



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDER
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
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IN REPLY REFER TO:

5090

Ser N46/0052

January 30, 2024

Office Director, Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
B-SSMC3, Room 13821
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

Dear Director:

On behalf of Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, enclosed is a printed copy of the unclassified Northwest Training and Testing (NWTT) Study Area Annual Training Report for the third year of the authorization (6 pages). The classified annex of this report will be delivered separately.

This report is submitted pursuant to the reporting requirements for the NWTT Study Area Marine Mammal Protection Act authorization.

Please extend my thanks to your staff for their continued support of the U.S. Navy's compliance process. We are available to discuss with you or your staff should you have comments on the enclosed report or recommendations for future reports. My point of contact for these matters is Mr. Ben Kostenbader at 808-471-4683 or arnold.r.kostenbader.civ@us.navy.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. H. Beattie".

J. H. BEATTIE
Captain, U.S. Navy
Deputy Fleet Civil Engineer
By direction

Enclosure: 2023 Unclassified NWTT Study Area Annual Training Report, Year 3

Prepared for and submitted to:

National Marine Fisheries Service
Office of Protected Resources

Prepared by:

Department of the Navy

In accordance with the Letters of Authorization
Under the MMPA and ITS authorization under
the ESA 06 November 2020

2023
Northwest Training & Testing (NWTT)
Study Area Annual Training Report
09 November 2022 to 08 November 2023
Year 3

09 FEBRUARY 2024

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NORTHWEST TRAINING AND TESTING STUDY AREA TRAINING REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Navy prepared this Annual Training Report covering the period from 09 November 2022 to 08 November 2023 in compliance with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Final Rule, Letter of Authorization (LOA), and Incidental Take Statements under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and Endangered Species Act (ESA) authorizations for the U.S. Navy's Northwest Training and Testing (NWTT) Study Area. All classified information during this reporting period is available in the classified annex of this report.

In the NWTT Final Rule and Letter of Authorization,¹ the following report subsections were specified and are present within this report:

(1) Summary of Sources Used

- (i) Total annual hours or quantity of each bin of sonar or other transducers
- (ii) Total annual expended/detonated ordnance (missiles, bombs, sonobuoys, etc.) for each explosive bin

The information in this report represents the best practical data collection for this period.

The Letter of Authorization sections 7(e) and 7(f) state the Navy will report additional details and sonar usage specific to the Mitigation Areas (MA) within NWTT. This information is present in this report in sections (2) and (3).

¹NWTT: 7(e) of the Letter of Authorization, and 50 CFR §218.145(e)(1).

(1) NWTT – Summary of Sources Used

This section summarizes total annual usage of each type of sound source used for training within NWTT from 09 November 2022 to 08 November 2023, which constitutes Year 3 of the 7-year authorization.

(i) Total annual hours or quantity of each bin of sonar or other transducers

Table 1-1. Annual Training Acoustic Source Usage within the NWTT Study Area by Source Bin

Authorized sound sources from NWTT Final Rule	Authorized Amount (09Nov22 – 08Nov23)	Actual Usage (09Nov22 – 08Nov23)	% Used of Authorized Amount
(i) Acoustic Sources Used During Annual Training			
<i>See classified annex for acoustic sources</i>			

(ii) Total annual expended/detonated ordnance for each explosive bin

Table 1-2. Annual Training Explosive Source Usage within the NWTT Study Area by Source Bin

Authorized sound sources from NWTT Final Rule	Authorized Amount (09Nov22 – 08Nov23)	Actual Usage (09Nov22 – 08Nov23)	% Used of Authorized Amount	
(ii) Explosive Sources Used During Annual Training				
E1	Medium-caliber projectile	120 detonations	0	0%
E2	Medium-caliber projectile	130 detonations	0	0%
E3	Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mine Neutralization	6 detonations	0	0%
E5	Large-caliber projectile	112 detonations	0	0%
E10	General purpose bomb / Air-to-surface missile	4 detonations	0	0%

Table 1-3. 7-year Cumulative Training Sound Source Usage within the NWTT Study Area by Source Bin

Sound Source Bin	Year 1 Actual Usage (09Nov20 – 08Nov21)	Year 2 Actual Usage (09Nov21 – 08Nov22)	Year 3 Actual Usage (09Nov22 – 08Nov23)	7-yr Authorized Amount (09Nov20 – 08Nov27)	7-yr Cumulative Actual Usage (09Nov20 – 08Nov27)	% Used of 7-yr Authorized Amount
(i) Acoustic Sources Used During Annual Training						
<i>See classified annex for acoustic sources</i>						
(ii) Explosive Sources Used During Annual Training						
E1	120	0	0	672 detonations	120	18%
E2	14	0	0	728 detonations	14	2%
E3	1	0	0	42 detonations	1	2%
E5	0	40	0	628 detonations	40	6%
E10	2	2	0	9 detonations	4	44%

(2) NWTT – Requirements Associated with Mitigation Areas

This section contains details regarding specific requirements associated with seven mitigation areas within NWTT. These areas and requirements are delineated in §218.144(a)(2) of the Final Rule and Condition 6(2) of the Letter of Authorization.

(i) Marine Species Coastal Mitigation Area

The Navy met all requirements for actions within 50 NM, 20 NM, and 12 NM from shore in accordance with paragraphs (6)(2)(i)(A), (B), (C), and (D) of the Letter of Authorization.

(ii) Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Mitigation Area

The Navy met all requirements in accordance with paragraphs (6)(2)(ii)(A), (B), (C), (D), and (E) of the Letter of Authorization.

The amount of surface ship hull-mounted MF1 mid-frequency active sonar used during training in the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Mitigation Area (OCNMS MA) during the reporting period can be found in the classified annex to this report.

(iii) Juan de Fuca Eddy Marine Species Mitigation Area

The Navy met all requirements in accordance with paragraphs (6)(2)(iii)(A), (B), and (C) of the Letter of Authorization.

(iv) Stonewall and Heceta Bank Humpback Whale Mitigation Area

The Navy met all requirements in accordance with paragraphs (6)(2)(iv)(A), (B), and (C) of the Letter of Authorization.

(v) Point St. George Humpback Whale Mitigation Area

The Navy met all requirements in accordance with paragraphs (6)(2)(v)(A), (B), and (C) of the Letter of Authorization.

(vi) Northern Puget Sound Gray Whale Mitigation Area

The Navy met all requirements in accordance with paragraphs (6)(2)(vi)(A) and (B) of the Letter of Authorization.

(vii) Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca Mitigation Area

The Navy met all requirements in accordance with paragraphs (6)(2)(vii)(A), (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), and (H) of the Letter of Authorization.

(3) NWTT – Annual Classified Mitigation Area Sonar Usage

This section contains additional classified details of active sonar usage in specified mitigation areas within NWTT. These areas and requirements are delineated in §218.145(f)(1) and (2) of the Final Rule and Condition 7(f)(1) and (2) of the Letter of Authorization.

The total hours of low-frequency, mid-frequency, and high-frequency active sonar used during training annually within the OCNMS MA can be found in the classified annex to this report.

The amount of surface ship hull-mounted MF1 mid-frequency active sonar used during training within the Stonewall and Heceta Bank Humpback Whale Mitigation Area from 1 May to 30 November can be found in the classified annex to this report.

The amount of surface ship hull-mounted MF1 mid-frequency active sonar used during training within the Point St. George Humpback Whale Mitigation Area from 1 July to 30 November can be found in the classified annex to this report.