# Northwest Training and Testing

## Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

September 2026
www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis

ID# SEIS-007-17-USN-1757623448

## Introduction

The United States (U.S.) Navy and U.S. Coast Guard have jointly prepared a second supplement to the 2015 and 2020 environmental analyses of at-sea military readiness activities in the Northwest Training and Testing (NWTT) Study Area (referred to as the "Study Area"). Military readiness activities include training, testing, and undertaking range modernization and sustainment efforts necessary to support these activities into the future. The September 2026 Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) is now available for review and comment through **Oct. 19, 2026**.

As the lead agency for the Proposed Action, the Navy is responsible for the scope and content of the SEIS/OEIS under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Executive Order 12114 *Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions*, Executive Order 13175 *Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments*, and Section 106 compliance under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The Coast Guard is participating as a joint lead agency due to the inclusion of its training activities, which are similar to Navy training covered in the Draft SEIS/OEIS. The Coast Guard participated as a cooperating agency for the 2015 and 2020 analyses.

Military personnel must be ready to respond to any situation that may arise, ranging from engaging in large-scale conflict, to providing humanitarian assistance and disaster response, to securing the world's oceans. The success and safety of service members depend upon realistic training using new technology that prepares them to respond to an urgent situation or an act of aggression at a moment's notice. Maintaining rigorous, comprehensive training regimens ensures aircraft, vessels, and equipment are ready to deploy and military personnel are prepared to carry out their duties as required.

Testing activities are also critical for maintaining readiness. The Navy continually researches and develops new technologies to ensure it remains the most advanced and capable in the world. At-sea testing is needed to ensure technologies perform as designed and expected in the environment where they will be relied upon.

## Virtual Presentation

The Navy and Coast Guard encourage you to visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis** to view a virtual presentation and learn more about the Proposed Action and alternatives analyzed, potential effects on the environment and historic in-water properties, National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 processes, and public involvement opportunities.

www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis

## Proposed Military Readiness Activities

Proposed at-sea military readiness activities include training, testing, and undertaking range modernization and sustainment efforts in the Study Area. The majority of the proposed military readiness activities remain consistent with previous environmental analyses; however, some continuing activities have been recategorized for the supplemental analysis to ensure comprehensiveness and consistency. These activities include those occurring in new locations or with refined testing parameters. Please refer to the Draft SEIS/OEIS for more information on proposed military readiness activities.

- Training continues to include unit-level activities in the Pacific Northwest.
- Testing includes military research, development, testing, and evaluation activities associated with new technologies before use in real-world situations.
- Range modernization and sustainment activities include the maintenance, repair, replacement, or installation of in-water instrumentation and infrastructure for Southeast Alaska Acoustic Measurement Facility and replacement of in-water array towers and the installation of cables and hydrophones in the Dabob Bay Range Complex.


**Realistic training and testing are crucial for military readiness, personnel safety, and national defense.**

## Proposed Action and Alternatives

### Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to continue at-sea military readiness activities in the Pacific Northwest and Southeast Alaska. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to ensure the Navy and Coast Guard can organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions.

Proposed military readiness activities are similar to those analyzed in previous analyses and are consistent with activities occurring in the Pacific Northwest and Southeast Alaska for decades, with some updates to the types, frequency, duration, intensity, and location. The Proposed Action is needed to maintain military readiness through realistic training and rigorous testing in a marine environment, as well as the modernization and sustainment of ranges within the Study Area. At-sea military readiness activities may include the use of active sonar, explosives, and other sources of sound. Proposed modernization and sustainment of ranges include the maintenance, repair, replacement, or 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 the Dabob Bay Range Complex near Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, Washington.

In 2020, the Navy and Coast Guard prepared the first supplement to the 2015 NWTT EIS/OEIS. Since the 2020 analysis, the second supplement includes:

- New information regarding previously analyzed military readiness activities
- An updated compilation of training and testing activities deemed necessary to accomplish military readiness requirements
- Necessary range modernization and sustainment activities
- New information from an updated acoustic effects model
- Best available science (new publications and emergent studies) since the previous environmental analysis

The Navy and Coast Guard are coordinating and consulting with federal and state agencies to comply with applicable laws and regulations (Table 1). The Navy and Coast Guard are consulting with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and will seek the issuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act to support at-sea military readiness requirements within the Study Area beyond November 2027, when current permits and authorizations expire. The Navy will also undertake government-to-government consultation with federally recognized tribes.

**Table 1: Coordination and Consultations**

| Law/Regulation | Responsible Agency |
|---|---|
| Marine Mammal Protection Act | National Marine Fisheries Service |
| Endangered Species Act | National Marine Fisheries Service<br>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service |
| National Marine Sanctuaries Act | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of National Marine Sanctuaries |
| Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act | National Marine Fisheries Service |
| Coastal Zone Management Act* | Washington State Department of Ecology<br>Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development<br>California Coastal Commission |
| National Historic Preservation Act | State Historic Preservation Offices<br>Tribal Historic Preservation Offices |

*Note: Alaska does not have a federally-approved coastal management program.

# Northwest Training and Testing Areas

Military training and testing ranges in the Pacific Northwest and Southeast Alaska have diverse environments with sufficient sea and airspace for public safety and realistic training and are near Navy and Coast Guard units based in the Puget Sound area.

The locations where military readiness activities would occur for the SEIS/OEIS are consistent with the locations in the 2015 and 2020 analyses. All proposed military readiness activities would occur in three areas: 1) the Offshore Area (which includes the waters offshore of the Washington, Oregon, and Northern California coasts), 2) Inland Waters of Washington, and 3) Western Behm Canal in Southeast Alaska (Figure 1). The Study Area for the SEIS/OEIS extends beyond these three areas and is based on the farthest geographic extent of each stressor's (see page 6) potential effect.

