



# **PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY REPORT**

## **Gulf of Alaska Navy Training Activities Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement**

**FINAL**

**May 2020**

**Gulf of Alaska Navy Training Activities  
Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement  
Public Scoping Summary Report**

This report summarizes the public involvement and stakeholder outreach activities conducted by the U.S. Navy (Navy) for the *Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Navy Training Activities Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS)* during the public scoping period, which ran from Feb. 10, 2020, to March 11, 2020. The purpose of public involvement and outreach was 1) to notify and inform stakeholders and the public about the Proposed Action, and 2) to provide the opportunity for the public to comment on the scope of the analysis, including potential environmental issues and viable alternatives to be considered in the development of the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS. Involvement and outreach efforts were conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Navy guidance.

**Summary of Activities**

**A. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

The following materials notified the public of the Navy’s intent to prepare a Supplemental EIS/OEIS, the Proposed Action, how to provide comments on the scope of the analysis to be considered during the development of the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS, and the commenting period. Public notices can be found on the [Public Notices page](#).

***Federal Register Notices***

A Notice of Intent was published in the *Federal Register* on Feb. 10, 2020.

***Newspaper Advertisements***

Display advertisements were placed in local newspapers. The advertisements were published for three consecutive publication days, beginning Feb. 10, 2020. Publication dates were dependent on the newspaper’s publication frequency (daily, semi-weekly, weekly).

Table 1 shows the newspapers and corresponding publication dates for each advertisement.

**Table 1: Newspaper Publications for Public Scoping Period**

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Newspaper Coverage</b>	<b>Publication Frequency</b>	<b>Publication Dates</b>
<i>Anchorage Daily News</i>	Anchorage	Daily except Saturday	Monday, Feb. 10, 2020 Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020 Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020
<i>Cordova Times</i>	Cordova and Prince William Sound	Friday only	Friday, Feb. 14, 2020 Friday, Feb. 21, 2020 Friday, Feb. 28, 2020
<i>Juneau Empire</i>	Juneau and Southeastern Alaska	Tuesday-Friday and Sunday	Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020 Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020 Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020
<i>Kodiak Daily Mirror</i>	Kodiak	Monday-Friday	Monday, Feb. 10, 2020 Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020 Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020

Newspaper	Newspaper Coverage	Publication Frequency	Publication Dates
<i>Peninsula Clarion</i>	Kenai-Soldotna Area	Tuesday-Friday and Sunday	Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020 Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020 Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020

**Postcard Mailer**

A postcard was mailed first-class to 556 individuals, community groups, tribal staff, and nongovernmental organizations on Feb. 7, 2020.

**Stakeholder and Tribal Notification Letters**

Tribal letters were mailed on Feb. 6, 2020, via priority mail to 24 tribal chairpersons of federally recognized tribes. Stakeholder letters were mailed first-class on Feb. 7, 2020, to 128 federal, state, and local elected officials and government agencies.

**News Release**

The Commander, Navy Region Northwest Public Affairs Office distributed a news release to local and regional media outlets on Feb. 10, 2020.

**Website Subscriber Email Notification**

An email notification was sent to website subscribers on Feb. 10, 2020. As of Mar. 11, 2020, there were 48 website subscribers.

**B. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

**Project Website**

A project website was established to provide the public with project information and to accept comments electronically. Public notices, the fact sheet booklet, posters, maps, frequently asked questions, public involvement information, and informational videos were posted on the website. The website was periodically updated with project announcements and other updates. The project website address is [www.GOAEIS.com](http://www.GOAEIS.com).

**Expanded Outreach**

Navy personnel conducted expanded outreach with stakeholders and the public at three Alaska public events prior to and during the scoping period: the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention, the Alaska Marine Science Symposium, and the Alaska Forum on the Environment Convention. Expanded outreach will continue throughout the development of the Supplemental EIS/OEIS to ensure stakeholders are kept informed. Table 2 provides more information about the Alaska public events.

**Table 2: Navy Participation in Alaska Public Events Prior to and During the Scoping Period**

Stakeholders	Conducted By	Format of Outreach	Date
Alaska Federation of Natives Convention	U.S. Pacific Fleet NAVFAC Northwest	Stewards of the Sea Outreach booth	Oct. 17-19, 2019
Alaska Marine Science Symposium	U.S. Pacific Fleet NAVFAC Northwest	Stewards of the Sea Outreach booth	Jan. 27-28, 2020
Alaska Forum on the Environment Convention	U.S. Pacific Fleet NAVFAC Northwest	Stewards of the Sea Outreach booth; public presentation during Military Training in Alaska panel	Feb. 10-14, 2020

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### ***Fact Sheet Booklet***

An 8-page [fact sheet booklet](#) was developed to provide project information to the public and included the following topics:

- Introduction to the Navy’s intent to prepare a Supplemental EIS/OEIS
- Military Training in Alaska
- Importance of Realistic Training
- Northern Edge Joint Training Exercises
- Temporary Maritime Activities Area
- Future Training Requirements
- Protective Mitigation Measures
- Key Updates to be Made in the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS
- Protection of Marine Species and the Marine Environment
- Community Engagement

### ***Posters***

Five [posters](#) were made available on the project website and included the following topics:

- Navy Training in the Gulf of Alaska
- Proposed Action and Alternatives
- Training with Active Sonar and Weapon Systems
- Marine Species Protection
- NEPA Process and Public Involvement

### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

Frequently asked questions were developed to provide the public with additional project information and can be found on the [FAQs page](#).

## **C. PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENTS**

The public scoping period was open from Feb. 10, 2020, to March 11, 2020. Throughout the public comment period, a total of 25 comment letters were received. Comment letters were submitted via the project website’s electronic comment form (22) and via postal mail (3). Public comments touched on the following themes:

- Need for temporal mitigation measures (i.e., move training to a time of year that isn’t as biologically important for species’ feeding and migration)
- Change in the training area (e.g., reduction in size, movement further offshore, avoiding seamount areas)
- Use of sonar and explosives
- Need for real-time monitoring during training exercises; use of independent on-board scientific observers
- Support for the Proposed Action/Navy training
- Request for a Navy detachment on Adak
- Concern regarding potential impacts on:
  - Overall marine ecosystem
  - Marine mammals, including potential strandings

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- Fish populations
  - Species navigation and migration
  - Prey availability
  - Marine habitat
  - Request for more marine research and monitoring of activities
  - Request for increased public engagement with local communities

The Navy will consider the substantive comments received when developing the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS.