



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release – 22-16
Nov. 9, 2016

Growler Draft Environmental Impact Statement Available for Public Review

The Navy will publish a notice of availability in the Federal Register tomorrow (Nov. 10) announcing the release of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for EA-18G Growler airfield operations at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. The Draft EIS will be available for review tomorrow on the project website (<http://www.whidbeyeis.com>). Hard copies will also be available at area public libraries.

The release of the Draft EIS begins a 75-day public comment period, which will conclude January 25, 2017. This represents an extended public comment period to support public participation in this process.

The Draft EIS evaluates the potential environmental effects associated with the addition of up to 36 Growler aircraft and the continuation and increase of Growler airfield operations at Ault Field and Outlying Landing Field (OLF) Coupeville. The Draft EIS includes three alternatives, all of which entail an addition of either 35 or 36 additional aircraft to be based at NAS Whidbey Island. The Draft EIS also analyzes three different options for the distribution of Field Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP) operations between Ault Field and OLF Coupeville.

Growler operations will increase under all alternatives analyzed in this Draft EIS. This increase will result in a total number of annual operations at the NAS Whidbey Island Complex that is similar to what was seen in the mid-1990s.

The Navy previously held two scoping meetings in 2013 and 2014. The DEIS addresses input from the public from these two scoping periods. Alternatives presented at scoping meetings analyzing fewer additional aircraft than 35 were not carried forward in the Draft EIS because Congress has purchased more aircraft than was reflected in those earlier alternatives.

The Navy will host five open-house meetings to provide members of the public the opportunity to ask questions of Navy representatives and submit comments on the Draft EIS analysis. Each meeting will consist of information stations staffed by Navy representatives. The public meeting locations, dates and times are:

Monday, December 5, 2016
Fort Worden State Park
Conference Center USO Hall
200 Battery Way
Port Townsend, WA 98368
3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Tuesday, December 6, 2016
Oak Harbor Elks Lodge
Grande Hall
155 NE Ernst St.
Oak Harbor, WA 98277
4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Wednesday, December 7, 2016
Lopez Center for Community
and the Arts
204 Village Road
Lopez Island, WA 98261
3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

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Thursday, December 8, 2016

Seafarers' Memorial Park Building
601 Seafarers' Way
Anacortes, WA 98221
3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Friday, December 9, 2016

Coupeville High School Commons
501 South Main Street
Coupeville, WA 98239
4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Interested members of the public are encouraged to attend one of these meetings and provide comments on the Draft EIS. Comments may be provided in person at one of the meetings (either written comments or verbal comments to a stenographer will be accepted). Comments may also be posted to the project website: <http://www.whidbeyeis.com>, or submitted in writing to:

EA-18G EIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC)
Atlantic, Attn: Code EV21/SS
6506 Hampton Blvd., Norfolk, VA 23508

All comments must be postmarked, received online or provided in a format listed above no later than January 25, 2017.

Area libraries at which hard copies of the DEIS may be reviewed include: Oak Harbor City Library, Anacortes Public Library, La Conner Regional Library, Coupeville Library, San Juan Island Library, Lopez Island Library District, Orcas Island Public Library, Island Library, Camano Island Library, Mount Vernon City Library, Port Townsend Public Library, Guemes Island Library, Seattle Public Library, Burlington Public Library, Freeland Library, Langley Library, Clinton Library, North Olympic Library System Sequim, Bellingham Public Library, North Olympic Library System Port Angeles, Jefferson County Library and Sedro-Woolley Library.

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