

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for San Clemente Island Training and Testing

Project Identification Number: EISX-007-17-USN-1772115300

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Department of Defense NEPA Implementing Procedures, the Department of the Navy (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps [USMC]), announces its intent to prepare the San Clemente Island (SCI) Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The SCI Training and Testing EIS will include an analysis of proposed military readiness activities, which include training; research, development, testing, and evaluation (collectively referred to as “testing”); and range improvement and maintenance activities. The Navy will also analyze the implementation of a new Wildland Fire Management Plan.

DATES: The 30-day scoping period begins April 24, 2026, and ends May 24, 2026. The public, stakeholders, and tribes can submit comments during the scoping period via the project website or by U.S. postal mail. Scoping comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time on May 24, 2026, for consideration in the EIS. The Navy is hosting a [virtual scoping presentation](#) on the project website during the scoping period to provide information about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, environmental resource areas to be analyzed in the EIS, NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) processes, and public involvement opportunities.

ADDRESSES: Scoping comments may be submitted via the [online comment form on the project website](#) or by mail to: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Southwest, Attention: SCITT EIS Project Manager, 750 Pacific Highway, Floor 12, San Diego, CA 92132-0058.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (PACFLT) is the Navy’s lead action proponent. The USMC is also an action proponent. Other military services may also participate in Navy-led events or independently conduct similar activities to Navy and USMC activities.

The Navy previously analyzed training and testing on SCI in the 2008 Southern California Range Complex EIS/Overseas EIS. Due to proposed changes in the Navy’s activities to support critical military readiness requirements at SCI, it is now appropriate to prepare an EIS as an update to the 2008 evaluation of land-based activities.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to achieve, sustain, and maintain naval readiness in a maritime environment using SCI to support and conduct current, emerging, and reasonably foreseeable future military readiness activities. The Proposed Action is needed because (1) the number and type of military readiness activities currently conducted at SCI are inadequate to meet the Navy’s statutory responsibility to organize,

train, and equip combat-ready naval forces; (2) SCI is an essential military readiness asset because of its proximity to the largest concentration of naval forces in the United States; and (3) SCI provides rugged terrain and unique range capabilities critical to maintaining the readiness of the U.S. PACFLT, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, and units from other military services.

Two action alternatives will be carried forward for analysis in the EIS. The public has an opportunity during the scoping period to identify additional alternatives and environmental resources for Navy consideration. Alternative 1 is designed to meet current and near-term military readiness requirements. Under Alternative 1, the Navy proposes to:

- Continue current training and testing activities (baseline)
- Increase the annual number of some training and testing activities
- Conduct new training activities, such as activities for the high-mobility artillery rocket system and the lightweight water purification system
- Improve and maintain range capabilities, such as for the phase 2 development of the aerial target launch site, improvements to the four existing assault vehicle maneuver areas, and maintenance of ranges and support facilities
- Implement a new Wildland Fire Management Plan

Alternative 2 is designed to meet current, near-term, and long-range military readiness requirements. Alternative 2 includes all elements of Alternative 1, including improving and maintaining range capabilities and implementing a new Wildland Fire Management Plan. Alternative 2 includes the following additional actions:

- Conduct up to two battalion (700-900 personnel) landings per year.
- Expand off-road maneuver training in 13 new assault vehicle maneuver areas in support of Marine Corps Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations requirements.
- Increase the frequency of two activities (ground launch of air warfare targets, special operations in urban complex)

A No Action Alternative will be included for the purpose of establishing a baseline for the environmental impact analysis to compare the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action with existing conditions within the Study Area. Under the No Action Alternative, military readiness activities would continue at current levels, SCI would not accommodate an increase in activities, and the Navy would continue operating with the existing Wildland Fire Management Plan.

The Navy will analyze the reasonably foreseeable impacts of the Proposed Action on four environmental resource areas: biological resources (including birds, mammals, reptiles, vegetation, habitats, and other protected species), cultural resources, geological and water resources (erosion and runoff), and air quality. The Navy would continue to implement measures intended to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential effects on natural and cultural resources and historic properties. The Navy will complete

consultations and coordinate as required by the NHPA, the Endangered Species Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Clean Air Act, and other applicable laws and regulations. As part of this process, the Navy will seek the issuance of a water permit to support mission readiness activities using a lightweight water purification system.

The Navy invites comments on the scope of the EIS, including identifying potential alternatives or issues that should be addressed in the NEPA analysis, relaying environmental concerns, identifying historic properties, and providing information or analyses relevant to the Proposed Action or the project's potential to affect historic properties. In compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Navy will consult with the California State Historic Preservation Officer and federally recognized tribes; coordinate with the public; and engage other stakeholders regarding potential effects on historic properties that may result from the Proposed Action, referred to as the *undertaking*. The participation of the public, stakeholders, and tribes is an important part of the NHPA Section 106 process. The Navy encourages all to help identify historic properties on SCI and share information regarding the identification of, or potential effects on, historic properties by providing a written comment during the scoping comment period. The Navy welcomes, values, and appreciates your input, which allows decision makers to consider community concerns and benefit from local knowledge.

After the scoping period, the Navy will consider substantive comments received in the development of the EIS.

Dated: April 24, 2026