



Volume I - June 2013

Final Environmental Impact Statement

Outdoor Research, Development, Test & Evaluation Activities

Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division
Dahlgren, Virginia

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Department of the Navy
Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division,
in accordance with Chief of Naval Operations
Instruction 5090.1C CH-1;
pursuant to National Environmental
Policy Act Section 102(2)(C)



Final Environmental Impact Statement Outdoor Research, Development, Test & Evaluation Activities Volume I

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Abstract

This EIS has been prepared by the US Department of the Navy, Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) to evaluate the effects of expanding research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E) activities within the Potomac River Test Range and Explosives Experimental Area complexes, the Mission Area, and special-use airspace at Naval Support Facility (NSF) Dahlgren. These capabilities include outdoor operations that require the use of ordnance (guns and explosives), electromagnetic energy, lasers, and chemical and biological simulants (non-toxic substances used to mimic dangerous agents). The purpose of the Proposed Action is to enable NSWCDD to meet current and future mission-related warfare and force-protection requirements by providing RDT&E of surface ship combat systems, ordnance, lasers and directed energy systems, force-level warfare, and homeland and force protection. The need for the Proposed Action is to enable the Navy and other stakeholders to successfully meet current and future national and global defense challenges by developing a robust capability to carry out assigned RDT&E activities at NSF Dahlgren. Three alternatives are analyzed in this EIS: the No Action Alternative, which addresses historical and current mission activities; Alternative 1 which addresses baseline activity levels plus known future requirements; and Alternative 2, which addresses current baseline requirements, known future requirements, and projected increases in the foreseeable future based on current trends. Potential effects associated with the alternatives have been identified and evaluated. The Navy concludes that for all three alternatives there would be no significant impact to land use and plans, coastal zone resources, socioeconomics, low-income and minority populations, children, utilities, air quality, noise levels, cultural resources, hazardous materials and hazardous waste, health and safety, geology, topography, soils, and sediments, water resources, and biological resources.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ES.1 Introduction

Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD), the action proponent, proposes to expand research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) activities within the Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) and Explosives Experimental Area (EEA) Range complexes, the Mission Area, and special-use airspace (SUA) at Naval Support Facility Dahlgren (NSF Dahlgren). NSWCDD is a tenant upon NSF Dahlgren on the western shore of the Potomac River in King George County, Virginia (Figure ES-1, NSF Dahlgren Location). NSF Dahlgren, a United States (US) Department of the Navy (Navy) facility under the supporting command of Naval Support Activity, South Potomac, Naval District Washington, is located 25 miles (mi) east of Fredericksburg, Virginia and 53 mi south of Washington, DC. NSWCDD is one of the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) surface warfare centers. NSWCDD has multiple sites, but this environmental impact statement (EIS) concerns NSWCDD's range and mission area operations at Dahlgren, Virginia and hence will be referred to as NSWCDD in this document.

The EIS focuses on RDT&E activities that take place outdoors and have the potential to affect the human environment. Much of NSWCDD's research and development takes place inside laboratories and does not generate environmental impacts on the human environment outdoors. NSWCDD's Safety and Environmental Office ensures that no indoor impacts take place. Many of NSWCDD's outdoor activities, such as tests of passive sensors, also have no environmental impact, as determined by NSWCDD's Safety and Environmental Office, and are not considered in this EIS. The operating ranges, mission area, and SUA at NSF Dahlgren are shown on Figures ES-2 (Potomac River Test Range Complex), ES-3 (Range Complexes and Mission Area), ES-4 (Special-Use Airspace), and ES-5 (Potomac River Test Range Primary Gunnery Target Area).

The environmental impact analysis in this EIS addresses activities that take place outdoors on range complexes and in the Mission Area. The analysis does not encompass all of NSWCDD's work, much of which takes place indoors in laboratories. These indoor activities are addressed in other NEPA documents – environmental assessments or categorical exclusions, as appropriate. However, the cumulative impacts of NSWCDD's indoor activities when combined with outdoor activities taking place on range complexes and the Mission Area are considered in the cumulative impact analysis in this EIS.

ES.2 Purpose and Need

The **purpose** of the Proposed Action is to enable NSWCDD to meet current and future mission-related warfare and force-protection requirements by providing RDT&E of surface ship combat systems, ordnance, lasers and directed energy, force-level warfare, and homeland and force protection.

Under 10 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 5062(d): “The Navy shall develop aircraft, weapons, tactics, technique, organization, and equipment of naval combat and service elements. Matters of joint concern as to these functions shall be coordinated between the Army, the Air Force, and the

Navy.” The **need** for the Proposed Action is to enable the Navy and other stakeholders to successfully meet current and future national and global defense challenges required under U.S.C. by developing a robust capability to carry out assigned RDT&E activities on range complexes, in the Mission Area, and in SUA at NSF Dahlgren.

ES.2.1 Proposed Action

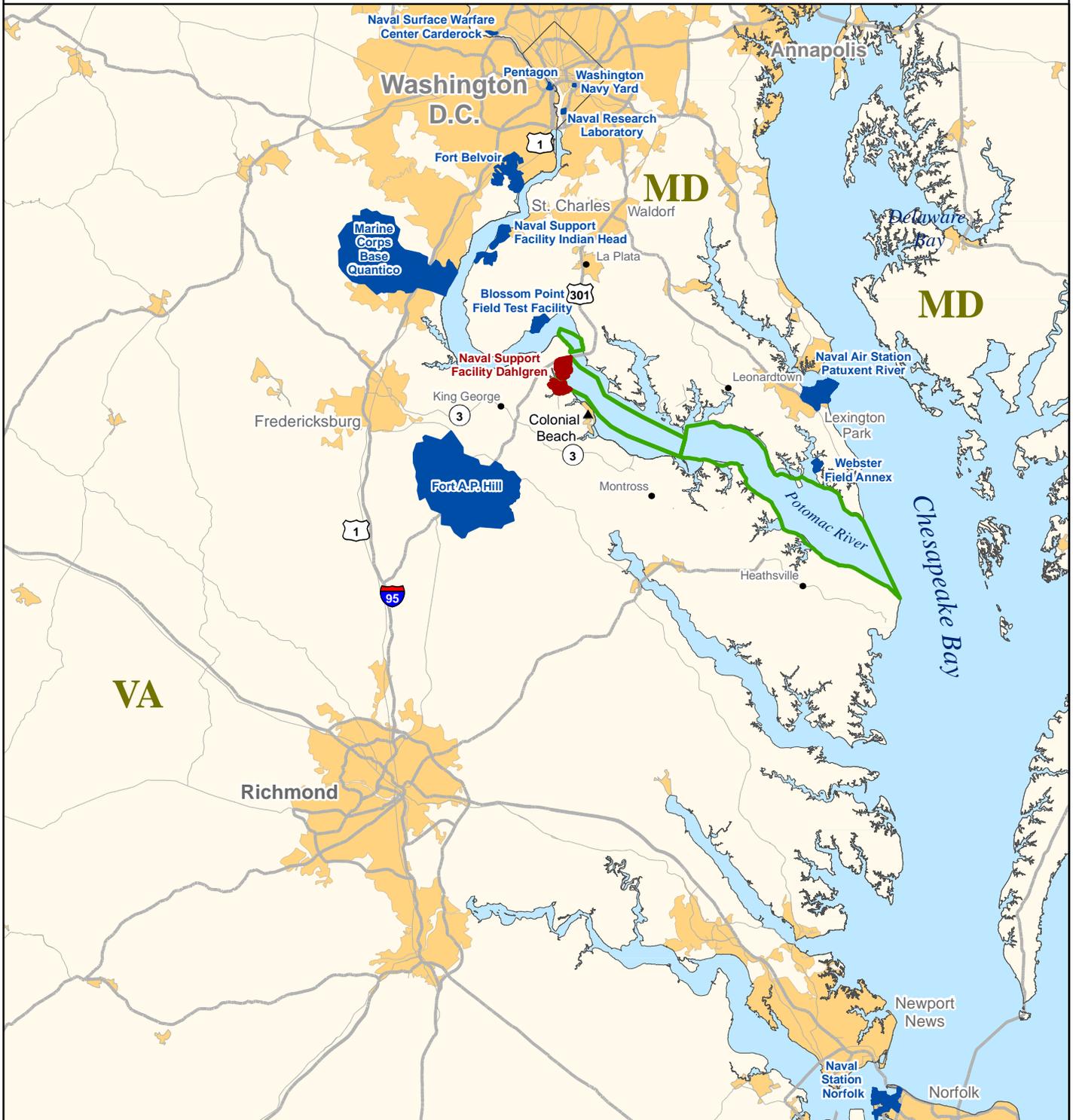
The Proposed Action evaluated in this EIS is to expand NSWCDD’s RDT&E activities within the PRTR and EEA Range complexes, the adjoining Mission Area, and SUA. These activities include outdoor activities that require the use of:

- **Ordnance** – Since its beginnings in 1918 as the US Naval Proving Ground, NSWCDD has been doing proof testing, lot acceptance¹, safety testing, and RDT&E for small- and large-caliber guns (refer to Table ES-1) , and many other types of military munitions², some of which result in detonations. Today it is the Navy’s primary center for such work. The Proposed Action would increase small-arms firing and detonations annually. Large-caliber gun firing would remain at current levels. Firing into the PRTR’s upper Lower Danger Zone (LDZ) (Figures ES-2 and ES-5) would increase to a maximum of 10 days a year, which represents an increase over recent firing levels in this target area.
- **Electromagnetic (EM) Energy** – EM energy is naturally occurring and man-made energy created by the interaction of fluctuating electrical and magnetic forces that travel through space at the speed of light. The equipment used outdoors at NSWCDD emits EM energy in a frequency range that includes radio waves or radio frequency, microwaves, and infrared, visible, and ultraviolet light. Many types of EM energy emitters are present at NSWCDD, ranging from everyday, low-power radios, cell phones, and car door openers, to higher-power radars and sophisticated, one-of-a-kind test equipment used to test whether electronics and ordnance can withstand pulses of EM energy. Only emitters requiring safety zones when operating because their power, frequency, and exposure levels are above established standards for hazards of EM energy to personnel, ordnance, fuel, and/or EM interference are discussed in this EIS. The 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission, which reviewed the work of all Department of Defense installations, identified NSWCDD as a center of excellence for weapon systems integration, which involves RDT&E for communications and sensors that use EM energy. NSWCDD is also the Navy's lead laboratory for the RDT&E of issues surrounding EM environmental effects. The Proposed Action would increase the number of annual activities and the power level of some activities; expand activities on the PRTR; and increase use of platforms such as unmanned systems to transmit, receive, or reflect EM energy.

