

# **Hawaii-California Training and Testing**

## **Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement**

[www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/](http://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/)

Jan. 22, 2025

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- Draft EIS/OEIS Overview
- Importance of At-Sea Military Readiness Activities
- Proposed Action and Alternatives Analyzed
- Cooperating Agency
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- Study Area Changes Since 2018
- Historic Use and Previous Environmental Analyses
- Resource Areas Analyzed and Summary of Environmental Analysis
- Protecting Marine Species
- Marine Species Monitoring and Research
- Environmental Stewardship
- Environmental Regulations
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- Question & Answer Session



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# Draft EIS/OEIS Overview

The Department of the 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 HCTT Draft EIS/OEIS.



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



# Importance of At-Sea Military Readiness Activities

## At-Sea Training

Essential for training service members in realistic environments to be ready to defend the United States and its territories, allies, and interests.



## At-Sea Testing

U.S. military services gain a technological advantage over potential adversaries.

At-sea military readiness activities are necessary to preserve the peace, respond in crises, and win decisively in war.





# Importance of At-Sea Military Readiness Activities

## Modernization and Sustainment of Ranges

- Needed to allow for full utilization of new technology, weapons, and systems capabilities.
- Needed when existing components of the ranges require maintenance or replacement.



# Importance of Training and Testing with Sonar and Explosives

## Use of Active Sonar

- Most effective method of detecting, identifying, and tracking underwater threats, including quiet submarines and in-water mines.
- Sonar proficiency is complex and requires regular, hands-on training in realistic and diverse conditions.



## Use of Explosives (Live Ordnance)

- The safety of U.S. forces in combat is significantly enhanced.
- Improvement in the readiness of service members and reliability of equipment.



# Draft EIS/OEIS Overview

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 within the HCTT Study Area.

The development of the EIS/OEIS will help the Navy and other U.S. military services meet their environmental compliance requirements while ensuring 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.
- Supporting Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act consultations for the reissuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations within the Study Area.





# Proposed Action

Conduct at-sea military readiness activities, comprised of training, testing, and modernization and sustainment of ranges, in the HCTT Study Area.

- Train and test at sea to support Primary Mission Areas
- Modernize and sustain ranges:
  - Establish new special use airspace
  - Install new or upgrade existing underwater training ranges
  - Deploy seafloor cables and instrumentation
  - Install and maintain mine warfare and other training areas
  - Install and maintain underwater platforms

Implementation of the Proposed Action ensures U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel to meet their respective national defense missions.

*Proposed activities are similar to those analyzed in previous at-sea environmental analyses and are consistent with activities conducted off Hawaii and California for more than 80 years.*



# Alternatives Analyzed

## No Action

- At-sea military readiness activities would not be conducted.
- The Proposed Action's purpose and need would not be met.
- MMPA permits would not be reissued by NMFS.

## Alternative 1

- Includes at-sea training, testing, and range modernization and sustainment activities.
- Reflects a representative level of annual activities to account for natural fluctuations in training and testing schedules.

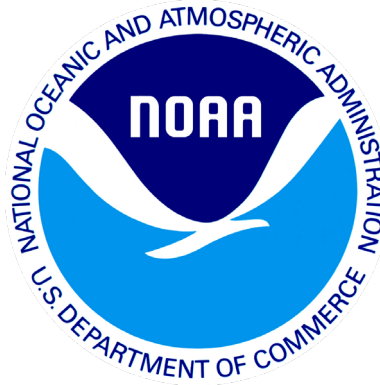
## Alternative 2

- Includes at-sea training, testing, and range modernization and sustainment activities.
- Assumes a maximum number of activities occurring in a given year and that the maximum level would occur every year over any seven-year period.

**Alternative 1 is identified as the military services Preferred Alternative to meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action.**



