

Special Report

Alaskan Command Gulf of Alaska Military Exercise



ALASKAN COMMAND



NORTHERN EDGE 2017

**Alaskan Command
and
U.S. Navy Pacific Fleet**

The Overall Classification of this Briefing is: **UNCLASSIFIED**



Background

- **NORTHERN EDGE (NE)** is a U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) exercise preparing for crisis in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region
 - ALCOM plans and conducts NE on behalf of USPACOM
- **Biennial exercise (odd years) dating back to 1975**
 - Late spring/early summer since 2002
- **Participation from all military services and interagency partners**





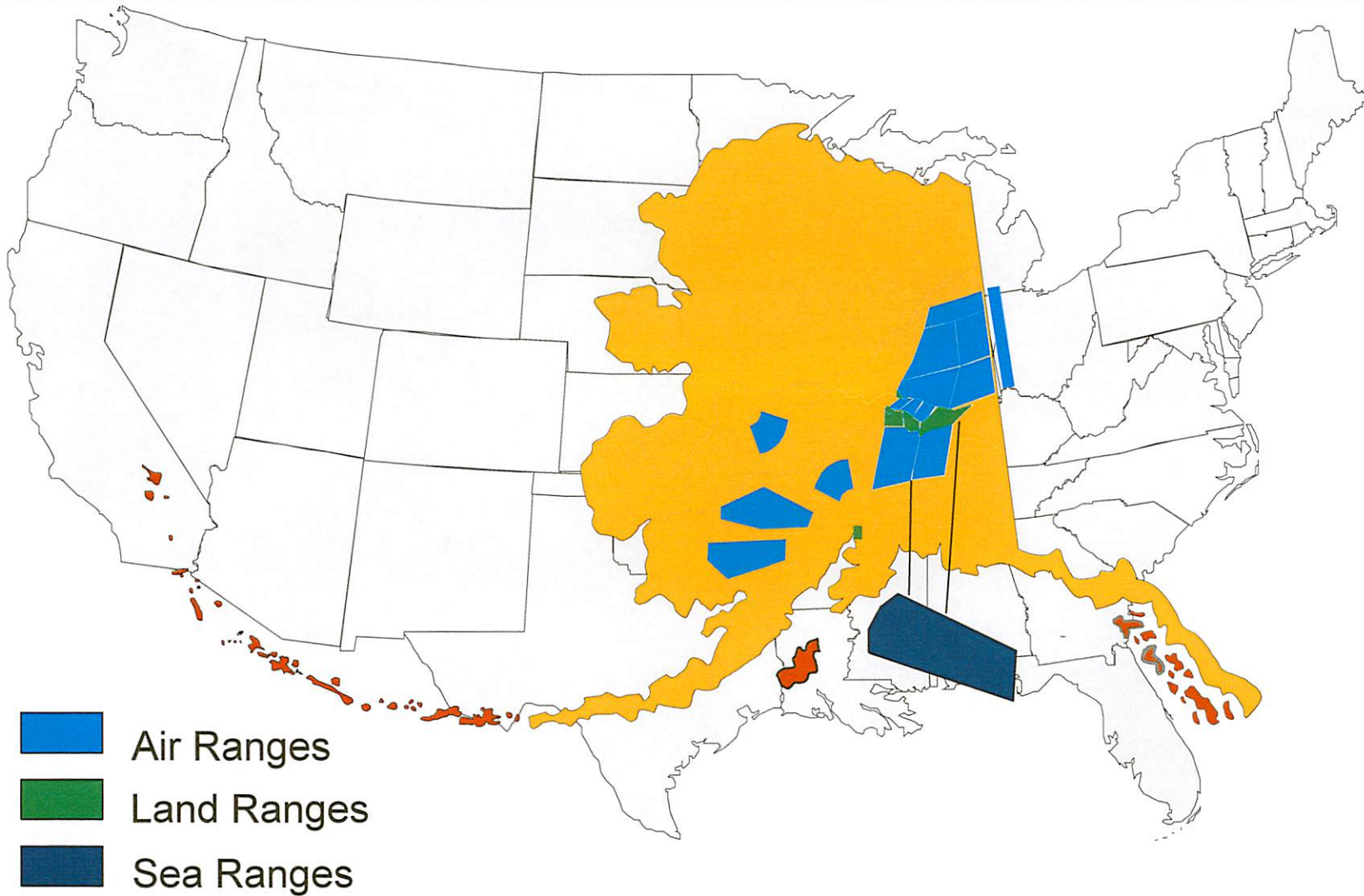
Overview

- **PACOM contingency exercise**
 - Replicate most challenging Pacific theater scenarios
 - Joint interoperability tactics, techniques & procedures
 - Requires Alaskan-sized spaces = vast distances large, modern military forces face
- **Comprehensive, realistic training**
 - Air-to-Air
 - Air-to-Surface
 - Tactical Command and Control
 - Live-Virtual-Constructive Integration



