

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

**Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement
for the Naval Base Coronado Coastal Campus at Naval Base
Coronado, California**

AGENCY: Department of the Navy, DOD.

ACTION: Record of Decision

SUMMARY: The Department of the Navy (DON), after carefully weighing the strategic, operational, and environmental consequences of the proposed action, announces its decision to construct and operate a Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWC) Coastal Campus at Silver Strand Training Complex-South (SSTC-South), Naval Base Coronado (NBC), California as set out in Alternative 1 of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Naval Base Coronado Coastal Campus at NBC, California. Implementation of this alternative would include design and construction of logistical support buildings, equipment use and maintenance training facilities, classroom and tactical skills instruction buildings, storage and administrative facilities, utilities, fencing, roads, and parking. A new controlled entry point would be provided for immediate access to/from State Route 75 and Building 99, a World War II-era bunker eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP), would be demolished to facilitate campus construction.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest, Attn: Teresa Bresler, 2730 McKean Street, Building 291, San Diego, California, 92136, (619) 556-7315; or e-mail: teresa.bresler@navy.mil.

A. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, sections 4321 *et seq.* of Title 42 of the U.S. Code; Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (Parts 1500-1508 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]); and DON regulations (Part 775 of Title 32 of the Code of Federal Regulations), the DON announces its decision to support the current and future operations readiness of personnel with the NSWC by constructing, operating, and maintaining a Coastal Campus at SSTC-South, NBC, California. The proposed action will be accomplished as set out in Alternative 1, described in the Final EIS as the preferred alternative. This decision will

enable the DON to provide adequate facilities to support growth of the NSWC and to maintain the required levels of operational readiness of special warfare forces, as mandated by Section 167 of Title 10 of the U.S. Code.

Under Alternative 1, the DON would construct and operate a campus encompassing 24 military construction projects. Construction activities would occur over a 10-year period at a cost of approximately \$700 million, providing nearly 1.5 million square feet of facilities. These projects would support administrative, operational, logistics and community support, and training (indoor and physical training) requirements.

B. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES: The Global War on Terrorism, signaled the need for, and ultimately led to, an increase in demand for Special Operations Force (SOF) capabilities, including Naval Special Warfare (NSW), the maritime component of the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) recommended a 15 percent increase in SOF personnel and a 33- percent increase in SOF Battalions for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. The 2006 QDR further directed the DON "to support an increase in Special Warfare Operators or Sea, Air, and Land (SEAL) team personnel and to develop riverine (river-type environments) warfare capabilities." The 2010 QDR provided an update to the 2006 QDR and contained a number of SOF-related directives pertaining to personnel, organizations, and equipment. Specifically, DoD determined that for the duration of the FY 2011-15 Future Years Defense Program (FYDP), U.S. Special Operations Forces would conform to the general parameters below:

- Maintain approximately 660 special warfare teams (including Army Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha teams, DON SEAL platoons, Marine special operations teams, Air Force special tactics teams, and operational aviation detachments); and
- Increase key enabling assets for SOF.

With USSOCOM and QDR directed growth, the NSWC will reach a force strength of approximately 11,000 by the end of 2015, an 86 percent increase when compared to the pre-September 11, 2001 force strength of approximately 5,900.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to: (1) provide adequate facilities to support future growth of NSWC on the west coast; and, (2) maintain the required levels of operational readiness of special warfare forces, as mandated by section 167 of Title 10 of the U.S. Code.

NSWC and its subordinate commands are currently located at five separate installations of NBC: Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI), NAB Coronado, Naval Outlying Landing Field Imperial Beach, Naval Auxiliary Landing Field San Clemente Island, and the SSTC-North and -South locations. Existing facilities cannot adequately support current force strength, let alone growth programmed to occur in the immediate future. Moreover, many NSWC facilities at NBC Coronado are functionally obsolete and do not meet current needs or future requirements for expansion and renovation.

Specifically, existing facilities include temporary, pre-engineered structures, tension fabric structures, and modular structures built or procured only as a short-term solution to ongoing needs. Several NSWC units are temporarily utilizing space in Bachelor Enlisted Quarters (BEQs). The lack of adequate, climate-controlled gear storage facilities has resulted in increased gear degradation and/or maintenance requirements. Moreover, west coast units have been forced to travel to private sector ranges in the Midwest and Southeast given the absence of dynamic shooting and close quarters combat training facilities in proximity to San Diego, resulting in increased time away from home and family.