Airspace activities within the Olympic Military Operations Area (previously analyzed as part of the Offshore Area) are not being reanalyzed or depicted in figures because these activities have not substantially changed, there is no new scientific information bearing on the effects, and the reasonably foreseeable effects are unchanged from the previous NWTT analyses.

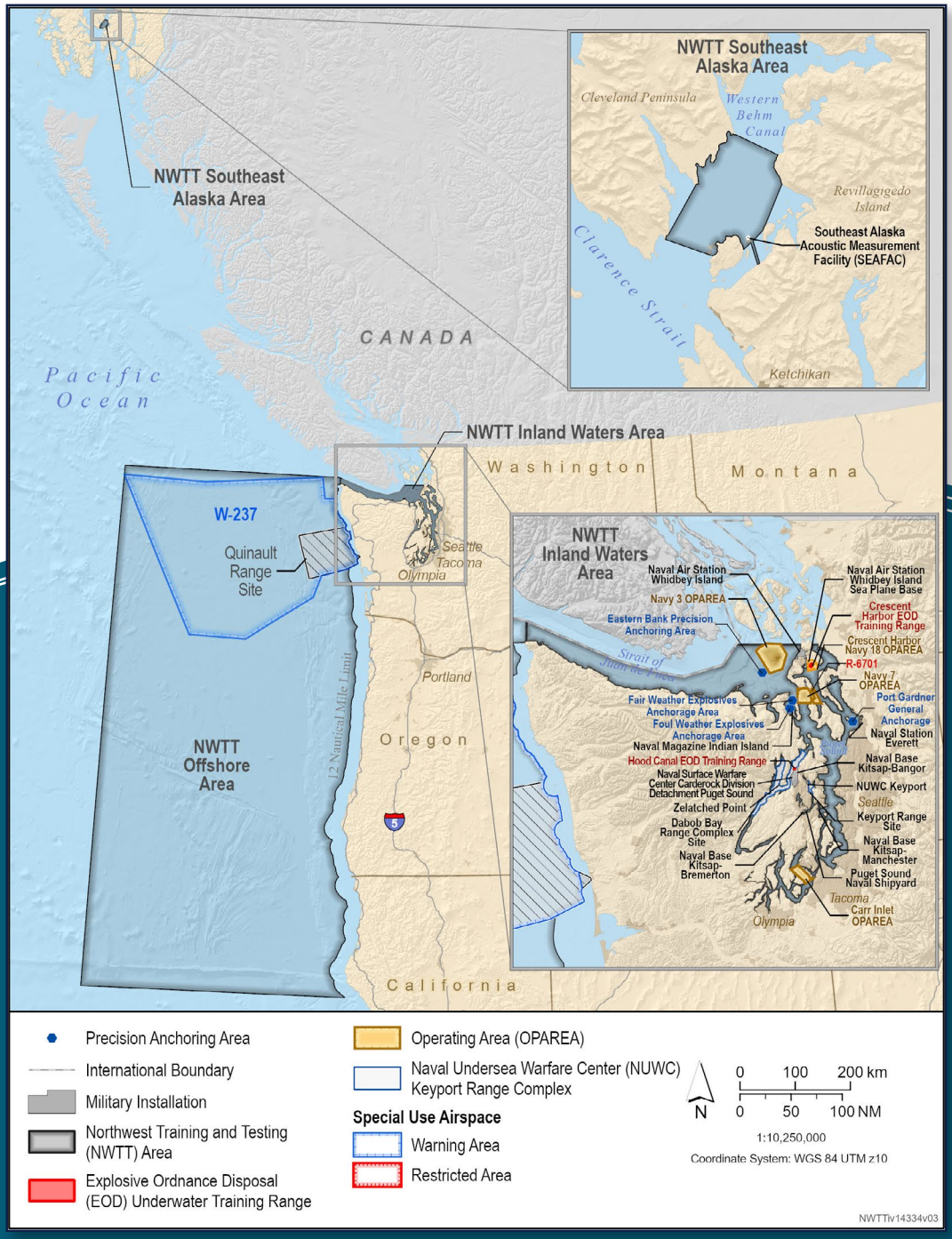


**Figure 1: Northwest Training and Testing Areas**

## Importance of At-Sea Training

Seventy percent of the earth is covered by water, 80% of the planet's population lives in proximity to coastal areas, and 90% of global commerce is conducted by sea. The priorities of the Department of War (DOW) and U.S. military services are to maintain open navigable seas, provide world-wide humanitarian response in crises, deter aggression, and win decisively in war. The Navy and Coast Guard must train military personnel in realistic environments in preparation to defend the United States and its territories, allies, and interests.

## Importance of At-Sea Testing

The Navy's research, acquisition, and testing community includes research organizations, laboratory facilities, and testing centers. This community researches, develops, acquires, and evaluates weapons, systems, manned and unmanned aircraft, surface ships, submarines, unmanned underwater vehicles, and other specialized technologies that give U.S. military personnel a technological advantage over potential adversaries. Testing activities must occur at sea to ensure these technologies perform as designed and expected in the environment where they will be relied upon by the services.

## Importance of Range Modernization and Sustainment

Modernization and sustainment of ranges are periodically necessary, as ranges provide the air, sea, or undersea space necessary for training and testing. The Navy's in-water range infrastructure, such as cables and hydrophones, provides valuable communication to support underwater training and testing, operational communications and data links, and observation and monitoring systems. When these assets require maintenance or replacement, actions may be needed to ensure that instrumented ranges can continue to support effective testing using the best available data collection and test controls.