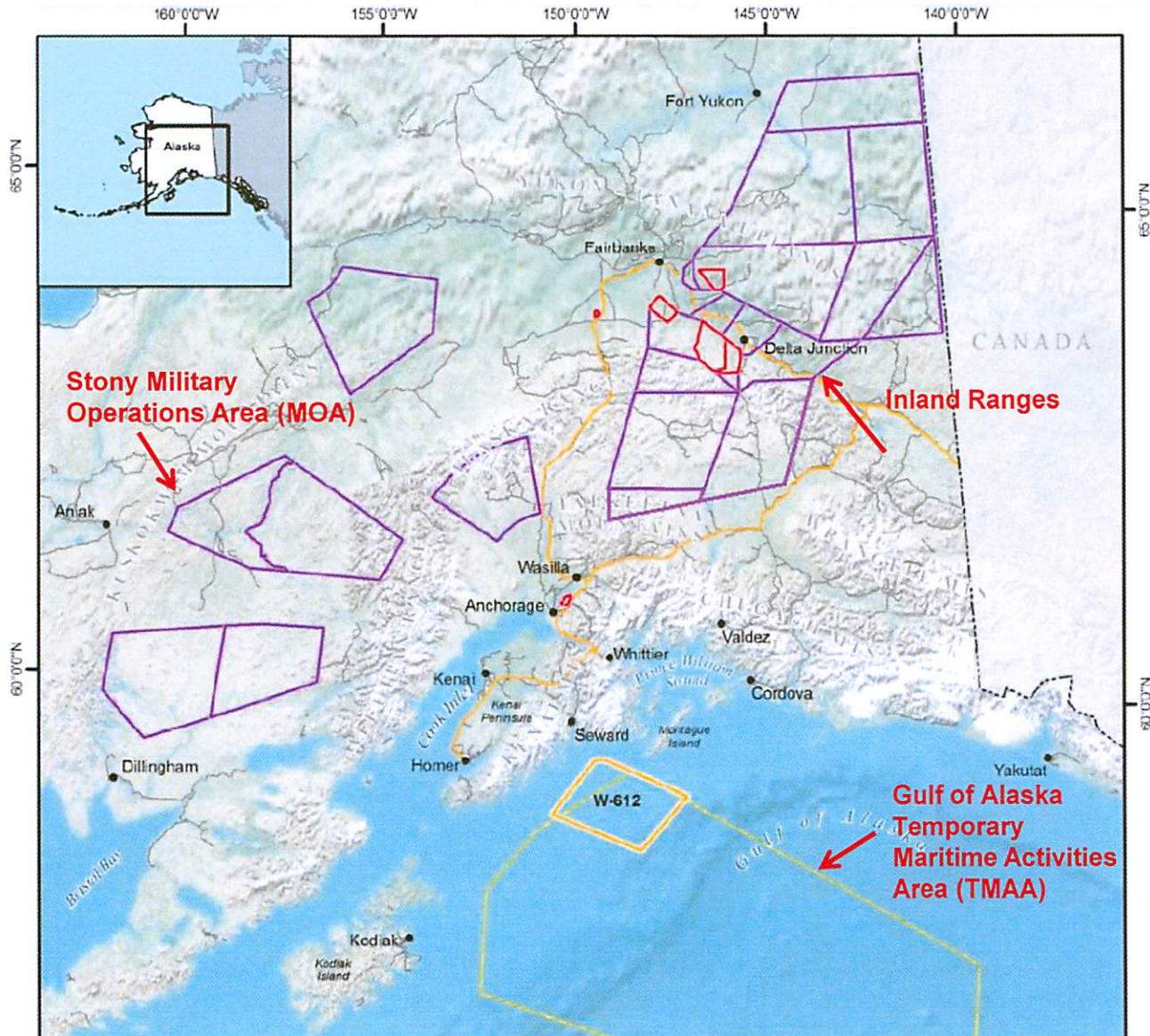


Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex



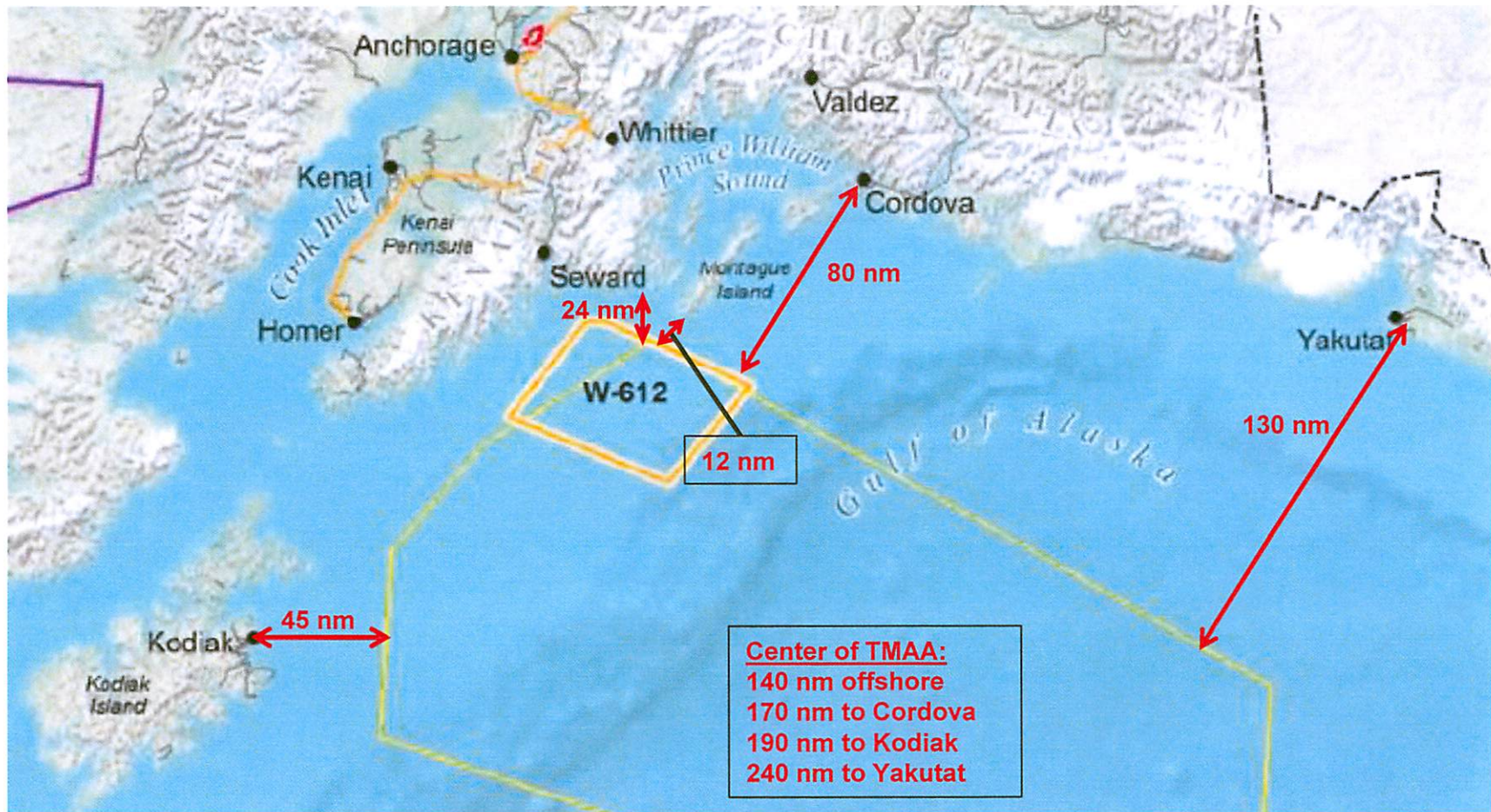


JPARC





Proximity of TMAA to Shore





NE15 Economic Impact

- **Total estimated economic impact of over \$13 million**
 - Lodging, rental cars, support contracts
 - Port fees for ship visit
 - Contracted fishing vessels
 - Participant spending in communities
- **Spread across Southcentral and Interior Alaska**



USS Shoup (DDG 86) mooring at the Port of Anchorage during NE15



NORTHERN EDGE 17

- **Scheduled exercise window: 1-12 May 2017**
 - Based on force availability, resource constraints, weather considerations
 - Tied to / restrained by larger PACOM calendar
- **Planning process on-going**
 - Maritime activities include air defense and anti-surface warfare
 - One more planning conference (Feb)





NE17 Participants

- **Participating organizations**
 - **United States Army Alaska**
 - **Marine Corps Forces Pacific**
 - **U.S. Pacific Fleet**
 - **Pacific Air Forces**
 - **U.S. Coast Guard District 17**
- **Approximately 6,000 personnel, 175 fixed-wing aircraft at JBER and Eielson AFB, 2 Navy ships with embarked helicopters**



NORTHERN EDGE Summary

- One of U.S. Pacific Command & DoD's premier exercises
- Alaska's military infrastructure allows top-quality training unmatched anywhere else
- Interagency cooperation & community support are keys to exercise success



Navy Environmental Planning

- **2011: Gulf of Alaska Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for training from 2011-2016**