# Cooperating Agency

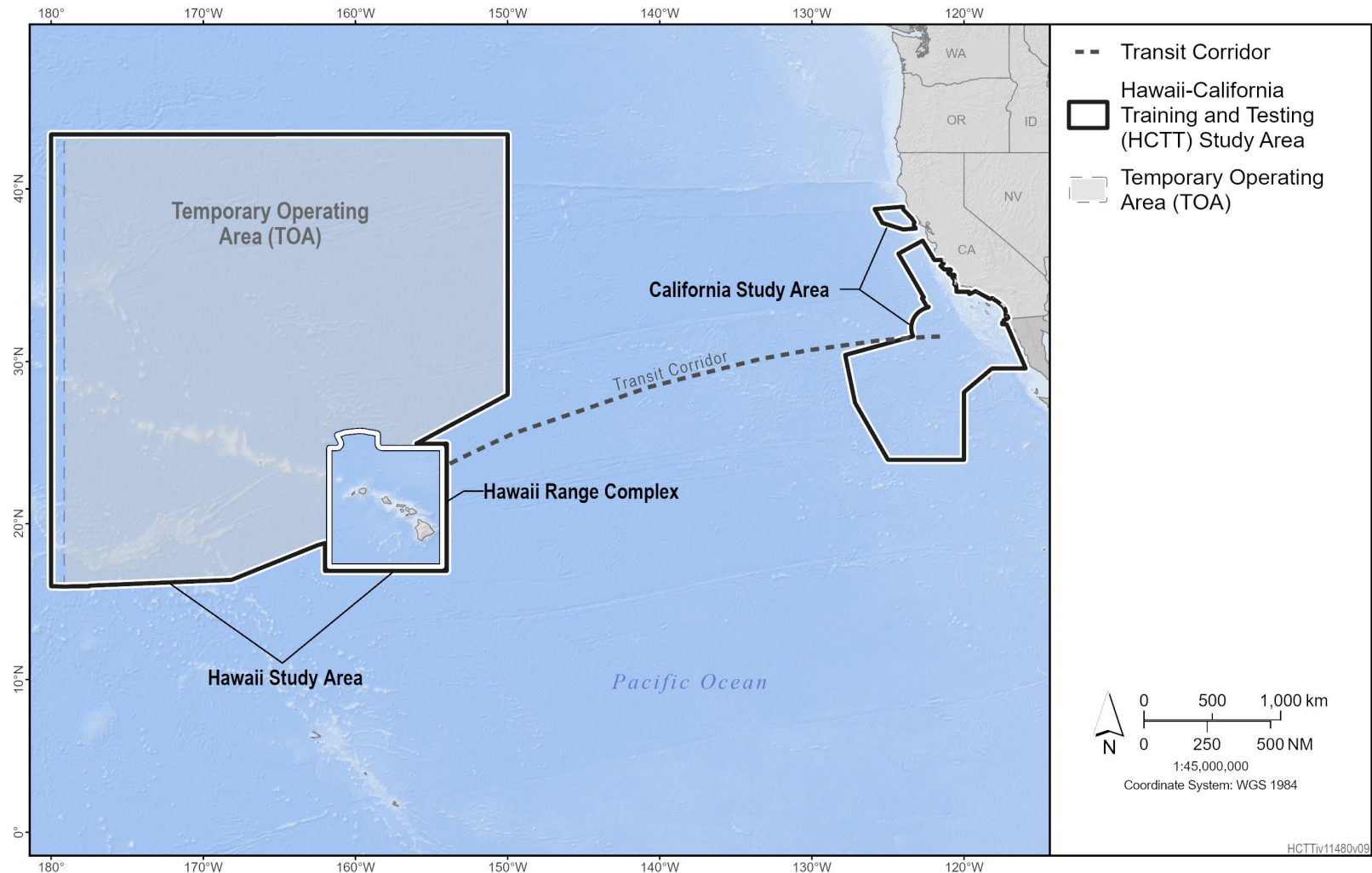


- Expertise and regulatory authority over marine resources
- EIS/OEIS will support the agency's rule-making process to issue Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) authorizations

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS/OEIS. NMFS will consider the potential effects of the Proposed Action on the marine environment.