¹ In order to minimize ordnance malfunctions at sea, the Navy randomly tests one or more pieces of ordnance in a lot provided by a contractor. On the basis of information yielded by the sample, a decision is made by the Navy whether to accept or reject the whole lot.

² U.S.C. Title 10, Section 101 defines “military munitions” as all ammunition products and components produced for or used by the armed forces for national defense and security, including ammunition products or components under the control of the Department of Defense, the Coast Guard, the Department of Energy, and the National Guard.

Location of Naval Support Facility (NSF) Dahlgren



| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|----|-----------------|
| • | County Seat | | |
| | Naval Support Facility (NSF) Dahlgren | 20 | 0 20 Miles |
| | Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) | 30 | 0 30 Kilometers |
| | Military Installation | | |
| | Urban Area | | |



NSWCDD EIS

 WARFARE CENTERS
 DAHLGREN

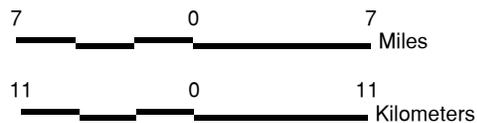
Figure ES-1

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Potomac River Test Range Complex



-  Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) Complex
-  Naval Support Facility (NSF) Dahlgren
-  Military Installation

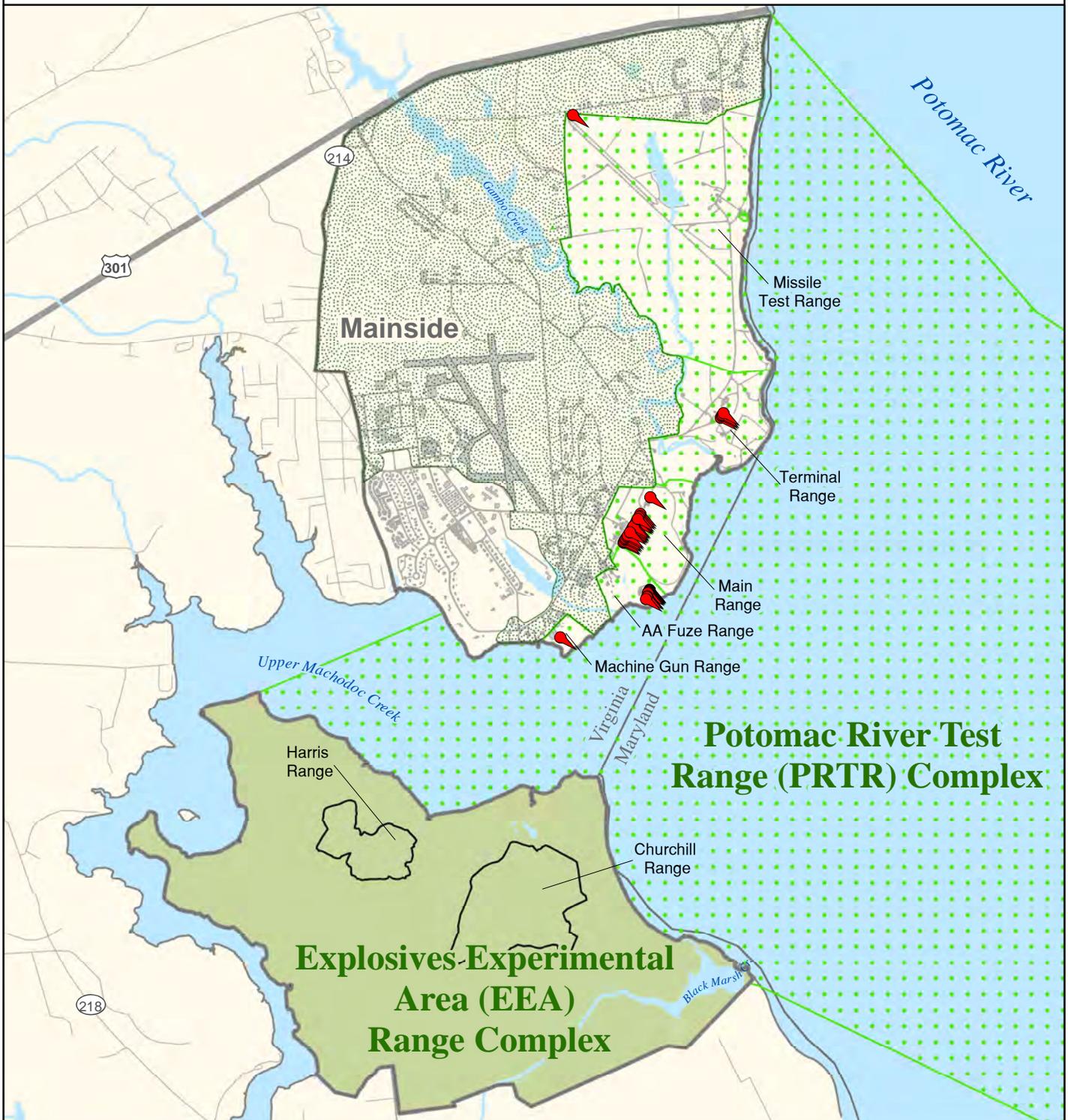


Source: NSWCDD GIS (2008 - 2011); Danger Zones defined in 33 CFR § 334.230.

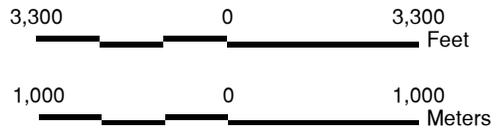
Figure ES-2

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Range Complexes and Mission Area



-  Gun Firing Location
-  Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) Complex
-  Mission Area
-  Explosives Experimental Area (EEA) Range Complex
-  Naval Support Facility (NSF) Dahlgren

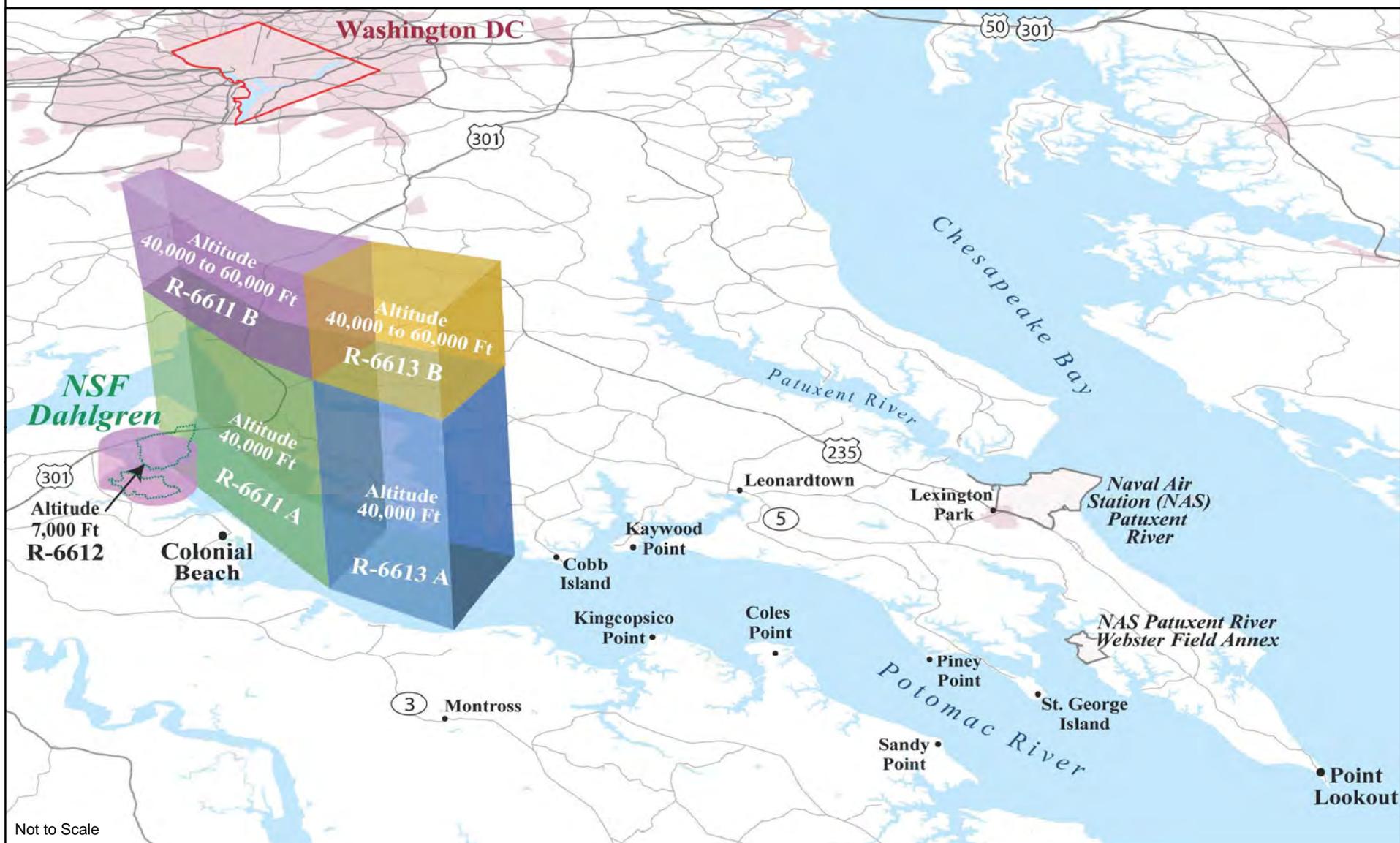


Source: NSWCCD GIS (2008 - 2011)

Figure ES-3

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Special-Use Airspace



Not to Scale

Source: FAA, 2005.

