting party and public involvement opportunities. Federal, state, and local agencies; American Indian and Alaska Native tribes; nongovernmental organizations; and interested persons are encouraged to provide substantive comments on the scope of the SEIS/OEIS, including identifying potential alternatives or issues that should be addressed in the NEPA analysis, relaying environmental concerns, identifying historic properties, and providing information or analysis relevant to the Proposed Action or the project's 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 within the Study Area may request to become a consulting party in the Section 106 process.

Scoping comments submitted via the project website or mailed to the address provided in the ADDRESSES section will be considered during the development of the Draft

SEIS/OEIS. Scoping comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. PDT on January 19, 2026, for consideration in the Draft SEIS/OEIS.

Dated: December 5, 2025