

GUAM, CNMI MILITARY BUILDUP COMMENT PERIOD NOW OPEN

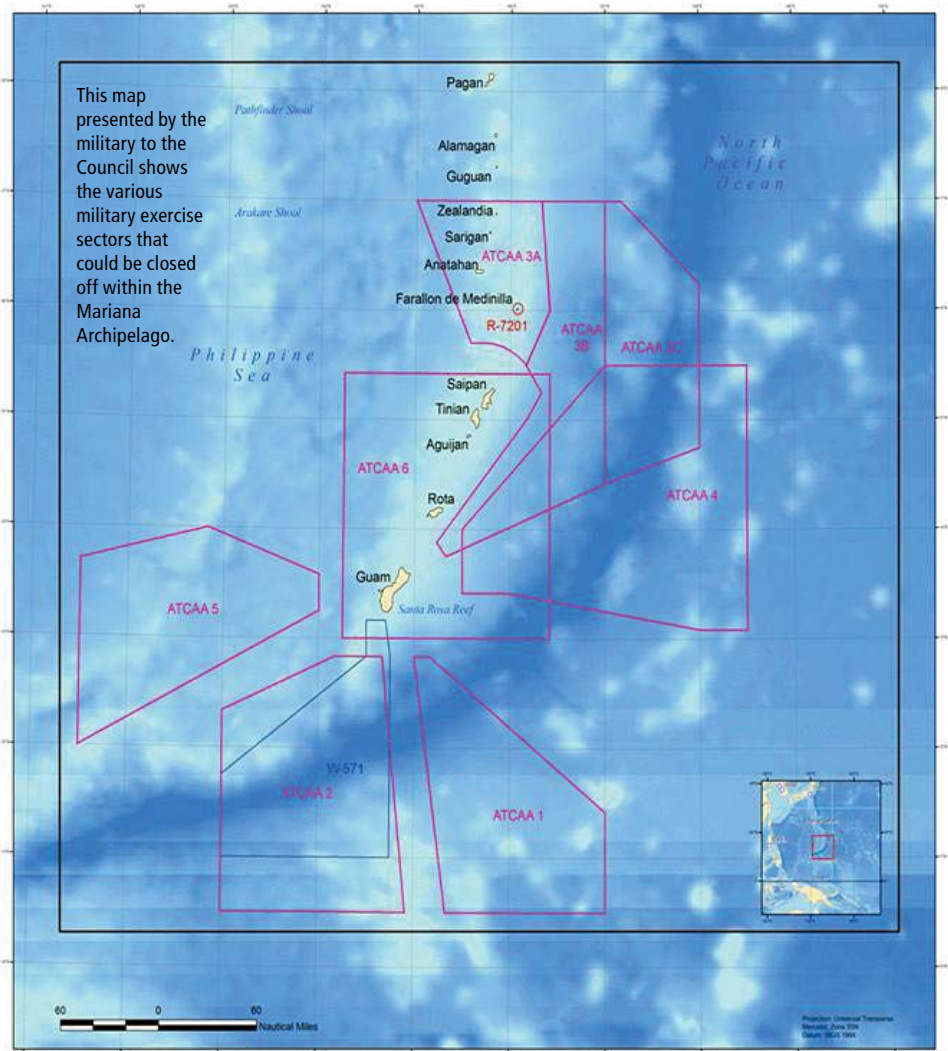
On Nov. 20, 2009, the Department of Navy released its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for the Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Military Relocation. The public has 90 days, until Feb. 17, 2010, to respond to the approximately 9,000-page, nine-volume report. This comment period is double the 45 days required under the National Environmental Protection Act, but falls short of the 120-day review period that the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council asked the Secretary of Defense provide to the people of Guam and CNMI to comment on the DEIS.

The Council has also asked the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to assist Guam and CNMI in acquiring funds and expertise in the military buildup negotiation and mitigation processes. NMFS has also been asked to provide a report on the military buildup to the Council when it meets during March 2010 in Guam and CNMI.

The DEIS includes analyses of impacts for the following proposed actions:

- Development and construction of facilities and infrastructure to support the relocation from Okinawa to Guam of approximately 8,600 Marines and their 9,000 dependents
- Development and construction of facilities and infrastructure to support training and operations on Guam and Tinian for the relocated Marines
- Construction of a new deep-draft wharf with shore-side infrastructure improvements creating the capability in Apra Harbor, Guam to support a transient nuclear-powered aircraft carrier
- Development of facilities and infrastructure on Guam to support the relocation of approximately 600 military personnel and their 900 dependents, and the establishment and operation of an Army Missile Defense Task Force

To download the DEIS or provide comments to it, go to www.guambuildupeis.us. Copies are available at libraries, and comments will be taken at public hearings scheduled for Guam, Tinian and Saipan between Jan. 7 and Jan. 15, 2010.



Community concerns regarding the military buildup expressed at Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Advisory Panel and other public meetings on Guam

- Increase in Guam population from 170,000 to 225,000 by 2014
- Inadequate dissemination of information by the federal government
- Lack of transparency of meetings held by local government agencies and the Joint Guam Program Office
- Impacts to coral reef and fisheries resources
- Prevention, control and eradication of invasive species
- Clearing of forest areas
- Slow, ongoing mitigation and habitat restoration process for dumpsites and other spots from past military and federal activities
- Navy's plan to dump dredge material from Apra Harbor into the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) waters around the islands and the potential for the currents to redistribute the matter onto seamounts and near shore-fishing areas.
- Three existing sites where Navy already has dumped contaminated soil
- Potential of dredged seabed and coral reefs to destroy fish habitat, to impact Guam's largest mangrove area in the nearby Sasa marine protected area and to potentially create conditions in which ciguatera may become prevalent in fish
- Rumors that new military properties will include a 12-mile exclusion zone for local access and fishing
- Loss of and restriction from traditional and cultural fishing grounds within the Mariana Islands Range Complex
- Potential that the local power, water and sewage infrastructure will not be ready when the military buildup begins
- Possible environmental, cultural and social impacts associated with plans to construct a US\$1 Billion road structure to connect the military bases on Guam
- Lack of information regarding the cargo ship with construction gravel for military buildup projects that was tainted with dangerous bacteria. (After unsuccessful fumigation at Apra Harbor, it left Guam and was refused entry to ports in CNMI and the Federated States of Micronesia. The ship eventually delivered the soil to Guam, but there is no report of when or where the ship was treated prior to the delivery.)
- Military bombing on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla, which is the primary nesting area for the flightless, endangered Marianas megapode as well as a primary fishing ground for local fishermen