

NAVAIR Sustainability Office

POINT MUGU, CA



The NAVAIR Range Department Sustainability offices at Patuxent River, Md.; China Lake, Calif.; and Point Mugu, Calif., ensure environmental compliance and manage (minimize) encroachment on operations conducted at NAVAIR Ranges at these three sites. The Range Sustainability Office supports the fleet's sustainable readiness by ensuring access to NAVAIR ranges, facilities and resources, and promotes public support for NAVAIR's test, training, evaluation and experimentation mission.

The Range Sustainability Office at Point Mugu is responsible for assuring the sustainability of the Point Mugu Sea Range and provides the following core functions:

- Environmental review of all Sea Range events
- Monitoring and tracking of, and engagement on encroachment issues
- Monitoring and tracking in accordance with the Sea Range Environmental Impact Statement
- Cultural and natural resources monitoring and stewardship at San Nicolas Island
- Range management planning support



Target missile launch for weapons testing



Cave of the Whales rock art on San Nicolas Island



Marine mammal populations on San Nicolas Island



Two-nation CSSQT on Sea Range

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Point Mugu Sea Range reached an important environmental achievement in 2002 when its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) / Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for continuing weapons system test and evaluation reached a Record of Decision (ROD). The EIS/OEIS provided for increased fleet training, special warfare training and new Theater Missile Defense testing and training. The EIS puts the Sea Range in compliance with environmental requirements and positions it for the future by addressing existing and future operations.

Along with the EIS, the Navy has obtained annual Letters of Authorization (LOAs) under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The EIS, IHAs and LOAs document the Navy's efforts to protect marine mammals and ensure that no harm comes to the large breeding marine mammal populations found on San Nicolas Island. NMFS LOAs include requirements for monitoring and reporting conducted by Sustainability Office staff. Through continued marine mammal monitoring, Sea Range testing and training operations can continue in compliance with the MMPA.

With a signed EIS in place, the Navy is able to meet its commitment to conserve and protect the unique natural and cultural resources of the Sea Range and San Nicolas Island while completing the Navy's mission. The Sea Range efficiently and effectively uses the assets under its control to meet strategic planning initiatives while complying with all applicable local, state and federal environmental laws.

The EIS is reviewed periodically to ensure it meets operational requirements of the Sea Range while continuing to assure environmental compliance. The most recent review was conducted in spring 2010.

ENHANCED READINESS TEAM

The Navy encourages the establishment of encroachment management teams, also called ERTs, to provide an interdisciplinary approach to addressing encroachment issues. In 2002, a local ERT was established that includes representatives from Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) and Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division. These commands provide subject-matter experts from Operations, Engineering, Environmental, Legal, Natural Resources, Public Affairs, Range Operations, RDT&E Operations, Safety and other disciplines as required.

The Sustainability Office leads and the NBVC Installation Environmental Program Manager co-chairs the local ERT, which addresses local encroachment issues and supports the Southwest region by providing them with encroachment information.

THE SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE:

- Reviews all planned test and training operations to ensure environmental compliance
- Analyzes future program requirements and operations
- Maintains and manages project planning checklists for proposed actions for operations
- Provides Geospatial Information System (GIS) and mapping support for natural and cultural resources issues
- Monitors marine mammal populations and determines marine mammal presence during operations with potential to harm animals
- In compliance with federal permits, produces annual marine mammal monitoring reports, which provide a summary of events and impacts to marine mammals, if any
- Periodically reviews the status of EIS conservation measures to ensure consistency with the ROD
- Provides subject-matter experts for natural resources (marine and terrestrial) and cultural resources issues
- Reviews and comments on draft OPNAV and NAVAIR instructions and policy documents to ensure field experience is considered and addressed
- Provides on-site natural and cultural resources expertise and input for all San Nicolas Island operations, including NBVC facilities management
- Supports the Pacific Fleet by supplying data related to fleet training that takes place in the Sea Range
- Provides Navy representation on local federal agency advisory panels and technical teams