In addition to their physical deficiencies, NSWC facilities within NBC Coronado are also geographically fragmented. For example, on NAB Coronado alone, NSWC and subordinate commands are spread throughout 60 facilities that are divided by State Route 75 (SR-75).

The space deficiencies coupled with fragmentation of the force, as previously described, result in inefficiencies in mission planning and execution and jeopardize operational readiness of NSWC. The proposed action would optimize both facilities and use of space, including synchronistic site improvements within the NBC footprint. This would allow NSWC to meet its need to support mandated mission requirements in an efficient manner. The proposed action would also consolidate

command elements into one geographic location (i.e., the Coastal Campus on SSTC-South) for efficient administrative functions.

Public Involvement

The DON published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS for the proposed NBC Coastal Campus on June 29, 2012 in the Federal Register (77 Fed. Reg. 38781). The NOI invited agencies, organizations, and the general public to provide written comments about the proposed action and issues to be addressed in the EIS. The NOI also announced two public meetings, which were held on July 17, 2012 at the Marina Vista Community Center in Imperial Beach, California, and July 18, 2012 at the Coronado Public Library in Coronado, California. The 30-day public scoping period was extended by 15 days for a total of 45 days, concluding on August 14, 2012 upon written request by the city of Coronado. Advertisements announcing the public scoping meetings were placed in four local and regional newspapers: San Diego Union-Tribune, Enlace (Spanish newspaper), Coronado Eagle and Journal, and the Imperial Beach Eagle and Times. Advertisements regarding the notice of extension of the scoping period were placed in the same newspapers. At each of these meetings, information was presented about the meeting's objectives, the process and purpose for the development of the EIS, and the opportunities for public input.

On July 25, 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published a Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS and the DON published a Notice of Public Meetings in the Federal Register (75 Fed. reg. 43465 and 75 Fed. Reg. 43457, respectively) initiating a 60-day public comment period on the document. The DON also published notices announcing the availability of the Draft EIS in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *Enlace* (Spanish language newspaper), *Coronado Eagle*, and in the *Imperial Beach Eagle and Times*.

The DON held two public meetings, the first in Imperial Beach, California (August 13, 2014) and the second in Coronado, California (August 14, 2014). The 60-day comment period ran from July 25, 2014 to September 22, 2014. The Draft EIS was distributed to those individuals, agencies, and associations who asked to be notified during the public scoping period, as well as to members of Congress, the California governor, and officials in the coastal region surrounding the NBC study area. Additionally, the Draft EIS was made available for general review on the project website (www.NBCCoastalCampusEIS.com) and

at three information repositories in the local area: Imperial Beach Library, Coronado Public Library, and City of San Diego Central Library.

A total of 337 comments by 62 commenters (12 federal, state, and local agencies, 1 Native American Tribe, 2 elected officials, 2 organizations, and 45 individuals) were submitted to the DON on the Draft EIS. The comments addressed land use; air quality; hazardous materials and waste; water quality and hydrology; noise; biological resources; cultural resources; traffic and circulation; public health and safety; utilities and public services; coastal uses and resources; aesthetics; alternatives; and cumulative impacts.

The Notice of Availability for the Final EIS was published in the Federal Register by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on April 3, 2015 (80 Fed. Reg. 18226) and in the same local newspapers as previously identified in this Record of Decision (ROD). The Final EIS addressed oral and written comments received during the Draft EIS public comment period. Compact discs containing the Final EIS and the Executive Summary of the Final EIS were mailed to key stakeholders based on previous notifications. Printed copies of the Final EIS were made available for public review at three local libraries (Imperial Beach Library, Coronado Public Library, and City of San Diego Central Library). Also, the Final EIS was made publicly available on the project website at www.NBCCoastalCampusEIS.com. The Final EIS 30-day wait period ended on May 4, 2015.

