
3.10 Cultural Resources

3.10 CULTURAL RESOURCES

3.10.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

For purposes of this Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (Supplemental EIS/OEIS), the Region of Influence (ROI) for cultural resources remains the same as that identified in the March 2011 Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Navy Training Activities Final EIS/OEIS and includes the Temporary Maritime Activities Area (TMAA) (the Study Area).

3.10.1.1 Existing Conditions

As presented in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, the focus of cultural resources is on submerged resources, which are sites that may, or may not, have cultural affiliation. Submerged resources in the Alaska Region may include prehistoric and/or historic coastal migration and settlement sites, shipwrecks, airplanes, or pieces of ship components, such as cannons or guns. Following a review of recent literature, including a review of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's list of shipwrecks in Alaska (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management 2011), no additional submerged cultural resources have been identified within the Study Area. As such, the information and analysis presented in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS is still valid. Additionally, the Navy is in ongoing discussions with several federally recognized Native Alaska tribes that have traditional use areas in the GOA TMAA.

3.10.1.2 Current Requirements and Practices

As stated in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, the United States Department of the Navy (Navy) has established protective measures to reduce potential effects on cultural resources from training exercises in coastal waters and on land and sea ranges. Protective measures include using inert ordnance or avoiding known shipwreck sites. Precise locations for shipwrecks in the TMAA are not known. However, as stated in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, should there be a shipwreck discovery, the Navy would cease the specific training that could potentially impact the resource until federal authorities (e.g., Navy Federal Preservation Officer, Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer) are notified and appropriate actions determined.

3.10.2 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

All three alternatives (No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2), as discussed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, remain the same for this Supplemental EIS/OEIS. The Navy conducted a review of existing federal and state regulations and standards relevant to cultural resources, as well as a review of new literature, to include laws, regulations, and publications pertaining to cultural resources. No additional information was found that indicates an appreciable change to the existing environmental conditions as described in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS. Because the existing conditions have not changed appreciably, and no new Navy training activities are being proposed to occur in the TMAA in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS, re-analysis of the alternatives with respect to cultural resources is not warranted. Subsequently, the conclusions made for the alternatives analyzed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS remain unchanged in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

3.10.3 CONCLUSION

As described above, there is no information on existing environmental conditions that changes the affected environment, which forms the environmental baseline of the cultural resources analysis in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS. Additionally, no new Navy training activities are being proposed in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS that would affect cultural resources in the TMAA. Therefore, conclusions for cultural resources impacts made for the alternatives analyzed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS remain

unchanged in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS. For a summary of effects of the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2 on cultural resources under both the National Environmental Protection Act and Executive Order 12114, please refer to Table 3.10-3 (Summary of Effects by Alternative) on pages 3.10-10 and 3.10-11 of the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS.

REFERENCES CITED AND CONSIDERED

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. (2011). Shipwrecks off Alaska's Coast. Available from <http://www.boem.gov/About-BOEM/BOEM-Regions/Alaska-Region/Ships/Index.aspx>.

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