



Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing

Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement



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Environmental Stewardship Programs

For decades, the U.S. Navy has been operating on, over and within the world's oceans. These waters are the Navy's home as well as its workplace; the Navy treasures the oceans' resources. The Navy is committed to conserving the environment as it trains personnel and tests new technologies to defend the United States.

The U.S. Navy is a disciplined force committed to protecting the environment and is proud of its record of successful environmental stewardship and pollution prevention.

Protection of natural resources is an important goal for the Navy as it conducts necessary training and testing activities. The Navy is proud of its strong record of maintaining the environment in which it works – on land, in the air and at sea. The Navy practices numerous environmental stewardship efforts, including programs to protect endangered species and preserve critical habitats, recycle and reduce waste, and prevent ocean dumping of plastic waste.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AT SEA

While training and testing at sea, the Navy reduces its "footprint" by minimizing and recycling waste, reducing emissions and preventing pollution. Some of these programs include:

Navy Shipboard Environmental Protection

While at sea, the Navy recycles waste fuel and prevents the introduction of non-native species through ballast water management. The Navy has equipped all warships with solid waste equipment, such as plastic waste processors and metal/glass shredders, to ensure that no plastic is discharged at sea and all other solid waste discharges are made with minimal environmental impact. The Navy is also dedicated to energy conservation.

Pollution Prevention Afloat Program

The Navy's Pollution Prevention Afloat program, which integrates pollution prevention practices and equipment into ship maintenance processes, was established in 1995 in response to a growing awareness of the need to reduce hazardous materials. This program has been a vital component of the Navy's overall environmental management strategy.

In recent years, the Navy has focused additional efforts on developing partnerships and coalitions with other government agencies and organizations to better manage and protect natural and cultural resources and leverage limited resources.

Partnering for Sustainability

The Navy recognizes that it shares common goals, objectives and interests with land conservancies, environmental groups, and federal, state and local government agencies in protecting endangered and threatened species, preserving important habitat and green space, and promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. The Navy's participation in sustainability programs helps to protect both the environment and the military mission.

Statutory and Regulatory Compliance

As a responsible environmental steward, the U.S. Navy is concerned about its effects on the environment and is committed to complying with all applicable laws, regulations and policies, such as:

- National Environmental Policy Act
- Clean Air Act
- Clean Water Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
- Marine Mammal Protection Act
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- National Historic Preservation Act
- National Marine Sanctuaries Act
- Rivers and Harbors Act
- Executive Orders:
 - Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions
 - Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts and the Great Lakes
 - Recreational Fisheries
 - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations
 - Protection of Children from Environmental Health and Safety Risks
 - Coral Reef Protection
 - Marine Protected Areas
 - Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments

The Atlantic and Gulf coasts and lower Chesapeake Bay are invaluable and the Navy takes an active interest in their protection. Some examples of the Navy's successful environmental programs within the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing (AFTT) study area are described below.

Protecting The North Atlantic Right Whale

The Navy has taken a leadership role throughout the AFTT study area in the protection of the North Atlantic right whale. The Navy implements operational procedures to monitor for and avoid right whales and has established communication networks to track and avoid them. The Navy participates in a number of cooperative efforts aimed at protecting right whales, including the following:

- Conducting comprehensive crew training to spot whales and providing annual reminders to personnel about the right whales' seasonal migration (generally October 15 through April 30).
- Publicizing whale sightings in an early warning system to increase awareness among ocean users.
- Paying a portion of the cost for National Marine Fisheries Service overflights of the waters off Georgia and northern Florida to locate and relay information about migrating whales.
- Creating and managing the Right Whale Data Fusion Center, which provides a central location for multiple parties to report whale sightings or other right whale issues.
- Participating in the Southeastern U.S. Implementation Team for the Recovery of the North Atlantic Right Whale and the Northeast Implementation Team, which advise the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of efforts to recover endangered species and the implementation of the North Atlantic Right Whale Recovery Plan.



Photo credit: NOAA

Protecting Sea Turtle Nesting Areas

The Navy recently expanded its partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story by patrolling for sea turtle activity and marine mammal strandings. USFWS representatives annually conduct non-intrusive patrols along a portion of beach front property at the base during turtles' prime nesting period. If a nest is present, USFWS relocates the eggs and transfers the hatchlings to the Virginia Aquarium or to the ocean.

Helping the Gulf Coast



As of May 20, 2010, Navy pollution response experts have shipped 98,000 feet of oil containment boom to the Gulf of Mexico as part of the combined effort to reduce the environmental impact of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Naval Sea Systems Command has positioned equipment and personnel from Texas to Florida to support the unprecedented oil spill response efforts led by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security.

"Green Ship" USS Makin Island Brought to Life

Dubbed "the Prius of Navy ships," the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island, commissioned in 2009, is an example of the Navy's efforts to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. During the ship's transit from Pascagoula, Miss., to San Diego, Calif., the USS Makin Island used approximately 900,000 gallons less fuel than a conventional ship completing the same transit. In addition to the environmental benefits, it also resulted in a savings of more than \$2 million in fuel costs. Other initiatives include the use of an electric plant to power auxiliaries, meaning no steam or associated chemicals, and the use of reverse osmosis water purification systems that negate the need for chemicals such as bromine or chlorine.



Restoring the Natural Environment

Over the years, rubber tires from an artificial reef have washed up on Florida beaches. With the cooperative efforts of the Navy's Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 2, Coastal America, and other federal and state partners, the Osborne Reef in Fort Lauderdale is evolving from an unsuccessful artificial reef venture to a training opportunity for military salvage teams with the goal of removing and recycling more than one million tires.