Alternatives Considered

The following three action alternatives were analyzed in detail in the Final EIS:

Alternative 1 (SSTC-South Bunker Demolition Alternative) is the DON's preferred alternative. Elements of Alternative 1 would consist of: (1) consolidation of necessary NSWC facilities to one location on SSTC-South; (2) design and construction of logistical support buildings; equipment use (and equipment maintenance) training facilities (including an approximately 50-foot-long by 80-foot-wide by 120-foot-tall parachute drying tower or paraloft); classroom and tactical skills instruction buildings; storage and administrative facilities; infrastructure, including utilities, fencing, roads, and parking; and (3) construction of a new entry control point providing immediate access to SSTC-South from SR-75. Also

included would be a food service facility, fuel dispensing facility, a "mini-mart" type of store and improved fire protection and emergency services. With the exception of the paraloft at 120 feet tall and potentially several rooftop communication antennas, all other buildings would be limited to 45 feet in height.

Under Alternative 1, Building 99 (the South Bunker), a World War II-era bunker eligible for listing in the NHRP as a contributing element to the discontinuous Fort Emory Coastal Battery Historic District, would be demolished along with up to 20 other existing structures. An existing DON facility along with its associated cabling would need to be relocated north of its current location within the Alternative 1 footprint. Site preparation would potentially include demolition, site grading, and leveling. Sustainable design would be used for all facilities as is practicable. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standards is the minimum goal for the Coastal Campus. Off-site traffic, access, and utility improvements would also be required.

Alternative 2 (SSTC-South Bunker Retention Alternative) would include all of the components of Alternative 1, except Building 99 would be preserved in place or adaptively reused subject to review in compliance with the NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process, rather than be demolished. Other existing structures on SSTC-South proposed for demolition under Alternative 1, would also be demolished under Alternative 2. Due to the central location and the areal extent of Building 99, the Alternative 2 development footprint would be 4.6 acres smaller than the development footprint proposed under Alternative 1.

Alternative 3 (Multi-Installation Alternative) would include all of the components described for Alternative 1 (SSTC-South Bunker Demolition Alternative), but these components would be located on three separate DON installations: NAB Coronado, NASNI, and SSTC-South. This is because neither NAB Coronado nor NASNI alone could accommodate the entire 1.5-million-square-foot Coastal Campus development; however, these installations could accommodate separate proposed uses, with the remaining proposed uses located at SSTC-South. Those facilities that would not be clustered with the other uses at SSTC-South would include the SEAL Team 17 Operations Facility, Naval Special Warfare Group-11 Operations Support Facility, and the Resiliency Center, and the maintenance and logistics portion of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle facility. All other proposed components would be located at

SSTC-South, similar to Alternative 1, and the SSTC-South portion of the Alternative 3 footprint would be the same as that for Alternative 2. Even though four facilities would not be co-located at SSTC-South, the configuration of Alternative 3 would still provide the sufficient adjacency and synergy to support the functionality of the various echelons/levels of command within the NSWC organizational structure.

Under Alternative 3, Building 99 (South Bunker) would be retained; however, up to 20 other existing structures on SSTC-South would be demolished, as is proposed under Alternative 1. Site preparation for construction would include demolition, site grading, and leveling. All traffic and access improvements as well as utility improvements for Alternative 3 would be the same as those described for Alternative 1 for SSTC-South. No additional access or utility improvements would be proposed at NAB Coronado or NASNI as a part of the proposed action, but routine maintenance and periodic system upgrades would continue to occur. Existing utilities at NAB Coronado and NASNI would be able to accommodate the proposed military construction projects at those installations.

The No Action Alternative would maintain existing NBC land uses and training facilities used by NSWC. None of the construction or improvements proposed under Alternatives 1, 2, or 3 would occur. As a result, NSWC would continue to have limited space for current and future training and related support and would be unable to accommodate Congressionally-mandated growth. The geographic dispersion of assets and continued use of deficient facilities would continue to cause inefficiencies in mission planning and execution as well as logistical support. Commands would not be consolidated, and inefficiencies in command and control functions would continue. By limiting facilities and land use support to accommodate NSWC growth and expansion, the No Action Alternative would not achieve the mission of NSWC or the purpose and need of the proposed action. The No Action Alternative is used in this EIS as an analytical baseline that establishes the current facilities and land use framework. It provides this analytical baseline for comparison with the other alternatives.

The environmentally preferred alternative for the Final EIS is the No Action Alternative, which would preserve Building 99 and retain existing biological conditions at SSTC.

Environmental Impacts

The Final EIS analyzed the potential environmental impacts of implementing the three action alternatives relative to 14 resource categories: land use and recreation; geology and soils; air quality; hazardous materials and waste; water quality and hydrology; noise; biological resources; cultural resources; traffic and circulation; socioeconomic and environmental justice; public health and safety; utilities and public services; coastal uses and resources; and aesthetics.

