

MARIANA ISLANDS

TRAINING AND TESTING

Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement



Project Information
www.MITT-EIS.com

Due to the effects of Typhoon Wutip, Navy officials postponed public meetings planned for February 2019. Public meetings have been rescheduled to March 14-19, 2019, and the public comment period extended by 15 days to April 2, 2019.



WELCOME TO THE U.S. NAVY'S OPEN HOUSE PUBLIC MEETING

All public comments must be postmarked or received online by **April 2, 2019**, Chamorro Standard Time, for consideration in the Final Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

Tinian:

Date: **Thursday, March 14, 2019, 1:00 to 3:30 p.m.**

Location: **Tinian Public Library
San Jose Village
Tinian, MP**

Rota:

Date: **Friday, March 15, 2019, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

Location: **Mayor's Conference Hall
Songsong Village
Rota, MP**

Saipan:

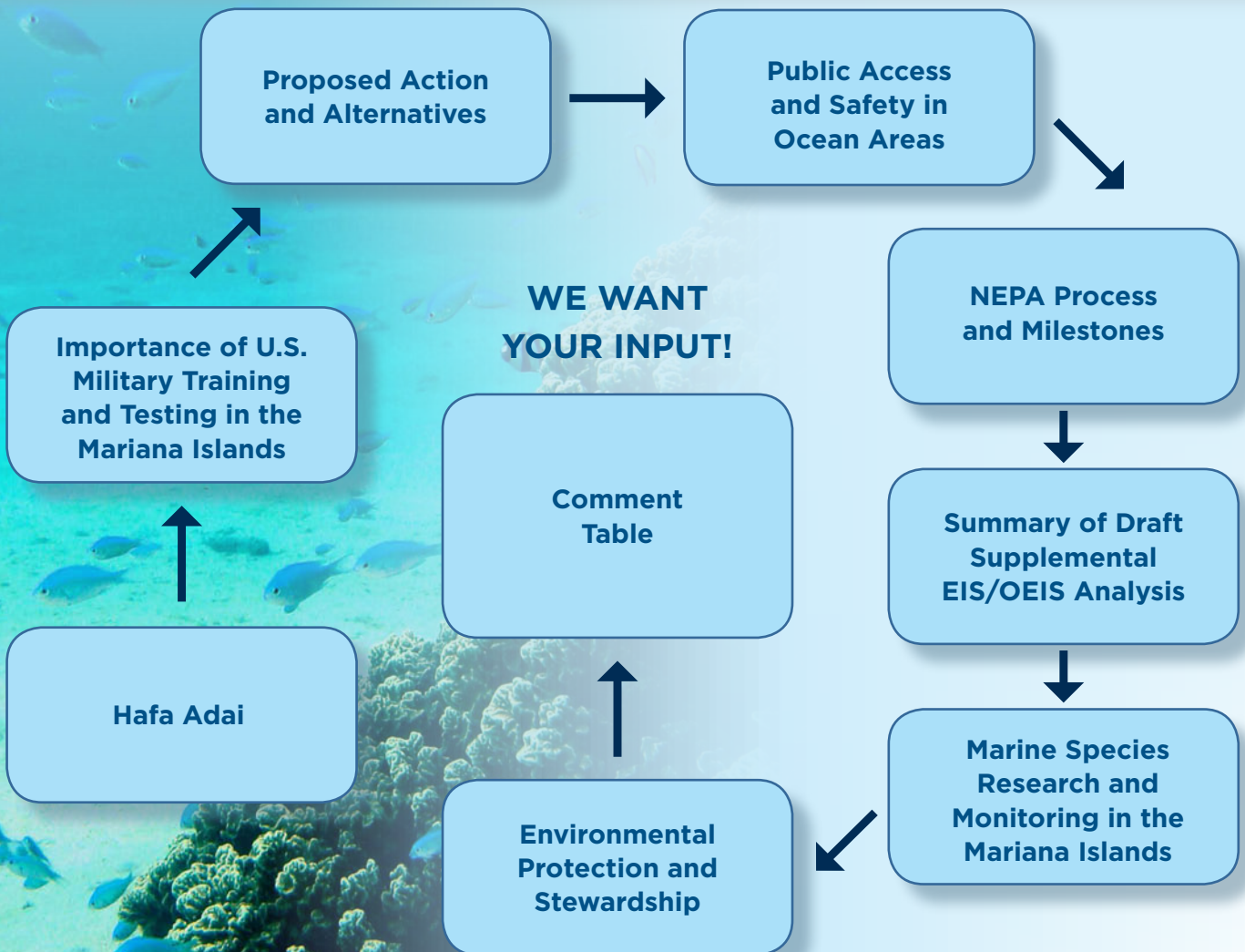
Date: **Monday, March 18, 2019, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

Location: **Kanoa Resort Saipan, Seaside Hall
Beach Road in Susupe
Saipan, MP**

Guam:

Date: **Tuesday, March 19, 2019, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

Location: **University of Guam, Jesus & Eugenia Leon Guerrero
School of Business and Public Administration Building
Anthony Leon Guerrero Multi-Purpose Room 129
and Henry Sy Atrium
Mangilao, Guam**





INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Navy has prepared a draft supplement to the 2015 Final Mariana Islands Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS).