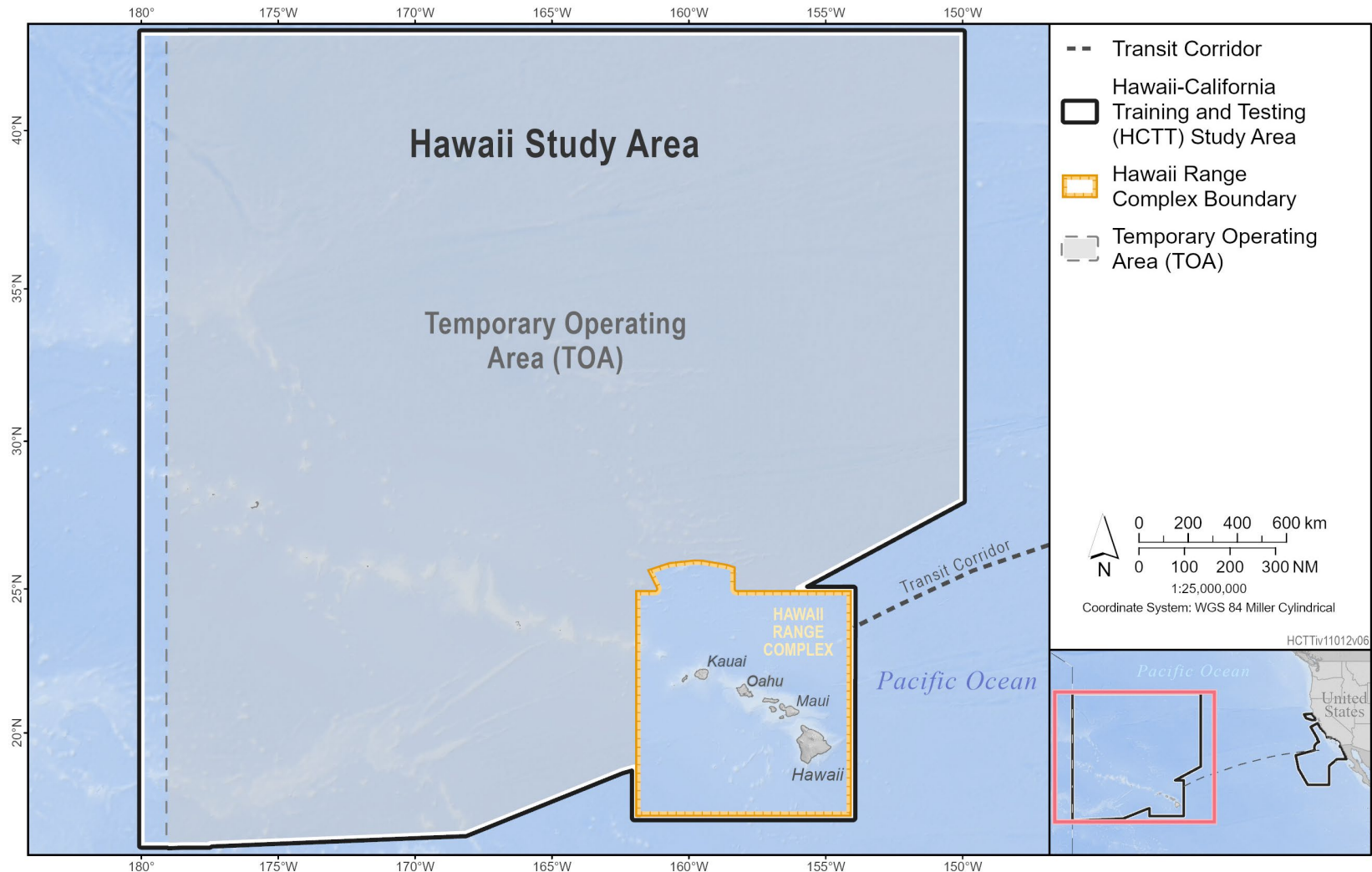


# HCTT Study Area





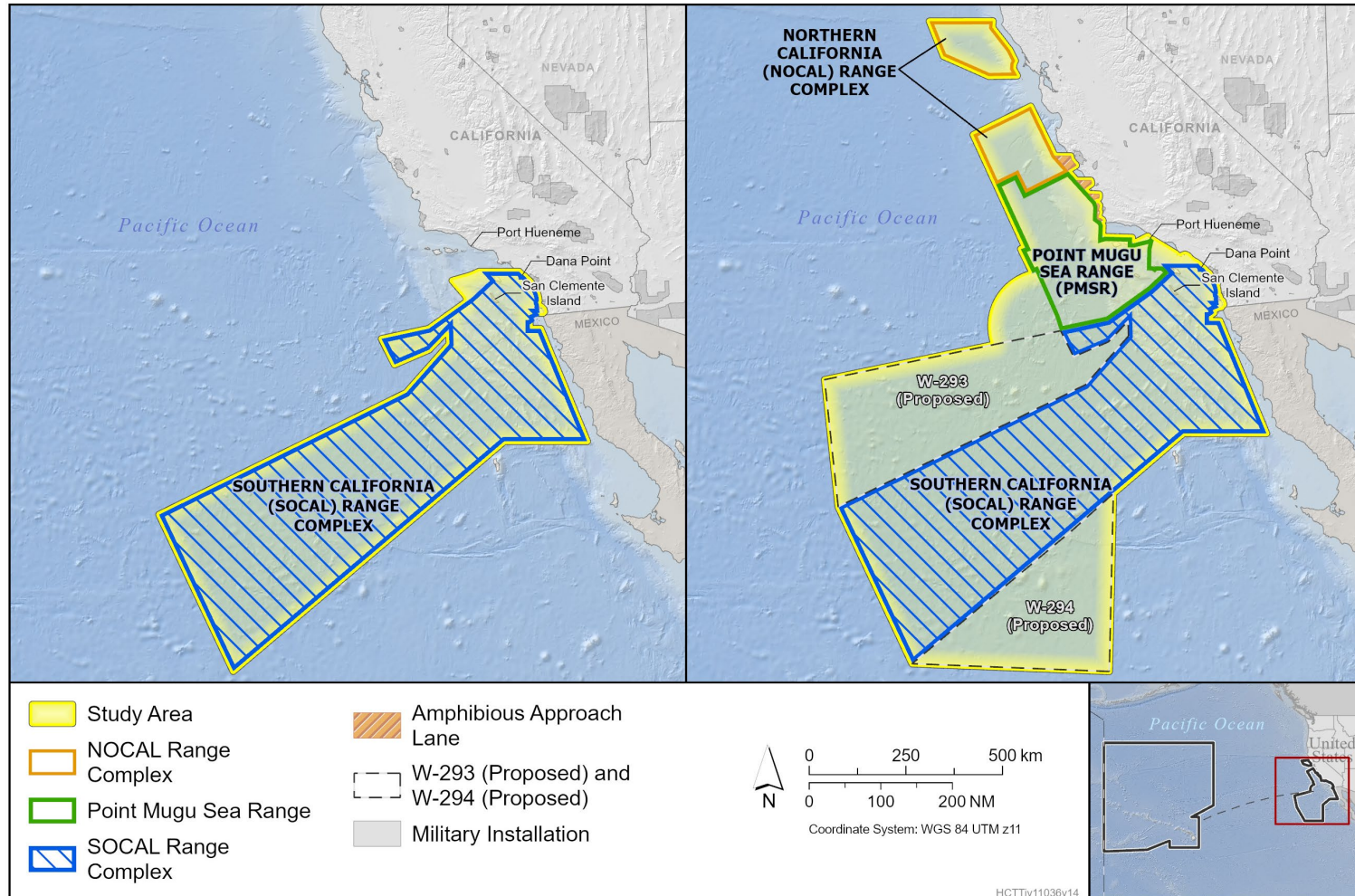
# Hawaii Study Area



# California Study Area

Phase III

Phase IV

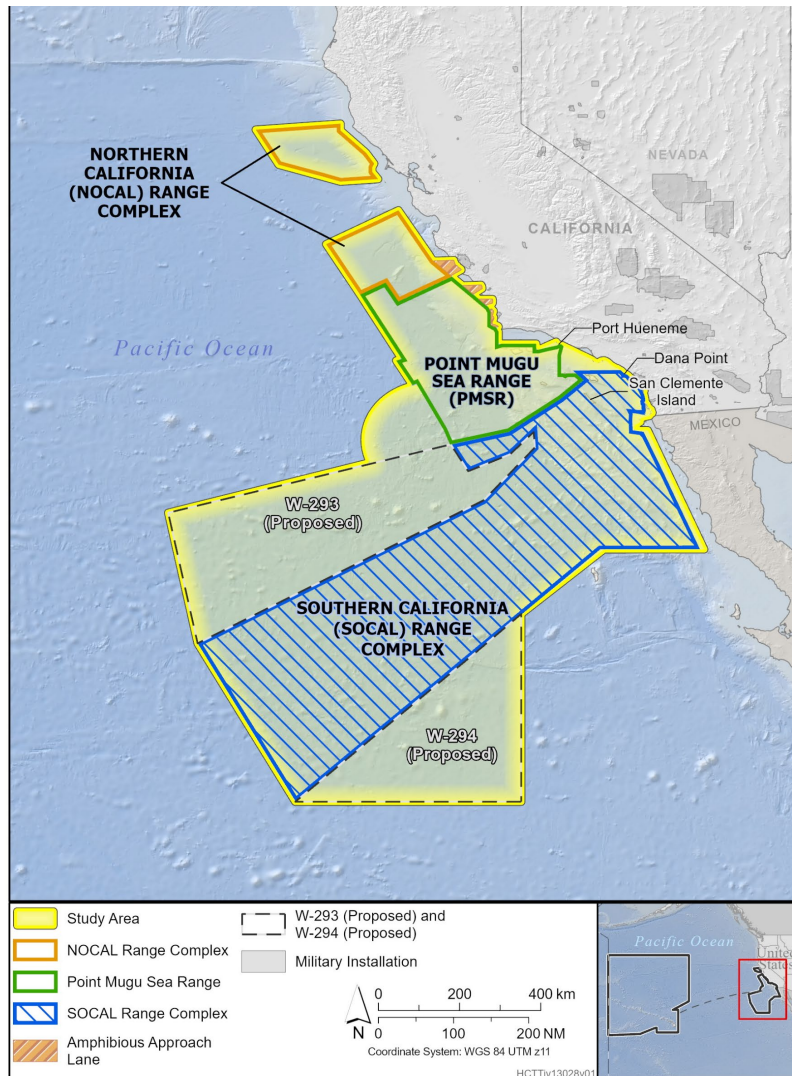


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# California Study Area

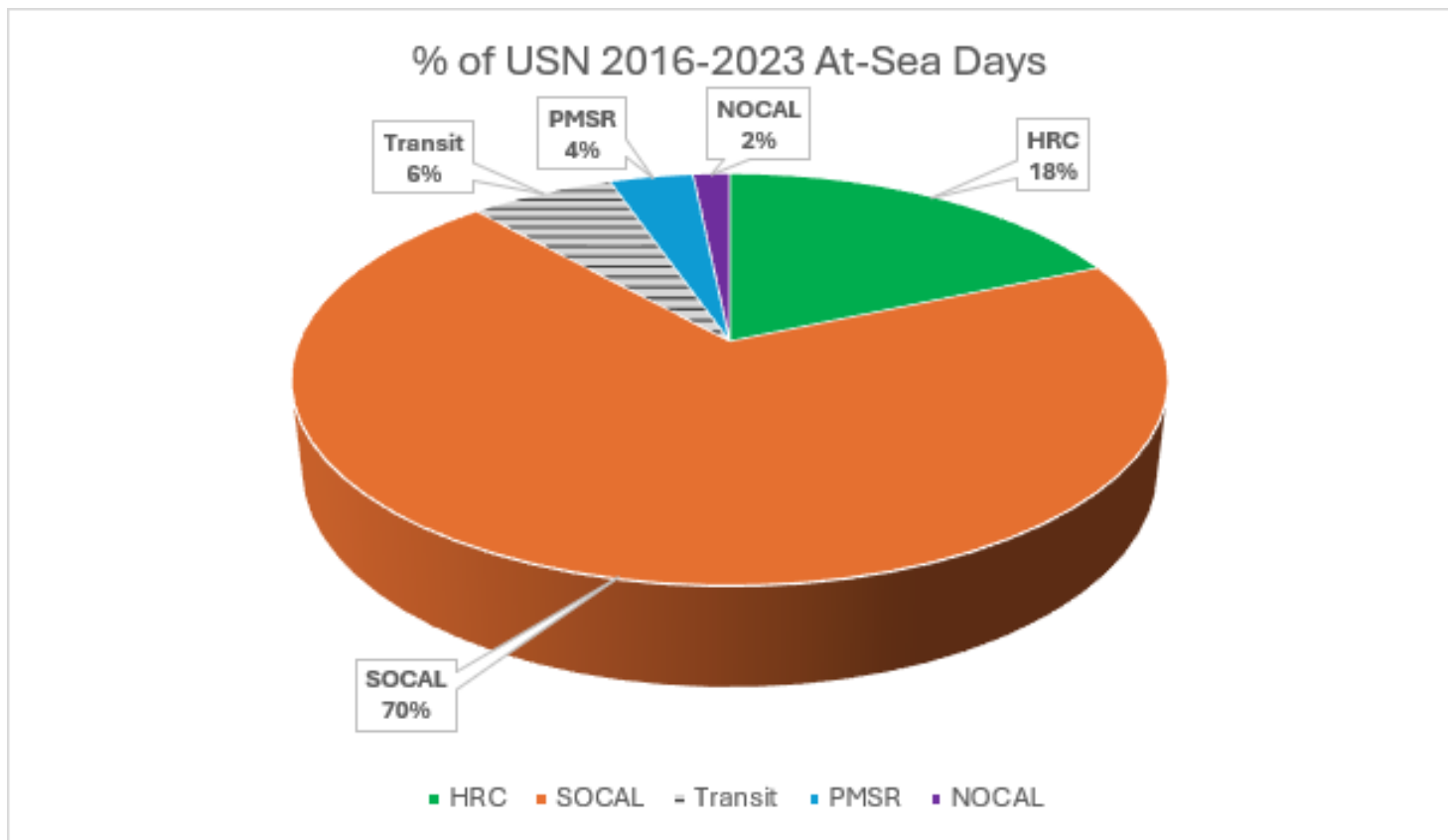


- An expanded Southern California (SOCAL) Range Complex
- Special use airspace (Proposed Warning Area [W]-293 and Proposed W-294) corresponding to the expanded SOCAL Range Complex
- New testing sea space between Proposed W-293 and PMSR
- Two existing training and testing at-sea ranges, the Point Mugu Sea Range (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



# Historic Use of HCTT Areas

- Based on Navy vessel traffic:





# Previous Environmental Analyses

The Navy's environmental planning documents for completed projects are found at the [homepage](#).

Phase	Hawaii Range Complex	Southern California Range Complex	Silver Strand Training Complex	Point Mugu Sea Range	Northern California Range Complex