Land Use and Recreation. Alternative 1 would expand the density and area of developed uses on SSTC-South but would not introduce incompatible land uses or be incompatible with existing land uses. All off-site improvements (traffic and access and utility) would occur within existing roadway and utility rights-of-way and corridors. No recreational facilities on or off SSTC-South would be adversely affected.

Geology and Soils. Changes in topography would be relatively minor involving construction site leveling. No significant geology and soils impacts would occur.

Air Quality. Annual emissions would be less than de minimis levels in the San Diego Air Basin and would conform to the State Implementation Plan. Therefore, a formal conformity determination under section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act is not required. With implementation of the proposed action, the estimated annual emissions of all pollutants (volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide, oxides of sulfur, and particulate matter) from 2015 through 2024 would be less than the Prevention of Significant Deterioration emissions rate thresholds. Therefore, air quality impacts would not be significant.

Hazardous Materials and Waste. All former underground storage tanks have received regulatory closure. There are two Installation Restoration (IR) sites (IR Sites 10 and 11) at SSTC-South. IR Site 10 was granted No Further Action by the Regional Water Quality Control Board and IR Site 11 (asbestos) was recommended for No Further Action and has been closed. The proposed action would not result in any significant hazardous materials and waste impacts.

Water Quality and Hydrology. Alternative 1 would create new impervious surfaces that could alter on-site and off-site drainage patterns, which could cause undesirable increases in

surface runoff flow rates or discharge volumes. Alternative 1 proposes improvements to the existing storm water drainage system to accommodate increases in runoff. No significant water quality and hydrology impacts would occur.

Noise. Alternative 1 demolition, construction, and operations would add to the noise levels of the existing activities on SSTC-South and the area's ambient noise levels. Alternative 1 would include the demolition of Building 99 in 2015-2016, which would generate noise from concrete drilling and sawing, blasting, concrete breaking, stockpiling, and truck hauling off-site. Temporary, worst-case, 8-hour averaged construction noise would be approximately 62 dBA at the Coronado Cays and 60 dBA at Imperial Beach. The City of Coronado (Coronado Cays) limits daytime construction noise levels to 75 A-weighted decibels (dBA) equivalent noise level (L_{eq}) and restricts construction noise to between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM. The City of Imperial Beach regulations do not limit decibel levels of construction noise but prohibit construction noise at night between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM. Nighttime construction could occur, although infrequently, but public notices would be posted for these activities. Facilities use and vehicle traffic would increase ambient noise levels on SSTC-South under Alternative 1; however, this would not cause a substantial increase in ambient noise levels; result in incompatible land use; or violate Federal, DON, state, regional, or local noise standards or requirements. Therefore, Alternative 1 would not result in significant noise impacts.

Biological Resources. Alternative 1 would result in permanent and direct impacts to all of the plant communities and cover types within the proposed action footprint (166.85 acres). The plant communities and cover types impacted would include diegan coastal sage scrub (0.35 acre), nonnative grassland (0.02 acre), southern foredunes (0.38 acre), disturbed habitat (114.06 acres), and urban/developed (52.04 acres). An additional 4.33 acres would be temporarily affected through utility easements, of which 0.01 acre is jurisdictional waters. Additionally, there would be a loss of 0.15 acre of critical habitat for the Western Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*) from construction of the proposed entry control point and supporting road improvements. Alternative 1 would have no effect on the California least tern (*Sternula antillarum browni*), Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), Coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), and the Pacific pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris pacificus*). Additionally, there are no anticipated adverse effects to any non-federally listed rare or sensitive

wildlife species or wildlife species or wildlife corridors. In addition, the DON determined that the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the salt marsh bird's beak, San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*), Light-footed Ridgeway's Rail (*Rallus obsoletus levipes*), Western Snowy Plover, and critical habitat for the Western Snowy Plover.

Cultural Resources. Demolition of Building 99, a contributing element to the NRHP-eligible Fort Emory Coastal Battery Historic District, would constitute an adverse effect to this historic property. The proposed ground-disturbing off-site traffic, access, and utilities improvements have the potential to impact other cultural resources.