- **2013: Initiated Supplemental EIS (SEIS) for beyond 2016**
- **July 2016: Released Final SEIS**
- **Record of Decision forthcoming**
- **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)– Cooperating Agency**
- **G2G Consultation with tribes in Kodiak area and Eyak in Cordova**

EIS/SEIS Alternatives

- **Alternative 2 – (Preferred) - includes:**
 - Conducting up to two annual large-scale Carrier Strike Group (CSG) exercises, each occurring over a maximum time period of up to 21 consecutive days during the April–October timeframe
 - Conducting one sinking exercise per CSG exercise for a total of two per year
- **Alternative 1 includes:**
 - Conducting one annual large-scale Carrier Strike Group (CSG) exercises, occurring over a maximum time period of up to 21 consecutive days during the April–October timeframe

| Training Ordnance or Expended Materials | Maximum Authorized per year in 2011 Final EIS/OEIS (for 2 events at 3 weeks each) | Northern Edge 2015 Proposed in TMAA (12 Days long) |
|--|---|--|
| Bombs | 360 | 0 |
| Missiles | 66 | 0 |
| Naval Gunshells (Various Types) | 26,376 | 16 actual (all inert/non-explosive) |
| Small Arms Rounds | 11,400 | 2,100 |
| Pyrotechnics | 156 | 5 (signal flares) |
| Targets | 94 | 6 ("Killer Tomato" floating target) |
| Sonobuoys | 1,587 (80 explosive) | 1200 (250 Active / 950 passive -all non-explosive) |
| Portable Undersea Training Range (PUTR) | 7 (Anchors on Sea Floor) | 0; Not Installed |
| Ordnance used during SINKEX (Various Types) | 858 | 0 |