I	2008 Hawaii Range Complex EIS/OEIS	2008 Southern California Range Complex EIS/OEIS	2011 Silver Strand Training Complex EIS	2002 Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division (NAWCWD) Point Mugu Sea Range (PMSR) EIS/OEIS	Note 1
II	2013 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS				
III	2018 Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS			2022 PMSR EIS/OEIS	
IV	Hawaii-California Training and Testing EIS/OEIS				

*Note 1: The 2014 U.S. Navy F-35C West Coast Homebasing EIS analyzed aircraft activities in airspace within the HCTT Study Area (W-283, W-285, W-532).*



# Resource Areas Analyzed

The military services evaluated the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects the Proposed Action may have on the human, natural, and cultural environments.

Resources evaluated include:

- Air quality and climate change
- Sediments and water quality
- Vegetation
- Invertebrates
- Habitats
- Fishes
- Marine mammals
- Reptiles
- Birds
- Cultural
- Socioeconomics and environmental justice
- Public health and safety



*The Draft EIS/OEIS also includes discussion of other considerations, including coastal and sanctuary resource effects.*



# Summary of Environmental Analysis

## Fishes

- Behavioral effects are expected to be temporary and minor.
- Some individuals may be injured or killed during sound-producing activities (e.g., explosives); however, population-level effects are unlikely.



Photo Credit: Danny Heilprin

## Marine Mammals

- Most effects on stocks from exposure to sonar, explosives, and other sound-producing activities would be short-term changes in behavior (e.g., avoidance), or temporary effects on hearing.
- Although injuries are predicted, no long-term consequences to any stocks are predicted.
- Long-term effects on individuals and populations from physical disturbance, entanglement, or ingestion of military expended materials are not anticipated.
- Vessel strike potential remains low.

## Reptiles

- Effects on individuals from entanglement could occur.
- Effects from sound-producing activities are expected to be short-term changes in behavior and temporary hearing effects; individuals may experience permanent hearing effects and injury.
- Population-level effects caused by physical disturbance, strike, entanglement, ingestion of military expended materials, and sound-producing activities are unlikely.