Traffic and Circulation. For Alternative 1, the traffic analysis projected that construction traffic would be spread over a 10-year construction period and combined with operational traffic during the build-out. For post-construction traffic, it was anticipated that 3,045 personnel would relocate from NAB Coronado to SSTC-South with completion of the Coastal Campus. At the same time, approximately 1,000 persons would relocate to vacated buildings at NAB Coronado, thus, including projected growth through 2024, there would be a net loss of about 1,600 persons at NAB Coronado by 2024.

During construction, 6 intersections would experience significant impacts in 2015 and up to 14 intersections would be significantly affected in 2023. Post-construction, 6 of the study intersections would experience a significant impact in 2024 and eight of the study intersections would experience a significant impact in 2040.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice. Effects of the proposed action on socioeconomics would be largely beneficial in terms of employment and economic output; no impacts are anticipated to population or housing. Alternative 1 would not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations nor result in environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children.

Public Health and Safety. Demolition of Building 99 could include the use of small commercial explosives and/or diamond saws and drilling and hammering to break up the materials. A detailed demolition plan would be prepared. Construction activities would be typical of military structures and would not result in a significant public health and safety impact.

Operation of the Coastal Campus would pose no substantial risk to public health and safety.

Utilities and Services. Potential environmental impacts associated with utilities and services required under Alternative 1 are summarized as follows:

- Water. The existing 16-inch/20-inch water line and additional water storage tanks and booster pumps to be constructed as part of Alternative 1 would be adequate to serve the water demand from the proposed Coastal Campus.
- Wastewater. Wastewater would continue to be pumped to the city of Imperial Beach's wastewater system for treatment; however, some improvements would be needed within the city to handle the additional demand. The DON and the city of Imperial Beach would ensure that all necessary wastewater improvements were in place prior to the operation of the Coastal Campus as proposed under Alternative 1.
- Electricity, Natural Gas, and Communications. Electrical, natural gas, and communication upgrades would be needed to serve the demand from Alternative 1. The existing infrastructure has sufficient space to accommodate any upgrades to the electrical, natural gas, and communications systems and any improvements would be within the existing Alternative 1 footprint.
- Stormwater. The Alternative 1 drainage design would maintain existing stormwater runoff patterns to the maximum extent practicable, and retain all runoff on-site (zero discharge) for treatment. Design features would reduce runoff volume, capture runoff pollutants on-site, provide groundwater recharge, and offer a supplemental resource for irrigation and/or graywater use in facility buildings.
- Security. Appropriate safety and security lighting and security fencing would be installed where necessary and NBC Security would continue providing police protection.
- Fire Safety. All facilities would meet applicable fire codes and regulations and include appropriate and required fire safety design such as sprinkler systems, fire flow requirements. Fire protection and emergency services improvements would include one or more of the following:
(1) constructing a new fire station with a structural

pumper, an ambulance, and associated staffing, (2) establishing a temporary fire station with firefighting apparatus, an ambulance, and staffing, (3) staging firefighting equipment including an ambulance at SSTC-South, (4) roving firefighting equipment including an ambulance, and (5) obtaining a deviation approval of the DoD Fire and Emergency Services Program (DoD Instruction 6055.06). These improvements would be supplemented by continued mutual aid agreements.

- Solid Waste. Alternative 1 would be compliant with Executive Order (EO) 13514 and EO 13423 specific to waste diversion, and with the Sustainable Solid Waste Program and Commander, Navy Region Southwest Instruction 11350.1B requirements regarding construction and demolition debris. Debris would be diverted from the landfill waste stream to the extent feasible.

Coastal Uses and Resources. Implementation of Alternative 1 would not have a significant impact to water quality in San Diego Bay or the Pacific Ocean. The proposed action would not change public access to coastal resources.

Aesthetics. Alternative 1 would modify viewsheds from SR-75, the Bayshore Bikeway, the Coronado Cays, and Silver Strand State Beach. It would create a more intense visual appearance, including increased nighttime lighting conditions, primarily from southbound SR-75 approaching the north gated entry control point. Viewshed modifications are not anticipated to be perceived as substantial, dramatic, adverse, or controversial.