### Active Sonar and Explosives

**Military training and testing may include the use of active sonar and explosives to prepare military personnel to successfully counter hostile threats. Active sonar is the most effective method of detecting modern, quieter submarines and underwater mines.**

*Proposed Action and Alternatives (continued)*

NMFS is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the SEIS/OEIS due to the nature and scope of the Proposed Action, and because of their expertise and regulatory authority over marine resources. As a cooperating agency, NMFS subject matter experts provide authoritative input to discussions of the potential effects on marine mammals and other protected marine species and habitats. Additionally, after independent review, NMFS may adopt the SEIS/OEIS to fulfill its NEPA obligations for the rule-making process under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

## The Draft SEIS/OEIS supports the issuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

### Alternatives Analyzed

The Draft SEIS/OEIS includes an analysis of three alternatives:

- **No Action Alternative:** Under this alternative, the Navy and Coast Guard would not conduct the proposed military readiness activities in the Study Area, and NMFS would deny the Navy and Coast Guard's application for Letters of Authorization under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. This alternative does not meet the Navy and Coast Guard's purpose and need for the Proposed Action because it prevents them from meeting statutory readiness requirements and would result in an unacceptable increase in risk to military personnel and national security. The No Action Alternative is included in the analysis to serve as a baseline for comparing the reasonably foreseeable effects of Alternatives 1 and 2.
- **Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative):** This alternative reflects a representative year of military readiness activities to account for fluctuations in deployment schedules and testing programs. The majority of training and testing activities would be the same as or similar to those conducted currently or in the past; however, Alternative 1 includes implementation of new proposed military readiness activities.
- **Alternative 2:** This alternative also encompasses both new and ongoing activities but assumes a higher annual tempo of activities to meet the highest levels of military readiness. Alternative 2 reflects the maximum number of activities that could occur within a given year and assumes that maximum level of activities would occur every year over a seven-year period.

## National Environmental Policy Act

NEPA is a U.S. law that requires federal agencies to identify and analyze the reasonably foreseeable environmental effects of a proposed action before deciding whether to proceed with that action. Federal agencies comply with NEPA by analyzing potential environmental effects and documenting how the findings influenced the final decision.

Public participation is important to the Navy and Coast Guard during the development of the SEIS/OEIS and is an important aspect of the NHPA Section 106 process. The public, stakeholders, and federally recognized tribes have opportunities throughout the project to comment on the alternatives, potential impacts, and relevant information, studies, or analyses with respect to a proposed action (Figure 2). The Navy and Coast Guard welcome and value your input, which allows decision makers to consider community concerns and benefit from local knowledge. You can participate in the NEPA process during the following stages:

- **Scoping Period**: Help to identify concerns, potential effects, relevant effects of past actions, and possible alternative actions.
- **Draft SEIS/OEIS Review and Comment Period**: Evaluate and provide substantive comments on the analysis of the Proposed Action and alternatives.
- **Final SEIS/OEIS**: Obtain the Final SEIS/OEIS which contains the Navy and Coast Guard responses to substantive comments received on the Draft SEIS/OEIS.
- **Record of Decision**: Become informed of the explanations for the Navy and Coast Guard decision and plans for mitigation and monitoring.

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|---|
| **Notice of Intent to Prepare an SEIS/OEIS**<br>Dec. 5, 2025 |
| **Scoping and Section 106 Comment Period**<br>Dec. 5, 2025 – Jan. 19, 2026 |
| **Notice of Availability of the Draft SEIS/OEIS**<br>Sept. 4, 2026 |
| We Are Here<br>**Draft SEIS/OEIS and Section 106 Review and Comment Period**<br>Sept. 4, 2026 – Oct. 19, 2026 |
| **Notice of Availability of the Final SEIS/OEIS**<br>Summer 2027 |
| **Record of Decision**<br>Fall 2027 |

**Figure 2: NEPA Schedule for the NWTT SEIS/OEIS**

Humpback whale, NOAA

### Changes in the National Environmental Policy Act

The SEIS/OEIS is more concise than previous analyses of military readiness activities in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. In 2023, the U.S. Congress amended NEPA and required the streamlining of NEPA documents by setting time and page limits, with the goals of promoting public understanding, reducing lengthy reviews, and maintaining comprehensive and thorough analyses. Under the law, EISs must be completed within two years and are limited to 150 pages, excluding appendices and citations. The Navy and Coast Guard have complied with the 150-page requirement in the SEIS/OEIS.

# Summary of Environmental Impact Analysis

The Navy and Coast Guard evaluated the reasonably foreseeable effects of the Proposed Action on the following resource areas:

- Sediments and water quality
- Air resources
- Marine habitats
- Marine mammals
- Sea turtles
- Seabirds
- Marine vegetation
- Marine invertebrates
- Fishes
- Submerged cultural resources
- American Indian and Alaska Native traditional resources
- Socioeconomic resources
- Public health and safety

The effects analysis is based on "stressors," which are introduced into the environment by military readiness activities and vary in intensity, frequency, duration, and location. The stressors associated with these activities are consistent with previous NWTT analyses. Stressors include:

- Acoustics – or sound-producing activities, such as the use of active sonar
- Explosives
- Energy
- Physical disturbance and strike
- Entanglement
- Ingestion
- Secondary, such as habitat or prey availability

For American Indian and Alaska Native traditional and socioeconomic resources, stressors include:

