



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER
U.S. FLEET FORCES COMMAND
1562 MITSCHER AVENUE SUITE 250
NORFOLK, VA 23551-2487

5090
Ser N46/110
November 12, 2015

The Honorable Nikki Haley
State of South Carolina
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton St.
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

This letter is to inform you that the United States (U.S.) Department of the Navy (Navy) is in the beginning stages of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (OEIS) for Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing (AFTT) activities in the seaspace in and the airspace over the Atlantic Ocean and the eastern coast of North America, portions of the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico.

The U.S. Navy is requesting your comments on the scope, content, and issues to be considered during the development of the AFTT EIS/OEIS. This document will assess training and testing activities which are proposed to be conducted at levels required to support military readiness requirements beginning in November of 2018 and into the reasonably foreseeable future. Such activities will also accommodate evolving mission requirements associated with force structure changes, including those resulting from the development, testing, and ultimate introduction of new platforms (vessels, aircraft, and weapon systems) into the fleet, thereby ensuring critical Navy requirements are met.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to maintain a ready force, which is needed to ensure that the Navy can meet its mission to maintain, train, and equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas, as consistent with Congressional direction in Section 5062 of Title 10 U.S. Code.

You may send written comments to the following address:

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Atlantic
ATTN: AFTT EIS/OEIS PM – Code EV22LDN
6506 Hampton Boulevard
Norfolk, Virginia 23508-1278

You may also submit comments on the project website at www.aftteis.com. All comments must be postmarked or received by January 12, 2016 to be considered in the Draft EIS/OEIS. For additional information about the AFTT EIS/OEIS, please visit the project website.

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We appreciate your comments on this important project. My point of contact for this matter is Mr. Todd Kraft at (757) 836-2943 or todd.kraft@navy.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. B. McCutcheon, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

B. B. McCUTCHEON, JR.
Acting
Deputy Chief of Staff
for Fleet Installations
and Environmental Readiness

Enclosures: 1. AFTT EIS/OEIS Project Description
2. AFTT Study Area Map

ATLANTIC FLEET TRAINING AND TESTING (AFTT)
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/OVERSEAS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT (EIS/OEIS)
PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND STUDY AREA MAP

AFTT EIS/OEIS Proposed Action and Alternatives:

The U.S. Navy's Proposed Action is to conduct military readiness training and testing activities in the AFTT Study Area. These activities are proposed to be conducted at levels necessary to support Navy military readiness requirements beginning in November 2018 into the reasonably foreseeable future and accommodate evolving mission requirements associated with force structure changes resulting from the development, testing, and ultimate introduction of new platforms (vessels, aircraft, and weapon systems) into the fleet, thereby ensuring critical Navy requirements are met.

The Navy has conducted previous analyses for these types of activities in the AFTT Study Area and signed a Record of Decision in November of 2013. This new AFTT EIS/OEIS will analyze the continuation of military readiness activities in the AFTT Study Area into the reasonably foreseeable future. The AFTT EIS/OEIS will consider a No Action Alternative and action alternatives that account for types and tempo of training and testing activities beginning in November of 2018 as necessary to meet future readiness requirements.

Environmental Analysis:

Resource areas that will be addressed include, but are not limited to: biological resources (including marine mammals and threatened and endangered species), sediments and water quality, air quality, noise, cultural resources, socioeconomic resources, and public health and safety.

AFTT Study Area:

The Study Area consists of seaspace in and airspace over the Atlantic Ocean along the eastern coast of North America, portions of the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico. The AFTT Study Area begins seaward from the mean high water line and moves east to the 45-degree west longitude line, north to the 65-degree north latitude line, and south to the approximately 20-degree north latitude line. The Study Area covers approximately 2.6 million square nautical miles of ocean area, including designated Navy operating areas, testing ranges, warning areas, select Navy pierside locations, and associated port transit channels.

ATLANTIC FLEET TRAINING AND TESTING (AFTT) STUDY AREA

