
Appendix E: Public Participation

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APPENDIX E PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This appendix includes information about the public's participation in the development of the Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) Activities Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS).

E.1 PROJECT WEBSITE

A public website was established specifically for this project: <http://www.MITT-EIS.com/>. This website address was published in the *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Overseas Impact Statement* (Notice of Intent) and has subsequently been re-printed in all newspaper advertisements, agency letters, and public postcards. The Scoping Meeting Fact Sheets and various other materials will be available on the project website throughout the course of the project.

E.2 GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE SCOPING PERIOD

The public scoping period began with the issuance of the Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* on 16 September 2011. This notice included a project description and scoping meeting dates and locations. The scoping period lasted 60 days, concluding on 7 November 2011. Section E.2.1 describes the United States (U.S.) Department of the Navy's (Navy's) notification efforts during scoping. The scoping period allowed a variety of opportunities for the public to comment on the scope of the EIS/OEIS.

E.2.1 PUBLIC SCOPING NOTIFICATION

The Navy made significant efforts at notifying the public to ensure maximum public participation during the scoping process. A summary of these efforts follows.

E.2.1.1 Scoping Notification Letters

Elected Officials:

U.S. Congressional Delegate, Washington D.C. Office

Guam Office of the Governor

31st Guam Legislature

Village of Agana Heights

Village of Agat

Village of Asan-Maina

Village of Barrigada

Village of Chalan Pago-Ordot

Village of Dededo

Village of Hagåtña

Village of Inarajan

Village of Mangilao

Village of Merizo

Village of MongMong-Toto-Maite

Village of Piti

Village of Santa Rita

Village of Sinajana

Village of Talofofo

Village of Tamuning-Tumon-Harmon

Village of Umatac

Village of Yigo

Village of Yona

13th Rota Municipal Council
Rota Mayor's Office
Saipan Mayor's Office
Tinian Mayor's Office
CNMI House of Representatives
CNMI Public Information and Protocol Office
CNMI Senate

Government Agencies – Federal:

Federal Aviation Administration
National Park Service, War in the Pacific National Historic Park
National Marine Fisheries Service Habitat Division, Guam Office
National Marine Fisheries Service, CNMI Office
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Honolulu District
U.S. Coast Guard Sector Guam – Officer in Charge Marine Inspections
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, West Area Office
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Saipan Service Center
U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9, Pacific Islands Contact Office, Honolulu
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Guam
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Guam National Wildlife Refuge
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office

Government Agencies – Local:

A.B. Won Pat International Airport, Guam
Department of Military Affairs/Guam Air National Guard
Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans, Coastal Management Program
Guam Chamorro Land Trust Commission
Guam Department of Agriculture
Guam Department of Agriculture, Division of Aquatics and Wildlife Resources
Guam Department of Parks and Recreation, Historic Preservation Office
Guam Environmental Protection Agency
Guam Environmental Protection Agency, Water Resources Management Program
Guam Homeland Security, Office of Civil Defense
Guam Visitors Bureau
Guam Waterworks Authority
CNMI Coastal Resources Management Program
CNMI Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Historic Preservation Office
CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture
CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife
CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation
CNMI Department of Public Lands
CNMI Department of Public Safety, Office of the Commissioner

CNMI Department of Public Safety, Tinian Fire Division
 CNMI Division of Environmental Quality

Other:

CNMI Northern Marianas College Cooperative, Research, Extension and Education Service
 Saipan Chamber of Commerce
 Guam Community College
 University of Guam
 University of Guam Water and Environmental Research Institute

An additional 10 stakeholders were sent a personalized notification letter on 9 September 2011, that offered a briefing. Recipients included:

Congressional Delegate Guam District Office
 Congressional Delegate Saipan District Office
 Guam Office of the Governor
 31st Guam Legislature
 Mayors' Council of Guam
 Military Integration Management Committee
 CNMI Department of Commerce
 Guam Chamber of Commerce
 Saipan Chamber of Commerce
 Tinian Chamber of Commerce

E.2.1.2 Postcard Mailers

On 12 September 2011, postcards announcing the Notice of Intent and providing the scoping meeting dates, locations, and times were mailed to 475 organizations and individuals on the project mailing list, which was compiled from the previous Mariana Islands Range Complex (MIRC) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) project mailing lists.

E.2.1.3 Press Releases

Press releases to announce the Notice of Intent were distributed on 9 September 2011.

E.2.1.4 Newspaper Display Advertisements

Advertisements were made to announce the scoping meetings in the following newspapers on the dates indicated below:

<i>Marianas Variety</i>	<i>Pacific Daily News</i>	<i>Saipan Tribune</i>
9 September 2011	9 September 2011	9 September 2011
21 September 2011	16 September 2011	19 September 2011
27 September 2011	21 September 2011	23 September 2011
28 September 2011	22 September 2011	24 September 2011
29 September 2011	23 September 2011	26 September 2011

E.2.2 SCOPING MEETINGS

Five scoping meetings were held on September 22, 23, 26, 27, and 29 in the villages of Mangilao, Guam; Santa Rita, Guam; Susupe, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and Songson Village, Rota, respectively. At

each scoping meeting, staffers at the welcome station greeted guests and encouraged them to sign in to be added to the project mailing list to receive future notifications. In total, 229 people signed in at the welcome table. The meetings were held in an open house format, presenting informational posters and written information, with Navy staff and project experts available to answer participants' questions. Additionally, a digital voice recorder was available to record participants' oral comments. The interaction during the information sessions was productive and helpful to the Navy.

