

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE JOINT LOGISTICS OVER THE SHORE, MARITIME PREPOSITIONING FORCE, AND FIELD EXERCISE TRAINING PROJECT, MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

1 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
2 DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

3
4 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
5 THE JOINT LOGISTICS OVER THE SHORE, MARITIME PREPOSITIONING FORCE, AND
6 FIELD EXERCISE TRAINING AT MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, SAN DIEGO
7 COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

8
9 INTRODUCTION

10
11 Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969
12 (42 U.S. C. §§ 4321 - 4370h), the Council on Environmental Quality
13 (CEQ) regulations (for implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA,
14 Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations [C.F.R.] Parts 1500-1508) and
15 United States (US) Department of the Navy (Navy) NEPA Procedures for
16 Implementing NEPA (32 C.F.R. Part 775), Chief of Naval Operations
17 Environmental Readiness Program Manual M-5090.1D, and the Marine Corps
18 Order P5090.2A (Change 3, dated 26 August 2013), the Navy gives notice
19 that an Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared. Based on
20 this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), an Environmental Impact
21 Statement (EIS) is not required for the Joint Logistics Over the Shore
22 (JLOTS), Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF), and Field Exercise (FEX)
23 Training at Marine Corps Base (MCB) Camp Pendleton, San Diego County,
24 California.

25
26 PURPOSE AND NEED

27 The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide an opportunity
28 for Navy, Marine Corps, and Army personnel to gain and improve
29 amphibious warfighting competencies at a west coast location that
30 allows for the focused assemblage and execution of logistics movement
31 from the offload to locations inland. These exercises would also
32 provide the Navy and the Marine Corps an opportunity to integrate as
33 an amphibious warfare team to move Marines from ships afloat to areas
34 inland to support the Range of Military Operations associated with
35 amphibious warfare training.

36 The Proposed Action is needed for Navy, Marine Corps, and Army
37 units to conduct repetitive and realistic routine amphibious training
38 exercises to ensure continued combat readiness. Amphibious training
39 exercises would allow military commands to practice their individual
40 skills as well as prepare for joint operations, where multiple units,
41 multiple commands, and multiple services work together under a single
42 commander in a realistic setting. The training aims to validate,
43 enhance, and refine military tactics, techniques, procedures, and
44 doctrine for these operations, which ultimately provides the U.S.
45 military the capability to move combat power across the surf zone, on
46 to land, and to inland areas.

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1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

2 The Proposed Action would occur at MCB Camp Pendleton in the
3 following existing training areas: offshore of and adjacent to as many
4 as three training beaches (Red, Gold, and White), from training
5 beaches to inland range and training areas, and within and adjacent to
6 the Del Mar Boat Basin.

7
8 The Proposed Action consists of an increase in amphibious
9 training exercises at MCB Camp Pendleton. Proposed amphibious
10 training exercises would be similar to existing amphibious training,
11 but at an increased annual tempo and covering a larger area. JLOTS,
12 MPF and FEX exercises allow Navy, Marine Corps and Army personnel to
13 gain and improve amphibious warfighting competencies at a west coast
14 location that allows for the focused assemblage and execution of
15 logistics movement from the offload to locations inland. These
16 exercises also provide the Navy and the Marine Corps an opportunity to
17 integrate as an amphibious warfare team to move Marines from ships
18 afloat to inland areas to support the range of military operations
19 associated with amphibious warfare training. JLOTS is a joint
20 services (Navy, Marine Corps and Army) exercise that requires
21 amphibious landings at multiple insertion points allowing for joint
22 service training in amphibious landings, logistical movements of
23 personnel and equipment from Ships to shore as well as the set-up of a
24 prepositioning force operations center and base camp. MPF is a
25 similar non-joint training exercise consisting of Navy personnel only
26 and would be conducted on a smaller scale (both personnel involved and
27 length of training). FEX training includes some but not all
28 components of a full JLOTS and/or MPF Exercise (including small boat
29 operations (offshore), communication tents on the beach, convoy
30 operations, campsite setup/security, entry control point operations,
31 and command and control facilities/operations) though at an even
32 smaller scale. In addition, new platforms and technologies would be
33 integrated into training under the Proposed Action. Also, ship-to-
34 ship refueling at sea more than 3 nautical miles (5.6 kilometers)
35 offshore. No permanent construction or site improvements would occur
36 as part of the Proposed Action.