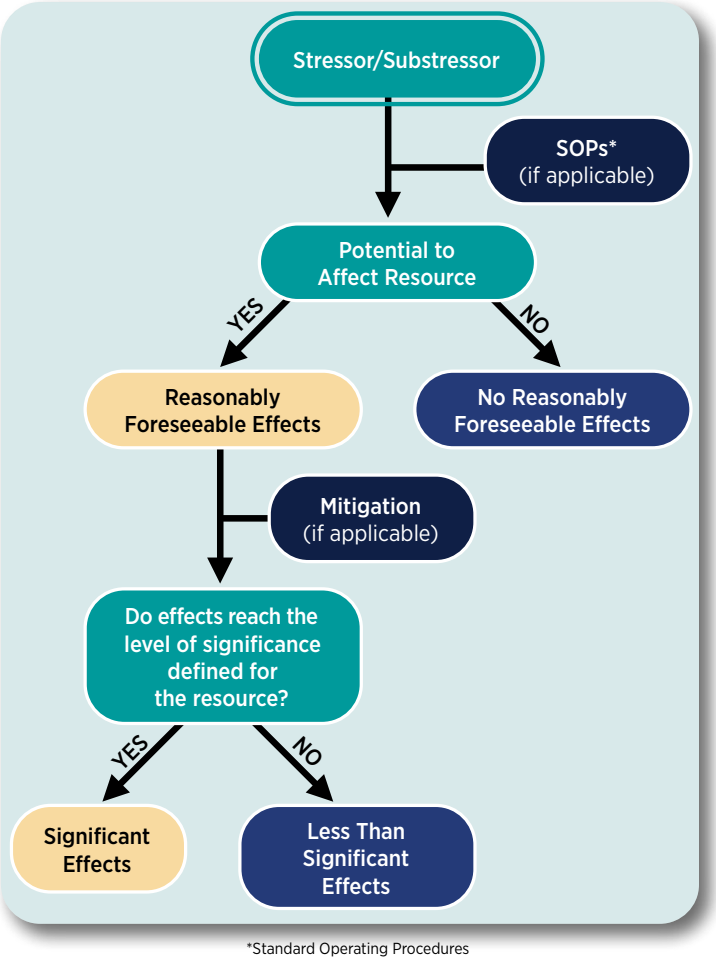
- Impeding access to usual and accustomed fishing grounds or traditional fishing areas
- Changes to the availability of marine resources or habitat
- Loss or damage of fishing gear
- Accessibility
- Airborne noise

## Effects Analysis Framework

Pursuant to NEPA and DOW NEPA implementing procedures issued in April 2026, the Navy and Coast Guard applied the following two-step framework (Figure 3) to facilitate the analysis:

- **Reasonably Foreseeable Effects:** First, the Navy and Coast Guard determine whether potential effects under each Action Alternative are "reasonably foreseeable." DOW NEPA Implementing Procedures define reasonably foreseeable as "sufficiently likely to occur such that a person of ordinary prudence would take it into account in reaching a decision."
- **Determination of Significance:** If an effect is determined to be reasonably foreseeable, the Navy and Coast Guard would consider the potentially affected environment and degree of the effect. In determining if the degree of effect is "significant" or "less than significant," the Navy and Coast Guard considered, as appropriate to the specific action:
    - Short-term and long-term effects
    - Beneficial and adverse effects
    - Effects on public health and safety
    - Economic effects
    - Effects on the quality of life of the American people

The best available science applies to this methodology. Effects may be documented either quantitatively or qualitatively.




*Standard Operating Procedures

**Figure 3: Analysis Approach Framework**

Southern Resident killer whale, NOAA

**The analysis indicates proposed military readiness activities may affect certain marine mammal species but are not expected to decrease the overall health or survival of any population. Most of the predicted effects are non-injurious, such as behavioral responses. No mortalities are predicted for marine mammals, including Southern Resident killer whales.**

Fin whales, Brenda Rone, NOAA

## Summary of Impacts

For more information about the potential impacts on environmental resource areas, please review the Draft SEIS/OEIS, available for download at **www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis**. Please also see the Glossary of Marine Mammal Protection Act Regulatory Terms on page 9 of this booklet for helpful definitions. The Draft SEIS/OEIS includes an analysis of measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects potentially resulting from military readiness activities.

**Sediments and water quality:** No reasonably foreseeable effects are expected from proposed military readiness activities.

NEPA Impact Determination: No reasonably foreseeable effects for all applicable stressors

**Air resources:** Criteria pollutants from military readiness activities would not result in a violation or contribute to an ongoing violation of the National Air Quality Standards. Emissions from activities are not expected to increase risk to human health.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for all applicable stressors

**Marine habitats:** If an activity includes the use of explosives, the related material would detonate at or near the water surface. Seafloor detonations would be infrequent and effects on soft-bottom habitat would be temporary to short-term. Most seafloor devices are typically placed in areas that would result in minor and temporary effects on the bottom substrate.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for all applicable stressors

**Marine mammals:** Predicted effects from sonar can vary depending on the species and stock. Although the Navy and Coast Guard implement mitigation measures when using sonar, effects are predicted. Most effects would be temporary changes in behavior, such as interruptions in communication, foraging, breeding, or temporary hearing loss (Figure 4). A small portion of effects for some species would be auditory injuries. Acoustic exposures may cause masking (when an animal's ability to detect or recognize a sound is degraded by the presence of another sound) or stress. Individuals or