Figure ES-4



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Potomac River Test Range Primary Gunnery Target Area



| | | | |
|--|---|----------------------|--|
| ■ Gun Firing Location | ▤ Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) Complex | 3.5 0 3.5 Miles | |
| ■ Primary Target Area | ■ Naval Support Facility (NSF) Dahlgren | 5.5 0 5.5 Kilometers | |
| — Maximum Firing Range (see definition in Section 1.5.1) | | | |

Source: NSWCDD GIS (2008 - 2011); Danger Zones defined in 33 CFR § 334.230.

Figure ES-5

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- **High-energy (HE) Lasers** – While HE lasers are a form of EM energy, they are treated separately in this EIS because of their unique properties, which create different types of hazards from other EM sources. A laser is a device that emits a coherent beam of light (EM energy). Most light (non-laser) is incoherent, meaning it is made up of many frequencies. Lased light is light of a single frequency, so it does not scatter but rather stays in a narrow, intense beam without dissipating quickly. NSWCDD’s laser program, which began in the 1970s, has been recognized by the Navy as a center of excellence for laser RDT&E. NSWCDD’s expertise in laser safety and lasers includes RDT&E of sensors, rangefinders, target designators, guidance systems, simulators, communications equipment, and weapons. The Proposed Action would increase the number of annual HE laser activities and the power level of some activities; expand activities on the PRTR; and increase use of platforms such as unmanned systems to serve as laser emitters, targets, or reflectors.
- **Chemical and Biological (Chem/Bio) Simulants** – The threat of terrorist attacks has prompted the Department of Defense to step up RDT&E to counter chem/bio terrorism. Chem/bio agents are very difficult to detect, and the key to minimizing the effects of an attack is early detection and warning. As the Navy’s center for RDT&E on chemical and biological warfare sensors and protection systems, NSWCDD uses chemical simulants rather than dangerous agents in the open air to test detection and protection systems. NSWCDD conducts research indoors in the laboratory before tests are performed outdoors. Simulants are substances – many of which are found in common, everyday use, such as acetic acid (strong vinegar) and oil of wintergreen – that mimic chemical and biological agents but do not have the agents’ adverse health and environmental effects. The Proposed Action includes increasing the annual number of outdoor test events using chemical simulants, introducing biological simulants, and expanding the areas where testing could take place. The biological simulants proposed for use would be biosafety level 1 (BSL-1) organisms, defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well-characterized strains of viable microorganisms not known to consistently cause disease in healthy adult humans and of minimal potential hazard to laboratory personnel and the environment. At the BSL-1 level, precautions against the biohazardous materials are minimal. BSL-1 organisms used as biological simulants may include common bacteria, fungi, proteins, and/or bacteriophages that are naturally found in the environment. The chemical and biological simulants selected would be influenced by parameters such as global threats, homeland security, and technological developments.

Under the Proposed Action, the average number of events that could take place annually would increase above recent levels (with the exception of large-caliber gun firing events). To ensure that equipment and materials work effectively even in less-than-ideal conditions, some of the tests would take place under conditions in which they are not currently conducted, such as at dusk, dawn, and night and in adverse weather.

ES.3 Public Involvement

Public involvement is an integral component of the NEPA process, and the Navy has both kept the public informed as well as listened to what the public has to say about the Proposed Action. NSWCDD developed a public-outreach program specifically for this EIS. The program began in

2003 with 96 interviews with various community leaders, business owners, on-base residents, and residents of the five counties bordering the PRTR about their concerns with respect to NSWCDD's current activities. Drawn from the interviewees, a Public Involvement Working Group was formed, which helped to develop messages and materials for the public. The concerns of those interviewed and the Public Involvement Working Group members were taken into consideration in developing the work plan for the EIS.

The next step in the program was notifying the public that NSWCDD was considering expanding certain RDT&E activities and was going to prepare an EIS to evaluate potential impacts. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on June 18, 2007 (72 Federal Register 33456). Soon after, notices were placed in six newspapers in the counties around the PRTR and letters were sent to public agencies, advising readers of the EIS process and inviting them to come to one or more of five public scoping meetings held in the counties around the PRTR to learn more about, and comment on, the proposed scope of the EIS. The scoping meetings – one in each of the counties around the PRTR: King George, Westmoreland, and Northumberland counties in Virginia; and Charles and St. Mary's counties in Maryland – were held in the last two weeks of July 2007. Seventy-seven people attended. Comments were received from twenty-one individuals and three agencies (the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and the Maryland Transportation Authority).

Subjects raised during the scoping process included NSWCDD's mission, noise and vibration, the environment, the scoping meeting format, socioeconomic, public safety, human and animal health, wildlife resources, EIS content, air space, coastal consistency, air quality, and the Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge improvement project.

When the Draft EIS (DEIS) was completed, a notice of availability was published in the *Federal Register* on August 17, 2012, beginning a 45-day public review period during which the DEIS was available for review in five local libraries, on the project website, or by mail, upon request. Letters indicating that the DEIS was available for review were sent and notices of the DEIS' availability were published in local newspapers. Public hearings were held to describe the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives and to receive comment on the impacts analysis. These comments have been taken into consideration in preparing this Final EIS (FEIS).

Public hearings for the DEIS were held in King George and Westmoreland counties, Virginia, and Charles County, Maryland the week of September 10, 2012. Twenty-nine people attended the hearings. By the end of the comment period, comments had been received from ten individuals, two non-governmental organizations, and 15 public agencies. These comments were submitted orally or in writing at the meetings or by fax, e-mail, or US Mail. Appendix A includes the comments in their original form, and a matrix that includes each comment and a response to the comment, which indicates changes incorporated into the FEIS.

ES.4 Operational Range Complexes and Mission Area

NSWCDD's RDT&E activities take place on the operational range complexes, the Mission Area, and SUA at NSF Dahlgren:

- **Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) Complex** – The PRTR Complex consists of land and water test areas that support RDT&E for ordnance, EM energy, HE lasers, and chemical defense. Figures ES-2, ES-3, ES-4, and ES-5 show the water areas and land ranges that comprise the PRTR, and the special use airspace that lies over it.

The PRTR Complex allows the Navy to conduct testing in a realistic, controlled environment, which effectively operates as a “ship on shore,” collecting real-time data from a number of instrument stations. The water portion of the range is 51 nautical miles long, covers 169 square nautical miles, and is divided into areas designated on nautical charts as the Upper, Middle, and Lower Danger Zones (UDZ, MDZ, and LDZ, respectively)³. The upper half of the MDZ receives the heaviest use; it is 2.6 nautical miles wide, 15.4 nautical miles long, and covers 38.5 sq nautical miles (Figure ES-5). Public use of the danger zones is restricted during test events by NSWCDD range control boats and by staff observers stationed at range stations along the Potomac River. Gun firing can be performed up to 40,000 yards (approximately 20 nautical miles) down range (Figure ES-5).

Testing over water is vital when evaluating the performance of detection and engagement systems such as radars and electro-optical tracking systems to ensure that systems work over water as well as they do on land. The over-water range provides tracker and sensor testing with low over-water targets in situations in which background clutter, reflectivity, and wave height conditions can all vary. The range has a comprehensive instrumentation system, with both fixed and mobile components located along the PRTR to accurately measure test results. The PRTR also serves as a safety buffer for land-based range activities.

The 725 acres (ac) of land ranges that are part of the PRTR Complex (Figure ES-3) include the Main Range, Anti-Aircraft Fuze Range (a name assigned during World War II – the range is no longer used for anti-aircraft RDT&E), Missile Test Range (another historical name – the range is no longer used for testing missiles), Machine Gun Range, and Terminal Range.

- **Explosives Experimental Area (EEA) Range Complex** – The 1,641-ac EEA Range Complex (Figure ES-3) supports performance, lethality, safety, and ordnance testing on full-scale weapon systems and components containing explosives, propellants, and inert materials. Although the EEA mainly supports RDT&E and safety testing for ordnance weapon systems, such as rocket-propelled grenades, rockets, and restrained missile launchers, this complex also supports RDT&E of EM energy and lasers. The EEA is extensively instrumented for conducting explosive tests such as blast measurements, target testing, arena testing, and live-fire tests. Two ranges – Churchill and Harris – are located within the EEA, as are two EM energy test facilities.
- **Mission Area** – The 1,593-ac Mission Area (Figure ES-3) lies immediately north and west of the PRTR land ranges and is used by NSWCDD for RDT&E activities that do not use explosives. Facilities in this area include the NSF Dahlgren Airfield and EM energy facilities.

