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## 3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences



### 3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

#### 3.0 CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

This chapter describes existing environmental conditions and assesses the environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives described in Chapter 2. The affected environment and environmental consequences are described and analyzed according to categories of resources. The categories of resources addressed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are listed in Table 3-1.

**Table 3-1: Categories of Resources Addressed in the EIS**

Land Use and Recreation (3.1)	Marine Mammals (3.9)
Geology and Soils (3.2)	Sea Turtles (3.10)
Air Quality (3.3)	Terrestrial Biological Resources (3.11)
Hazardous Materials and Waste (3.4)	Birds (3.12)
Water Resources (3.5)	Cultural Resources (3.13)
Acoustic Environment (Terrestrial) (3.6)	Transportation and Circulation (3.14)
Marine Biological Resources (3.7)	Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Protection of Children (3.15)
Fish (3.8)	Public Health and Safety (3.16)

In the environmental impact analysis process, the resources analyzed are identified and the expected geographic scope of potential impacts for each resource, known as the resource's region of influence, is defined. The discussion and analysis, organized by resource area, covers the oceanside lanes of the Silver Strand Training Complex (SSTC), the beach areas of SSTC-North and SSTC-South (SSTC-S) (the bayside training areas, the inland areas of SSTC-S, and the southern beaches and nearshore waters of Naval Air Station North Island), to the extent affected resources or potential impacts are present (see Figure 1-2). The analyses presented are addressed by similarity of activity, such as aircraft exercises, marine vessel exercises, Landing Craft, Air Cushion activities, underwater detonations, Elevated Causeway/Pile Driving, beach exercises and inland exercises. These training activities are broken down further for specific resource analyses—for example, beach activities can be organized into groups such as vehicle use, foot traffic, manual excavations, fluid transfer activities, pyrotechnics, simunitions/blanks, or solid waste.

For each resource area, specific activities (as listed in Chapter 2, Tables 2-1 through 2-3) are listed in terms of the potential to affect the subject resource. The analysis of listed activities considers the type, frequency, duration, and intensity of the activity, as well as use of existing training equipment (vessels, vehicles, and aircraft as described in Appendix B). In addition, platforms and training equipment associated with force structure changes (described in Section 2.3.4) are also considered as part of the analysis of training activities.

Activities with the potential to affect the resource are carried forward for environmental analysis in the EIS. For example, the potential impact associated with aircraft during training is anticipated to be minimal on marine plant and invertebrate populations and this type of activity will not be assessed. In contrast, the potential for impacts of air activities on air quality is much higher and requires a more detailed level of analysis. Each resource introduction presents a brief explanation of the logic utilized to determine which training activities are included or excluded for effects analysis. In addition, criteria used

to assess the significance of environmental impacts are provided—based on existing regulatory statutes or industry standards—for applicable resources.

### **3.0.1 Environmental Management and Mitigation Measures**

The Navy has a comprehensive management program that considers biological resources, cultural resources, environmental compliance, and environmental resource education and interpretation. Environmental management is the means by which the environment, including natural and cultural resources, is conserved, protected, enhanced, and restored while ensuring military readiness and sustainability. The basis for Navy environmental resource management at SSTC is a holistic, long-term view of human activities in conjunction with air and water quality, cultural resources, land uses, noise ordinances, waste management, or other marine or terrestrial biological resources such as sensitive habitats and Endangered Species Act - listed species.

The Navy is responsible for compliance with federal environmental laws, rules, regulations, policies, and guidelines designed to protect marine and terrestrial environmental and cultural resources at SSTC, concurrent with the Navy's sustained utilization of SSTC for training. Environmental programs at SSTC balance the need for environmental protection with the training mission, such that naval forces maximize the benefits of SSTC training assets while minimizing adverse effects on the environment.

To achieve this balance, the Navy monitors the effects of training activities on environmental resources, using an adaptive management strategy to modify resource management in response to the ongoing influx and evaluation of monitoring data. Through this approach, the Navy's environmental resource managers acquire information to identify potential impacts in a timely manner, thus allowing for ongoing adjustments to training and/or resource management while keeping the training mission on schedule to meet necessary training goals. The monitoring effort is focused not only on the environmental resource, such as a protected species, but also on the operational and administrative setting for training activities potentially affecting the resource.

In describing and analyzing affected resources and environmental consequences, the following subsections in this chapter identify current mitigation measures such as Standard Operating Procedures, Best Management Practices, and Conservation Measures that are integral to the activities covered by the Proposed Action and Alternatives. The subsections in this chapter also identify further measures the Navy proposes that are not currently being undertaken that would mitigate environmental impacts to a given resource. Mitigation measures are also presented in Chapter 5.