Agency Consultation and Coordination

The results of agency consultation and coordination under Alternative 1 are summarized as follows:

- In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the DON consulted informally with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding impacts of the proposed construction and operation of Alternative 1 on federally sensitive species. The DON submitted a Biological Assessment on April 28, 2014 and the USFWS issued an Informal Consultation Concurrence Letter (FWS-SDF-14I0295) on September 12, 2014 that concurred with the DON determinations that the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the salt marsh bird's beak, San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*),

Light-footed Ridgeway's Rail (*Rallus obsoletus levipes*), Western Snowy Plover, and critical habitat for the Western Snowy Plover. The USFWS concurred with the DON-identified general and species-specific conservation measures to be implemented by the DON to avoid, minimize, and/or offset impacts to the salt marsh bird's beak, San Diego fairy shrimp, Light-footed Ridgeway's Rail, and the Western Snowy Plover or plover critical habitat.

- In accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the DON consulted with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) regarding the effects of proposed construction activities on historic resources. On February 25, 2015, the California SHPO concurred with the DON's findings and signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) regarding the demolition of Building 99 (Battery 134 Getchell) as proposed under Alternative 1. To resolve adverse effects to the historic property, the MOA stipulates recordation of the affected resource and salvage of remaining World War II equipment.
- In accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act, the DON determined that the proposed action was fully consistent with the California Coastal Management Program and satisfied the standard of being consistent to the maximum extent practicable. Accordingly, a Coastal Consistency Determination was submitted to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) in August 2014. On November 12, 2014, the CCC concurred with the DON's coastal consistency determination.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures identified in the Final EIS to reduce potential impacts to less than significant are outlined below.

Cultural Resources. The MOA signed by the DON and the California SHPO stipulates that adverse effects to the historic property (Building 99) may be resolved by recordation of the affected resource and salvage of remaining World War II equipment.

Traffic and Circulation. No immediate traffic improvements are required to support the proposed action. However, DON has determined that mitigation would be necessary in the future to mitigate impacts of the action. Mitigation measures related to

traffic and circulation in 2024 and 2040 would include the following:

Post-Construction Year 2024:

- Modification of signal operations at Silver Strand Boulevard (SR-75) and Tulagi Road
- Modification of eastbound approach configuration at Silver Strand Boulevard (SR-75) and Rainbow Drive
- Modification of northbound and southbound approach configurations at 9th Street and Palm Avenue (SR-75)
- Removal of east leg pedestrian crossing at 13th Street and Palm Avenue (SR-75)
- Addition of a second westbound left-turn lane at Saturn Boulevard/19th Street and Palm Avenue (SR-75)
- Modification of southbound approach configuration at 7th Street and Palm Avenue (SR-75)

Post-Construction Year 2040:

- Extend the southbound right-turn lanes at Palm Ave (SR-75) and I-5 Southbound Exit Ramp.
- Restriction of left turns out of Fiddler's Cove Driveway and Silver Strand Boulevard (SR-75).

Traffic and circulation mitigation measures in 2040 were developed based on forecasted growth and traffic patterns with the addition of the Coastal Campus. Extending mitigation measures to 2040 provides the DON with flexibility to react to actual growth in traffic and changes in traffic patterns. The DON will continue to coordinate with the California Department of Transportation and the cities of Coronado and Imperial Beach to determine the applicability of proposed mitigation measures in 2040.

Response to Comments Received on the Final EIS: The DON reviewed and considered all comments that were received during the 30-day wait period following publication of the Notice of Availability of the Final EIS. A total of nine comment letters and e-mails were received on the Final EIS. Most comment themes were similar or identical to those received on the Draft EIS and which were considered and addressed in the Final EIS. The primary comment theme related to traffic impacts and mitigation. Another issue involved the legality of expanding current wastewater service to the City of Imperial Beach. The remaining comment themes not otherwise addressed in the Final EIS concerned sea level rise, prehistoric sites, emergency and fire services, design plans review, support for the resurrection of

the Coronado Belt railroad line, and cumulative impacts. Comments warranting specific responses are provided below.

Comment 1: The City of Imperial Beach requested that the DON work with the city's traffic engineering consultant to develop a mitigation program and that all traffic impact mitigation measures and impact avoidance and minimization measures be funded and implemented prior to and/or with project construction. This would include impacts identified by ongoing traffic monitoring.