³ The limits of the danger zones are defined in 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 334.230 and shown on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Nautical Charts: 12288, Lower Cedar Point to Mattawoman Creek; 12286, Potomac River – Piney Point to Lower Cedar Point; and 12233, Chesapeake Bay to Piney Point.

- **Special-Use Airspace (SUA)** – SUA has been established by the Federal Aviation Administration to prevent hazards to aircraft from NSWCCD’s RDT&E activities (Figure ES-4). The maximum altitudes are 40,000 feet for Restricted Areas (R)-6611A and R-6613A, and 60,000 feet for R-6611B and R-6613B. For safety reasons, flying through special-use airspace by non-military aircraft is restricted during testing. When testing is completed early or a scheduled test is cancelled, the airspace is returned to the control of the Federal Aviation Administration for normal civilian air traffic use. Additionally, a small restricted airspace – R-6612 – lies directly over the EEA, and extends to 7,000 feet. Helicopters occasionally use the main airfield. Unmanned aerial vehicles, which fly only within the special-use airspace, are either launched from small launchers or take off and land at small landing strips on the EEA and Terminal Range.
-

ES.5 Alternatives

ES.5.1 Development of Alternatives

The process of developing alternatives began by establishing NSWCCD’s RDT&E activity baseline. NSWCCD’s programs are diverse and numerous. Over several years, the EIS team interviewed the managers of 75 NSWCCD programs at least once, with subsequent interviews focusing on programs that were expanding and that had the potential to generate environmental impacts. With extensive knowledge of their field, Department of Defense requirements, customer needs, and future trends, the program managers helped to clarify which programs were growing, describe the ways in which the technology was evolving, and define future RDT&E needs and requirements.

From these interviews and from reviewing range operational logs, the operational baseline for each RDT&E activity was established. In most cases, because of the cyclical nature of RDT&E – which can vary considerably from year to year – the baseline was generated by averaging data collected for the years 1993-2009 and then weighting the data for the highest years in the RDT&E cycle to arrive at an average annual number of large-caliber gun and small arms firings; detonations; EM energy, HE laser, and chem/bio sensor events; and PRTR use hours. The data collected for those years are typical of activity levels after 2009. The No Action Alternative column in Table ES-1 lists the average annual baseline activity levels.

For each of the components of the Proposed Action, potential alternatives were developed and evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criterion 1 – Accommodate historical and current, baseline RDT&E mission requirements for activities that have the potential to affect human health and/or the environment – namely, those involving ordnance, the use of EM energy, the use of HE lasers, the use of chemical simulants, and the use of the PRTR.

Criterion 2 – Accommodate known future requirements, which include the use of biological simulants alone.

Criterion 3 – Accommodate a margin of growth for those programs for which it is difficult to accurately forecast future needs. Mixtures of biological and chemical simulants would be included.

Criterion 4 –Minimize impacts to commercial and recreational use of the Potomac River.**Table ES-1
EIS Alternatives**

| RDT&E Activity | No Action Alternative Activity Magnitude | No Action Alternative Average Annual Activity Levels | Alternative 1 Average Annual Activity Levels | Alternative 2 Average Annual Activity Levels |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| Large-caliber Guns/ Projectiles | >20 mm to 8" caliber gun/ projectile | 4,700 projectiles | 4,700 projectiles | 4,700 projectiles |
| Small Arms | ≤20 mm caliber gun/bullet | 6,000 bullets | 25,500 bullets | 30,000 bullets |
| Detonations | <0.01 lbs to 1,000 lbs net explosive weight | 190 events | 200 events | 230 events |
| EM Energy | 300 kilohertz to 300 gigahertz frequency 10 Watts to 500 megawatts average power | 490 events | 590 events | 680 events |
| Lasers | 500 nanometers to 11 micrometers wavelength 1 milliwatt to 100 kilowatts maximum power | 60 events 100 kW maximum power | 125 events 500 kW maximum power | 145 events 500 kW maximum power |
| Chemical & Biological Defense | ≤20 gals/event | 12 events Chemical simulants only | 60 events Chemical and biological simulants used separately | 70 events Chemical and biological simulants used separately and together |
| PRTR Use | 750 hours total annual use | 750 hours | 870 hours | 1,000 hours |

Alternatives that do not accommodate historical and current, baseline RDT&E mission requirements and known future requirements – and therefore do not meet Criteria 1 and 2 – do not satisfy the purpose and need for the Proposed Action and are considered unreasonable. Such alternatives were eliminated from further analysis, as were alternatives that substantially increase use of the PRTR beyond levels proposed in Alternatives 1 and 2 and therefore do not meet Criterion 4.

NSWCDD considered an alternative that would utilize the range complexes, the Mission Area, and SUA, to the maximum extent possible – up to 1,800 hours a year compared to the current 750 hours – in order to accommodate the maximum amount of growth in mission operations. This increase would more than double the number of hours during which public access could be restricted. While this theoretical increase in current outdoor RDT&E activity levels would use the range complexes and the Mission Area to the fullest feasible level, the alternative would require substantial increases in public access restrictions to the PRTR, negatively affecting public commercial and recreational use of the river well beyond the levels resulting from implementing either Alternative 1 or Alternative 2. For almost three-quarters of a century, the

Navy and its community neighbors in Virginia's Northern Neck and Southern Maryland have prospered in a much-treasured partnership that was established and is secured by the common bonds of friendship, patriotism, national defense, and economics. NSWCDD actively engages with the local community to maintain this partnership. Because this alternative would not meet Criterion 4, it was dismissed from further consideration.

The activities that comprise the Proposed Action are not new technology, nor are they programs new to NSWCDD, but rather expansions of current programs based at NSWCDD. Relocation of these programs is neither desirable nor feasible. It would involve moving existing, active programs from NSWCDD to a new location, which would needlessly disrupt program operations, cause unnecessary delays, and generate substantial additional costs, all without any additional benefits. The 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission concurred with this thinking and recommended that NSWCDD's programs remain in place. Therefore, the Navy concluded that no other location for expanding these programs was a reasonable alternative.

The process resulted in the development of three alternatives:

- **No Action Alternative** – This alternative constitutes baseline activity levels for the portion of NSWCDD's outdoor activities that have the potential to affect the human environment – namely, those involving ordnance, the use of EM energy and HE lasers, the use of chemical simulants, and the use of the PRTR. This alternative meets Criteria 1 and 4.
- **Alternative 1** – This alternative includes baseline activity levels plus reflects the growth necessary to meet the minimum RDT&E mission requirements in the reasonably foreseeable future, and constitutes increases in current activities of: 108 percent for laser events, 20 percent for EM energy events, 325 percent for small-arms firing, 5 percent for detonations, 400 percent for chem/bio events, and 16 percent for PRTR hours of use. Large-caliber gun activities would remain at baseline levels. This alternative includes outdoor use of chemical and biological simulants separately. Alternative 1 meets Criteria 1, 2, and 4.
- **Alternative 2** – This alternative is NSWCDD's Preferred Alternative, which provides for roughly 15 percent growth in activity levels above Alternative 1, averaged across activities. There would be increases in all activities except large-caliber gun activities, which would remain at baseline levels. It satisfies current baseline requirements, includes the growth necessary to meet minimum RDT&E mission requirements for the reasonably

Operations, Tests, and Events

An **operation** is a group of **tests** that has a common objective and that may take place over one or more days under one standard operating procedure (SOP). For purposes of this EIS, an **event** consists of all the tests that take place under one SOP on one day. If the same test occurs the following day, it is considered a separate event. If two groups of tests are conducted on the same day under separate SOPs, then each group counts as a separate event.

Standard Operating Procedure

A **standard operating procedure (SOP)** is prepared for every operation determined by performance of a **risk hazard assessment** to be potentially hazardous. SOPs are prepared to ensure the safety of participants and the public and to minimize environmental impacts. An SOP includes a description of the proposed operation; a statement of responsibilities; a listing of which persons will be in charge of what actions; the operational location; a description of personnel and material limits (including buffer zones for safety); safety requirements; emergency response and contingency plans; applicable environmental protection procedures; security requirements; a hazard control brief; an equipment list; and step-by-step descriptions of the procedures to follow, with highlighted warning and caution boxes.

foreseeable future, includes the use of biological and chemical simulants together and separately, and includes a margin of growth for the most actively evolving programs – those for which the numbers of future annual test events, firings, and hours of use are harder to predict because of the uncertainties inherent in carrying out RDT&E. Alternative 2 optimizes NSWCDD’s outdoor RDT&E activities and meets all four criteria.

Table ES-1 summarizes the annual activity levels for each RDT&E activity proposed under each alternative. The alternatives are described in more detail below.

ES.5.2 No Action Alternative

The annual activity levels for the No Action Alternative constitute the existing baseline condition, and the number of outdoor RDT&E large-caliber gun and small-arms firings, detonations, events, and hours of PRTR use would remain at existing levels. Even though the Navy proposes to increase RDT&E activities, including the No Action Alternative in the evaluation of impacts provides a baseline against which to measure the impacts of the other two alternatives.

Ordnance Activities

Large-caliber guns at NSF Dahlgren mainly fire inert (non-explosive) projectiles (74 percent fired from 1995-2009 were inert) but also fire live (explosive) projectiles into the Potomac River mainly within the PRTR’s MDZ but infrequently into the upper LDZ. Live (explosive) projectiles produce noise both at the gun when they are fired and at the target downriver when they detonate. Inert projectiles only produce noticeable noise at the gun when they are fired. The guns range in caliber from more than 20 mm (0.8”) up to 8” (203 mm). The largest gun normally fired is the 155 mm (6.1”) gun, but it is fired infrequently and usually into a backstop on land. The gun fired most frequently is the 5” (127 mm) gun, which is standard on Navy ships. The 8” gun is no longer used to fire normal projectiles but rather to launch canisters filled with electronics to test how well they can withstand high gravitational forces.