What is a scoping meeting?

The scoping period determines the extent of the EIS in terms of significant issues. Scoping meetings allow the face-to-face exchange of information and ideas to ensure relevant topics are identified and properly studied and that the Draft EIS is thorough and balanced.

E.2.3 PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENTS

Scoping participants submitted comments in five ways:

- Oral statements at the public meetings (as recorded by the digital voice recorder)
- Written comments at the public meetings
- Written letters (received any time during the public comment period)
- Electronic mail (received any time during the public comment period)
- Comments submitted directly on the project website (received any time during the public comment period)

In total, the Navy received comments from 34 individuals and groups. Because many of the comments addressed more than one issue, 135 total comments resulted. Table E-1 provides a breakdown of areas of concern based on comments received during scoping. The summary following Table E-1 provides an overview of comments and is organized by area of concern.

Table E-1: Public Scoping Comment Summary

Area of Concern	Count	Percent of Total
Proposed Action/Alternatives	9	7
Study Area	7	5
Marine Mammals/Sea Turtles	7	5
Marine Mammal Monitoring	5	4
Fish/Marine Habitat	8	6
Terrestrial/Birds	10	7
Water Quality	5	4
Air Quality	1	1
Noise	2	1
Cultural Resources	5	4
Reefs	3	2
Land Use	5	4
Commercial/Recreational Fishing	6	4
Regional Economy	9	7

Table E-1: Public Scoping Comment Summary (continued)

Area of Concern	Count	Percent of Total
Public Health & Safety	6	4
SONAR/Underwater Explosions	6	4
Marianas Trench National Monument/Piti Marine Preserve Area	3	2
Mitigation	8	6
Cumulative	8	6
Other	21	16
TOTAL	134	99

E.2.3.1 Proposed Action/Alternatives

Comments in this category included whether NEPA applied in the open ocean, if other training sites were options, and whether some proposed sites in the Study Area could be avoided.

E.2.3.2 Study Area

Participants expressed concerned regarding the larger size of Study Area. Participants expressed confusion between the MIRC Study Area and the new MITT Study Area and why the boundaries have changed.

E.2.3.3 Marine Mammals/Sea Turtles

Participants expressed concern that military activity would drive marine mammals to other locations. Participants expressed concern over impacts from Sound Navigation and Ranging (sonar) and underwater explosives.

E.2.3.4 Marine Mammal Monitoring

Respondents inquired as to whether monitoring was taking place and if it would continue, and generally requested the results of any monitoring that had taken place to date.

E.2.3.5 Fish/Marine Habitat

Concerns in this area were related to potential harm to fish and habitat during military training activities.

E.2.3.6 Terrestrial/Birds

Comments in this category included concerns regarding military training impacts on seabirds on Farallon de Medinilla, general injury of wildlife, monitoring of the Mariana fruit bats/swiftlets/common moorhen, and bird aircraft strike hazards.

E.2.3.7 Water Quality

Water quality comments included general concerns regarding potential contaminants in the water.

E.2.3.8 Air Quality

One respondent noted a general concern regarding the impact of military training on air quality.

E.2.3.9 Noise

Respondents commented on the potential impact of noise on the public, wildlife, and areas outside of military installation boundaries.

E.2.3.10 Cultural Resources

One respondent was concerned about impacts on and access to historical medicinal plants. Other respondents made comments related to the historical resources of the region.

E.2.3.11 Reefs

Participant expressed concern regarding the impact of military training on reefs.

E.2.3.12 Land Use

Land use comments ranged from respondents not wanting the military to use the land at all to concerns regarding overall cumulative effects on land-based resources.

E.2.3.13 Commercial/Recreational Fishing

Comments concerned the limitations placed on fishermen as a result of military activity. One participant suggested that additional military personnel brought to the region should be given a special orientation regarding the local population and resources. Additional comments included concern regarding restrictions to prime fishing areas.

E.2.3.14 Regional Economy

There were several comments regarding regional economic concerns, including questions about the effects on commercial shipping and commercial fishing.

E.2.3.15 Public Health and Safety

Respondents commented on the overall potential cumulative impacts related to public health and safety.

E.2.3.16 SONAR/Underwater Explosions

Concerns were expressed regarding the impact of sonar and underwater explosives on marine mammals and sea turtles.

E.2.3.17 Marianas Trench National Monument/Piti Marine Preserve

One participant questioned whether the Marianas Trench National Monument was included in the Study Area and, if it was, whether special environmental precautions would be taken in the vicinity of the monument.

E.2.3.18 Mitigation

Participants wanted to ensure that mitigations were discussed in the Draft EIS/OEIS and asked for reports of the effectiveness of mitigations put in place as a result of the MIRC Record of Decision. A suggestion was made that a communication line be established between the military and the office of the Mayor of Rota for notification of military exercises at least two weeks ahead of time.

E.2.3.19 Cumulative

Comments in this category expressed concern about the overall impact of military activity in Guam and in overall MITT Study Area.

E.2.3.20 Other

This category of comments related to the desire for the military activities to take place somewhere other than the Mariana Islands, that the documents were not available at the library that had been publicized, issues with use of the project website, concern regarding the way information was conveyed to the public, concern regarding termination of public leases as a result of the Proposed Action, a desire for reporting of the adequacy of Notices to Mariners and Notices to Airmen, excitement regarding their ability to be involved in the NEPA process, and praise to the Navy presenters at the public meetings.

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