Response: As stated in the Final EIS, the DON would be responsible for funding the off-site traffic improvements. The in-depth traffic analysis identified traffic mitigation requirements in Year 2024 and Year 2040. However, these improvements would not be necessary to resolve project impacts prior to the requirement years noted in the analysis. The DON would coordinate these improvements with CALTRANS and the Cities of Imperial Beach, San Diego, and Coronado. Also, as stated in the Final EIS, the DON will consider installation of permanent vehicle count stations.

Comment 2: The City of Coronado requested that new traffic signal and entry control gate improvements be completed prior to any demolition activities instead of construction of a temporary northern access point followed by a permanent entry gate.

Response: The interim north gate access would be established first to adequately handle all Building 99 demolition traffic and initial construction traffic. In addition, the DON will work with CALTRANS District 11 to establish and implement a transportation management plan which includes measures to reduce construction traffic to the extent practical with the goal of a level of service of D or better. The proposed Entry Control Point would be fully constructed in 2017.

Comment 3: The City of Imperial Beach reiterated their request that traffic signals be phased for all intersections within the Palm Avenue/SR-75 corridor to mitigate the increased traffic from construction and operation of the Coastal Campus. In addition, traffic signal phasing of Rainbow Drive, 9th Street, and 13th Street should occur with the construction phase and not in 2024 or 2040.

Response: As stated in the Final EIS, the DON will coordinate any phasing improvements with CALTRANS and the cities

of Imperial Beach and San Diego. In addition, the DON will consider traffic signal phasing in its Transportation Demand Management Plan for the Coastal Campus via the Transportation Management Committee.

Comment 4: The City of Coronado indicated that the DON did not address a funding commitment and implementation of a Traffic Reduction Program to reduce vehicle traffic. Traffic mitigations including preparation of the Transportation Demand Management should not be delayed until 2024.

Response: As stated in the Final EIS, the DON will continue implementing the goals of the 2014 Memorandum of Agreement between the DON and San Diego Association of Government to reduce drive-alone work trips. Upon signature of the ROD, the DON will establish a Transportation Management Committee. The Committee will develop a Transportation Demand Management Plan to holistically review all aspects of transportation for Naval Base Coronado to include the Coastal Campus and associated mitigation measures. The Committee will routinely re-assess the traffic assumptions and potential mitigation measures identified in the ROD. Where feasible, the Committee will work with the cities in implementing mitigations outlined in the EIS prior to the 2024 and 2040 requirement dates in the EIS.

Comment 5: The City of Coronado requested that traffic mitigations, including ongoing traffic monitoring, with installation of permanent count stations at the new entry control point and at the three controlled gates at NAB Coronado be implemented. These data should then be reviewed by the DON, CALTRANS, and the City of Coronado to confirm these data are consistent with the conclusions of the EIS.

Response: As stated in the Final EIS the DON will consider installation of permanent vehicle count stations. The volume estimates made in the Final EIS are based on regional model estimates that provide the best known information at the time. Actual traffic volumes at the Coastal Campus and other Naval Base Coronado facilities will depend on the DON's missions and needs in the future. Permanent count stations would be informational but are not considered to be a mitigation measure. The Transportation Demand Management Plan and Transportation Management Committee will evaluate measures to help manage traffic demand at Coastal Campus and other Naval Base Coronado facilities.

Comment 6: A member of the public requested Navy to consider moving the Entry Control Point to the south half way between the Cays and Imperial Beach.

Response: The proposed Entry Control Point is located where the Hooper Boulevard access currently exists and because it provides the safest ingress/egress to the proposed Coastal Campus. This location provides the necessary line-of-sight safety distance to oncoming traffic. The access cannot be moved farther south due to the existing berm and its associated sensitive natural and cultural resources.

Comment 7: The City of Coronado pointed out that as indicated in the Coastal Commission staff report, the Navy agreed to implement a bike and pedestrian pathway onto the SSTC-South site.

Response: The proposed entry gate and SR-75 intersection improvements would include a pedestrian walkway from the Bayshore Bikeway on the east side of SR-75 onto the Coastal Campus. This walkway would be usable by pedestrians and cyclists.