Using the most current and best available science, the Navy has prepared a Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with ongoing at-sea military readiness activities (referred to as “training and testing”) conducted within the Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) Study Area (referred to as the “Study Area”). The Navy welcomes public review and substantive comments on the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

The supplement to the 2015 analysis supports ongoing and future activities conducted at sea and on Farallon de Medinilla (FDM) within the Study Area beyond 2020. Proposed activities are similar to those that have been conducted in the Study Area for decades. The Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS supports the issuance of federal regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act.

The Navy used new, relevant information to reanalyze the impacts of training and testing activities. New information includes an updated underwater sound effects model, more recent marine mammal and sea turtle density data, and new science.

The National Marine Fisheries Service is a cooperating agency for this Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

KEY UPDATES MADE IN THE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIS/OEIS

Proposed training and testing activities are similar to activities conducted in the Mariana Islands for decades. In the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS, the Navy:

- ▶ Includes a No Action Alternative in which Marine Mammal Protection Act authorization would not be issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS); therefore, proposed training and testing activities would not be conducted.
- ▶ Refines the analysis of anti-submarine warfare activities, resulting in reduced levels of active sonar and fewer hours of underwater sound.
- ▶ Includes analyses of training with new vessels, aircraft, weapons systems, and unmanned/autonomous systems, and decreases in other activities.
- ▶ Includes analyses of testing new systems and technologies, such as radar, communication systems (or simulators), or high-energy lasers.
- ▶ Includes an updated underwater sound effects model, criteria and thresholds, and marine mammal and sea turtle data.
- ▶ Continues to use the most current and best available science and analytical methods.
- ▶ Reviews procedural mitigation measures and considers geographic mitigation measures.



IMPORTANCE OF MILITARY READINESS



For more than 240 years, the U.S. military has been operating on, over, and within the world's oceans. These waters are the home and workplace of America's military.

The mission of the U.S. Department of Defense is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of the United States, its territories, and its interests. To that end, the military services must maintain, train, and equip forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom.

Military personnel must be ready to respond to many different situations, in varied settings, often under crisis conditions. From large-scale conflict to maritime security operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, military personnel must be fully trained and ready to perform these various and demanding duties at a moment's notice.

The land, air, and sea areas of the Mariana Islands are important to members of the military and their families who call the islands their home. The U.S. military, including the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, along with the Coast Guard, conduct military readiness activities in designated areas of the Mariana Islands. These areas collectively comprise the military's Mariana Islands Range Complex.

For decades, the Mariana Islands have provided an ideal location in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region for the military to maintain a global and strategic presence. Every day, the military strives to reduce its effects on the islands while ensuring the United States and its territories are protected and safe.

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

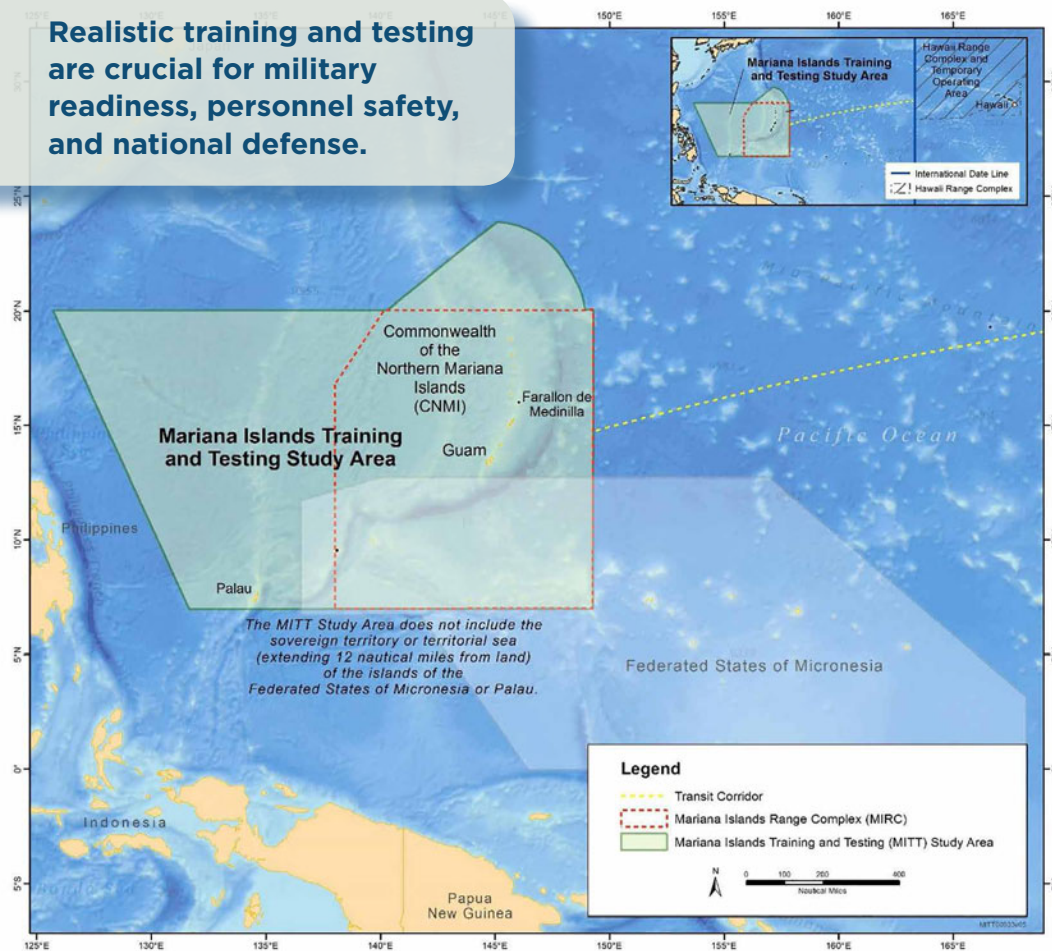


Figure 1: The Mariana Islands Training and Testing Study Area includes:

- Mariana Islands Range Complex (MIRC)
- Areas on the high seas to the north and west of the MIRC
- A transit corridor between the MIRC and the Hawaii Range Complex, starting at the International Date Line
- Apra Harbor and select Navy pier-side and harbor locations

In the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS, the Navy analyzes only the training and testing activities conducted at sea and on FDM within the Study Area. Other activities and land areas are not included and remain covered under the 2015 analysis and associated authorizations.

The Study Area has not changed since the 2015 MTT Final EIS/OEIS.

MILITARY TRAINING AND TESTING IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS

Military personnel must be ready to respond to many different situations when called upon. The skills needed to achieve military readiness are challenging to master and require constant practice. Training and testing activities must be diverse and as realistic as possible to prepare military personnel for what they will experience in real-world situations and ensure their success and survival.

The Study Area (Figure 1) provides a range of realistic training and testing environments and sufficient air and sea space necessary for safety, for mission success, and to ensure military personnel are ready to fight. There is no substitute for live training and testing in a realistic environment.

Training in the Study Area

The Study Area supports the Navy's 7th Fleet, the largest of the Navy's forward-deployed fleets. The required training that occurs in the Study Area encompasses all levels of training, from basic to advanced, including integrated and joint events and exercises involving all military services, in addition to coalition and partner nations.

Training in the Mariana Islands is vital to the continued readiness of military personnel. Without access to the training areas within the Study Area, forward-deployed military units on Guam and Japan would be unable to train and maintain the skills needed to respond to crises.

The Study Area provides forward-deployed and transiting military personnel with regional resources and the opportunity to practice skills and build experience. Military personnel train in the following fields:

- Air Warfare
- Amphibious Warfare
- Surface Warfare
- Anti-Submarine Warfare
- Mine Warfare
- Strike Warfare
- Electronic Combat
- Expeditionary Warfare

Annual exercises conducted in the Study Area support the military's ability to respond in times of crisis. Examples of exercises include:

- **Cope North:** Designed to increase readiness and coordination between the U.S. military, Japan Air Self-Defense Forces, and Royal Australian Air Force in aerial missions, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief.
- **Valiant Shield:** Focuses on cooperation between the U.S. military services. U.S. forces practice skills including maritime interdiction; defense counter-air; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and command and control.
- **Tri-Crab:** Designed as a multi-national, joint service explosive ordnance disposal training exercise with U.S., Australian, and Singaporean forces.

Testing in the Study Area

Testing activities conducted in the Study Area are critical for maintaining readiness. To maintain an edge over potential adversaries, service members must have access to technologically advanced vessels, aircraft, and weapons systems.

The Department of Defense continually researches and develops new technologies. These technologies must be tested and evaluated before use during deployment. Testing may include:

- Development of basic and applied scientific research and technology
- Testing, evaluation, and maintenance of sensors and systems, such as missiles, torpedoes, radar, active and passive sonar systems, vessels, submarines, and aircraft
- Acquisition of technologically advanced vessels, aircraft, and systems



The Mariana Islands have provided the military with a safe training and testing environment for decades and are an ideal setting because of their location in the Western Pacific.

MEETING FUTURE TRAINING AND TESTING REQUIREMENTS



Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to conduct military readiness activities within the Study Area. To achieve and maintain military readiness, the Navy proposes to:

- Conduct at-sea training and testing activities at levels required to support military readiness requirements beyond 2020.
- Accommodate evolving mission requirements, including those from the development, testing, and introduction of new vessels, aircraft, and weapons systems into the fleet.

Training and testing activities include the use of active sonar and explosives while employing marine species mitigation measures. Proposed activities are similar to those that have been conducted in the Study Area for decades. The type and number of proposed activities allow for changes needed to meet requirements.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to conduct training and testing activities to ensure the Navy and other U.S. military services meet their missions, which for the Navy is to maintain, train, and equip combat-ready military forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas.

The Navy must train and conduct tests to be able to respond to a wide range of situations while maintaining a continuous presence on the world's oceans.



Alternatives

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to achieve the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action. In the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS, the Navy evaluates the potential environmental impacts of three alternatives, including a No Action Alternative.

Alternative 1

- Includes adjustments to types and levels of training and testing to meet current and future requirements.
- Consists of activities and requirements associated with development, testing, and introduction of new vessels, aircraft, and weapons systems.
- Reduces amount of active sonar estimated to be necessary to meet requirements.

Alternative 2

- Includes all activities under Alternative 1.
- Includes additional adjustments to types and levels of activities should unanticipated emergent world events require increased readiness levels.