37
38 Pursuant to the Proposed Action, the amphibious training
39 exercises would occur in five general geographic areas at the MCB Camp
40 Pendleton: offshore, in the littoral zone (including Del Mar Boat
41 Basin), on the beach, in terrestrial areas, and in the air (R-26503).
42 These exercises are similar in scope and size to other previously
43 analyzed, approved, and on-going amphibious training exercises at MCB
44 Camp Pendleton within existing training areas. The Hawaii-Southern
45 California Testing and Training Activities (HSTT) Environmental Impact
46 Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS) (Navy 2013a) analyzed those
47 portions of amphibious warfare training that occur at sea (up to the
48 mean high tide mark), to include pile driving and vessel movement as

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1 covered in the associated Letter of Authorization and Biological
2 Opinion (BO) (National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS] 2014, 2015).
3 This JLOTS EA analyzes the potential impacts associated with the near
4 shore and land-based portions of amphibious training at MCB Camp
5 Pendleton.
6

7 Under the Proposed Action, the average annual amphibious training
8 exercise tempo would increase by approximately 25 percent (as compared
9 to existing conditions), resulting in an average annual total of
10 approximately 12 amphibious training exercises at MCB Camp Pendleton
11 (as compared to the baseline of approximately amphibious training
12 exercises each year). On average, amphibious training exercises would
13 occur as follows: one JLOTS exercise every three years, one MPF
14 exercise every year, and up to ten FEX activities every year.
15 Depending on scheduling and training needs, some years would
16 experience a lower or higher number of total amphibious training
17 exercises. On average, approximately 2,000 - 3,500 personnel would
18 take part in JLOTS training exercises, which would last up to 90 days.
19 MPF exercises would include an average of approximately 600 - 1,500
20 personnel and would last around 30 days. FEXs would last 7 to 14 days
21 and would typically involve 30 - 800 personnel.
22

23 ALTERNATIVES

24

25 The Navy developed 17 screening criteria specifically for this EA to
26 assess whether a possible alternative would meet the purpose of and
27 need for the Proposed Action. The Navy also identified potential
28 alternative locations to measure against screening criteria to
29 determine if they would serve as feasible alternatives. Of those
30 alternatives, two action alternatives were determined to meet all of
31 the screening criteria. These two alternatives and the No Action
32 Alternative, which did not satisfy the screening criteria, but serves
33 as a baseline against which the impacts of the Proposed Action are
34 compared, were carried forward for analysis in this EA.
35

36 **No Action Alternative.** Under the No Action Alternative, existing
37 JLOTS, MPF, and FEX amphibious training activities similar to those
38 described in Section 2.2 of the EA would continue to occur as
39 described, without an increase in annual exercise tempo, geographic
40 expansion, the use of emerging platforms and technology, or ship to
41 ship at sea refueling.
42

43 **Alternative 1.** Under Alternative 1, existing amphibious exercise
44 training (JLOTS, MPF, and FEXs) would occur on Red and Gold Beaches,
45 similar to those described in Section 2.2 of the EA. As Part of
46 Alternative 1, emerging platforms and new technologies would be
47 integrated into future exercises. In addition, ship-to-ship refueling
48 operations would occur more than 3 nautical miles (5.6 km) offshore.
49

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1 **Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative).** Under Alternative 2,
2 amphibious training exercises (JLOTS, MPF, and FEXs) would occur on
3 Red and Gold beaches and the Del Mar Boat Basin, identical to those
4 described under Alternative 1, but would also include amphibious
5 training at White Beach and offshore approximately 3 nautical miles
6 (5.6 km). Alternative 2 is preferred for implementation as it best
7 meets the purpose and need for the project and would have no
8 significant impacts to the human or natural environment.

9
10 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

11
12 This EA examined the potential impacts on geological resources,
13 water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, air
14 quality, transportation and circulation, and hazardous materials and
15 waste. This EA did not analyze any resource areas that were not
16 impacted by the Proposed Action. Resource areas that did not require
17 further analysis included Utilities, Visual Resources, Noise, Safety
18 and Environmental Health, Land Use, Socioeconomics Environmental
19 Justice and Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and
20 Safety Risks.

21
22 Below is a summary of the environmental impacts to the resources
23 from the activities of the Proposed Action (by the means identified in
24 the Preferred Alternative).