In the years 1995-2009, NSWCDD fired an average of 2,900 projectiles annually, ranging from a low of 910 fired in the year with the smallest number of firings (2005) to a high of 6,170 (all inert) in 2004. In particularly active years since 1995, the average has been approximately 4,700 large-caliber projectiles fired. Not all projectiles go into the river; guns on the Missile Test and Terminal ranges sometimes fire projectiles into backstops on land rather than targets in the river.

NSWCDD’s small-arms tests usually employ inert bullets with small propellant charges that produce noise levels that affect a far smaller area than the noise resulting from firing the large-caliber guns. Approximately 10 percent of the bullets are fired into the PRTR. Each bullet fired counts as one of the 6,000 bullets fired annually, on average.

Annual detonations average 190 individual detonations. The explosives used in the ordnance being detonated can vary from less than 0.1 pounds (lbs) up to 1,000 lbs of explosives. Detonations above 200 lbs of explosives are covered with at least eight feet of dirt to minimize noise and fragmentation. Most detonations take place on the EEA Range Complex.

EM Energy Activities

The EM energy devices included operate in the frequency range of 300 kilohertz to 300 gigahertz and at powers ranging from 10 watts up to 500 megawatts. An average of 490 events take place annually, three-quarters of which are ground plane tests of whether electrical and electronic systems can withstand high-power EM energy. The remaining events involve emissions from radars on the Search and Track Sensor Test Site, from the Navy Directed Energy Center to targets on the river or to the Counter Explosive Test Facility, within the Maginot Open Air Test Site, and within the Naval Ordnance Transient Electromagnetic Simulator. Devices, such as radios and range radars with power, frequency, and exposure levels below established thresholds for EM energy hazards to personnel, ordnance, fuel, and EM interference are not included in the Proposed Action.

HE Laser Activities

The HE lasers operated at NSWCDD and included under the No Action Alternative emit focused, coherent (lased) light ranging in power from more than 1 milliwatt (Laser Class 3) to 100 kilowatts (Laser Class 4) in a wavelength range from 500 nanometers to 11 micrometers. Class 3 and Class 4 lasers are HE lasers. Eye-safe Laser Class 1 (such as laser printers) and usually eye-safe Class 2 lasers (such as laser pointers) are not included in the Proposed Action because they have negligible environmental and safety impacts.

NSWCDD currently conducts approximately 60 outdoor HE laser events a year (see “Operations, Tests, and Events” text box for the definition of a laser event). For lasers and EM energy devices, effects are possible only when the device is emitting. The time of emission is usually brief – varying from less than a second to several minutes – and there are no residual effects. However, one event may entail several hundred instantaneous pulses while another event with a different device may be one single pulse of five minutes. Laser corridors over the land ranges and Mission Area as well as over the river from PRTR land ranges to the EEA have been established; laser tests take place on these corridors. Laser beams are directed from either mobile emitters or the Naval Directed Energy Center to strike targets surrounded by backstops.

Chemical Defense Activities

Activities outdoors using chemical simulants have been conducted by NSWCDD since the 1980s on the PRTR Complex. Up to 12 events using chemical simulants are conducted annually. Chemical simulants are dispersed from a blower on a land range or on a barge, helicopter, or small vessel in the MDZ. Detectors, located on a land range or on a barge or small vessel in the MDZ, remotely detect chemical simulant vapors some distance from the source using a scanner, a detector, and an electronics module to process and communicate information.

A chemical defense event is defined in the same way that EM energy and HE laser events are defined (see “Operations, Tests, and Events” text box). The quantities of simulant used for an event may vary depending on the tests being conducted. Each test may include small quantities of a number of simulants or larger quantities of one or two simulants, consisting of no more than 20 gallons of simulant per release or test.

Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) Use

Use of the PRTR for RDT&E activities would remain at present levels, which average approximately 750 hours per year. Use is defined by the number of hours that range control boats are on the PRTR to restrict public access to ensure public safety. For many of these hours, test

set-ups and equipment calibrations are occurring, so testing takes place for only some of the 750 hours. Currently, only access to the MDZ or upper LDZ to 40,000 yards from Main Range (Figure ES-5) is restricted. The MDZ is the area that receives most of the use, and it includes the main gunnery target area (Figure ES-5). Normally, only the part of the range being used is restricted, unless large guns are being fired, in which case, the whole MDZ or upper LDZ is restricted. When the range is in use, vessels are cleared from the range or the part in use to protect their safety. NSWCDD's Range Operations Center works with vessel operators to minimize waits by allowing them to pass by or across the range during lulls in testing. Small watercraft can always pass by the range on the Maryland side even when access to the whole MDZ is restricted. When the range is restricted, small vessels may wait up to 30 minutes to move through, but 10-minute waits are more typical. For deep-draft vessels, which must use the main channel through the range, delays are no more than one hour, and more typically last less than 30 minutes.

ES.5.3 Alternative 1

The numbers shown in the Alternative 1 column of Table ES-1 represent average annual activity levels under Alternative 1 and were determined by combining:

1. An average of the annual number of bullets, events, or hours, as appropriate, for each RDT&E activity from 1993 (1995 for ordnance) to 2009, weighted to take into account years with the highest activity levels (No Action Alternative levels);
2. *Plus* growth above No Action Alternative levels necessary to meet known RDT&E mission requirements in the near future.

Ordnance

- There would be no increase in large-caliber gun use, which would vary from year to year but would remain at the current level of approximately 4,700 projectiles on average fired in a particularly active year.
- EM launchers, a type of large-caliber gun using EM energy rather than explosives to fire projectiles, would fire inert, shaped metal projectiles at conventional targets on land and river ranges. Projectile speeds would be no greater than conventional large Navy gun projectile speeds.
- Long-range guns would fire into a target area from 32,000 to 35,000 yards in the upper LDZ approximately 10 days a year, which is more frequently than over the last 15 years.
- Outdoors small arms use would increase more than fourfold from 6,000 to 25,500 bullets fired annually.
- Detonations would increase by 10 detonations, or five percent annually.

EM Energy

- Under Alternative 1, the number of annual events using EM energy would increase from No Action Alternative levels of 490 to 590. This represents a 20 percent increase in the number of tests annually using EM energy in the frequency range of 300 kilohertz to 300 gigahertz and at average powers ranging from 10 watts up to 500 MW.
- Directed EM energy sensors and emitters may be mobile (operating from a moving vehicle or aircraft, for example).

- EM energy may be directed at unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) and unmanned surface vehicles (small vessels on the river) on the MDZ; unmanned surface vehicles may be disabled or destroyed; unmanned aerial vehicles would only be tracked.
- EM energy emitted from a land range or a vessel on the PRTR may be reflected off an unmanned aerial vehicle or similar airborne platform over the horizon to a target on the land ranges or to a platform, such as a barge, located in the Udz, MDZ, or LDZ.
- Some EM energy operations would take place beyond the normal 8 am to 5 pm, Monday-to-Friday PRTR range schedule because of the increasing need to test systems in all kinds of weather conditions and at dawn, dusk, and at night.

HE Lasers

- Under Alternative 1, the number of HE laser events would increase from current/No Action levels of 60 annually to 125 annually, which is a 108 percent increase.
- The maximum HE laser power levels would increase from the current/No Action Alternative level of 100 kilowatts to 500 kilowatts.
- HE lasers would be directed from land ranges to a target on a barge on the MDZ.
- HE lasers would use tracking to target mobile unmanned aerial vehicles; HE lasers would disable/destroy mobile unmanned surface vehicles on the water and mortar shells in the air.
- HE laser beams emitted from a land range or a vessel on the PRTR may be reflected off an unmanned aerial vehicle or similar airborne platform located over the horizon to a target on land ranges or on various types of platforms, such as a barge, in the Udz, MDZ, or LDZ.
- If lighter-weight power sources are developed, lasers may be fired from manned and unmanned aerial vehicles at targets on the MDZ water surface.
- Some laser operations would take place beyond the normal 8 am to 5 pm, Monday-to-Friday PRTR range schedule because of the increasing need to test systems in all kinds of weather conditions and at dawn, dusk, and at night.

Chem/Bio Defense

- Like the No Action Alternative, chemical and biological simulants would be dispersed from a blower on a land range or on a barge, helicopter, or small vessel in the MDZ. Detectors, located on a land range or on a barge or small vessel, would remotely detect chemical or biological simulant vapors some distance from the source using a scanner, a detector, and an electronics module to process and communicate information.
- The annual number of outdoor chem/bio defense events would increase fivefold from 12 to 60.
- A wider range of chemical simulants would be used for outdoor chemical defense operations.
- Biological simulants would be used as well as chemical simulants outdoors, but they would not be tested together.

- Chemical and biological simulants would be used on the land ranges, the Mission Area, and the whole MDZ. Under the No Action Alternative, only the upriver part of the MDZ and the land ranges have been used for testing.
- Some chem/bio sensor activities would take place beyond the normal 8 am to 5 pm, Monday-to-Friday PRTR range schedule because of the increasing need to test systems in all kinds of weather conditions and at dawn, dusk, and at night.