Northern Edge 2015 Overview



Mitigation and Conservation

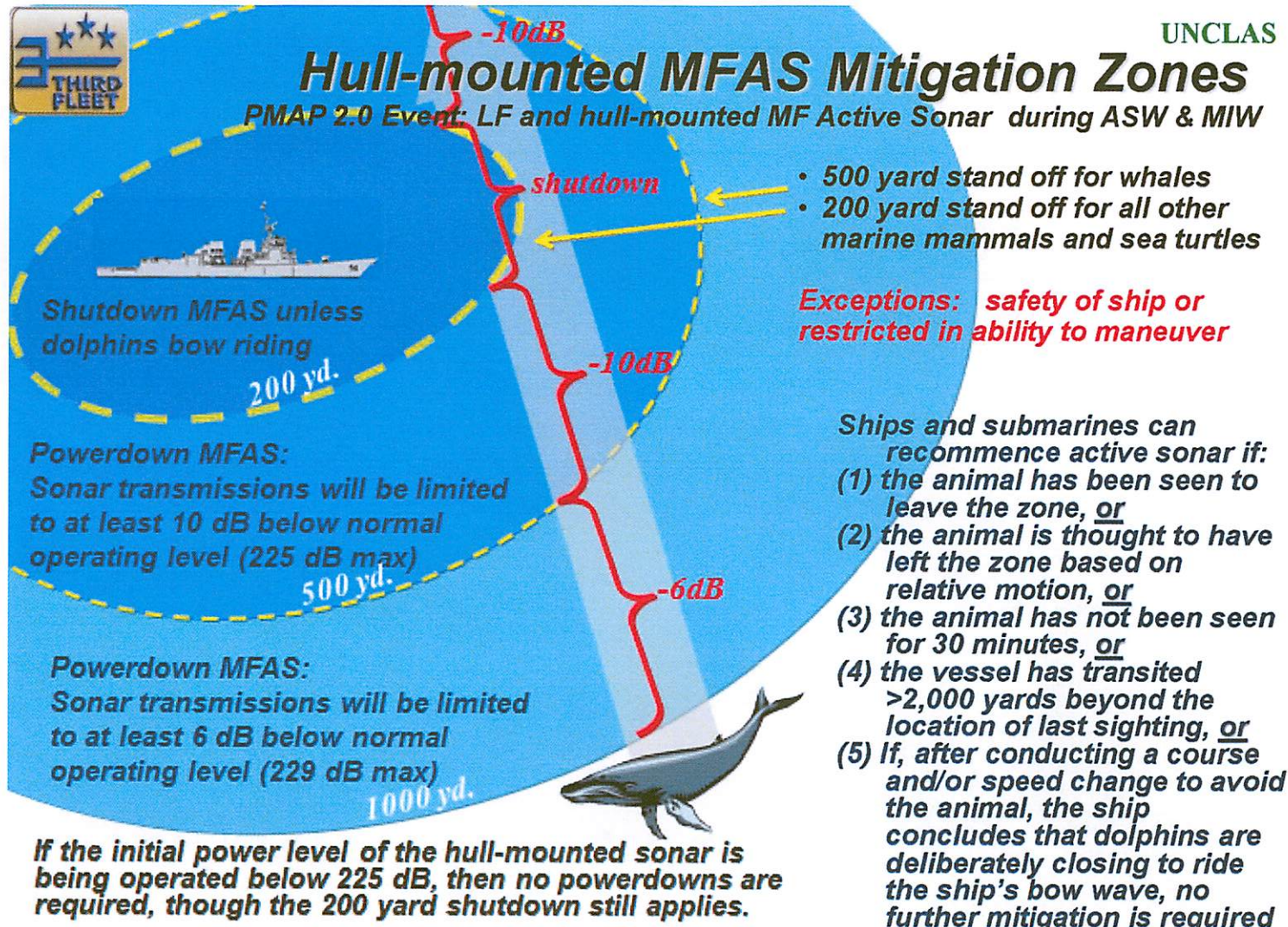
- Extensive mitigation measures developed with NMFS
- Implement mitigation zones for sonar and explosive activities
- Monitor zones before and during training
- Post qualified Lookouts
- Report monitoring results and training activities
- Coordinate with regulatory agencies stranding program
- No plastics discharge at sea
- Conduct population density surveys and other research
- No aircraft fuel release in air unless required for safety
- **New for 2017**
 - North Pacific Right Whale Cautionary Area during feeding time (June-September)
 - No hull mounted Mid-frequency Sonar
 - No explosive detonations
 - No explosives in Portlock Bank



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Hull-mounted MFAS Mitigation Zones

