



# Gulf of Mexico

## Range Complex

### Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS)

The Navy is holding four public hearings to inform the public of the findings in the Draft Gulf of Mexico Range Complex EIS/OEIS and to solicit public comment. At each public hearing, informational poster stations and Navy project team representatives are available to provide the public with an opportunity to learn more about the NEPA process, the Proposed Action, and the Navy's environmental stewardship programs and protective measures. Government agencies, organizations, and the public will have the opportunity to provide oral or written comments at the public hearings or to provide written comments throughout the public review period. The Navy will consider each of the comments received and address them in the Final Gulf of Mexico Range Complex EIS/OEIS.



To encourage public input, the Navy is holding public hearings for the Gulf of Mexico Range Complex Draft EIS/OEIS at four locations along the Gulf Coast. These are listed below:

#### For More Information and to Submit Comments

**February 2, 2009**  
Bay Point Marriott  
4200 Marriott Drive  
Panama City Beach, FL 32408

**February 4, 2009**  
New Orleans Marriott  
555 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130

**February 3, 2009**  
New World Inn  
600 South Palafox Street  
Pensacola, FL 32302

**February 6, 2009**  
Holiday Inn-Emerald Beach Hotel  
1102 South Shoreline Boulevard  
Corpus Christi, TX 78401

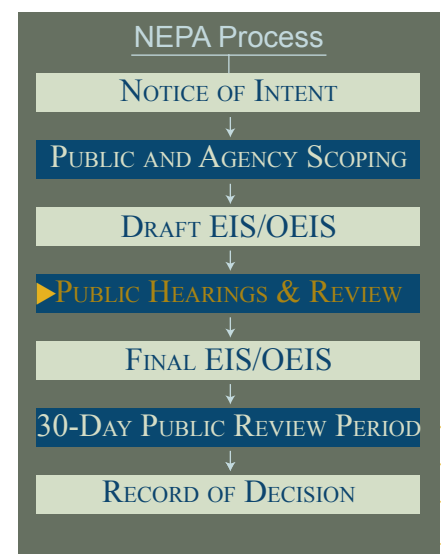
In addition to holding public hearings, the Navy has established a user-friendly Web site that makes it easy to download the environmental documents currently available for review (e.g., the Draft EIS/OEIS). The Web site also serves as a source for background information (e.g., fact sheets, posters, and links to related environmental topics) for those who want to learn more.

The public may also review the Gulf of Mexico Range Complex Draft EIS/OEIS by visiting any of the following information repositories:

- Bay County Public Library, 898 West 11th Street, Panama City, FL 32401
- Pensacola Public Library, 200 West Gregory Street, Pensacola, FL 32501
- West Florida Public Library-Southwest Branch, 12248 Gulf Beach Highway, Pensacola, FL 32507
- Walton County Coastal Library, 437 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
- Meridian-Lauderdale County Public Library, 2517 Seventh Street, Meridian, MS 39301
- Ben May Main Library, 701 Government Street, Mobile, AL 36602
- East Bank Regional Library, 4747 West Napoleon Avenue, Metairie, LA 70001
- New Orleans Public Library – Main Library, 219 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70112
- Central Library, 805 Comanche, Corpus Christi, TX 78401
- Southmost Branch Library, 4320 Southmost Blvd, Southmost, TX 78522

#### Community Involvement

The NEPA process emphasizes the importance of community involvement during the development of an EIS/OEIS. The above diagram illustrates the steps of the NEPA process, with the blue boxes indicating opportunities for the public and interested stakeholders to provide input.



## Federal Environmental Regulations

Federal regulations govern activities that may affect the environment, including Navy training and testing activities. The Navy complies with applicable environmental regulations, including:

### National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NEPA of 1969 established national policies and goals for the protection of the environment. Its procedural requirements direct all Federal agencies to give appropriate consideration to the environmental effects of their decision-making prior to the action taking place and to prepare detailed environmental statements on any action that may significantly affect the quality of the environment.

### Executive Order 12114, Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions

Enacted by President Carter in 1979, this Executive Order requires Federal agencies to consider the impacts of actions that may affect the environment outside U.S. territorial waters.

### Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)

MMPA of 1972 prohibits the 'take' of marine mammals in U.S. waters and on land, and by U.S. citizens on the high seas. A 'take' is an action that results in an injury or a disturbance of a marine mammal's critical behavior. The Secretary of Commerce has the authority, upon request, to authorize the unintentional taking of marine mammals incidental to activities. For military readiness activities, the determination of impacts on marine mammal species or stocks includes considerations of "personal safety, practicality of implementation, and impact on the effectiveness of the military readiness activity." (National Defense Authorization Act, 2003)

### Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Established in 1973 to preserve the nation's natural heritage by conserving wildlife species, ESA sets out requirements to be followed by Federal agencies with regard to potential impacts of any action on endangered or threatened species and their critical habitat.

### National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA)

NMSA authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to designate and protect areas of the marine environment with special national significance due to their conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, scientific, cultural, archeological, educational, or esthetic qualities as national marine sanctuaries.

### Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA)

As a Federal-State partnership, CZMA provides for the preservation, protection, development, restoration, and enhancement of the nation's coastal zone resources.

### Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act provides for the conservation and management of U.S. fishery resources. In 1996, the Act was reauthorized and amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act to include habitat conservation provisions in the form of "Essential Fish Habitat" designation and protection.

### The Gulf of Mexico Range Complex EIS/OEIS

In compliance with NEPA and Executive Order 12114, the Navy has prepared the Gulf of Mexico Range Complex EIS/OEIS to plan for the future and to assess the effects of the Navy's ongoing and future training and testing activities on the environment. The Gulf of Mexico Range Complex EIS/OEIS also gives the Navy the opportunity to review its procedures and ensure that the benefits of recent scientific and technological advances are applied toward minimizing environmental effects.



**THE NAVY  
WANTS  
YOUR  
INPUT!**

For more information or to submit comments, please contact:

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