PRTR Use

- There would be an overall increase in the number of hours that public access to some part of the PRTR would be restricted from 750 hours under the No Action Alternative to 870 hours annually under Alternative 1.
- Public access to the PRTR UDZ and the LDZ would be restricted approximately two days a year each to allow, for example, for weapon systems integration operations using vessels and aircraft, compared to no restrictions under the No Action Alternative.
- Public access to the upper LDZ would be restricted up to 10 days a year for long-range, large-caliber gun firing, compared to only infrequent restrictions under the No Action Alternative.

ES.5.4 Alternative 2

This alternative is the Navy's preferred alternative because it satisfies current requirements, known outdoor RDT&E activities scheduled for the coming years, and projected increases in activities in the foreseeable future based on current trends. In most respects, Alternative 2 would include the same types of activities described for Alternative 1. The number of annual activities under Alternative 2 represents:

- An average of the annual number of firings, detonations, and events for each RDT&E activity from 1993 (1995 for ordnance) to 2009, weighted to take into account years with the highest activity levels (No Action Alternative levels);
- *Plus* the increase in average annual RDT&E activities under Alternative 1 above No Action Alternative levels;
- *Plus* roughly 15 percent growth in the number of average annual RDT&E activities above Alternative 1 levels.

This alternative satisfies current requirements, known outdoor RDT&E scheduled for the coming years, and projected increases in tests in the foreseeable future based on current trends. It provides the flexibility required in RDT&E to accommodate future developments that may influence global threats, homeland security, and future missions. Alternative 2 includes the following increases above Alternative 1 levels:

- Small-arms activities would be approximately 30,000 bullets fired annually (an 18 percent increase over Alternative 1 levels). The number of large-caliber projectiles fired would not increase (0 percent).
- The number of detonations on the EEA would increase by about 30 annually (15 percent) above Alternative 1 levels.

- RDT&E activities using EM energy events would increase above Alternative 1 levels by 90 (15 percent) annually; HE laser events would increase by 20 (16 percent); and chem/bio simulant events would increase by 10 (17 percent).
 - Biological simulants may be tested simultaneously with chemical simulants. Detectors capable of immediately recognizing a mixture of chemical and biological threats would be tested.
 - NSWCCD's use of the PRTR (hours when range control boats restrict public access) would increase by 130 hours annually (15 percent above Alternative 1 levels). The number of days that the UDZ and LDZ would be restricted would be similar to Alternative 1 – approximately two times a year – and the upper LDZ would be restricted approximately 10 days a year.
-

ES.5.5 Environmental Impacts

Each alternative was evaluated for its potential to produce environmental impacts. The following defines the impact attributes that were used to assess potential impacts:

- **Context** – Context refers to the geographic, social, and environmental circumstances within which a proposed action may have effects on an environmental resource, as well as the size of the area affected by the action.
- **Intensity** – Intensity refers to the severity of the impacts. Intensity is rated as negligible, minor, moderate, or major, in accordance with the framework presented below.
- **Short-term or Long-term** – In general, short-term impacts are those that would occur only with respect to a particular discontinuous activity or for a finite period, or only during the time required for installation activities. Long-term impacts are those that are more likely to be persistent and chronic.
- **Direct or Indirect** – A direct impact is caused by a proposed action and occurs contemporaneously at or near the location of the action. An indirect impact is caused by a proposed action but might occur later in time or be farther removed in distance but still be a reasonably foreseeable outcome of the action.
- **Positive or Negative** – A positive impact is one having beneficial outcomes on an environmental resource. A negative impact is one having adverse, unfavorable, or undesirable outcomes.

The following scale is the qualitative framework used in this EIS to evaluate the intensity of impacts:

- **No Impacts** – No change to the environmental resource.
- **Negligible Impacts** – Impacts either are non-detectable or, if detected, are well within natural or normal variability and do not appreciably affect the extent or value of the environmental resource. Adverse impacts are easily absorbed by the natural or human environment without mitigation or long-term consequences.

- **Minor Impacts** – Impacts are clearly detectable but they approximate natural or normal variability and do not appreciably affect the extent or value of the resource. If needed to offset adverse impacts, mitigation is simple and mitigation success is likely.
- **Moderate Impacts** – Impacts exceed natural or normal variability; impacts appreciably affect the value or extent of the resource, but do not affect its viability. Although mitigation typically would be needed for the environment to absorb adverse impacts without long-term deterioration, mitigation success is likely.
- **Major Impacts** – Impacts exceed natural or normal variability and likely affect the viability of the resource or, as the impacts are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks, the future viability of the resource is in question. Full mitigation of adverse impacts may not be possible or mitigation success is not likely, and some long-term deterioration of the environment may be unavoidable.

Table ES-2 summarizes the environmental impacts that would result from implementing each of the three alternatives.