PMAP 2.0 Event: LF and hull-mounted MF Active Sonar during ASW & MIW



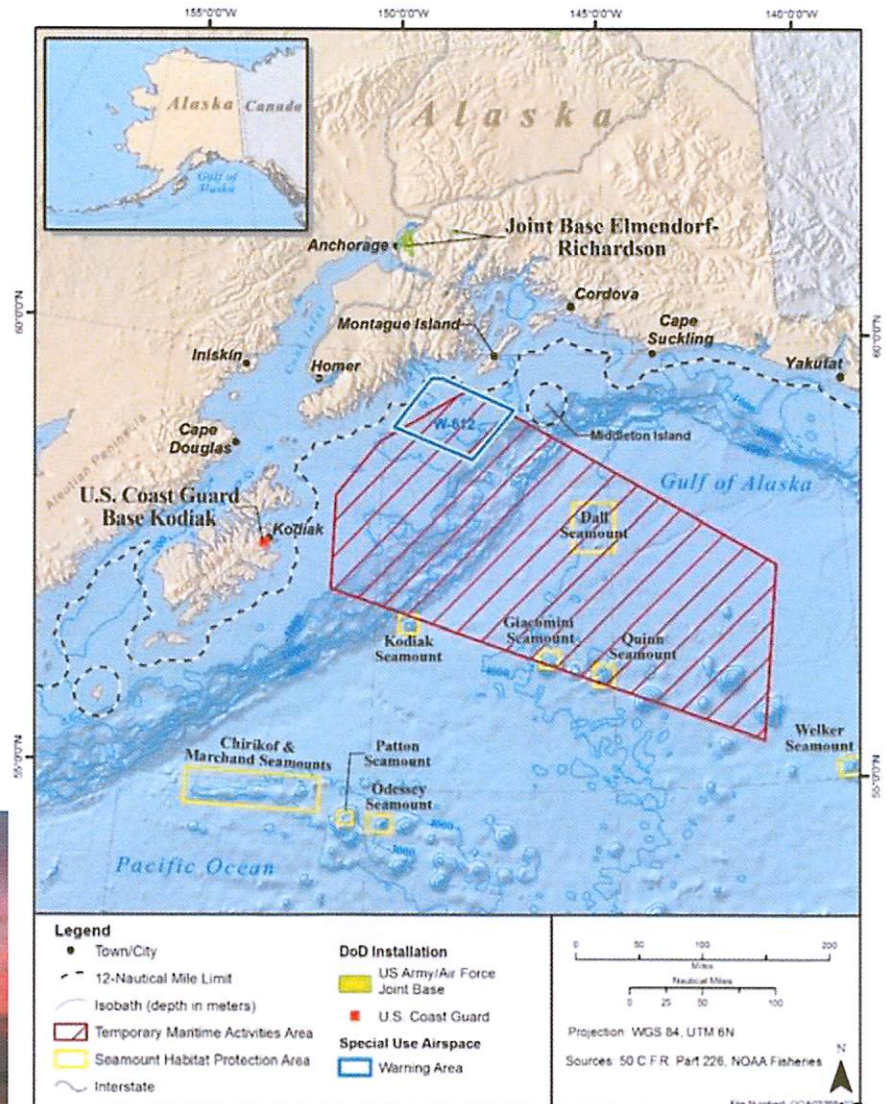
If the initial power level of the hull-mounted sonar is being operated below 225 dB, then no powerdowns are required, though the 200 yard shutdown still applies.

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HAPC SINKEX Mitigation

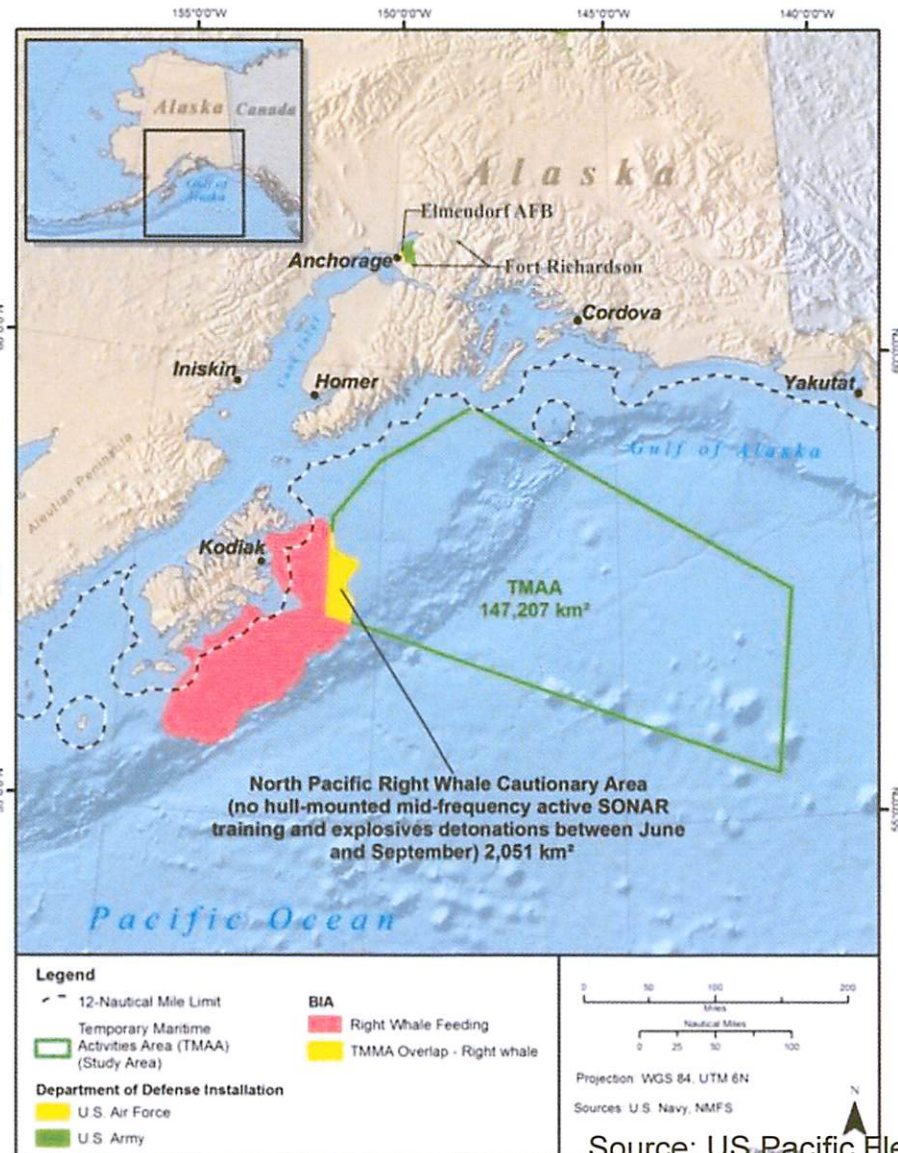
- Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs)
 - No SINKEX in HAPCs
 - No SINKEX within 50nm of land
 - Only in water greater than 6,000' deep
 - No SINKEX planned for NE17