No Action Alternative

- Authorization from NMFS would not be issued.
- Proposed training and testing activities would not be conducted.
- Strike warfare (dropping of ordnance) on FDM would not be conducted.
- Other military activities not associated with the Proposed Action would continue.
- Purpose and need would not be met.



IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING AND TESTING WITH ACTIVE SONAR AND EXPLOSIVES

Need for Sonar Training and Testing

Defense against enemy submarines is a top priority for the Navy. To detect potential hostile submarines, the Navy uses both passive and active sonar.

Torpedoes, in-water mines, and quieter submarines are true threats to global commerce, national security, and the safety of military personnel. Active sonar is the most effective method of detecting these threats.

Sonar Training

Sonar uses sound energy waves to detect and locate submerged objects, such as submarines and in-water mines. Sonar proficiency is complex and requires regular, hands-on training in realistic and diverse conditions. The military uses simulators and other advanced technologies for some training; however, simulation cannot completely replace training in a live environment. Lack of realistic training will jeopardize the lives of military personnel in real-life combat situations.

Sonar Systems Testing

The Navy needs to research, test, and maintain sonar systems both at sea and pierside to ensure their reliability and availability. As other nations' submarine technology evolves and improves, scientific research and testing of new sonar systems and technologies ensures U.S. forces are combat-ready and equipped with the most up-to-date technology. Maintaining and upgrading existing sonar systems requires periodic testing and evaluation to ensure systems are functioning properly.

Need for Training and Testing With Explosives

Training in a high-stress environment, including the use of and exposure to explosive ordnance, is necessary for military personnel to be fully prepared to respond to emergencies and national security threats, and to ensure their safety.

Testing with explosives is necessary so systems function properly in the type of environment they will be used. To the extent possible, military personnel train and conduct tests using inert (non-explosive) practice munitions. Non-explosives, however, cannot completely replace training and testing in a live environment. Limited training and testing with in-water explosives occurs only in established operating areas. The Navy, in coordination with the Coast Guard and Federal Aviation Administration, issues notices to mariners and pilots to ensure public safety.

Sonar: Then and Now

The Navy began using sonar in response to devastating allied shipping and human losses from U-boat attacks during World War II. Today, sonar is used to identify, track, and target submarines; detect in-water mines; and navigate safely.

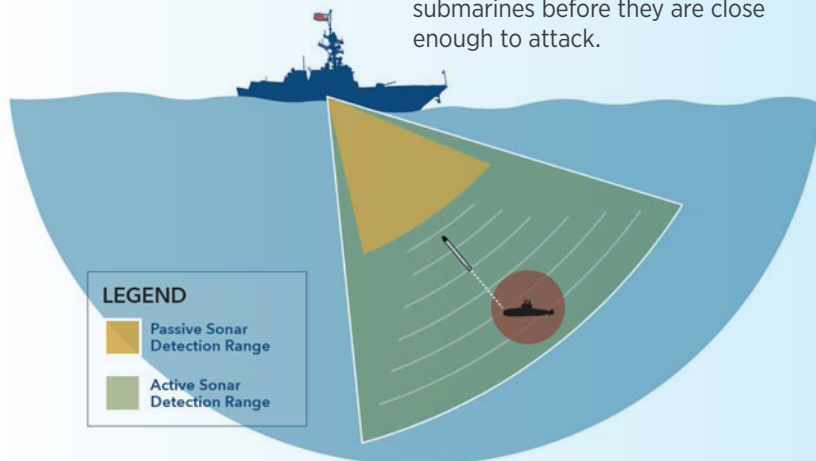
With advances in warfare technology, newer-generation submarines pose a challenge for the Navy because they are extremely quiet and hard to detect in the noisy ocean environment. Advances in technology and increases in the number of quiet submarines have made it necessary for the Navy to use active sonar, as passive sonar is no longer adequate for detecting them (Figure 2). The difference between passive and active sonar is that passive sonar does not emit a signal while active sonar emits a pulse sound for purposes of detecting an echo.



Figure 2. Passive and Active Sonar Detection Range

Submarines of the previous generation were noisy and could be detected with passive sonar before they came close enough to deploy short-range weapons against a vessel.

Extremely quiet, difficult-to-detect, diesel-electric submarines can approach close enough to deploy long-range weapons before entering the passive sonar detection range of U.S. vessels. Active sonar has a longer detection range that is needed to allow Sailors to detect, identify, and track quieter, modern submarines before they are close enough to attack.



SUMMARY OF THE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIS/OEIS FINDINGS

In the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS, the Navy presents the results of the evaluation of relevant new information and best available science. Each resource area analyzed within the 2015 MITT Final EIS/OEIS has been evaluated to determine the need for reanalysis within the Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

The Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS presents the updated alternatives analysis for the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on 13 environmental resource areas. The findings presented in the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS indicate the following for proposed training and testing activities:

- **Air quality:** Not expected to result in detectable local emissions of air pollutants or impact public health.
- **Sediments and water quality:** Not expected to degrade sediment and water quality.
- **Marine vegetation:** Could affect individual or small patches of marine vegetation; however, population-level impacts not expected.
- **Marine invertebrates:**
 - Could affect coral species, but not expected to decrease overall health and survival of any population.
 - May reduce quality and quantity of sedentary invertebrate beds or reefs.
- **Marine habitats:** Would not impact ability of marine areas on seafloor to provide habitat function.
- **Fishes:**
 - May have minimal and temporary impact on fishes occupying the water column.
 - Not expected to decrease overall health and survival of any population.
- **Marine mammals:**
 - May affect certain species, but not expected to decrease overall health and survival of any population.
 - Almost all predicted effects are behavioral responses that cause no injury.
- **Sea turtles:** May affect certain species, but not expected to decrease overall health and survival of any population.