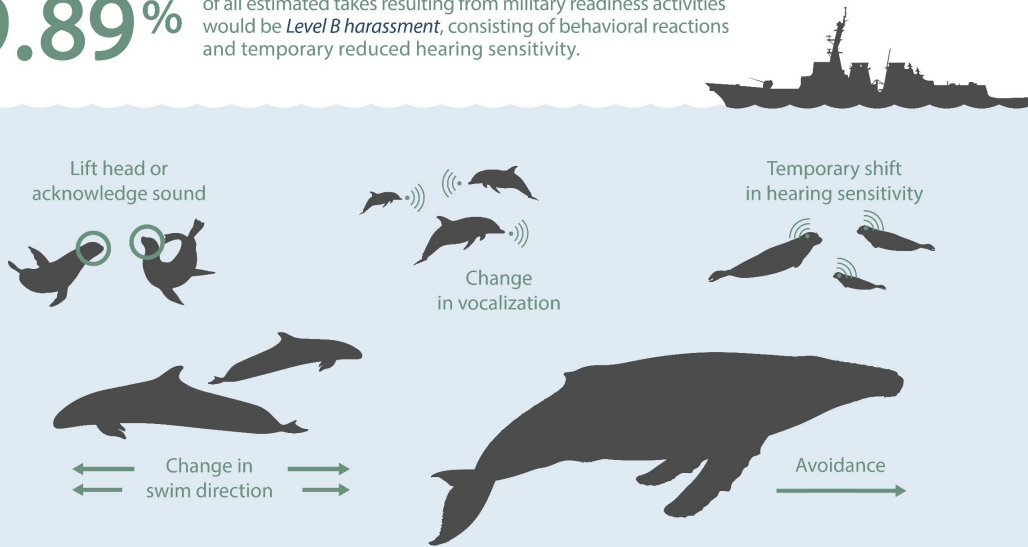
# Estimated Marine Mammal Effects

## Military Readiness Activities Estimated Marine Mammal Annual Takes

Approximately

**99.89%**

of all estimated takes resulting from military readiness activities would be *Level B harassment*, consisting of behavioral reactions and temporary reduced hearing sensitivity.



Approximately

**0.11%**

of all estimated takes would be **auditory injury** (*Level A harassment*). Per the acoustic effects modeling, non-auditory injury would be 0.0032% and mortality would be 0.0005% of all takes.



Permanent shift of hearing sensitivity  
(for a portion of an animal's  
pre-exposure hearing range)

The analysis indicates proposed 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.

*\*Illustrations are representative of potential behavioral or physiological responses.*





# Protecting Marine Species

The military services are committed to avoiding, reducing, or minimizing effects on the marine environment from at-sea activities.

Some requirements for at-sea military readiness activities include:

- Establishing activity-based mitigation zones
- Posting qualified Lookouts to visually observe mitigation zones for marine species prior to and during activities
- Maneuvering vessels to maintain distance from observed marine species
- Implementing geographic mitigation areas with seasonal, monthly, or year-round restrictions



Photo Credit: NOAA permit no. 642-1536-03  
issued to Joseph Mobley of HDR

The Navy uses the Protective Measures Assessment Protocol prior to training and testing activities to comply with mitigation requirements and protect marine resources.



# Marine Species Monitoring and Research

The Navy is a world leader in marine species research, investing over \$20 million in research and monitoring each year.

Navy research and monitoring of marine species helps to:

- Build a better understanding of the abundance, distribution, foraging, reproduction, hearing, sound production, and behavior.
- Refine methods used to detect and monitor species.
- Advance the understanding of the effects of underwater sound.
- Improve models used to estimate potential effects of underwater sound.
- Use adaptive management strategies to establish mitigation guidelines to better protect marine species.





# Environmental Stewardship – Hawaii

Programs contribute both to the success of the military's mission and the preservation of natural and cultural resources for future generations.



Fishpond habitat restoration



Photo Credit: USFWS

Hawaiian stilt



Laysan albatross chick relocation



Plant removal to restore native habitat





# Environmental Stewardship – California

Programs contribute both to the success of the military's mission and the preservation of natural and cultural resources for future generations.

Photo Credit: USFWS



Sage sparrow

Black abalone



Photo Credit: NPS

Photo Credit: NOAA, Permit #18238-03



East Pacific green sea turtle



Beach clean-up





# Regulations

The military services are committed to complying with federal and applicable state and local laws.

Regulation/Law	Responsible Agency
Marine Mammal Protection Act	National Marine Fisheries Service
Endangered Species Act	National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Marine Sanctuaries Act	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Coastal Zone Management Act	California Coastal Commission Hawaii Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act	National Marine Fisheries Service
Migratory Bird Treaty Act	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Historic Preservation Act	Hawaii and California State Historic Preservation Officers
Rivers and Harbors Act	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



# Project Schedule


There are opportunities for the public to participate in the EIS/OEIS and NHPA Section 106 processes. The military services welcome and appreciate the public's participation.