25
26 *Geological Resources.* The Proposed Action will not result in
27 significant impacts to geological resources such as marine sediment.
28 Under the Preferred Alternative, the 25 percent increase in annual
29 training tempo would result in the incremental temporary and minor
30 impacts to beach, marine, and surface sediment disturbance as well as
31 the potential to increase erosion and offsite movement of soils.
32 However, oceanographic and littoral cell coastal sand movement
33 processes would not be impacted, and potential erosion would be
34 limited to designated, existing training areas as well as acreage
35 limits included in the No Action Alternative as a special conservation
36 measure. Vehicle ingress from the White Beach landing area would use
37 existing roads, thus would not increase the potential for additional
38 impacts to geological resources in this area. With the existing
39 impact avoidance/minimization measures as currently incorporated into
40 the No Action Alternative, the implementation of the Preferred
41 Alternative would result in no significant impacts to geological
42 resources.

43
44 *Water Resources.* The Proposed Action will not result in
45 significant impacts to water resources. The proposed increase in
46 annual training tempo and the inclusion of White Beach in the
47 amphibious training exercises would result in the incremental increase
48 and geographical expansion of impacts to water resources that
49 currently occur under the No Action Alternative. Similar permit

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1 requirements and compliance to those obtained for the No Action
2 Alternative under the Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality
3 Certification and the Clean Water Act Section 404 and Rivers and
4 Harbors Act Section 10, along with the Negative Determination obtained
5 from the California Coastal Commission would be integrated into the
6 activities of the Preferred Alternative, to include application to
7 activities on White Beach. The implementation of the Preferred
8 Alternative would result in no significant impacts to water resources.
9

10 *Biological Resources.* The Proposed Action will not result in
11 significant impacts to biological resources. Under the Preferred
12 Alternative, the proposed increase in annual training tempo and the
13 inclusion of White Beach in the amphibious training exercises would
14 result in an incremental increase in impacts to biological resources
15 from vessel movements, anchoring, pile driving, and use of the
16 Offshore Petroleum Discharge System and Amphibious Bulk Liquid
17 Transfer System that currently occur under the No Action Alternative.
18 The impacts from training activities would be minimized through the
19 continued implementation of the proposed monitoring and impact
20 avoidance/minimization measures identified in the Programmatic
21 Riparian Biological Opinion (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1995), and
22 the Hawaii-Southern California Testing and Training Activities Final
23 EIS/Overseas EIS and related Biological Opinion.¹ For the land
24 portion of the Proposed Action, as analyzed in this EA, White Beach
25 specific impact avoidance/minimization measures would be implemented
26 to ensure minimal impact to tern and plover colony breeding.
27 Therefore, with the White Beach impact avoidance/minimization
28 measures, the implementation of the Preferred Alternative would result
29 in no significant impacts to biological resources.
30

31 *Cultural Resources.* The Proposed Action is not expected to
32 result in significant impacts to cultural resources. Under the
33 Preferred Alternative, the proposed increase in annual training tempo
34 and the inclusion of White Beach in the amphibious training exercises
35 would result in one additional documented cultural resource.² Based

¹ Data collected during the Nearshore Habitat Assessment (NAVFAC Atlantic 2010a) and the Baseline Study (NAVFAC Atlantic 2010b) would be integrated and applied to the greatest extent practicable. Visual reconnaissance would be used to avoid kelp. Before large scale amphibious training exercises are scheduled to occur during the peak grunion spawning period (as specified annually by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, currently April through May) a qualified biologist would perform a survey of the project site to determine the suitability of the beach for grunion spawning. Environmental procedures, to include avoidance measures, are outlined in the MCIWEST-MCB CAMPENO 3500.1.

² Twenty-one of the sites are situated near Red or Gold beaches, and one is near White Beach. Of these resources, one site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), six are eligible for NRHP listing, seven are assumed eligible, two are determined eligible and six are ineligible.

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1 upon the nature of the proposed amphibious training exercises
2 (specifically their short duration and limited amount of ground
3 disturbance), and with implementation of the No Action Alternative
4 impact avoidance/minimization measures that include compliance with
5 Marine Corps Installations West-Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton Order
6 3500.1, the Preferred Alternative would have no significant impact on
7 cultural resources. Therefore, implementation of the Preferred
8 Alternative, with No Action Alternative impact avoidance/minimization
9 measures, would result in no significant impacts to cultural
10 resources.