Source: US Pacific Fleet

North Pacific Right Whale Cautionary Area

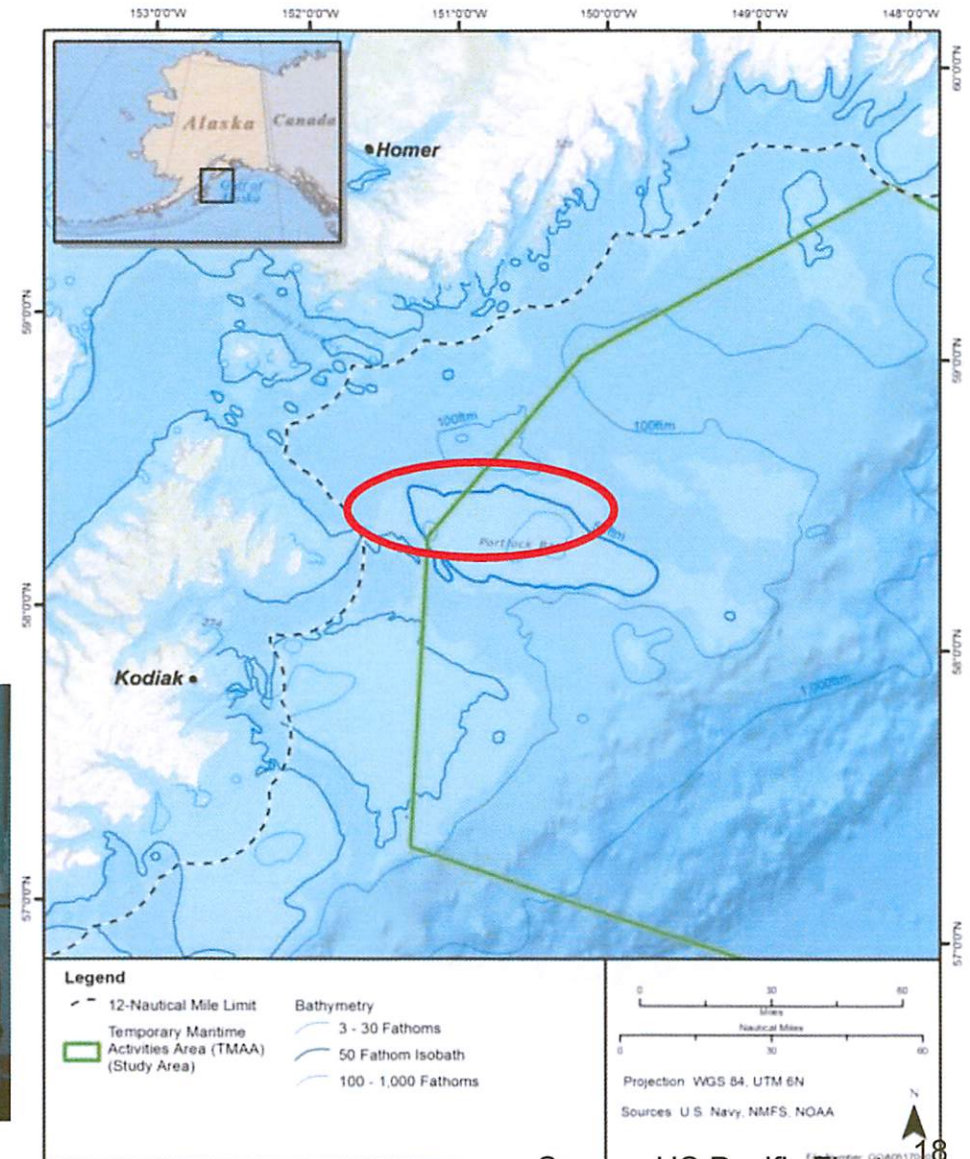
- Measure developed with NMFS as part of MMPA process and based on public comments
- Implementation of Cautionary Area in months of feeding importance (June – September) in southwest corner of Temporary Maritime Activity Area (TMAA)
 - No hull-mounted mid-frequency active SONAR
 - No explosives detonations
 - Not a factor for NE17



Source: US Pacific Fleet

Portlock Bank

- Westernmost portion of TMAA
- Area identified during consultation with fishermen and tribes
- Agreed not to conduct training with explosives



