

Tiered Environmental Impact Statement (FTEIS) and Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) to analyze dredged material placement for the Port of Baltimore for 20 years of maintenance and new work dredging. USACE is making the document available to the public through a Notice of Availability published in the **Federal Register**. The overall goal of the DMMP is to develop a plan to maintain, in an economically and environmentally sound manner, channels necessary for navigation for the Port of Baltimore, conduct dredged material placement in the most environmentally sound manner, and maximize the use of dredged material as a beneficial resource. The recommendations which will provide a minimum of 20 years of dredged material placement capacity for the Port of Baltimore are:

- Continued maintenance dredging of the Virginia channels and use of the existing open-water placement sites in Virginia (Dam Neck Open Water Placement; Rappahannock Shoal Deep Alternate Open Water Placement; and Wolf Trap Alternate Open Water Placement).

- Continued maintenance dredging of the Maryland channels and use of the existing sites in Maryland including Pooles Island Open Water Site, Hart-Miller Island Dredged Material Containment Facility (HMI DMCF), Cox Creek Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) (+36 ft dike height), and Poplar Island Environmental Restoration Project (PIERP).

- Multiple confined disposal facilities for harbor material in Patapsco River.

- PIERP Expansion in Talbot County, Maryland.

- Large Island Restoration in Middle Chesapeake Bay, Maryland.

- Wetland Restoration in Dorchester County, Maryland.

- Continue to pursue opportunities to innovatively use dredged material.

**ADDRESSES:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, Attn: Mr. Mark Mendelsohn, Planning Division, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, MD 21203-1715, or electronically to [Mark.Mendelsohn@usace.army.mil](mailto:Mark.Mendelsohn@usace.army.mil).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Mark Mendelsohn, Biologist, USACE, Baltimore District, Planning Division, (410) 962-9499 or (800) 295-1610.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A key mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is to provide safe, reliable, and efficient waterborne transportation systems (channels, harbors, and waterways) for movement of commerce, national security needs, and recreation. Accomplishing this successfully

requires dredging of channels to adequately meet the needs of waterborne transportation. Operating and maintaining the nation's harbors and waterways, which includes the placement and/or management of dredged material, is an increasingly challenging task. USACE continues its priority mission to plan and implement sound management of dredged materials.

Since 1824, the USACE Baltimore District has been actively involved in constructing and maintaining a system of channels to allow large, deep-draft commercial shipping vessels to call on the Port of Baltimore. In addition to the shipping channels, a number of anchorage areas were established within the Port of Baltimore for vessels requiring layover. The existing project for the Baltimore Harbor and Channels was authorized by the River and Harbor Act of August 8, 1917 and was modified by the River and Harbor Acts of January 1927, July 1930, October 1940, March 1945, July 1958, and December 1970. The USACE *Engineering Regulation (ER) 1105-2-100* mandates that the USACE Districts develop a DMMP for all federally maintained navigation harbor projects where there is an indication of insufficient placement capacity to accommodate maintenance dredging for the next 20 years. The DMMP is a planning document that ensures maintenance-dredging activities are performed in an environmentally acceptable manner, use sound engineering techniques, and are economically justified. A DMMP addresses a full range of placement alternatives, leading to the selection of a final plan that ensures that sufficient placement capacity is available for the next 20 years.

The DMMP for the Baltimore Harbor and Channels project has been developed using a consistent and logical procedure by which dredged material management alternatives have been identified, evaluated, screened, and recommended so that dredged material placement operations are conducted in a timely, environmentally sensitive, and cost-effective manner.

A Notice of Intent to prepare and Environmental Impact Statement was published in the **Federal Register** in May 2002 and scoping meetings were held in June 2002. The public was invited to provide oral comments at the scoping meetings and to submit additional comments to the Baltimore District. The Draft TEIS was distributed to the public on February 9, 2005. Two public meetings on the Draft TEIS were held in March 2005. All persons and organizations that have an interest in

the DMMP were urged to participate in one or both meetings.

The Final TEIS may be viewed on the Baltimore District's Web page at <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects//DMMP/index.html>. USACE has distributed copies of the TEIS to appropriate members of Congress, State and local government officials, Federal agencies, and other interested parties. Copies are available for public review at the following locations:

(1) Queen Anne's Public Library,

Stevensville Branch, 200 Library Circle, Stevensville, MD 21666.

(2) Baltimore County Public Library, 1110 Eastern Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21221.

(3) Anne Arundel County Public Library, 1410 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401.

(4) St. Mary's County Public Library, 23250 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

(5) Somerset County Public Library, 11767 Beachwood St., Princess Anne, MD 21853.

(6) Dorchester County Public Library, 303 Gay Street, Cambridge, MD 21613.

For information on this document or to obtain copies, please contact Mr. Mark Mendelsohn (see **ADDRESSES**).

The Final TEIS has been prepared in accordance with (1) The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), and (3) USACE regulations implementing NEPA (ER-200-2-2). A record of decision (ROD) for this project will not be signed until at least 30 days from the date of EPA's notice of availability publication in the **Federal Register**.

