



# Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement



Aug/Sept  
2010

## NEPA Process and Community Involvement

### WHY IS THE NAVY PREPARING AN EIS/OEIS?

The U.S. Navy is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) to assess the potential environmental effects from current and future Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing (AFTT) activities at sea. This EIS/OEIS will assist the Navy in consolidating and renewing regulatory permits and authorizations under various environmental laws and regulations.

The AFTT EIS/OEIS is part of the Navy's environmental planning and regulatory compliance effort. The Navy's previous assessments of its activities in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico and the lower Chesapeake Bay are provided in separate EIS/OEIS documents. The analyses focused on non-sonar activities at several individual training areas and one which included all sonar-related activities.

The AFTT EIS/OEIS will be one consolidated assessment of all AFTT activities at sea. Previous analyses will be reevaluated and potential impacts from new activities will be analyzed. The EIS/OEIS also gives the Navy the opportunity to review its procedures to ensure that the benefits of recent scientific and technological advances are applied toward minimizing potential environmental effects.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires federal agencies to examine the potential environmental effects of their activities in order to allow informed decision-making. An EIS is a detailed public document that provides an assessment of the potential effects a federal action may have on the human, natural or cultural environment.

An OEIS is prepared to comply with U.S. Executive Order 12114, Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions of 1979. The Executive Order requires federal agencies to consider the potential effects of their actions on the environment outside the U.S. territorial sea. The U.S. territorial sea extends 12 nautical miles from shore.

### HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY BE INVOLVED?



Community involvement is a critical part of the EIS/OEIS process and there are a number of opportunities for the public to participate throughout the EIS/OEIS development. In August and September 2010, the Navy is holding five scoping meetings in an open house format to inform the public about the proposed action and to receive public comments on resource areas to be studied in the environmental analysis. During the open houses, informational poster stations and Navy project team representatives will be available to provide the public with an opportunity to learn more about the NEPA process, the proposed action and alternatives.

### WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

The Navy has established a website, [www.AFTTEIS.com](http://www.AFTTEIS.com), where the public can find project documents, fact sheets and additional information. The website also provides background information on environmental topics referenced in project documents. As project documents become available, information repositories will be established throughout the AFTT study area to allow for public review. The locations of those repositories will be listed on the project website once they are established.

## NEPA PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The public participates in the NEPA process by helping to identify environmental issues and potential alternatives during the scoping period and by evaluating the analysis of the proposed action and alternatives during the public review period. All public comments are considered and the Navy will not proceed with the proposed action until the NEPA process is complete.

### The Navy Appreciates Your Input

Public involvement is a fundamental part of the AFTT EIS/OEIS development, and the U.S. Navy wants and appreciates your comments. The Navy has established several venues and informational resource areas for the public to learn and provide input.

Comments on the AFTT EIS/OEIS will be accepted via mail or the project website as part of the scoping process. All comments should be submitted no later than September 14, 2010, for consideration in the Draft EIS/OEIS.

For more information or to submit comments, please contact:

**Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Atlantic**  
**ATTN: AFTT EIS/OEIS PM - Code EV22LL**  
**6506 Hampton Boulevard**  
**Norfolk, VA 23508-1278**

MILESTONES	DESCRIPTION	SCHEDULE
Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an EIS/OEIS	Publication of the NOI in the Federal Register starts the initial public involvement phase of the process.	July 15, 2010
Scoping Period	The scoping process actively involves the public and other agencies in identifying the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIS/OEIS as well as other potential alternatives to accomplish the project's purpose and need. The comment period for this EIS/OEIS will end on September 14, 2010, providing a 60-day comment period.	<b>Boston, MA</b> August 23, 2010 <b>Virginia Beach, VA</b> August 25, 2010 <b>Morehead City, NC</b> August 26, 2010 <b>Jacksonville, FL</b> August 31, 2010 <b>Panama City, FL</b> September 1, 2010
<b>Public Review and Comment Opportunity</b>		
Draft EIS/OEIS	The Draft EIS/OEIS presents the analysis of potential environmental impacts for the proposed action and each of the identified alternatives, including a no action alternative. The Draft EIS/OEIS will be available for public and agency review and comment. The Draft EIS/OEIS will be filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and made available to interested parties.	Winter 2011/2012
Public Hearings and Comment Period	Under NEPA regulations, the public must be provided a minimum of 45 days to comment on the analysis presented in the Draft EIS/OEIS. Comments may be submitted at the public hearings, via U.S. postal mail or on the project website.	Winter 2011/2012
<b>Public Review and Comment Opportunity</b>		
Final EIS/OEIS	The Final EIS/OEIS is an update to the Draft EIS/OEIS based on comments received during the public hearings and comment period. The Notice of Availability for the Final EIS/OEIS is published in the Federal Register and appropriate general circulation newspapers. The Final EIS/OEIS will be filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and made available to interested parties.	Summer 2013
30-Day Wait Period	Regulations provide for a 30-day wait period after the Final EIS/OEIS is published before the agency may take final action.	Summer/Fall 2013
Record of Decision	After the 30-day wait period and fully considering the potential environmental effects, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy, Installations and Environment) will select an alternative and issue a Record of Decision. A notice of the Record of Decision is published in the Federal Register and appropriate general circulation newspapers and made available to the public.	Fall 2013

■ Complete

■ In Progress