## NEPA Process

Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS/OEIS  
Dec. 15, 2023

▶ Scoping and Section 106 Comment Period  
Dec. 15, 2023 – Jan. 29, 2024

Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS/OEIS  
Dec. 13, 2024

▶  Draft EIS/OEIS and Section 106  
Public Review and Comment Period  
Dec. 13, 2024 – Feb. 11, 2025

Notice of Availability of the Final EIS/OEIS  
Fall 2025

▶ 30-Day Wait Period  
Fall 2025

Record of Decision  
Late 2025

▶ Opportunity for Public Review and Comment Under NEPA and NHPA Section 106

▶ Opportunity for Public Review Under NEPA



# Submit Comments

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.

## Submitting Comments:

- In-person at public meetings
- Electronically via the website: [www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/](http://www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/)
- Mail to:

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

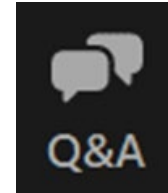


Comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. HST on Feb. 11, 2025, for consideration in the Final EIS/OEIS.



# How to Ask a Question

- Desktop or Mobile Applications
  - Type your question: Click on Q&A icon
    - Question will be read by moderator



**Questions submitted during the question-and-answer session are not an official public comment.**





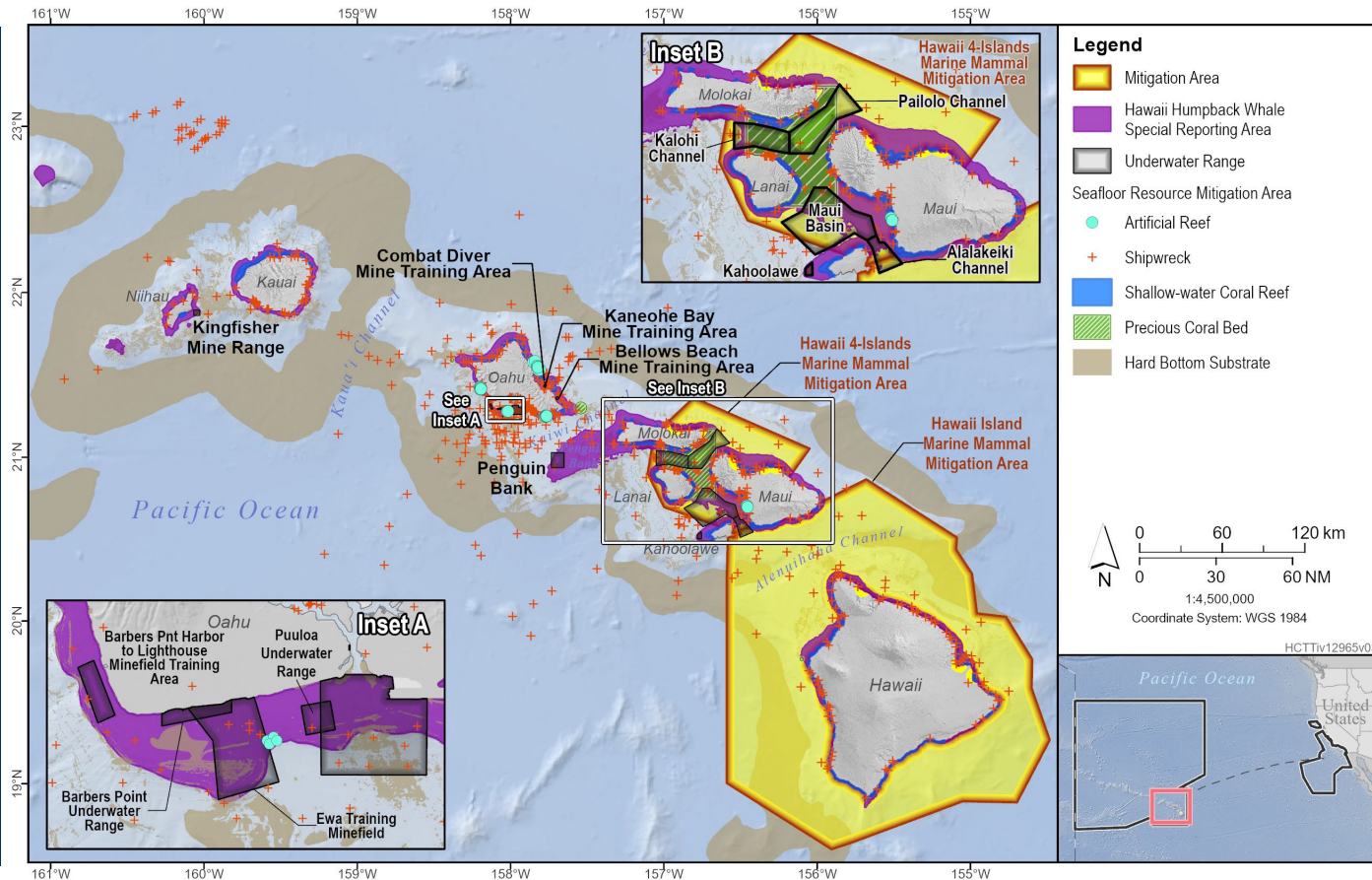
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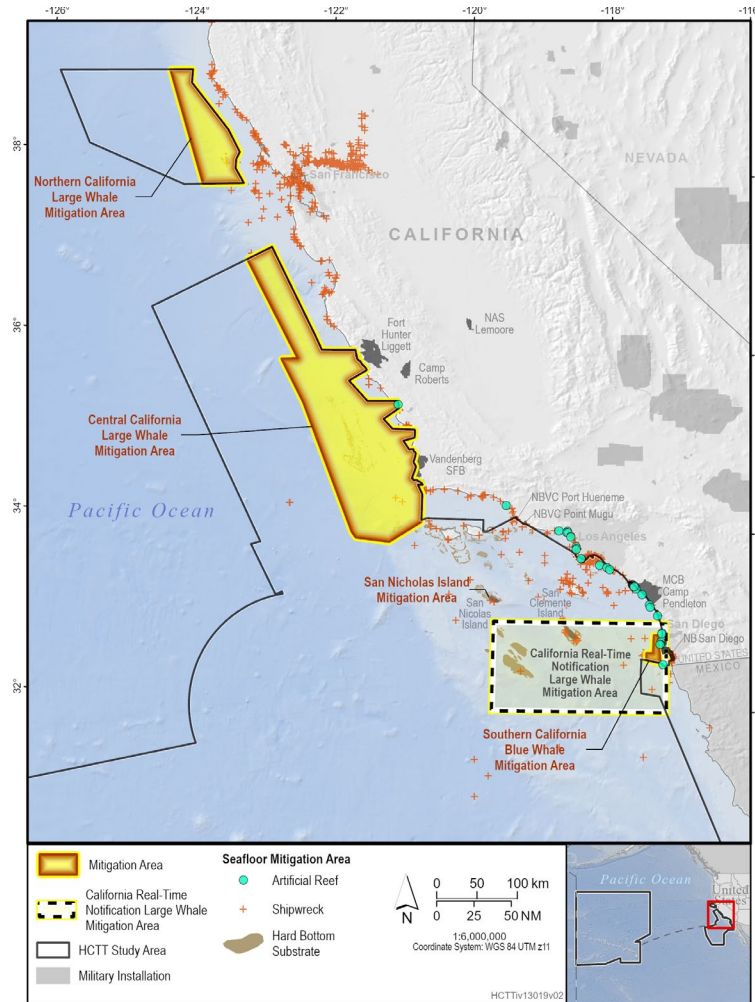
# Proposed Geographic Mitigation Areas – Hawaii