**Table ES-2
Summary of Environmental Impacts**

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|---|--|---|---|
| Land Use, Plans, & Coastal Zone Management | | | |
| NSF Dahlgren | <p>No military construction proposed. Activities would continue to use existing facilities and corridors within operational ranges and the Mission Area. No direct or indirect impacts on NSF Dahlgren land use pattern. Negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts on non-operational uses of ranges and the Mission Area on NSF Dahlgren.</p> <p>Consistent with Navy plans to guide development at NSF Dahlgren, except that alternative would not support regional plans to further promote district as an RDT&E center.</p> | <p>No military construction proposed. Activities would use existing facilities and existing plus some new areas within operational ranges and the Mission Area. Activities would take place more frequently than under No Action Alternative (Alt). No direct or indirect impacts on NSF Dahlgren land use pattern. Negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts on non-operational uses of ranges and the Mission Area on NSF Dahlgren.</p> <p>Consistent with Navy plans for NSF Dahlgren. Would support regional plans to promote district as an RDT&E center and maximize existing facilities for highest and best use.</p> | <p>No military construction proposed. Activities would use existing facilities and existing plus some new areas within operational ranges and the Mission Area. Activities would take place more frequently than under other alternatives. No direct or indirect impacts on NSF Dahlgren land use pattern. Negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts on non-operational uses of ranges and the Mission Area on NSF Dahlgren.</p> <p>Consistent with Navy plans for NSF Dahlgren. Would support, to a greater extent than Alt 1, regional plans to promote district as an RDT&E center and maximize existing facilities for highest and best use.</p> |
| Dahlgren Area and Potomac River Shoreline | <p>Master plans, market forces, and the presence of NSF Dahlgren have determined current land use pattern and development projects. Therefore, continuing RDT&E activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on land use near NSF Dahlgren or along the shoreline of the PRTR.</p> <p>Consistent with master plans and policies of counties and towns near the PRTR.</p> <p>No direct or indirect impacts on existing access to the Potomac River for commercial or recreational purposes.</p> | <p>PRTR use increase of 16% plus 20% increase in EM energy and 108% increase in HE laser events would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts on river use. No direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on the desirability of waterfront property based on the slight increase in noise levels in the upper LDZ. NSWCDD gives notice of restrictions in advance, boat traffic is allowed to pass during lulls in tests, and recreational boating mainly takes place on weekends when operations rarely are conducted.</p> <p>No direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on land use, land use planning, and ongoing development projects.</p> | <p>PRTR use increase of 33% plus 39% increase in EM energy and 142% increase in HE laser events would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts on river use. No direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on the desirability of waterfront property for the reasons described under Alt 1.</p> <p>No direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on land use, land use planning, and ongoing development projects.</p> |
| Special-Use Airspace | <p>No change from existing conditions; no direct or indirect impacts on civilian air traffic.</p> | <p>Negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts on civilian air traffic. No change in the hours that airspace is restricted annually. Although</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| | | fewer hours would be turned back to FAA for civilian use, commercial and general aviation operators normally stay out of the special-use airspace at all times; many operators consider the special-use airspace to be off-limits at all times. It is expected that few aircraft would actually use the airspace during hours normally restricted. | |
| Coastal Zone | The Proposed Action is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of Virginia's and Maryland's coastal zone management (CZM) programs. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) concurred that the Proposed Action will be consistent with the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) received a copy of the DEIS and the Federal Coastal Consistency Determination (Appendix I) but did not respond within 60 days to the Navy's consistency determination nor ask for an extension, so under the provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Act, the state has waived its consistency rights, stating neither that it concurs with nor objects to the Navy's consistency determination. | Same as No Action Alt. | Same as No Action Alt. |
| Socioeconomics | | | |
| Demographics | No significant increase in NSWCDD's outdoor RDT&E personnel anticipated; unlikely to affect population projections and would have no direct or indirect impacts on demographics. | No significant increase in NSWCDD's outdoor RDT&E personnel anticipated; unlikely to affect population projections and would have no direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on demographics. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Economics | Current PRTR activities have not suppressed real estate development driven by proximity to Washington, DC and attractiveness of the Potomac River. Marine navigation (freight movement, commercial fishing, and recreational boating) coexists with range use; inconvenience of delays of | Based on No Action Alt experience, the 16% increase in PRTR use and no significant increase in noise, coupled with Range Operations Center measures to facilitate river traffic movement (as described under No Action Alt), are expected to have no direct and negligible, | Based on No Action Alt experience, the 33% increase in PRTR use and no significant increase in noise, coupled with Range Operations Center measures to facilitate river traffic movement (as described under No Action Alt.), are expected to have no direct and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|---|--|---|---|
| | up to 30 minutes (10 minutes typical) for small vessels and up to one hour (half-hour typical) for large vessels is mitigated by Range Operations Center's early notices of upcoming operations and working with vessel operators to allow them to pass during lulls in testing. No direct or indirect impacts on economic conditions in the study area because it would not change factors such as noise and river use, which are already incorporated into existing economic activities. | long-term, indirect, negative impacts on real estate development; and minor, short-term, direct and minor, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on marine commerce. | impacts on real estate development; and minor, short-term, direct and minor, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on marine commerce. |
| Environmental Justice and Protection of Children | No disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations. No disproportionate environmental health or safety risks to children. | Same as No Action Alt. | Same as No Action Alt. |
| Utilities | | | |
| Utilities | NSWCDD's current power requirements are being adequately supplied by the power grid and NSF Dahlgren's auxiliary generators. RDT&E activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on utilities. The Dominion Virginia Power (DVP) application to build a new 230 kilovolt transmission source and substation at NSF Dahlgren has been approved and construction is scheduled to be completed in 2014. This would meet NSF Dahlgren's needs and King George County's growth and development. | Despite 20% increase in EM energy and 108% increase in HE laser events, RDT&E activities would have no direct and negligible, long-term, indirect impacts on the Virginia power grid. RDT&E activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on other utility systems, which are sufficient to support proposed activities. | Despite 39% increase in EM energy and 142% increase in HE laser events, RDT&E activities would have no direct and negligible, long-term, indirect impacts on the Virginia power grid. RDT&E activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on other utility systems, which are sufficient to support proposed activities. |
| Air Quality | | | |
| Stationary & Mobile Sources | No construction of any new major stationary sources is proposed. The land-based portion of NSF Dahlgren is in an attainment area and has a state operating permit for stationary air emissions. Annual emission levels do not exceed Title V major source thresholds. The emissions from the portion of the PRTR's MDZ located within an ozone | Same as No Action Alt. | Same as No Action Alt. |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| | nonattainment area would be unchanged. RDT&E activities would result in negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on air quality. | | |
| Greenhouse Gases | NSWCDD RDT&E activities make an incremental contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, representing a very small percentage of total United States emissions. Based on an estimate of CO ₂ equivalents generated, NSF Dahlgren's facility-wide total greenhouse gas emissions in 2008 represented approximately 0.0001% of the total emissions for the country as a whole. NSWCDD RDT&E activities when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions would have the potential for negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on climate. | Same as No Action Alt because increases in greenhouse gas emissions would be negligible. | Same as No Action Alt because increases in greenhouse gas emissions would be negligible. |
| Other Sources | Chemical simulants released have low toxicity and are rapidly dispersed to low concentrations. NSWCDD personnel exposed to simulants use personal protective equipment. Chemical defense activities would result in negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on air quality. | The 400% increase in chem/bio defense events and the addition of biological simulants would result in negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative air quality impacts comparable to impacts under the No Action Alt. | The 483% increase in chem/bio defense events and the addition of biological simulants, which may be mixed with chemical simulants, would result in negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative air quality impacts comparable to impacts under the No Action Alt. |
| Noise | | | |
| Noise | Noise levels resulting from firing large guns and small arms and from detonations would remain the same as at present. Ordnance activities would have minor, long-term, direct, negative weapons-testing noise impacts; negligible, long-term, direct, negative vibration impacts; and no indirect noise or vibration impacts. EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect noise or vibration impacts. | Although small-arms firing would increase by 325% and detonations by 5%, there would be no significant overall increase in noise levels. Ordnance activities would have minor, long-term, direct, negative weapons-testing noise impacts; negligible, long-term, direct, negative vibration impacts; and no indirect noise or vibration impacts. EM energy, HE laser, chemical and biological defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect noise or vibration impacts. | Although small-arms firing would increase by 400% and detonations by 21%, there would be no significant overall increase in noise levels. Ordnance activities would have minor, long-term, direct, negative weapons-testing noise impacts; negligible, long-term, direct, negative vibration impacts; and no indirect noise or vibration impacts. EM energy, HE laser, chemical and biological defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect noise or vibration impacts. |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|--|---|--|---|
| Cultural Resources | | | |
| Archaeological Resources | RDT&E activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on previously identified archaeological resources and are not expected to affect unknown resources within the Archaeological Area of Potential Effect (APE) because no groundbreaking activities and no expansion of outdoor RDT&E activities are proposed. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) and Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) concurred that this alternative would not have an adverse effect on archaeological resources within the archaeological APE. | RDT&E activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on previously identified archaeological resources and are not expected to affect unknown resources within the Archaeological APE. In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the VDHR and MHT concurred that this alternative would not have an adverse effect on archaeological resources within the archaeological APE. No archaeological resources are known to occur in the heavily-disturbed range areas used for detonations so an increase in detonations would have no effect. There would be no increase in large-caliber gun firing. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Historic Architectural Resources | In accordance with Section 106, ordnance noise and vibration modeling indicates no adverse effect to either the National Register-eligible Dahlgren Residential Historic District or the three proposed districts on NSF Dahlgren. The VDHR and MHT concurred that the Proposed Action would have no direct or indirect adverse effect on National Register of Historic Places-eligible or -listed properties within the Historic Architectural APE. In accordance with NEPA, the No Action Alt would have minor direct impacts and no indirect negative impacts on historic architectural resources within the APE. | Same as the No Action Alt. Although there would be a 325% increase in small-arms use, the area affected is limited and would not include National Register-listed or -eligible resources. There would be no increase in large-caliber gun firing. | Same as the No Action Alt. Although there would be a 400% increase in small-arms use, the area affected is limited and would not include National Register-listed or -eligible resources. There would be no increase in large-caliber gun firing. |
| Hazardous Materials and Waste | | | |
| Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste | The numerous policies and programs in place to remediate and to safely use, store, transport, and dispose of hazardous materials and hazardous waste ensure that they are safely handled and do not enter the environment. The environmental restoration | The numerous policies and programs in place to remediate and to safely use, store, transport, and dispose of hazardous materials and hazardous waste would ensure that they are safely handled and do not enter the environment. The | Same as Alt 1. |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| | <p>program is addressing past range use when environmental programs were less stringent. Ordnance activities would have minor, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts and EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts.</p> | <p>environmental restoration program is addressing past range use when environmental programs were less stringent. Comparable to the No Action Alt, ordnance activities would have minor, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts and EM energy, HE laser, and chem/bio defense activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts.</p> | |
| Health & Safety | | | |
| Health and Safety | <p>Activities are conducted in accordance with Navy policies, carefully-conceived management controls, and operation-specific risk hazard assessments and standard operating procedures, which are implemented to ensure safety during the RDT&E activities. Input of munitions constituents (MCs) into the Potomac River from current and past ordnance use are well below concentrations that could cause adverse effects on human health. Ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts. PRTR use would have negligible, long-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts.</p> | <p>The 325% increase in small-arms firing and 5% increase in detonations would not increase releases of MCs on or off range or pose unacceptable risks to human health. Most bullets are fired into butts and those entering the PRTR are likely to be buried in sediments and be isolated from exposure pathways. The MC contribution of the additional number of bullets settling near the surface of the sediments is negligible (0.1% of duds and inert bullets or about 26 bullets). Treatment of explosive waste from the additional detonations would take place at NSWCDD, consistent with current operations. Biological simulants would be tested, but simulants proposed for use are common and found naturally in the environment. Ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, and chem/bio defense activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts. PRTR use would have negligible, long-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts.</p> | <p>The 400% increase in small-arms firing and 21% increase in detonations would not increase releases of MCs on or off range or pose unacceptable risks to human health. Most bullets are fired into butts and those entering the PRTR are likely to be buried in sediments and be isolated from exposure pathways. The MC contribution of the additional number of bullets settling near the surface of the sediments is negligible (0.1% of duds and inert bullets or about 30 bullets). Treatment of explosive waste from the additional detonations would take place at NSWCDD, consistent with current operations. Biological simulants would be tested, but simulants proposed for use are common and found naturally in the environment. Biological simulants tests could be performed in combination with chemical simulants; there are no known synergistic interactions between the proposed types of biological organisms and low-toxicity chemical simulants. Ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, and chem/bio defense activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts. PRTR use would have negligible, long-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts.</p> |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|---|---|--|------------------------|
| Geology, Topography, Soils & Sediments | | | |
| Geology, Topography, Soils and Sediments | <p>Ordnance activities would have minor, long-term, direct, negative impacts on soils and sediments, based on localized disturbances to soil and sediments, and no direct or indirect impacts on geology or topography. EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities would have negligible, short-term, direct impacts and no indirect impacts on geology, topography, soils, or sediments, as there would be minimal contact with these features. Use of boats during activities on the PRTR would have no direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on geology, topography, soils, and sediments.</p> | Same as No Action Alt. | Same as No Action Alt. |
| Water Resources | | | |
| Surface Water | <p>RDT&E activities would have little contact with surface water resources and minimal potential to affect them. Low concentrations of MCs and simulants enter surface water with predicted concentrations below standard detection levels. Ordnance activities and PRTR use would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on surface waters. EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. Any incidental EM/laser energy would be quickly diminished by reflection, absorption, or scattering by water. Chemical defense activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. PRTR use would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on surface waters.</p> | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring biosafety level (BSL)-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect surface water. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Wetlands and | Ordnance and PRTR use would have no direct impacts and negligible, long-term, | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests | Same as Alt 1. |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|---|---|---|----------------|
| Floodplains | indirect, negative impacts on wetlands and floodplains. EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. | would not affect wetlands and floodplains. | |
| Groundwater | Ordnance activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on groundwater. EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use do not contact groundwater and therefore would not directly or indirectly impact groundwater. | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not enter the groundwater. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Potomac River Biological Resources | | | |
| Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) | Ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on SAV communities. Exposure concentrations of MCs and simulants are below levels that could cause adverse effects in aquatic organisms. EM energy, HE laser, and PRTR use would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts on SAV. Chemical defense activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, short-term, indirect, negative impacts. | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect SAV. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Plankton | Ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on plankton communities. EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. Chemical defense and PRTR activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, short-term, indirect, negative impacts. | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect plankton communities. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Aquatic Invertebrates | Ordnance, activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on aquatic invertebrate communities. EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect aquatic invertebrate communities. | Same as Alt 1. |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|----------------|
| | impacts. Chemical defense and PRTR activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, short-term, indirect, negative impacts. | | |
| Fish | Ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on fish communities. EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. Chemical defense activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, short-term, indirect, negative impacts. PRTR use would have negligible, short-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts. | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect fish communities. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) | <p>The RDT&E activities conducted by NSWCCD on the PRTR may adversely affect EFH, but likely would result in minimal adverse effects on EFH, as the resulting changes to EFH and its ecological functions would be relatively small and insignificant. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) concurred that the proposed action would not substantially adversely affect EFH or habitat areas of particular concern.</p> <p>In accordance with NEPA, ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on EFH. EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts on EFH.</p> <p>Chemical defense activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, short-term, indirect, negative impacts.</p> <p>PRTR use would have negligible, short-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts.</p> | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect EFH. | Same as Alt 1. |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|--|--|---|----------------|
| Potomac River Birds | | | |
| Potomac River Birds | Ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on Potomac River birds. EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. Chemical defense activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, short-term, indirect, negative impacts. PRTR use would have negligible, short-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts. | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect birds. | Same as Alt 1. |
| NSF Dahlgren's Biological Resources | | | |
| Ponds, Streams, and Creeks | Ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on biological resources associated with NSF Dahlgren's ponds, streams, and creeks. Large-caliber guns are mostly fired into the river rather than at land targets; 90% of small arms are fired at targets on land that trap the bullets, but 10% are fired at targets in the water up to 4,000 yds out and end up in the river. EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts, as most activities occur well away from ponds, streams, and creeks. Chemical defense activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect ponds, streams, and creeks. | Same as Alt 1. |
| Vegetation | Ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on NSF Dahlgren's vegetation. HE laser, EM energy, and chemical defense activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. | Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect vegetation. | Same as Alt 1. |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| Wildlife | <p>Ordnance activities would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on NSF Dahlgren's wildlife.</p> <p>EM energy and HE laser activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. EM and laser corridors are checked for presence of wildlife before and during tests.</p> <p>Chemical defense activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect wildlife.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |
| Special Interest Areas (SIAs) | <p>Ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on biological resources associated with SIAs.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt/Biological defense activities would have no direct or indirect impacts on biological resources associated with SIAs.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |
| Hunting and Fishing | <p>Ordnance activities would have no direct impacts and negligible, long-term, indirect, negative impacts on hunting and fishing.</p> <p>EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities would have negligible, short-term, direct, negative impacts and no indirect impacts. These activities have little or no spatial overlap with hunting and fishing areas.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Biological defense activities would have little or no spatial overlap with hunting and fishing areas.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |
| Protected Species | | | |
| Fish | <p>NMFS has provided concurrence in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that existing RDT&E activities may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect the endangered shortnose sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon.</p> <p>In accordance with NEPA, ordnance activities and PRTR use would have negligible, long-term, direct and indirect, negative impacts on the shortnose sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon. EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities would have no direct or indirect impacts.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Biological defense activities would have no direct or indirect impacts.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|-----------------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| Sea Turtles | <p>Ordnance use is more than 6.5 nautical miles above the lowest reach of the Potomac River where sea turtles (ESA-listed loggerhead, Kemp's ridley and green) are found seasonally. There is minimal spatial overlap between RDT&E activities conducted by NSWCDD on the PRTR and sea turtles using the lower Potomac River. NMFS has provided concurrence in accordance with Section 7 of the ESA that the baseline RDT&E activities impacts are considered to be insignificant or discountable, and may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect sea turtles.</p> <p>In accordance with NEPA, ordnance activities would have no direct and negligible, short-term, indirect negative impacts on sea turtles. EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect impacts.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not change the conclusions.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |
| Birds | <p>Ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use would not affect the birds protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Action (BGEPA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), Lacey Act, or the ESA.</p> <p>In accordance with NEPA, ordnance, EM energy HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect impacts on the bald eagle or other protected bird species.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not change the conclusions.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |
| Marine Mammals | <p>There are no reasonably foreseeable takes of marine mammals associated with ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use in accordance with the MMPA.</p> <p>In accordance with NEPA, ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect impacts on marine</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not change the conclusions.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|----------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| | mammals. | | |
| Insects | <p>The ESA-listed threatened northeastern beach tiger beetle is found on sandy beaches in the lowest reach of the Potomac River, but no RDT&E activities, inclusive of ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, and chemical defense activities, would take place near the shoreline of the LDZ. In accordance with Section 7 of the ESA, RDT&E activities would have no effect on listed insect species.</p> <p>In accordance with NEPA, ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect impacts on tiger beetles.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not affect the tiger beetle, and in any event, would not be released near the beaches on which they live.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |
| Plants | <p>A USFWS Virginia Field Office online project review of the Proposed Action determined that because suitable habitat exists for the ESA-listed sensitive joint-vetch in tidal wetlands within NSF Dahlgren, the Proposed Action may adversely affect the sensitive joint-vetch. However, based on site- and project-specific information, the No Action Alt would have no effect on this species. Even if the species occurs in tidal wetlands on the installation, it is unlikely to be present in the parts of the range used for ground-disturbing activities, because there is no suitable habitat in these areas.</p> <p>Further, the No Action Alt would not cause ground disturbance outside of existing target areas and other areas subject to recent and continuing disturbance.</p> <p>In accordance with NEPA, ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, chemical defense activities, and PRTR use would have no direct or indirect impacts on rare, threatened, or endangered plants.</p> | <p>Same as No Action Alt. Naturally-occurring BSL-1 organisms used in bio defense tests would not change the conclusions.</p> | <p>Same as Alt 1.</p> |

