

Final
Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement
Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing

Lead Agency: United States Department of the Navy
Cooperating Agency: National Marine Fisheries Service
Title of the Proposed Action: Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing
Designation: Final Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement

Abstract

The United States Department of the Navy (Navy) prepared this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Executive Order 12114. This EIS/OEIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of conducting training and testing activities after December 2018 in the Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing Study Area (Study Area). The Study Area is made up of air and sea space off Southern California, around the Hawaiian Islands, and the transit corridor connecting them. Three alternatives were analyzed in this EIS/OEIS:

- The No Action Alternative would be no training and testing activities associated with the Proposed Action within the Study Area.
- Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative) reflects a representative year of training and testing to account for the natural fluctuation of training and testing cycles and deployment schedules that generally limit the maximum level of activities from occurring year after year in any 5-year period. Using a representative level of activities rather than maximum level reduces the amount of ship hull-mounted, mid-frequency active sonar estimated to meet requirements. Under Alternative 1, the Navy assumes that some unit-level training and testing would be conducted using synthetic means (e.g., simulators). Additionally, this alternative assumes that some unit-level active sonar training will be completed through other training exercises.
- Under Alternative 2, the Navy would be enabled to meet the highest levels of required military readiness in order to respond to naval opponents. Alternative 2 reflects the maximum number of training and testing activities that could occur within a given year and assumes that the maximum level of activity would occur every year over a 5-year period. This allows for the greatest flexibility for the Navy to maintain readiness when considering potential changes in the national security environment, fluctuations in schedules, and anticipated in-theater demands.

The resources evaluated include air quality, sediments and water quality, vegetation, invertebrates, habitats, fishes, marine mammals, reptiles, birds, cultural resources, socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety.

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