The Navy would continue to implement Geographic Mitigation Areas where limitations are established on certain activities around Hawaii.

The Special Reporting Area would be expanded to reflect updated Humpback Biologically Important Areas.



# Proposed Geographic Mitigation Areas – California

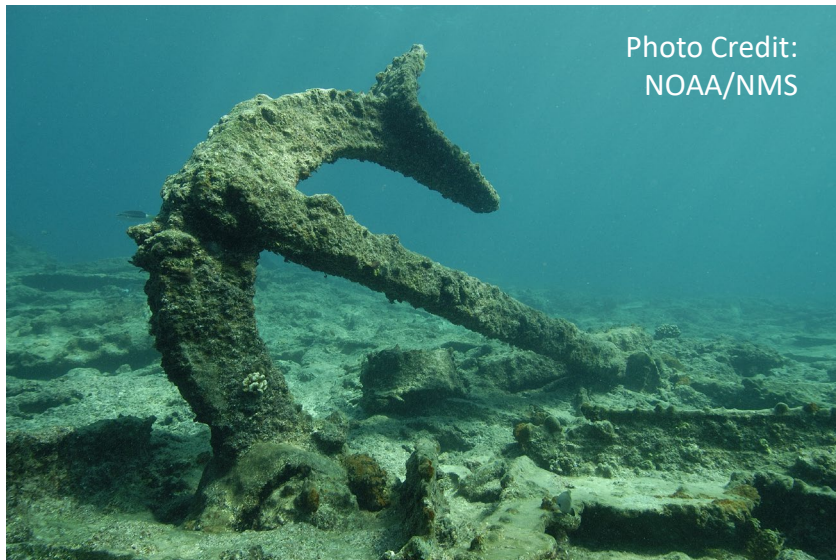




# Cultural Resources

The Navy implements standard operating procedures to avoid known historic (e.g., shipwrecks) and submerged cultural resources while conducting military readiness activities at sea.

Seafloor devices would be placed to avoid submerged cultural resources.



Submerged cultural resources are not expected to be affected by proposed activities.



# Environmental Stewardship

**The military services are committed to protecting the marine environment and actively strive to minimize potential effects from their activities at sea.**

Reduce a vessel's environmental footprint by:

- Consolidating plastic waste into melted disks and preparing for proper disposal ashore.
- Maximizing energy resiliency using energy efficient best practices and technologies.
- Managing ballast water to prevent the introduction of non-native species.
- Using shore power when ships are in port to minimize air emissions.
- Managing, reusing, and recycling hazardous materials

