

FACTS

on Navy EIS/OEIS Mar 2019 Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Northwest Training and Testing

The Navy plan is unacceptable because:

- It will damage Olympic National Park and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary
 - It will disturb visitors to, and the wildlife of, Olympic National Park;
 - Eighth most-visited park in the National Park System; 3.4 million visitors to Olympic National Park in 2017
 - International Biosphere Reserve and a World Heritage Site
 - In the Marine Sanctuary they are asking for extension of a NOAA permit for "incidental takes of marine mammals ... and incidental takes of threatened and endangered marine species."
- The noise will cause problems to the health and economy of the Olympic Peninsula.
 - Health effects on people:
 - Noise causes and aggravates health problems
 - High blood pressure (hypertension),
 - Heart disease (ischemic heart disease),
 - Hearing impairment
 - Increases or creates mental health problems
 - Increases accidents (stress, startle and inability to hear danger)
 - Sound profile of the Growler is very different than other jets. Not only loud but includes a low-frequency vibration that travels farther and vibrates objects in its path. This aspect of the Growler's complex noise profile creates a deadly combination beyond annoyance that impacts human health.
- Economic effects on Peninsula;
 - People spent \$279 million in communities near the park.
 - That spending supported 3,556 jobs in the local area, and
 - Had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$385 million
- Idaho and Nevada training areas were designed for warfare training; the Olympic Peninsula was not.
- In addition to the National Park and Marine Sanctuary, the noise created by the activities in the EIS will also affect:
 - Washington Islands Wilderness;
 - Washington Islands National Wildlife Refuges;
 - Washington State Department of Natural Resources land;
 - Quinault, Quileute, and Hoh Reservations;
 - Thousands of acres of private land, including the towns of Forks and Amanda Park;
 - People, birds, and wildlife living on the Peninsula and visitors to the Peninsula.

The Navy claims the **no action option** would cause "Cessation of military at-sea training and testing activities in the NWT Study Area would mean that the Navy would not meet its statutory requirements and would be unable to properly defend itself and the United States from enemy forces, unable to successfully detect enemy submarines, and unable to safely and effectively use its weapons systems or defensive countermeasures. Navy personnel would essentially not obtain the unique skills or be prepared to safely and effectively use sensors, weapons, and technologies in realistic scenarios required to accomplish the overall mission. Consequently, the No Action Alternative is inherently unreasonable because it does not meet the purpose and need." [EIS p. ES-4] Navy EIS/OEIS Mar 2019 Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Northwest Training and Testing]

OPA argues this is a continuation of a completely irresponsible regard for the Washington state environment by the Navy. The two alternatives the Navy supports would condemn the western areas of Olympic National Park to intolerable noise and the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary to activity that would defeat its purpose.

The Navy already has shown its disregard for the environment. In Washington state alone, they allowed workers in the Bremerton Navy Yard to become sick because of their irresponsible lack of oversight of their working conditions despite warnings on those conditions. [KING5]

They "committed multiple violations of the Clean Water Act by its decision to release toxic substances into the Sinclair Inlet, which flows into the Puget Sound, and failed to obtain the proper permits when cleaning a decommissioned aircraft carrier, the USS Independence." [AG Ferguson]

The Navy broke off discussions "with state and local groups about easing the impacts of expanding EA-18G Growler jet training over a central Whidbey Island historic district.

"A Navy statement Friday cited a 'fundamental difference of opinion' on what should be done to reduce the noise and other adverse effects of the training flights.

"The breakdown of talks is the latest sign of a bitter divide between the Navy and many residents of the rural central part of the island who fiercely oppose plans to quadruple, in the years ahead, the number of Growler flights over the Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve." [*Seattle Times*, Dec. 3, 2018]

To tell the American public they cannot train in any other place is untrue. They have been doing the electronic warfare training in Idaho and Nevada for decades. Why do they want to move here? The Mountain Home, Idaho base is under control of the Air Force. To relieve themselves of that burden, they are trying to bring a large group (118) growler jets to a base and airfields that are too small for safe operations. They are already harming Coupeville residences with the noise and are contaminating the ground water with their use and disposal of chemicals. In a booming Northwest real estate market, many in Coupeville can't sell their homes because of the noise.

To say that the only acceptable place to do their off-shore training is the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary certainly lacks imagination. To say in the millions of miles of U.S. coastline there is no other area defies belief. Why they want it is because it is close to Whidbey. They claim, and it is true, they have traditionally used this area for training for decades. However, their traditional training was much less taxing on the environment. In this EIS they will be asking NOAA for a continuation of their 2015 NOAA permit. As the EIS states, "reauthorization of incidental takes of marine mammals under the MMPA and incidental takes of threatened and endangered marine species under the ESA." [p. ES-4 Navy EIS/OEIS Mar 2019 Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Northwest Training and Testing]

The **No Action Alternative** may not meet the purpose and need of the Navy, but it perfectly fits the need of its citizens to live in a peaceful and productive environment. Since 1907 areas of the Olympic Peninsula have been set aside to protect Peninsula wildlife. Beginning with Theodore Roosevelt and a series of congressional acts, this protection is in wildlife refuges, a national park for the enjoyment of its citizens, elk, other unique wildlife, wilderness areas to protect the resources from human damage, and a national marine sanctuary. This area the Navy wishes to convert into an electronic warfare training area has been designated as an environmentally sensitive area for 112 years. The Navy needs to rethink its plans. The Navy is needed to protect us, not harass us.