Comment 8: The City of Coronado questioned the City of Imperial Beach's capability, capacity and legal basis to provide to the DON wastewater services for the Coastal Campus. The City of Coronado also noted that sewer service cannot be provided to the project by the City of Imperial Beach without approval of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

Response: Based on the best available data and prior historic agreements for provision of services, the Final EIS determined that continuing wastewater service through the City of Imperial Beach was the least environmentally damaging and least operationally disruptive to the two cities. Further, the DON received correspondence on April 9, 2015 from LAFCO asserting that provision of wastewater service at the project site by the City of Imperial Beach is exempted from LAFCO purview per Government Code Section 56133(e) because the existing agreement and subsequent amendments between the City of Imperial Beach and the DON for wastewater service were signed prior to January 1, 2001.

Comment 9: Since coastal armoring can have adverse impacts on coastal ecosystems, the USEPA encouraged the DON to consider whether any features could reasonably be incorporated into the

proposed project at this time that could reduce the potential need for coastal armoring in the future.

Response: The DON will continue to monitor global sea level changes and the associated risks but does not propose any armoring features at this time. As stated in the Final EIS, no climate change-related sea level rise impacts are anticipated at the Coastal Campus through year 2050. As the science on climate changes evolves, the DoD and the DON will develop policies and plans to manage the effects of sea level rise on DoD's facilities, as necessary.

Comment 10: The La Posta Band of Mission Indians expressed concerns about prehistoric sites in the area and possible impacts to them and requested Navy contact them.

Response: The California SHPO concurred with the DON's findings for effect to archaeological sites in the Coastal Campus project's Area of Potential Effect. The only National Register-eligible site (CA-SDI-5454/12270) will be completely avoided by the Proposed Action. The other seven recorded prehistoric "sites" represent extensively disturbed or transported cultural deposits on which SHPO concurred with the DON's recommendations for non-eligibility. This information has been conveyed to the Tribe in on-going discussions outside the Section 106 compliance process.

Comment 11: The City of Coronado pointed out that no mitigation or impact avoidance and minimization measures are proposed for fire life safety services.

Response: Per the responses to comments in the Final EIS under Public Health and Safety, the DON determined that fire protection and emergency services would be needed and proposed one or more of five measures that could be included. The Final EIS also stated that the DON would continue to work with the cities of Coronado and Imperial Beach on additional measures.

Comment 12: A member of the public recommended that the DON should look into supporting the resurrection of the Coronado Belt rail line through Imperial Beach to help traffic flow.

Response: The DON appreciates the efforts to establish new transit options in the area; this effort, however, is not part of the Proposed Action nor is the DON the Federal agency with jurisdiction over Federal transportation projects.

Comment 13: As noted by the City of Coronado, the February 6, 2015 Coastal Commission Consistency Determination report indicated the DON's intention to solicit and accept comments from neighboring communities on building design and to work with the City to achieve a visually-compatible aesthetic for the Coastal Campus. The EIS should be revised to include this commitment.

Response: By signing this ROD, the DON commits to partnering with the City of Coronado to create a visually compatible campus and will solicit input from neighboring communities on building design.


Comment 14: The City of Coronado expressed concern that the cumulative impact analysis is flawed because the analysis was bifurcated by the development of two separate environmental studies, this one and the 2011 Silver Strand Training Complex EIS. The analysis is also flawed because it fails to address redevelopment of NAB Coronado.

Response: This EIS considered 51 past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the cumulative impacts analysis, including the actions of the Silver Strand Training Complex EIS. As stated in this EIS, the 2006 and 2010 Quadrennial Defense Reviews identified the need for additional Special Operation Forces, and several years of specific planning were required by the DON to determine how to achieve those requirements. This is discussed in Section 1.2, Background, and Section 2.3, Development of Alternatives of the EIS. Therefore, at the time of the preparation of the Silver Strand Training Complex EIS, the Coastal Campus action was not defined or known. New growth is not planned at NAB Coronado at this time; however, this EIS did account for, and analyzed, an increase of approximately 1,000 new personnel from other DON tenants to fill the vacancy at NAB Coronado.

C. CONCLUSIONS: After carefully considering the purpose and need for the proposed action, the analyses contained in the Final EIS, mitigation measures, and the comments received on the Draft EIS and Final EIS from federal, state, and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individual members of the public, I have determined that the preferred alternative identified in the Final EIS, Alternative 1, best meets the needs of the DON. Implementation of Alternative 1 will provide space for current and future training support for NSWC, as well as the ability to support congressionally mandated expanding training

needs to maintain the operational readiness of special warfare forces.

6/12/15
Date


Mr. Steven R. Iselin
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the DON
(Installations, Energy, and Environment)