

Public Comment is being accepted through October 10, 2014 on the environmental assessment, which is at <http://tinyurl.com/PDN-Electrowarfare>.

U.S. Forest Service Website:

http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa_project_exp.php?project=42759

<http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/article/20140928/NEWS/309289934/0/news/no-people-large-animals-to-be-harmed-in-electronic-warfare-training>

No people, large animals to be harmed in electronic warfare training, Navy says — but it has its risks



Keith Thorpe/Peninsula Daily News

By Paul Gottlieb

Peninsula Daily News

TRUCKS EMITTING ELECTROMAGNETIC radiation would travel around Olympic National Forest service roads as they participate in electronic warfare exercises on the North Olympic Peninsula, according to the Navy's environmental assessment of the project.

Sites within the national forest on or near the following National Forest Service roads are being considered:

Forest Service roads 2140, 2190, 011, 2258, 2258, 2257 pull-off area, 042 pull-off area, pull-off area at intersection of 3000 and 015, 2190, pull-off area at the intersection of 2923 and 025, pull-off area on 2923, pull-off area at intersection of 060 and 065.

Also under consideration are sites on state Department of Natural Resources land:

- Via DNR access road off Forest Service Road 005 on a pull-off area.

That's the estimate of time it could take for "the liquid tissue" of the eye to be damaged by close proximity to the electromagnetic radiation emitted by three electronic warfare trucks the Navy wants to deploy in Clallam, Jefferson and Grays Harbor counties, Navy official Jerry Sodano said Friday.

The Pacific Northwest Electronic Warfare Range project would entail the first use of electromagnetic radiation for the Navy training that pilots now simulate by internal aircraft controls.

(EDITOR'S NOTE — Previous story: "For war games next year, Navy wants to post trucks with electromagnetic radiation equipment on West End" — <http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/article/20140927/NEWS/309279992>)

The Navy's environmental assessment, which includes plans for protecting people and large animals, found no significant impact from the \$11.5 million warfare training project, planned to be operational on the West End by September 2015.

But the Navy's environmental assessment was not specific about the intensity or maximum potential exposure of the vehicles' electromagnetic emitters.

Dean Millett, district ranger for the Pacific District of the Olympic National Forest, had issued a draft notice of a decision earlier this month in which he had agreed with the Navy's finding of no significant impact, clearing the way for a Forest Service special permit.

He canceled the decision Thursday and reopened public comment because of "renewed interest . . . from members of the public who were unaware of the proposal," notice of which was not published in North Olympic Peninsula newspapers.

Comment is being accepted through Oct. 10 on the environmental assessment, which is at <http://tinyurl.com/PDN-Electrowarfare>.

The state Department of Natural Resources must still issue permits for its logging roads.

The camper-sized trucks would be dispersed on 15 sites reached by Forest Service roads.

The exercises would be conducted by training aircraft from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island that would target the vehicles' aimed electromagnetic radiation.

The purpose is to train to deny the enemy "all possible frequencies of electromagnetic radiation (i.e. electromagnetic energy) for use in such applications as communication systems, navigation systems and defense related systems and components," according to the environmental assessment.

Extended exposure to electromagnetic radiation could cause a health hazard, the Navy said in the environmental assessment, available at <http://tinyurl.com/PDN-Electrowarfare>.

Trucks will be ringed with warning tape of up to a 101-foot radius.

"Basically, it's a no-loiter area," Sodano said. "If people want to pass through those areas, it's OK.

"Most of the areas will be at ridge lines and cliffs. [Hikers and hunters] will be walking behind the emission of the antennae."

The perimeters would be marked with triangular red-and-yellow warning signs with the admonition: "Warning/Radio Frequency Hazard Personnel Hazard Exists In This Area/Keep Moving."

One of the two crew members staffing each truck would be on watch to shoo away intruders, and vehicles would be moved if hunters and campers refuse to leave, Sodano said.

"We can ask, we can use our skilled use of influence, but we can't force anyone to do anything out there, and we don't want to," Sodano said.

"The point is to pull back, and pull back without any effect on the environment."

The trucks also would stop emitting and move if animals are in the area, according to the plan.

The emitters would operate on a radio frequency band from 4 to 8 gigahertz (GHz).

“Common systems that typically operate in this range of frequencies include satellite communications, some Wi-Fi devices, cordless phones, Bluetooth devices, industrial, scientific and medical (ISM) equipment and weather radar systems,” said Robbi Mangra, a Navy electromagnetics expert, in a Friday email.

Mangra is head of the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance branch of the Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command in San Diego.

But frequency is only one of several factors to take into consideration, Mangra said.