- **Marine birds:**
 - May affect roosting and breeding species on FDM.
 - Would not decrease overall health and survival of any population.
- **Terrestrial species on FDM:** May affect species on FDM, such as Mariana fruit bat or Micronesian megapode.
- **Cultural resources:** Would not impact submerged cultural resources or prehistoric sites.
- **Socioeconomics:** Would not impact commercial transportation and shipping, commercial and recreational fishing, traditional fishing practices, or tourism.
- **Public health and safety:** Would not impact public health and safety.
- **Cumulative impacts:** Combined impacts of past, present, and other future actions would continue to have significant impacts on socioeconomics, invertebrates, some individual marine mammals, and all sea turtle species in the Study Area.



Minimizing impacts on the marine environment is imperative to the Navy. The analysis indicates that the majority of predicted effects on marine species would be behavioral responses. The Navy will continue to implement mitigation and monitoring measures to minimize effects on marine species.

Navy Activities and Marine Mammal Annual Estimated Takes

More than

99.89%

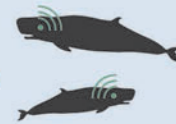
of all estimated takes resulting from training and testing activities would be *Level B harassment*, consisting of behavioral responses or temporary reduced hearing sensitivity to one or more specified frequencies.



Change in vocalization



Temporary shift in hearing sensitivity



Change in swim direction



Avoidance



Less than

0.11%

of all estimated takes would be **permanent threshold shifts** (*Level A harassment*). Non-auditory injury and mortality are not expected to occur per the acoustic effects modeling.



Permanent shift of hearing sensitivity (for sonar, would be only a single frequency and not the animal's entire hearing range)

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

GLOSSARY OF 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 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.
 - » **Permanent threshold shift:** A permanent shift in an animal's hearing sensitivity.
 - » **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.

The Navy reassessed the potential effects of training and testing on the marine environment using the most current data and analysis methods.

MARINE RESOURCE PROTECTION

Navy Marine Species Research and Monitoring Efforts

The Navy is a world leader in marine species research and monitoring, having funded marine research programs, surveys, and data collection efforts since 2006. The Navy partners with state and federal agencies, universities, research institutions, federal laboratories, and private researchers around the world to better understand marine species occurrence and behavior. This scientific research helps environmental regulators, scientists, and the Navy to:

- Understand marine mammals and sea turtles to better assess effects on species from military activities
- Assess behavioral responses of marine species to sonar and explosives
- Develop and improve models that better predict potential effects of underwater sound and explosives on marine species
- Develop effective protective measures

The Navy uses the most current and best available science and analytical methods to re-evaluate protective measures that help minimize impacts on the marine environment.

MARINE MAMMAL AND SEA TURTLE SURVEYS IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS

Navy-funded biologists conduct visual surveys to identify species of beaked whales, dolphins, and baleen whales that occur in the Mariana Islands. Biologists monitor marine mammal and sea turtle presence, distribution, and diversity in nearshore waters during key seasons (summer and winter). The data help develop a better understanding of distribution and movement patterns, habitat use, population levels, and abundance, and how these factors may overlap in areas where naval activities occur.



Research Findings

As part of its Integrated Comprehensive Monitoring Program, the Navy works closely with NMFS to coordinate monitoring efforts across all ocean regions where the Navy trains and conducts tests. In the Mariana Islands, the Navy monitors marine species to better understand species occurrence and provides annual reports of training and testing activities and monitoring studies to NMFS. These reports are also available to the public.

This body of scientific research has provided several indicators that Navy training and testing activities are unlikely to have long-term consequences on marine mammal populations. Some species have displayed short-term behavioral responses during or following certain activities. However, the indicators below demonstrate that current protective measures are successful.

- Increases in the number of certain marine species present in the Study Area
- Continued presence of species and long-term residence by individual animals in high-use areas, including species thought to be sensitive to sound
- Lack of observable negative effects on marine mammal stocks or populations over more than 10 years of comprehensive monitoring and data collection

Visit www.navy-marine-species-monitoring.us for more information on the Navy's Marine Species Monitoring Program.

Mitigation Measures at Sea

The coastal and sea areas of the Mariana Islands are important for recreation and commercial activities, and are home to a variety of marine plants and animals, including whales, dolphins, sea turtles, corals, invertebrates, sea birds, and multiple fish species.

Avoiding impacts from training and testing on the marine environment is important to the military. The military follows strict guidelines and employs measures to reduce potential effects on marine species while training and testing. The measures listed in this fact sheet include some, but not all, of the existing at-sea mitigation measures.

Posting qualified Lookouts

Navy personnel undertake extensive training to qualify as Lookouts in accordance with the Navy's Lookout Training Handbook. All Lookouts must complete Marine Species Awareness Training (www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKo3r1yVBBA) approved by NMFS. Navy Lookouts visually observe for the presence of marine species within mitigation zones.

