



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NAVY PUBLISHES FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) IN FINAL MH-60 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Navy has released an Environmental Assessment (EA) and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been issued for the Helicopter Wings Realignment and MH-60R/S Helicopter Transition at Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI).

The Navy released the Draft EA February 25, 2011, and received public comments on the document from February 25 to April 25.

The EA evaluated the potential environmental effects of adding 52 helicopters, replacing older model H-60 helicopters with the new MH-60 R/S model, increasing helicopter operations at NASNI and Naval Outlying Landing Field (NOLF) Imperial Beach, construction of a new hangar and supporting facilities, and the addition of 800 personnel at NASNI when the realignment is completed by 2016. The proposed action would increase helicopter operations at NASNI and at NOLF Imperial Beach by a maximum of 30 percent. The proposed action adds about 35 daily helicopter flights at NASNI and about 19 daily helicopter flights at NOLF.

Direct, indirect and cumulative environmental impacts that may occur with implementation of this action would range from no impacts to minor impacts, with no significant impacts to the environment expected.

The EA has determined that the proposed action will not result in significant noise impacts. The Navy prepared a noise study in 2010 that included the prospective aircraft operations (helicopter and fixed-wing) and the resulting noise environment at NASNI and NOLF Imperial Beach in 2020. This study was made available to the public during the public comment period and was included in the Final EA as an appendix. The 2010 noise study assumed a 30 percent increase in helicopter operations, and thus includes the proposed action. The 2010 noise study developed noise contours for the prospective 2020 scenario that show a slight reduction in the total land area under the 65 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) noise contours at NASNI as compared with the baseline.

The proposed action would slightly expand the 2010 baseline 65 CNEL noise contour at NOLF, but this would be contained almost entirely within the installation boundaries and would not extend to populated areas. This minimal increase in the noise contour footprint means that the proposed action would not noticeably increase noise levels at NOLF. NASNI and NOLF have a

suite of policies, procedures, and programs along with specific course rules to promote measures to minimize aircraft noise.

Since this action would not entail significant impacts to the environment, the Navy has determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. A copy of the EA, including the FONSI, can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.navyregionsouthwest.com/go/doc/4275/1174759/>

Copies of the Final EA and FONSI have been distributed to the following libraries:

- Coronado Public Library, 640 Orange Avenue, Coronado, CA
- San Diego Country Library, Imperial Beach Branch, 810 Imperial Beach Boulevard, Imperial Beach, CA
- San Diego Public Library, 820 E Street, San Diego, CA

A limited number of CDROMs are available to fulfill individual requests submitted in writing to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
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