11
12 *Air Quality.* The Proposed Action is not expected to result in
13 significant impacts to air quality. Under the Preferred Alternative,
14 the proposed increase in annual training tempo and the inclusion of
15 White Beach in the amphibious training exercises would result in the
16 increase of criteria pollutant emissions by approximately 35 percent.
17 This increase in criteria pollutant emissions in the San Diego Air
18 Basin region would be below de minimis levels for conformity
19 thresholds and not require further determinations under the General
20 conformity rule. The No Action Alternative impact
21 avoidance/minimization measures regarding visible emissions and
22 temporary power supply equipment would be integrated into the
23 Preferred Alternative, limiting any impacts to air quality.
24 Therefore, implementation of the Preferred Alternative would result in
25 no significant impacts to air quality.

26
27 *Transportation and Circulation.* The Proposed Action is not
28 expected to result in significant impacts to Transportation and
29 Circulation. Under the Preferred Alternative, the proposed increase
30 in annual training tempo and the inclusion of White Beach in the
31 amphibious training exercises would result in an increase of
32 approximately 20 vehicles on the roads up to four times per year.
33 This is due to an increase in the transport of personnel and materiel
34 between the Silver Strand Training Complex and MCB Camp Pendleton by
35 road (likely using State Route 75 and Interstate 5). Impact
36 avoidance/minimization measures to potential traffic congestion
37 include road convoys broken into smaller elements consisting of 3-5
38 vehicles, convoy elements departing at 15-30 minute intervals to
39 minimize potential effects on traffic flow, and avoidance of travel
40 during peak commuting hours. Therefore, with these impact
41 avoidance/minimization measures, the implementation of the Preferred
42 Alternative would result in no significant impacts to transportation
43 and circulation.

44
45 *Hazardous Materials and Waste.* The Proposed Action is not
46 expected to result in significant impacts from hazardous materials and
47 waste. Under the Preferred Alternative, the proposed increase in
48 annual training tempo and the inclusion of White Beach in the

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1 amphibious training exercises would result in an incremental increase
2 in impacts from hazardous materials and waste (such as fuels, oils,
3 hydraulic lubricants) that currently occur under the No Action
4 Alternative. However, hazardous materials and wastes, as well as
5 lighterage craft refueling, would be managed in accordance with
6 existing regulations, plans, and protocols, thus reducing the
7 potential for a spill to occur. adherence to the Navy's Spill
8 Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan and applicable oil spill
9 regulations would minimize these impacts. Therefore, implementation of
10 the Preferred Alternative would result in no significant impacts
11 related to hazardous materials and waste.

12
13 **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

14
15 The Navy initiated the public participation process with the
16 publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EA in three
17 local newspapers: the San Clemente Times (weekly publication) on May
18 15, 2014; the Orange County Register from May 16 - 18, 2014; and the
19 San Diego Union Tribune (North County Edition) from May 16 - 18, 2014.
20 The Draft EA was also made available for public review at the
21 Oceanside Public Library, the San Clemente Library, and the Friends of
22 the Fallbrook Library. In addition, the Draft EA was made available
23 via the Navy Region Southwest website
24 (<http://www.navyregionsouthwest.com/go/doc/4275/2105046>) and MCB Camp
25 Pendleton website
26 ([http://www.pendleton.marines.mil/StaffAgencies/EnvironmentalSecurity/
27 EnvironmentalAssessmentsImpactStatements.aspx](http://www.pendleton.marines.mil/StaffAgencies/EnvironmentalSecurity/EnvironmentalAssessmentsImpactStatements.aspx)). The 15-day public
28 review period was from May 15 to May 30, 2014. No public comments
29 were received during this public review period on the Draft EA. A NOA
30 of the Final EA and FONSI will be published in the San Clemente Times,
31 Orange County Register, and San Diego Union Tribune. Copies of these
32 documents (NOA, final EA, and FONSI) will also be placed in the
33 information repositories located at the Oceanside Public Library, the
34 San Clemente Library, and the Friends of the Fallbrook Library and on
35 the Navy Region Southwest and MCB Camp Pendleton websites.

36
37 **FINDINGS**

38
39 Based on the analysis presented in this EA and coordination with
40 the National Marine Fisheries Service, United States Fish and Wildlife
41 Service, California Coastal Commission, and the California State
42 Historic Preservation Officer, the Navy finds that implementation of
43 the Preferred Alternative will not significantly impact the quality of
44 the human environment. Therefore, an EIS will not be prepared.

45
46 This EA, which was prepared by the Navy addressing this action,
47 is on file. Interested parties may access the EA on the MCB Camp

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1 Pendleton website, or obtain a hard copy from JLOTS EA Project
2 Manager, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest, Code EV21.SR,
3 1220 Pacific Highway, San Diego, California 92132-5190.

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28 May 2015
Date

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