*Summary of Impacts (continued)*

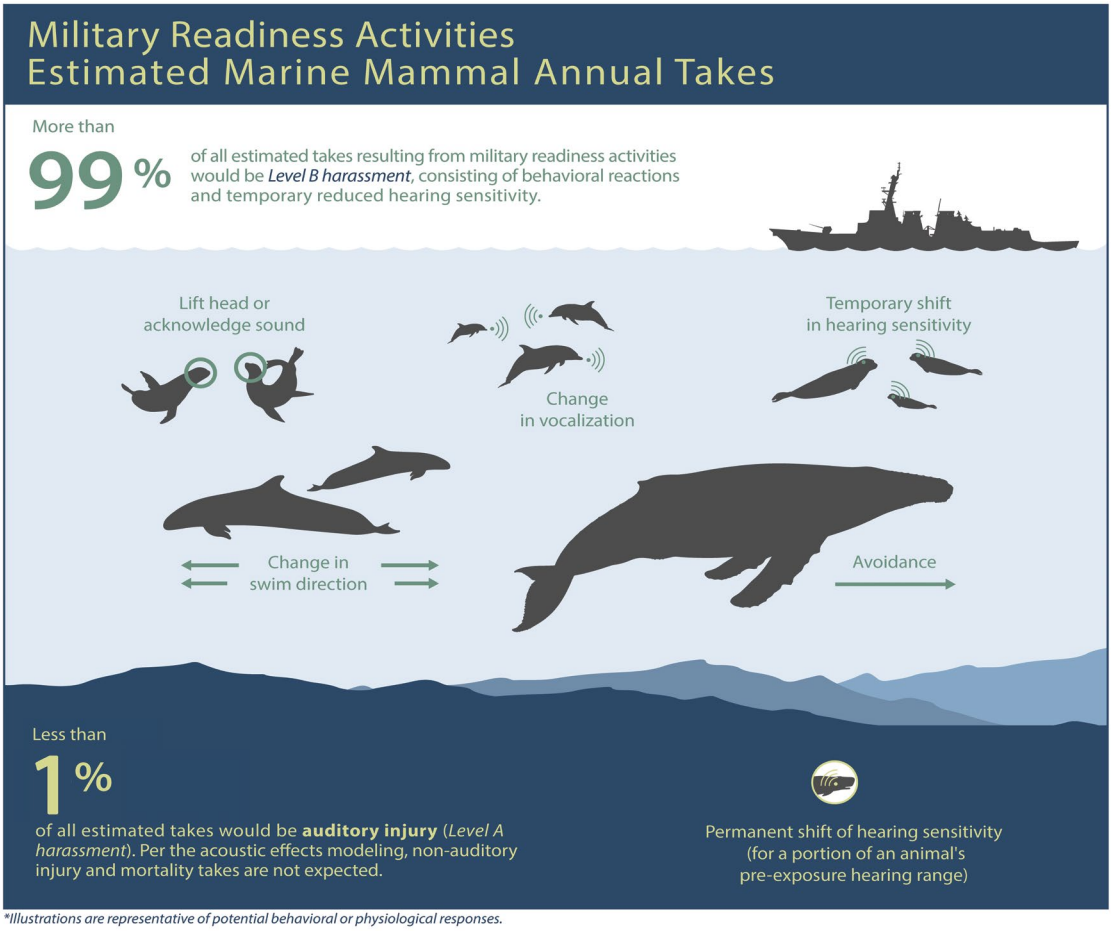
groups of marine mammals may avoid areas around sound-producing activities and be temporarily displaced from preferred habitat. Sensitive species, such as beaked whales, may avoid an area at farther distances and for longer durations. While effects vary for individuals and stocks, the overall degree of effect from sound-producing activities would be less than significant because effects are not expected to interfere with biologically important functions that would threaten the viability of the population. No mortalities are predicted from the use of sonar.

The use of explosives during military readiness activities may result in temporary effects on individual marine mammals, such as changes in behavior or avoidance of an area where detonations occurred. Activities using explosives would be relatively brief and occur over small areas relative to the ranges of most marine mammals. Potential auditory injuries from explosives would be limited and are not expected to interfere with feeding, reproduction, or other biologically important functions that would threaten the viability of the population. No mortalities are predicted from the use of explosives.

Steller sea lions, NOAA

Long-term effects on individual marine mammals and marine mammal populations from physical disturbance, entanglement in, or ingestion of military expended materials, such as wires, cables, or parachutes, are not expected. Overall vessel use in the Study Area would remain similar to current activities, even with the inclusion of ongoing Coast Guard activities in the Offshore Area; therefore, the probability of a vessel strike remains low.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance and strike stressors; no reasonably foreseeable effects for energy, entanglement, ingestion, and secondary stressors




*Illustrations are representative of potential behavioral or physiological responses.

**Figure 4: The Navy and Coast Guard assessed the potential effects of military readiness activities on the marine environment using the most current data and analysis methods. More than 99% of predicted effects on marine mammals would be behavioral reactions and temporary hearing effects.**

**The Navy and Coast Guard would continue to implement measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential environmental effects during military readiness activities.**

## Glossary of Marine Mammal Protection Act Regulatory Terms

**Take:** To harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal. A take does not necessarily mean the animal is hurt or injured.

**Incidental take:** An unintentional, but not unexpected, take.

**Hearing threshold:** The lowest sound pressure (similar to volume) at which an animal can hear a particular frequency.

**Level B harassment:** An act that disturbs or is likely to disturb a marine mammal's natural behavioral patterns, such as migration, surfacing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering, to a point where patterns are abandoned or significantly altered.

- **Behavioral response:** A disruption of natural behavior patterns.
- **Temporary threshold shift:** A reversible shift in an animal's hearing sensitivity.

**Level A harassment:** An act that injures or has the significant potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild.

- **Auditory injury:** Permanent hearing loss or damage to cells in the auditory system.
- **Injury:** Direct harm or damage to tissues or organs.

**Mortality:** When an animal is killed or is subjected to a serious injury that is more likely than not to result in death.