**Mark Mendelsohn,**

*Biologist, Baltimore District, USACE.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Navy

#### Notice of Availability for the Draft 2006 Supplemental Environmental Assessment to the 2002 Rim of the Pacific Programmatic Environmental Assessment, Hawaii

**AGENCY:** Department of the Navy, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy

Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR, Parts 1500–1508) implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, the United States Department of the Navy (Navy) gives notice that a draft Supplement to the Programmatic Environmental Assessment (Supplemental PEA) has been prepared to evaluate the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the 2006 Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises. RIMPAC 2006 is scheduled to be conducted from about June 26 to July 28, 2006. The United States National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce, is a cooperating agency in the preparation of this draft Supplemental PEA.

**DATES:** Written comments on the draft EA are requested not later than February 21, 2006. Comments should be specific as possible. Comments should be mailed to: Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (N01CE1), 251 Makalapa Drive, Pearl Harbor, HI 96860. For additional information, write to the above address or call Pacific Fleet Environmental Office at 808-474-7836.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the Supplemental PEA addressing the proposed action are available by written request to the above address. Copies of the draft Supplemental PEA are also available for public review at the project Web site at <http://www.smdcen.us/rimpac06/>. In addition, the document may be reviewed at the following locations:

1. Wailuku Public Library, 251 High Street, Wailuku, HI 96793 (Maui).
2. Hilo Public Library, 300 Waianaenue Avenue, Hilo, HI 96720.
3. Hawaii State Library, Hawaii and Pacific Section Document Unit, 478 South King Street, Honolulu, HI 96813 (Oahu).
4. Lihue Public Library, 4344 Hardy Street, Lihue, HI 96766 (Kauai).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Pacific Fleet Environmental Office at 808-474-7836 or write to Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (N01CE1), 251 Makalapa Drive, Pearl Harbor, HI 96860.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** RIMPAC has been conducted at various locations throughout the State of Hawaii and surrounding ocean areas biennially for the last 36 years. The purpose of RIMPAC is to implement a selected set of exercise activities that are combined into a multinational, sea control/power projection Fleet training exercise in a multi-threat environment. RIMPAC exercises enhance the abilities of a multinational Fleet force to communicate and operate in simulated

hostile scenarios. In 2002, a Programmatic EA (PEA) was prepared in support of the RIMPAC exercises. The PEA identified the Proposed Action as the set of exercises and locations that would be used for RIMPAC activities for the foreseeable future. It identified the maximum usage of ongoing training assets and exercises that could be conducted within a given RIMPAC event and evaluated the impacts on the environment within those bounds. The FONSI for the RIMPAC PEA, signed June 11, 2002, concluded that as long as future RIMPAC exercises did not exceed the evaluated set of activities, the Proposed Action could be implemented without supplemental NEPA documentation. Thus, the scope of each future RIMPAC exercise has been evaluated for any emergent science affecting impact analysis and for consistency with the 2002 RIMPAC PEA and its FONSI.

The 2006 Supplement to the 2002 RIMPAC PEA was prepared to evaluate additional training event locations and to review all proposed RIMPAC 2006 activities to the analysis in the 2002 RIMPAC PEA and a 2004 Supplement to ensure all proposed activities are addressed. The review included an evaluation of: training levels (personnel and equipment) and types of equipment; facilities and procedures for implementing RIMPAC at each installation or range; and changes in the affected environment or environmental sensitivities. In addition, the 2006 Supplemental PEA also includes a description of the Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW) operations, and the ASW acoustic effects modeling completed for RIMPAC 2006.

The only change being proposed is the location for conducting the Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) and Niihau. No new training events are proposed. The NEO training event locations at PMRF and Niihau, when added to the Proposed Action assessed in the RIMPAC PEA and 2004 Supplement, form the Proposed Action for the purpose of the draft 2006 Supplemental PEA.

Accordingly, the analysis conducted in the draft Supplemental PEA focused on the following resources: terrestrial and marine environments and cultural resources. Specifically, the 2006 Supplemental PEA includes analysis related to mid-frequency active sonar based on application of emergent science. Long-term studies of the quantification and effects of exposure of marine mammal species to acoustic emissions are progressing, and Navy, in coordination with the NMFS, is

incorporating the results into this Supplemental PEA. The Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW) training events being analyzed are not new and have taken place with no significant changes over the previous 19 RIMPAC exercises. However, new scientific information has led to the ability to quantitatively identify harassment levels, as defined in the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), through the use of newly derived threshold criteria metrics. Additionally, scientific advances in effects-analysis modeling of sound on marine mammals have provided Navy the ability to predict cumulative effects on marine species due to a proposed action. Due to these advances in scientific information, the 2006 Supplemental PEA provides an effects-analysis on marine mammals that may be affected by the RIMPAC training events that use mid-frequency active sonar.

Based on the assumptions and analyses in the draft SPEA, the proposed action appears to have no significant impacts on the environment. However, Navy will consider and incorporate public comments into the final SPEA before making a decision on the environmental significance of the proposed action. If warranted, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be prepared and the final Supplemental PEA and FONSI will be made available for public review on or about May 5, 2006.

Dated: January 10, 2006.

**Eric McDonald,**

*Lieutenant Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Navy

#### **Notice of Intent (NOI) To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Use of a More Efficient Shipping Container System for Spent Nuclear Fuel From Naval Aircraft Carriers**

**AGENCY:** Department of the Navy, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and the Chief of Naval Operations Environmental and Natural Resources Program Manual