DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Notice of Intent To Prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement for Mariana Islands Training and Testing

AGENCY: Department of the Navy, DOD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The DoN announces its intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) activities. The DoN has been conducting training and testing activities in the Mariana Islands Training Area for decades. As part of this process the DoN will seek the issuance of regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act to support training and testing requirements within the Study Area, beyond 2020. Military readiness activities include training and research, development, testing, and evaluation (hereafter known as “testing”). The Supplemental EIS/OEIS will include an analysis of training and testing activities using new information available after the release of the 2015 Final MITT EIS/OEIS. New information includes updated acoustic effects models, updated marine mammal density data, and other best available science. Proposed activities are generally consistent with those analyzed in the 2015 Final MITT EIS/OEIS and are representative of training and testing activities the DoN has been conducting in the Study Area for decades.

The Study Area remains unchanged since the 2015 Final MITT EIS/OEIS. The Study Area includes the existing Mariana Islands Range Complex (MIRC); areas on the high seas to the north and west of the MIRC; a transit corridor between the MIRC and the Hawaii Range Complex, starting at the International Date Line; and Apra Harbor and select DoN pierside and harbor locations. The Study Area includes only the in-water components of the range complex and FDM; land components associated with the range complex are not included in the Study Area.

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SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and regulations implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality, the Department of the Navy (DoN) announces its intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) activities. The DoN has been conducting training and testing activities in the Mariana Islands Training Area for decades. As part of this process the DoN will seek the issuance of regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act to support training and testing requirements within the Study Area, beyond 2020. Military readiness activities include training and research, development, testing, and evaluation (hereafter known as “testing”). The Supplemental EIS/OEIS will include an analysis of training and testing activities using new information available after the release of the 2015 Final MITT EIS/OEIS. New information includes updated acoustic effects models, updated marine mammal density data, and other best available science. Proposed activities are generally consistent with those analyzed in the 2015 Final MITT EIS/OEIS and are representative of training and testing activities the DoN has been conducting in the Study Area for decades.

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As part of this process the DoN will seek the issuance of regulatory permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act to support training and testing requirements within the Study Area, beyond 2020, thereby ensuring critical Department of Defense requirements are met.

Pursuant to 40 CFR 1501.6, the DoN will invite the National Marine Fisheries Service to be a cooperating agency in preparation of the Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

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Pursuant to 40 CFR 1501.6, the DoN will invite the National Marine Fisheries Service to be a cooperating agency in preparation of the Supplemental EIS/OEIS.
The DoN’s lead action proponent is Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet. Additional action proponents include Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Air Systems Command, and the Office of Naval Research.

The DoN’s Proposed Action is to conduct military training and testing activities within the Study Area. Activities include the use of active sonar and explosives while employing appropriate marine species protective mitigation measures. The Proposed Action does not alter the DoN’s original purpose and need as presented in the 2015 MITT Final EIS/OEIS.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to maintain a ready force, which is needed to ensure the military can accomplish its mission to train, equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas, consistent with Congressional direction in section 5062 of Title 10 of the U.S. Code. A Supplemental EIS/OEIS is considered the appropriate document, as there is recent scientific information including revised acoustic criteria to consider, in furtherance of NEPA, relevant to the environmental effects of the DoN’s Proposed Action, and the analysis will support Marine Mammal Protection Act authorization requests.

Proposed training and testing activities are generally consistent to those analyzed in the 2015 MITT Final EIS/OEIS. The Supplemental EIS/OEIS will propose changes to the tempo and types of training and testing activities, accounting for the introduction of new technologies, the evolving nature of international events, advances in war fighting doctrine and procedures, and changes in the organization of vessels, aircraft, weapon systems, and military personnel. The MITT Supplemental EIS/OEIS will reflect the compilation of training and testing activities required to fulfill the DoN’s military readiness requirements beyond 2020, and therefore includes the analysis of newly proposed activities and changes to previously analyzed activities.

In the Supplemental EIS/OEIS, the DoN will evaluate the potential environmental impacts of a No Action Alternative and action alternatives. Resources to be evaluated include, but are not limited to, marine mammals, sea turtles, essential fish habitat, and threatened and endangered species. The scoping process is used to identify public concerns and local issues to be considered during the development of the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS. Federal agencies, local agencies, the public, and interested persons are encouraged to provide substantive comments to the DoN on environmental resources and issue areas of concern the commenter believes the DoN should consider.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by September 15, 2017, for consideration during the development of the Draft Supplemental EIS/OEIS. Comments can be mailed to: Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific, Attention: MITT Supplemental EIS/OEIS Project Manager, 258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100, Pearl Harbor, HI, 96869–3134. Comments can be submitted online via the project Web site at http://mitt-eis.com/.


A.M. Nichols,
Lieutenant Commander, Judge Advocate General’s Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Final Waiver and Extension of the Project Period for the Native American Career and Technical Education Program

[Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.101A]

AGENCY: Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Final waiver and extension of the project period.

SUMMARY: For the 24-month projects originally funded in fiscal year (FY) 2013 and extended for an additional 24-months in FY 2015 under the Native American Career and Technical Education Program (NACTEP), the Secretary: Waives the requirements in Education Department regulations that generally prohibit project extensions involving the obligation of additional Federal funds; and extends the project period for the current 30 NACTEP grantees for an additional 12 months under the existing program authority. This waiver and extension will allow the 30 current NACTEP grantees to seek FY 2017 continuation awards for the project period through FY 2018.

DATES: As of August 1, 2017, the waiver and extension of the project period are finalized.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gwen Washington by telephone at (202) 245–7790 or by email at gwen.washington.ed.gov. You may also contact Linda Mayo by telephone at (202) 245–7792 or by email at linda.mayo@ed.gov. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTV), call the Federal Relay Service, toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On April 26, 2017, we published a notice in the Federal Register (82 FR 19240) proposing to waive the requirements of 34 CFR 75.261(a) and (c)(2) that generally prohibit project period extensions involving the obligation of additional Federal funds. In that notice, the Secretary also proposed to extend the NACTEP project period for up to an additional 12 months. The proposed waiver and extension of project period would enable the Secretary to provide continuation awards to the current NACTEP grantees through FY 2018 under the existing program authority.

That notice contained background information and our reasons for proposing the waiver and extension of the project period. This notice makes the waiver and extension of the project period final. Any activities carried out during the period of a NACTEP continuation award must be consistent with, or a logical extension of, the scope, goals, and objectives of the grantee’s application as approved in the FY 2013 NACTEP competition. The requirements applicable to continuation awards for this competition set forth in the 2013 notice inviting applications and the requirements in 34 CFR 75.253 will apply to any continuation awards sought by the current NACTEP grantees.

We will make decisions regarding the continuation awards based on grantee program narratives, budgets and budget narratives, program performance reports, and the requirements in 34 CFR 75.253. We will not announce a new competition or make new awards in FY 2017.

The final waiver and project period extension will not exempt the current NACTEP grantees from the appropriation account closing provisions of 31 U.S.C. 1552(a), nor will it extend the availability of funds previously awarded to current NACTEP grantees. As a result of 31 U.S.C. 1552(a), appropriations available for a limited period may be used for payment of valid obligations for only five years after the expiration of their period of availability for Federal obligation. After that time, the unexpended balance of those funds is canceled and returned to the U.S. Department of the Treasury and is unavailable for restoration for any purpose (31 U.S.C. 1552(b)).