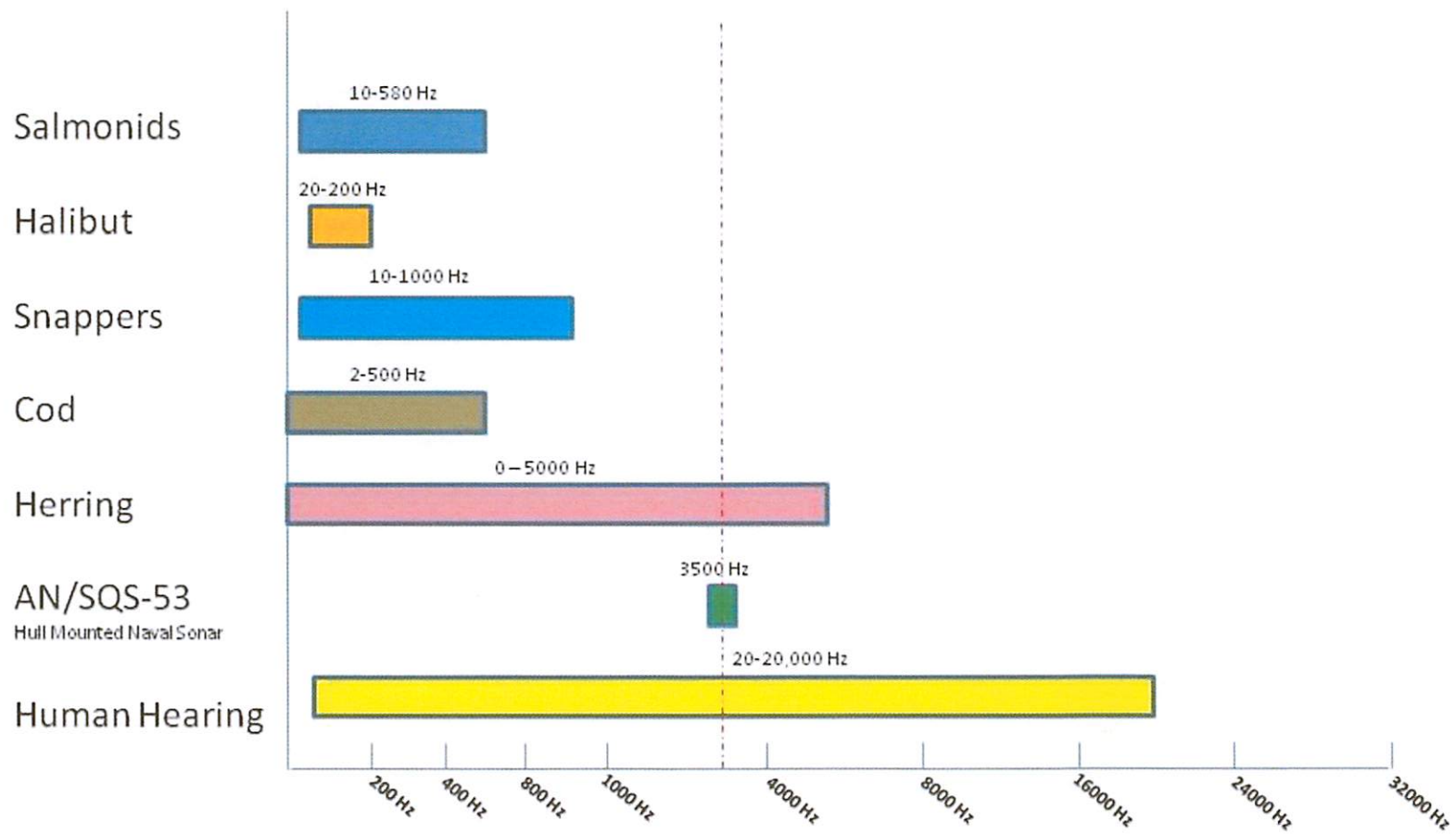
Source: US Pacific Fleet



Potential Impacts to Fish

- **Mid-frequency active sonar is not heard by most fish species**
- **Fish species that are able to hear sonar are not likely to be affected**
- **Use of explosives during training may injure individual fish, if present, close to the surface and within the immediate vicinity of detonations**
- **Military expended materials will not have significant effects on fish or fish habitat**

FISH HEARING AND NAVAL SONAR





Fishing Impacts Conclusion

- **NMFS Biological Opinion – concluded that activities are not likely to adversely affect Endangered Species Act listed fish**
- **No adverse effect to Essential Fish Habitat**
- **Training will not interfere with commercial, subsistence or recreational fishing**

Summary

- **Environmental protection is an integral part of the exercise. The Navy's at-sea training activities are conducted with an extensive set of mitigation measures designed to minimize the potential risk to marine life**
- **NORTHERN EDGE planned activity in Gulf of Alaska well below max allowable under the EIS**
- **Operations in Gulf of Alaska deconflicted from areas of concern highlighted by fishing communities**
- **We are grateful to the citizens of the state of Alaska for their support as we use our expansive training ranges**



Questions?