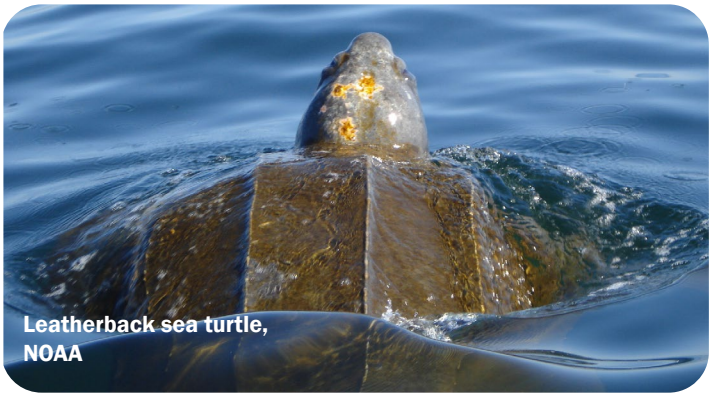
*Sources: Marine Mammal Protection Act; National Marine Fisheries Service*

Short-finned pilot whale, Julie Rivers, U.S. Navy

## Navy Acoustics Effects Model

The Navy's acoustic effects model, or NAEMO, is an advanced acoustic modeling and simulation tool that allows for estimation of potential effects on marine mammals and sea turtles from underwater sound associated with military readiness activities. For more information, please visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6FGmVSnT5c.



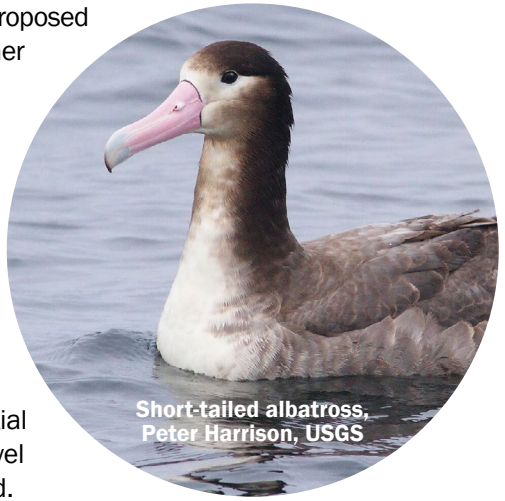


Leatherback sea turtle, NOAA

**Sea turtles:** Sea turtles could be affected by a limited number of sound-producing activities where frequencies overlap with sea turtles' low-frequency hearing. Sonar and explosives may cause temporary hearing loss, but no auditory injuries are predicted. If a sea turtle were to be present near an explosion, there is risk of injury or mortality. If a sea turtle were farther away, the sound of the explosion could cause hearing loss, masking, physiological stress, or behavioral responses. The Navy's acoustic effects model predicted no auditory or non-auditory injuries, and no mortalities to sea turtles from the use of explosives. Potential population-level effects on sea turtles from physical disturbance (strike or collision) are unlikely, and entanglement or ingestion of military expended materials is not expected.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for acoustic, explosive, and physical disturbance and strike stressors; no reasonably foreseeable effects for energy, entanglement, ingestion, and secondary stressors

**Seabirds:** Responses by seabirds to sound-producing activities would likely be limited to short-term behavioral responses. Some birds may be temporarily displaced and there may be temporary increases in stress levels. Although individual birds may be affected, population-level effects are not expected. The proposed use of explosives, whether in-air or underwater, may cause a startle reaction but the exposure would be brief, and any reactions are expected to be short term. Although a few individual birds may experience long-term effects, injury, or potential mortality, population-level effects are not expected.



Short-tailed albatross, Peter Harrison, USGS

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for acoustic and explosive stressors; no reasonably foreseeable effects for energy, physical disturbance and strike, entanglement, ingestion, and secondary stressors

**Marine vegetation:** Proposed military readiness activities could affect vegetation near the activity but would not result in persistent or large-scale effects on vegetation growth, survival, distribution, or structure, primarily due to the avoidance of sensitive habitats and recovery of small areas of disturbed vegetation.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for all applicable stressors

**Marine invertebrates:** Marine invertebrates, such as zooplankton, squid, and jellyfish, are prevalent mostly inshore at the surface and at night when military readiness activities using explosives do not typically occur. Invertebrate communities in affected soft-bottom areas are naturally resilient to occasional physical disturbances. Therefore, population-level effects are not expected.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for explosive and physical disturbance and strike stressors; no reasonably foreseeable effects for acoustic, entanglement, ingestion, and secondary stressors

### Potential Effects on Chinook Salmon

Puget Sound Chinook may be exposed to training activities using explosives at two specific locations in the Inland Waters portion of the Study Area. Seasonal and geographic mitigation measures for these activities were created to minimize the potential overlap of training activities and salmonid occurrence.

Chinook present in the Offshore Area may overlap areas where explosives occur. However, mitigation measures for those activities would reduce the likelihood of exposure of Chinook salmon to those activities. Although some individuals may be injured or killed during activities involving explosives, population-level effects are not expected.

Chinook salmon, Morgan Bond, NOAA

**Fishes:** Most sonar is not heard by the majority of marine fish species. Noise from vessels and weapons use could result in masking, physiological responses, or behavioral reactions in fishes. Most effects from sound-producing activities are expected to be temporary and infrequent, resulting in short-term and mild to moderate effects. Sound and energy from explosions could cause mortality, injury, hearing loss, masking, physiological responses, or behavioral responses. Most effects such as hearing loss or behavioral responses are expected to be short term and localized. Although some individuals may be injured or killed due to the use of explosives, population-level effects are not expected. Most fishes are mobile and have sensory capabilities that enable them to detect and avoid vessels, in-water devices, and entanglement in military expended materials; therefore, behavioral and stress responses from these stressors would be temporary.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for acoustic, explosive, energy, physical disturbance and strike, ingestion stressors, and secondary stressors; no reasonably foreseeable effects for entanglement stressors