Observing the area prior to activities

Marine mammals and sea turtles can be detected visually only while at the surface, and marine mammals can be detected acoustically only while vocalizing underwater. Therefore, before certain activities are conducted, the area is scanned visually and, when possible, monitored acoustically.

Establishing mitigation zones for marine species

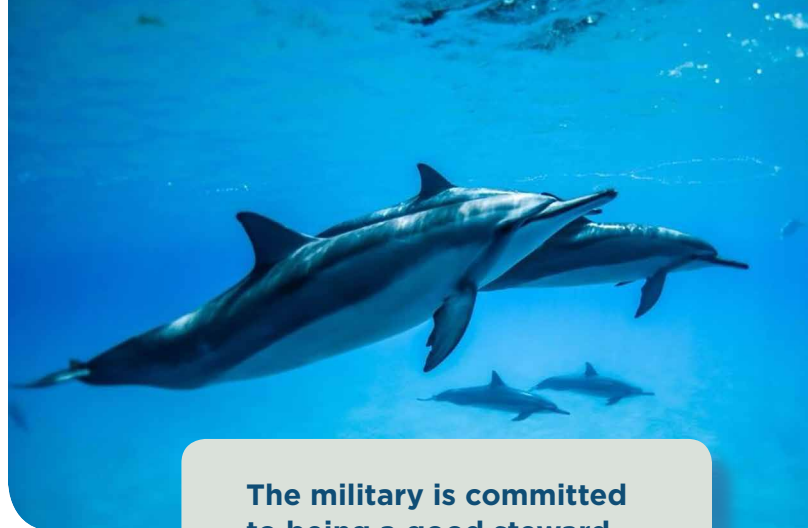
A mitigation zone is designed to reduce potential impacts on marine species from certain training and testing activities. The size of a mitigation zone is unique for each activity. Navy personnel visually observe each zone. If a marine mammal or sea turtle is detected within the mitigation zone, the activity will cease until the animal exits the zone.

Implementing geographic mitigation measures

The Navy restricts some types of training and testing activities in specific areas to further avoid impacts on marine mammals.

Navigating safely

While in transit, Navy vessel operators are alert at all times, watching for objects in their path. Operators follow Coast Guard navigation rules, operate at a speed consistent with mission and safety, and take proper action if there is a risk of collision. Vessels avoid approaching marine mammals head on and maneuver to maintain a mitigation zone of 500 yards around whales and 200 yards around other marine mammals.



The military is committed to being a good steward of the environment.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The military's environmental stewardship programs contribute both to the success of the military mission and the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the Mariana Islands.

Environmental Protection at Sea

The military is deeply committed to protecting the environment and actively strives to minimize potential effects of training and testing at sea. The Navy continues to implement and improve programs to reduce a vessel's environmental footprint by:

- Consolidating plastic waste into disks and disposing of them when ships return to port
- Conserving energy by installing energy-efficient technologies
- Managing ballast water to prevent the introduction of non-native species



Environmental Protection in the Mariana Islands

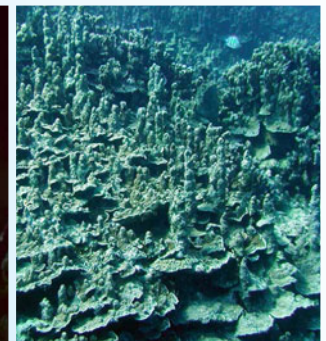
The military is committed to protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Mariana Islands. Programs have been established to care for and protect threatened and endangered plants and wildlife, and cultural and historic buildings and sites on military ranges.

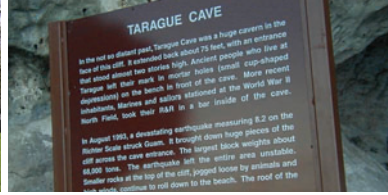
Coral Reef Protection

The Mariana Islands are home to several types of coral reefs, both close to the islands and farther offshore. Coral reefs are considered among the world's most diverse and complex ecosystems. Many of the coral reefs in the Mariana Islands are well developed and support a wide range of recreational and commercial activities. They also provide natural shoreline protection.

The Navy strives to limit its impact on coral reefs and conducts the following activities:

- Conducting regular surveys since 1999 to study the condition of coral reefs and other plants and animals around FDM. Based on these surveys, there is no evidence that training activities have had significant impacts on marine resources.
- Participating in the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, a group of government agencies that works to protect coral reefs around the world.





Sea Turtle Monitoring and Avoidance

Endangered green and hawksbill sea turtles spend time on the shores and in the ocean areas of the Mariana Islands. The Navy works with other agencies and local governments to study, monitor, and protect these long-lived species. State-of-the-art scientific methods and technologies are used to monitor and track sea turtles in the Mariana Islands to learn more and have a better understanding of sea turtles, including their population levels, home ranges, and habitat use.