“There are many factors that go into determining the maximum safe distance to an emitter. One of these factors is frequency, but frequency is not the entire story,” he continued.

“Power density and duty factor are just a couple of the additional variables that go into the calculation for maximum permissible exposure.

“For instance, your Bluetooth device has little effect in close proximity because it is such low power (and low power density).”

Mike Welding, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island spokesman, said last week that any antennas emitting electromagnetic energy carry some radiation.

“As a general answer, if someone is in the exclusion area for more than 15 minutes, that's a ballpark estimate for when there would be some concern for potential to injure, to receive burns,” he said.

The trucks, equipped with antennas mounted 14 feet off the ground, would be targeted by aircraft flying 90 miles off the coast.

“The pilot has to achieve an ID of the emitter, locate it and simulate a 'harm shoot,’” Sodano said.

Navy officials did not know the impact of the emissions on small animals.

“Human tissue is directly susceptible to shock or burns” similar to those caused by a microwave oven “when metallic objects, which have absorbed high electromagnetic radiation, are touched,” according to the environmental assessment.

“There are no conclusive direct hazards to human tissue as a result of electromagnetic radiation.

“Links to DNA fragmentation, leukemia, and cancer due to intermittent exposure to extremely high levels of electromagnetic radiation are speculative; study data are inconsistent and insufficient at this time,” according to the assessment.



These two U.S. Navy renderings show one of the camper-sized trucks that contain electromagnetic radiation emitting equipment.

By Paul Gottlieb

Peninsula Daily News – September 28, 2014

FORKS — The Navy wants to allow three camper-sized trucks with electromagnetic radiation equipment to conduct war exercises with military aircraft from 15 sites in Clallam, Jefferson and Grays Harbor counties.

The locations — 12 in Olympic National Forest and three on state Department of Natural Resources land — would be part of the Pacific Northwest Electronic Warfare Range and would involve aircraft from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.

The trucks' activities would be protected from human encroachment by warning signs and taped barriers that would cordon off the areas when the emitters are operating.

If human activity such as camping or hunting is detected during operations, the emitter would be de-energized, according to the draft environmental assessment for the project available at <http://tinyurl.com/PDN-Electrowarfare>.

Extended close exposure to electromagnetic radiation could be a health hazard.

If the people did not want to leave, the emitters would be relocated to another available site.

The Navy hopes to start deploying the trucks for warfare exercises by September 2015, John Mosher, Northwest environmental program manager for the U.S. Pacific Fleet, said Thursday.

The emitters systems, operated by two crew members inside each vehicle, would provide the Navy “with the ability to simulate modern [electronic warfare] threats in an open-air environment to effectively and efficiently train the operators of these systems,” according to the assessment.

The project would include installation of communications equipment at a 16th site located at an existing government communications facility on Octopus Mountain on state Department of Natural Resources land in western Clallam County.

'No significant impact'

Greg Wahl, project lead and an environmental coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service, has issued a finding of no significant impact for the project for its Forest Service permit.

That eliminates the need for an environmental impact statement.

Wahl based his decision on a review of the project's health impacts.

“Human tissue is directly susceptible to shock or burns when metallic objects, which have absorbed high electromagnetic radiation, are touched,” according to the assessment.

“This type of burn would be similar to the type of burn produced inside a microwave oven,” it states.

“There are no conclusive direct hazards to human tissue as a result of electromagnetic radiation.

“Links to DNA fragmentation, leukemia, and cancer due to intermittent exposure to extremely high levels of electromagnetic radiation are speculative; study data are inconsistent and insufficient at this time.”

Three of the mobile emitter sites are about 10 miles northeast of Forks in Clallam County, Wahl said.

Six are in Jefferson County within 10 miles of the Quinault Reservation, while another is in Jefferson County 15 miles southeast of Forks, he said.

Four are in Grays Harbor County.

All of the Forest Service sites are off Forest Service roads.

The sites would be located on ridges and cliffs, with the direction of emissions toward open areas away from the cliff or ridge.

Dean Millett, district ranger for the Forest Service Pacific District, signed off on the environmental assessment.

Millett said Thursday that the Forest Service roads where most of the emitters will be located are remote.

“They don't get much traffic unless there is some activity going on in the area,” he said.