Shipwreck off the coast of Washington, Ocean Exploration Trust, Nautilus Live

**Submerged cultural resources:** The Navy and Coast Guard implement standard operating procedures and avoidance measures to minimize potential effects and avoid known submerged cultural resources such as shipwrecks while conducting military readiness activities at sea. For example, seafloor devices are placed to avoid submerged cultural resources. Therefore, physical disturbance and strike stressors would not result in adverse effects on known cultural resources. Effects from explosives are not reasonably foreseeable.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for physical disturbance and strike stressors; no reasonably foreseeable effects for explosive stressors

*Summary of Impacts (continued)*

**American Indian and Alaska Native traditional resources:** Military readiness activities are not expected to significantly impede access to usual and accustomed fishing grounds or traditional fishing areas because:

- Exclusion zones associated with activities would be temporary, infrequent, and would affect a relatively small area;
- The Navy and Coast Guard would continue to work with potentially affected tribes to deconflict schedules before activities begin, including notifying tribal fisheries enforcement officers of events in advance; and
- Measures resulting from ongoing government-to-government consultations would be implemented to avoid or resolve effects on accessibility.

Additionally, military readiness activities would not change the availability of marine resources or habitat. The analysis indicates the loss of fishing gear due to military readiness activities would be less than significant because:

- Tribal fishermen mark their gear in accordance with fishing regulations to assist in avoidance by other vessels;
- The Navy uses standard navigational practices to avoid potential interactions with fixed fishing gear;
- The Navy would coordinate with the Coast Guard to issue notices to mariners that advise tribal fisheries enforcement officers on locations of planned activities;
- Interactions between mobile fishing gear, such as a trawl and naval vessels, would be unlikely because the vessels would avoid each other;
- Interactions between mobile gear and a fixed in-water device, such as testing equipment, would be unlikely because fixed devices would be clearly marked on the surface with a buoy;
- The probability of encountering military expended materials on the seafloor would be low;
- Unrecoverable military expended materials are typically small and designed to avoid entanglement with fishing gear;
- The Navy would continue to work with tribes to deconflict schedules to avoid and minimize the potential for lost or damaged tribal fishing gear associated with military readiness activities; and
- The Navy would continue to engage with the tribes in government-to-government consultation.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for impeding access to usual and accustomed fishing grounds or traditional fishing areas and loss of fishing gear; no reasonably foreseeable effects for changes to the availability of marine resources or habitat

**Socioeconomic resources:** Areas of military and civilian co-use in the Study Area may be temporarily inaccessible to the public due to military readiness activities; however, the military would notify the public of closures in advance, and effects would be short term and limited to the duration of the activity. Airborne acoustics would be infrequent and short term, lasting for the duration of the activity. Noise would not be expected to deter the public from participating in recreational activities in nearshore or offshore areas. Physical disturbance and strike stressors, such as military expended materials, are not expected to damage civilian equipment if encountered. The Navy and Coast Guard would continue to implement mitigation to avoid or reduce effects from physical disturbance and strike stressors on seafloor resources.

NEPA Impact Determination: Less than significant effects for accessibility, airborne acoustic, and physical disturbance and strike stressors; no reasonably foreseeable effects for secondary stressors

**Public health and safety:** No reasonably foreseeable effects are expected from proposed military readiness activities.

NEPA Impact Determination: No reasonably foreseeable effects for all applicable stressors

# Marine Resource Protection

Protecting coastal and marine environments and cultural resources are important goals for the Navy and Coast Guard.

## At-Sea Mitigation Measures

The Navy and Coast Guard are committed to avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating effects on the marine environment from military readiness activities.

Mitigation measures are established and adhered to with the aim of reducing effects on resources. Requirements for military readiness activities at sea include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing activity-based mitigation zones.
- Posting trained lookouts to monitor mitigation zones.
- Maneuvering vessels, such as by reducing speed or changing course, to maintain distance from observed marine species.
- Implementing geographic mitigation areas, such as:
    - Seasonal, monthly, or year-round restrictions on the use of sonar and explosives.
    - Avoidance of physical disturbance or contact with artificial reefs, hard bottom substrate, and shipwrecks.

## Protective Measures Assessment Protocol

Before training or testing begins, the Navy and Coast Guard use a mapping tool called the Protective Measures Assessment Protocol (PMAP) to identify the specific combination of mitigation measures which apply to the activity and the location.

## At-Sea Environmental Protection

The Navy implements and improves processes to reduce a vessel's environmental footprint while at sea by:

- Consolidating plastic waste into melted disks and preparing them for proper disposal ashore.
- Maximizing energy resilience by using best practices and technologies to increase energy efficiency.
- Inspecting hulls routinely to prevent the introduction of non-native species.
- Managing, reusing, and recycling hazardous materials.

**Blue whale, Oregon State University Marine Mammal Institute taken under NMFS permit no. 14856 issued to Dr. Bruce Mate**

## Marine Species Population Monitoring

The Navy is a world leader in marine species research and monitoring, having funded marine research programs, surveys, and data collection efforts since 1992. In the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, the Navy has supported and funded studies on seabirds, fishes, and marine mammals since 2004. Monitoring species allows Navy scientists to develop a better understanding of their distribution, movement patterns, habitat use, population structure, and abundance.

Data and reports from scientific research and monitoring help environmental regulators, scientists, the public, and the Navy to:

- Build a comprehensive understanding of the abundance, distribution, foraging, reproduction, hearing, sound production, and behavior of marine species, which is necessary to assess effects from military readiness activities.
- Refine methods used to detect and monitor marine species before, during, and after military readiness activities.
- Determine the effects of underwater sound on marine species.
- Improve models used to estimate potential effects of underwater sound on marine species.
- Use adaptive management strategies to establish mitigation guidelines to strengthen protections of marine species.