The Navy also follows regulatory policy to not disturb sea turtles or their nesting areas, such as:

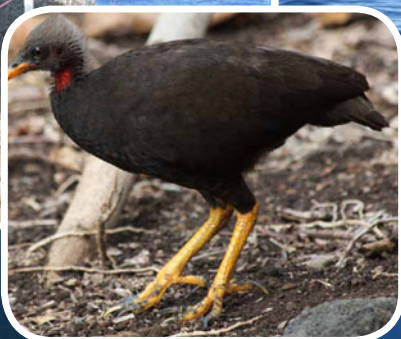
- Checking training and testing areas before starting activities to avoid turtle nesting and foraging areas
- Moving vehicles and people away from turtle nesting areas and minimizing use of foraging areas
- Monitoring known nesting areas during nighttime training
- Stopping activities if turtles or their nests are seen, and delaying the activity until turtles have left the area
- Reporting to NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service any impacts on sea turtles or their nests from training and testing activities

Protection of Cultural Resources and Historic Properties

The Mariana Islands have a diverse mix of cultural resources and historic properties. Some of these resources include ancient Chamorro, Spanish-era, and World War II buildings, structures, and sites. Since many cultural resources are located on land managed by the military, cultural resources management plans have been developed to facilitate and guide the responsible stewardship of these sensitive resources.

The military works with local government agencies, such as the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Historic Preservation Office, the Guam Historic Preservation Office, the National Park Service, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, to help manage cultural resources found on military lands.

PARTNERING FOR SUSTAINABILITY
The military has developed partnerships and built coalitions with other government agencies, organizations, and communities to better manage and protect natural and cultural resources.



PUBLIC ACCESS AND SAFETY AT SEA



Sharing the Sea

Many people in the Mariana Islands use and depend on the coast and ocean for commercial and recreational purposes, such as tourism, fishing, and diving. The ocean areas of the Mariana Islands also support other important activities related to shipping, scientific, cultural, and institutional functions.

Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are designated as fishing communities because of the number of people who are dependent on fishing for subsistence; the economic importance of fishery resources to the islands; and the geographic, demographic, and cultural attributes of the communities.

The military shares these areas with the community and recognizes the importance of public access to ocean and coastal areas. Therefore, the military has designated airspace and marine areas to indicate where and when it may not be safe for civilian activities to take place. The Navy attempts to avoid popular fishing areas, provides notice of where and when ocean areas will be open or closed for extended periods, and works with local communities to improve communication.

Public Safety Measures

The military strives to be good neighbors by minimizing access restrictions and limiting the extent and duration of closures of public areas whenever possible while ensuring safety at all times. When certain training and testing activities are scheduled, notices to mariners are published for public awareness and safety, helping mariners plan accordingly to avoid temporarily restricted areas.

FDM is an active military training area. Because dangerous military activities are conducted on FDM and up to 12 nautical miles (NM) around the island, restricted airspace has been established (Figure 3). The restrictions are intended to keep pilots, fishermen, and other people safe. However, when FDM is not in use by the military, civilian vessels have access up to the 3-NM radius around the island.

The military trains and conducts tests in a manner that is compatible with civilian activities at sea.

The safety of the public and military personnel is of utmost importance. The Navy implements multiple safety precautions when planning and conducting at-sea training and testing activities. Some precautionary measures include:

- Ensuring impact areas and targets are unpopulated prior to potentially dangerous activities
- Canceling or delaying activities if public or personnel safety is a concern
- Notifying the public of the location, date, time, and duration of potentially dangerous activities
- Implementing temporary access restrictions to training and testing areas when appropriate to ensure public safety

These measures, along with the cooperation of the public, enable safe at-sea training and testing. The Coast Guard publishes and broadcasts notices, and mariners are requested to read and adhere to the published notices.

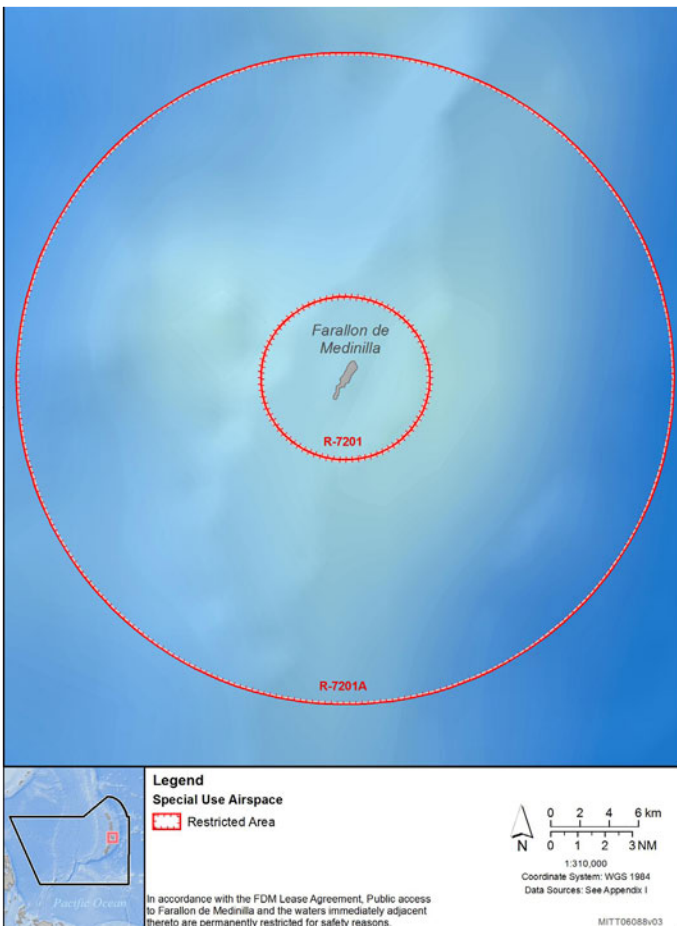
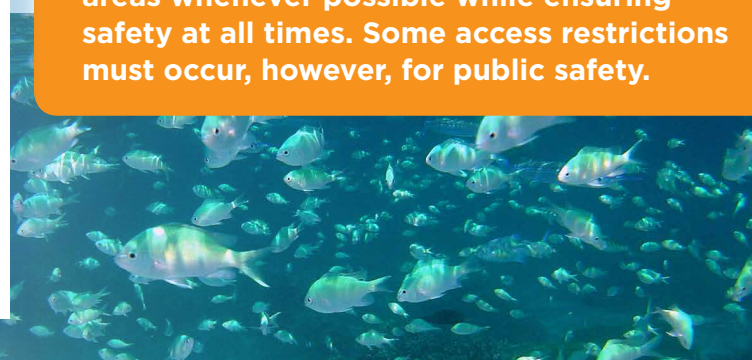