Participants

United States Northern Command
Alaskan Command

United States Pacific Command
United States Army Pacific
United States Marine Corps Forces, Pacific
United States Pacific Fleet
United States Pacific Air Forces

Participating Military Assets

Navy

Ticonderoga-class cruiser(s) and/or
Arleigh Burke-class destroyer(s)
P-3 Orion
P-8 Poseidon
EA-18G Growler

Air Force

F-22 Raptor
F-15C Eagle
F-15E Strike Eagle
F-16 Fighting Falcon
E-3 Sentry
B-1 Lancer
B-2 Spirit
B-52 Stratofortress
KC-10 Extender
KC-135 Stratotanker

USMC

F-35 Lightning II
Tactical Air Operations Center

*(More details will be released as
they become available)*



On Facebook:

www.facebook.com/ALCOMANR

Public Site:

www.jber.af.mil/alcom/northernedge/northernedge.asp

**For more information on
NORTHERN EDGE 2017
please contact:**

Capt Anastasia Wasem

Director of Public Affairs
Alaskan Command
(907) 552-2341
anastasia.wasem@us.af.mil

TSgt John Gordinier

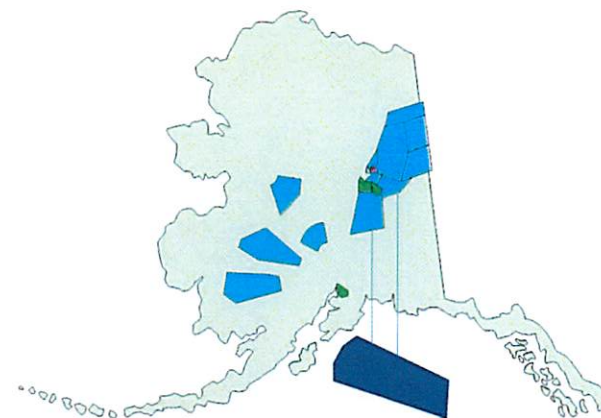
NCO in charge of Public Affairs
Alaskan Command
(907) 552-2341
john.gordinier@us.af.mil



 Air Ranges

 Land Ranges

 Sea Ranges



NORTHERN EDGE 2017

May 1 - 12, 2017

Background

NORTHERN EDGE has its roots in military exercises beginning in 1975 with JACK FROST (1975-79), BRIM FROST (81-89), Arctic Warrior (91-92), then NORTHERN EDGE beginning in 1993.

NORTHERN EDGE 2017 (NE17) is one in a series of U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) exercises which prepare joint forces to respond to crises in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. With an emphasis on integrating joint forces for real-world contingencies, the exercise is designed to sharpen participant skills; practice operations, techniques and procedures; improve command, control and communications; and to develop interoperable plans and programs.

Environmental Protection

A thorough environmental analysis was conducted of NE17 activities. Alaskan Command is proud of its environmental stewardship and goes to great lengths to minimize impacts to the environment. Aerial and land-based military training activities in or near Alaska, including NORTHERN EDGE exercises, are analyzed in the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex Environmental Impact Statement, which was completed by the Air Force and Army in 2013 (see <http://www.jber.af.mil/Portals/144/units/JPARC/PDF/JPARC-Executive-Summary-JPARC-FEIS-June-2013.pdf>). Maritime activities, including future NORTHERN EDGE exercises, were re-analyzed and recently released in the Navy's 2016 Gulf of Alaska Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (see <https://goaeis.com>). The at-sea portions of NORTHERN EDGE occur within the Temporary Maritime Activities Area, which

begins more than 12 nautical miles from shore.

U.S. Navy training activities are conducted with an extensive set of mitigation measures designed to minimize the potential risk to marine life. The Navy has conducted NORTHERN EDGE in the Gulf of Alaska for many decades without significant impact to the environment. The mitigation measures used by the Navy during NORTHERN EDGE are developed and authorized by permit from the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Training

Alaska's expansive, instrumented joint training land ranges, airspace, and maritime areas, along with the support of Alaska's Army and Air Force bases provide a unique joint training venue that cannot be found anywhere else in the Pacific region.

NE17 provides more than 6,000 active-duty, National Guard and Reserve component Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard military participants the opportunity to train together in Alaska's vast Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC), including the Gulf of Alaska (GoA) maritime training area.

The diverse environment and challenging terrain of the JPARC allows for units to alert, deploy and fight over realistic engagement distances. This includes mobile land warfare and fighter aircraft from the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force practicing long-distance, power projection using air-refueling assets.

NE17 participants will practice tactics, techniques and procedures associated with defensive counter air, close air support, air interdiction of marine targets, and personnel

recovery missions. Land-based forces will hone their skills in engaging targets at sea, and forces normally sea-based will practice engaging targets on the land.

NORTHERN EDGE 2017 highlights:

- Training in 65,000 square miles of airspace, 42,000 square nautical miles of ocean, and 1.5 million acres of maneuver land as part of the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex.
- Alaska's size enables the military to have the largest air-ground training complex in America.
- Exercise Northern Edge provides the opportunity to hone current and test future applications of combat operations and weapons capabilities.
- More than 2,000 personnel deploy to Alaska during the exercise. Participants will be based at the major Alaska Army and Air Force installations.
- Joint training event NE17 provides effective, flexible and capabilities-centered joint forces ready for deployment worldwide and enables real-world proficiency in detection, identification and tracking of units at sea, in the air and on land, and response to multiple crises.
- Environmental protection is an integral part of the exercise. The military in Alaska has conducted thorough environmental analysis of the activities being conducted as part of NE17.

Closing the Loop

Detailed after-action reviews will occur at all levels of exercise play. This process ensures units incorporate "lessons learned" from NE17 into better joint military planning, tactics, techniques, and procedures.