Visit **www.navymarinespeciesmonitoring.us** for more information on the Navy's Marine Species Monitoring Program and to access public reports.

Pacific white-sided dolphin, NOAA

Southern Resident killer whale, Janice Waite, NOAA

## National Historic Preservation Act Section 106

The NHPA is a U.S. law that requires federal agencies to identify and consider potential effects of their actions on historic properties that may be present and look for ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects (Figure 5). By definition, historic properties may include archaeological sites, sacred and religious sites, submerged historic resources, traditional cultural places, or historic buildings, structures, or objects.

The Draft SEIS/OEIS review and comment period supports consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations, as members of the public, stakeholders, and federally recognized tribes are invited to provide comments about potential effects on historic in-water properties during established comment periods or seek to participate as a consulting party.

The participation of the public, stakeholders, and federally recognized tribes is an important part of the NHPA Section 106 process. The Navy and Coast Guard encourage all to help identify historic in-water properties within the proposed area of potential effects and share information regarding the identification of, or potential effects on, historic in-water properties by providing a written comment during designated comment periods. You may submit a comment at the in-person public meetings, online via the project website, or by mail (see the Submitting Comments section on page 16).

**Initiate the Process**

- Identify the federal activity, or "undertaking"
- Coordinate with other reviews, such as the National Environmental Policy Act review
- Identify consulting parties, including the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs)
- Plan to involve the public

**Identify Historic Properties**

- Determine the Area of Potential Effect
- Make a reasonable and good faith effort to identify historic properties in the area, e.g., research, survey
- Determine whether cultural resources are "historic properties"
- Seek input from SHPOs and consulting parties
- Involve the public

**Assess Adverse Effects**

- Determine how the undertaking will affect historic properties
- Consider input from consulting parties
- Continue to involve the public

**Resolve Adverse Effects**

- Develop and consider alternatives or modifications to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects
- Notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- Continue consultation with SHPOs and consulting parties
- Continue to involve the public

**Proceed**

**Figure 5: National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Process**

Parties with demonstrated interest in the undertaking and its effects on historic in-water properties may request to become aconsulting party in the Section 106 process. Please visit **www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis** and click on "Public Involvement for the National Historic Preservation Act" to request more information on the consultation process.

As the lead agency for the SEIS/OEIS, the Navy has notified potentially affected federally recognized tribes and will offer briefings or consultations as appropriate, maintaining compliance with statutes, regulations, and policies governing federal tribal consultation. The Navy and Coast Guard have invited federally recognized tribes that attach religious and cultural significance to historic in-water properties within the Study Area to initiate government-to-government consultation. In addition, federally recognized tribes whose tribal rights or resources may be significantly affected by the Proposed Action can initiate government-to-government consultation. All consultations established by the Navy will be in accordance with applicable procedures and guidelines.

# Public Involvement

To improve and strengthen the SEIS/OEIS, the Navy and Coast Guard welcome and value public, stakeholder, and tribal participation during the review and comment period from **Sept. 4 to Oct. 19, 2026**. Visit the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis** to learn more about the project, download the Draft SEIS/OEIS, and view locations where you can view a printed copy of the Draft SEIS/OEIS.

## Public Meetings

The Navy and Coast Guard are hosting two in-person open-house public meetings and two live virtual public meetings to provide additional information and answer questions about the Draft SEIS/OEIS.

### In-Person Open House Public Meetings

The in-person open-house public meetings will include informational poster stations staffed by project representatives who can answer questions about the Proposed Action and environmental analysis. Comments will be accepted in writing at the in-person public meetings.

**In-Person Open House Public Meetings**

**Silverdale, Wash.**
**Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2026**
**4-7 p.m. PDT**
Oxford Suites, Olympic Ballroom
9550 Silverdale Way NW

**Everett, Wash.**
**Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2026**
**4-7 p.m. PDT**
Carl Gipson Center, Cascade View Room
3025 Lombard Ave.

### Live Virtual Public Meetings

The virtual public meetings will consist of a live presentation followed by a question-and-answer session. The public can submit questions in advance of the live virtual public meetings until **Sept. 28, 2026**, via the question form on the project website. Questions may also be submitted online in writing during the live virtual public meetings. Please note that questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session are not official comments. Participants dialing in via telephone will not be able to ask questions during the live virtual public meetings. Visit **www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis** to learn more about and attend the live virtual public meetings.

**Live Virtual Public Meetings**

**Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2026**
**5 p.m. PDT/4 p.m. AKDT**

**Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2026**
**6 p.m. PDT/5 p.m. AKDT**

**The Navy and Coast Guard are committed to meaningful public participation.**

## Submitting Comments

The public, stakeholders, and federally recognized tribes are invited to review the Draft SEIS/OEIS and provide substantive comments on the Proposed Action, the environmental analysis, and the project's potential to affect historic in-water properties in line with Section 106 of the NHPA. Comments will be considered under NEPA and Section 106 of the NHPA, as appropriate. Comments must be postmarked or received online by **11:59 p.m. PDT on Oct. 19, 2026**, for consideration in the preparation of the Final SEIS/OEIS. This review period allows time to review and comment on the 150-page document. Comments may be submitted at the in-person public meetings, on the project website at **www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis** or by mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Northwest
Attention: NWTT SEIS/OEIS Project Manager
1101 Tautog Circle, Room 102
Silverdale, WA 98315-1101

**Comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. PDT on Oct. 19, 2026, for consideration in the preparation of the Final SEIS/OEIS.**

www.nepa.navy.mil/nwtteis
September 2026
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