Figure 3. Restricted Areas around Farallon de Medinilla

The Navy strives to maintain access to ocean areas whenever possible while ensuring safety at all times. Some access restrictions must occur, however, for public safety.



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

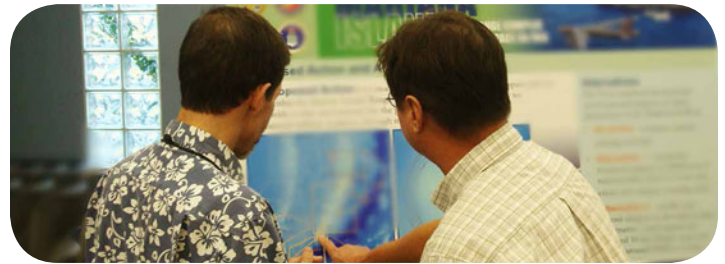
NEPA is a U.S. federal law that requires federal agencies to identify and analyze the potential environmental impacts of a proposed action before deciding whether to proceed with that action. The law encourages and facilitates public involvement to inform decision makers on actions that may affect the community or the environment.

Public involvement is a fundamental aspect of the environmental analysis process.

Public involvement is an important part of the NEPA process, and a number of opportunities are available for the public to participate throughout the development of the Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

Public and agency input allows decision makers to benefit from local knowledge and consider community issues and concerns. The public participates in the NEPA process during the following stages by:

- **Scoping Period:** Helping to identify the scope of the analysis, including potential environmental issues and viable alternatives
- **Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS Public Review and Comment Period:** Evaluating and providing substantive comments on the draft analysis
- **Final Supplemental EIS/OEIS Wait Period:** Reviewing the Final Supplemental EIS/OEIS and Navy responses to substantive comments received on the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS



How to Submit Comments on the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS

The Navy encourages the public, government agencies, elected officials, and organizations to participate and comment in any of the following ways:

- Submit comments at the public meetings
- Submit comments via the project website at: www.MITT-EIS.com
- Mail comments to:
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific
Attention: MITT Supplemental EIS/OEIS
Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **April 2, 2019**, for consideration in the Final Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

The Navy welcomes and appreciates your substantive comments. For more information about the Supplemental EIS/OEIS and to submit comments, visit www.MITT-EIS.com.



MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Due to the use of active sonar and explosives during some training and testing activities, the Navy has applied for permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act with NMFS. The Navy has requested from NMFS authorization for the incidental take of marine mammals (see glossary of terms on page 9). NMFS will request public comments on its draft Proposed Rule to issue regulations and a Letter of Authorization to the Navy. After the NEPA process is complete, NMFS would make a determination whether to issue the Navy a Final Rule and Letter of Authorization.



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS AND TIMELINE

A Supplemental EIS/OEIS is prepared when:

- 1) There are new circumstances or new information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action.
- 2) The impacts of the proposed action would result in significant environmental impacts not evaluated in the EIS/OEIS.
- 3) The agency determines the purposes of NEPA will be furthered by doing so.

STEP 9 Proposed Action Implemented:
Summer 2020

STEP 8 Record of Decision:
Summer 2020

STEP 7 Final Supplemental EIS/OEIS 30-Day Public Review and Wait Period:
Spring 2020*

STEP 6 Final Supplemental EIS/OEIS Preparation

STEP 5 Public Meetings for Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS:
Tinian: March 14, 2019*
Rota: March 15, 2019*
Saipan: March 18, 2019*
Guam: March 19, 2019*

WE ARE HERE →

STEP 4 Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS Public Review and Comment Period:
Feb. 1 – April 2, 2019*

STEP 3 Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS Preparation

STEP 2 Public Scoping Period:
Aug. 1 – Sept. 15, 2017*

STEP 1 Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplemental EIS/OEIS:
Aug. 1, 2017

* Opportunities for Public Review and Comment

Acronym Key

- **EIS:** Environmental Impact Statement
- **FDM:** Farallon de Medinilla
- **MITT:** Mariana Islands Training and Testing
- **OEIS:** Overseas Environmental Impact Statement