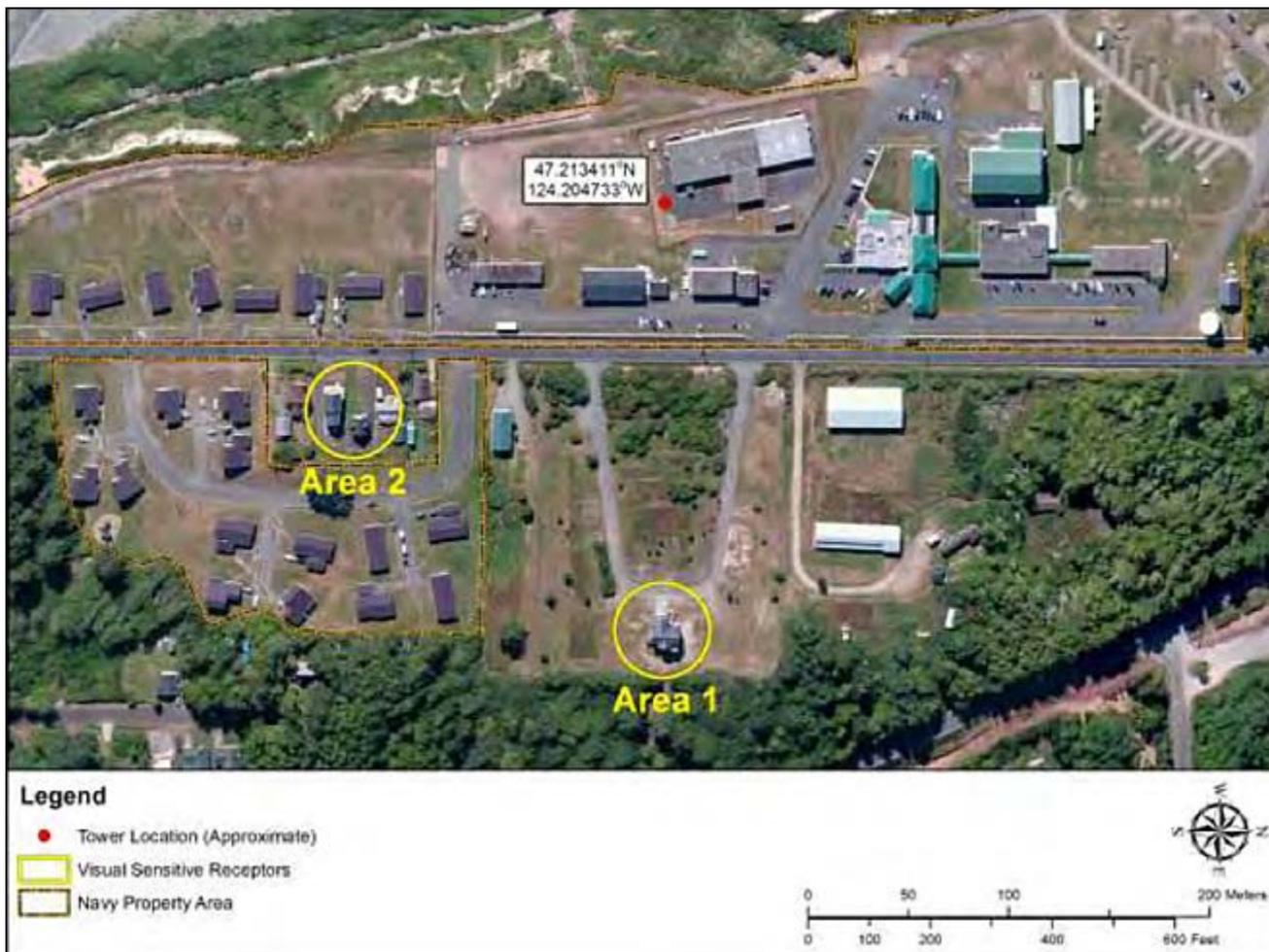


Figure 3.5-3: Visual Sensitive Receptors - Area 1 and Area 2. Environmental Assessment for the Electronic Warfare Range. (USDA Forest Service - JUNE 2014)

FORKS, Wash. (AP) - The U.S. Navy hopes to post three camper-sized trucks with electromagnetic-radiation equipment on the Olympic Peninsula to conduct war exercises with military aircraft from 15 sites.

The Navy plans to post warning signs and barriers near the trucks when the machines are operating because getting exposed at close range to the radiation could be dangerous, according to [The Peninsula Daily News](#). The machines that emit the radiation would let the Navy simulate modern electronic warfare, according to a draft environmental assessment for the project posted on a [U.S. Forest Service website](#).

http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa_project_exp.php?project=42759

Officials hope to begin the war games next year in Clallam, Jefferson and Grays Harbor counties. The exercises would be conducted at 12 sites in the Olympic National Forest and three sites on state Department of Natural Resources land. The proposal would be part of the Pacific Northwest Electronic Warfare Range and would involve aircraft from the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.