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|
| Cumulative Impacts | | | |
| Cumulative Impacts | The baseline RDT&E activities when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions would have the potential for negligible or minor, but recoverable, negative impacts to the resources evaluated in this EIS. | Same as No Action Alt. The addition of biological defense activities would not change the conclusion. | Same as No Action Alt. The addition of biological defense activities alone or in combination with chemical defense activities would not change the conclusion. |

ES.6 Protective Measures

In order to minimize the environmental impacts of current RDT&E activities, NSWCCD and NSF Dahlgren have developed environmental management processes, comprising the established NSWCCD Environmental Management System (EMS) and Safety Program, the NSF Dahlgren Comprehensive Work Approval Process, and protective measures. For the purposes of this EIS:

- *Protective measures* are actions taken by NSWCCD to protect sensitive resources, but that are not implemented in response to the impact findings of this EIS.
- *Mitigation measures* differ from protective measures in that they would be implemented specifically in response to the impact findings described in Chapter 4 of this EIS.

The protective measures already implemented for current No Action Alternative activities, which rely heavily on ongoing process improvements, would continue to be used as the means of mitigating environmental impacts for the Proposed Action alternatives. NSWCCD identifies environmental and safety risks for current No Action activities and responds with mitigation and protective measures based on experience from earlier RDT&E. Developing mitigation based on the projected risk when the RDT&E activity is being planned and then implementing these responsive measures when the activity takes place can effectively reduce the impact of the activity below that level at which the impact would be significant.

The impact findings summarized in Table ES-2 were determined in the context of the existing environmental management processes and protective measures that are integral to current and future NSWCCD RDT&E activities. Basically, mitigation is and would continue to be built into current activities and future activities under the Proposed Action. Because the protective measures in place reduce the impact of activities discussed in this EIS below the level at which the impact would be significant, no mitigation measures are necessary. NSWCCD is committed to applying the same processes used to mitigate safety and environmental impacts for current activities to all future activities under the No Action Alternative, and Alternatives 1 and 2. NSWCCD's Safety and Environmental Office is responsible for carrying out these processes for NSWCCD's current activities and would do so for future activities.

In order to minimize potential impacts, and consistent with NSWCCD's Environmental Policy and current environmental procedures, NSWCCD would include **general safety and environmental protective measures** in the planning and implementation of activities under the Proposed Action and ensure that:

- All activities proposed under the Proposed Action strictly adhere to all health, safety, and environmental protocols, including Risk Hazard Assessments (RHAs), SOPs or General Operating Procedures (GOPs) with associated Operation Procedures Supplements (OPSS) that cover RDT&E activities.
- All activities proposed strictly adhere to all safety zones – i.e., PRTR danger zones, Airfield Safety Zones and special-use airspace, explosive safety quantity distance (ESQD) arcs, unexploded ordnance (UXO) areas, EM hazard arcs, and laser safety buffer zones.

- Members of the public and personnel not involved in a test are excluded from ranges and the Mission Area prior to and during tests on the waters of the PRTR through the use of patrol boats and range restrictions and on land through the use of lookouts, road barriers, and signs.
- The Range Operations Center (ROC) in general notifies the public in advance of upcoming range activities through the Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) website and a toll-free telephone recording. The information given includes daily range schedules, types of tests, use of substances such as smoke or lights, hours of testing, where on the PRTR tests will take place, whether tests are on schedule, whether noise will be made, and contact numbers to obtain more information.
- ROC notifies the public specifically of any activities that will restrict access within and from Upper Machodoc Creek or when any test is scheduled to take place before or after normal PRTR operating hours of 8 am to 5 pm weekdays. ROC notifies the public through NSWCDD's range website, its toll-free information line, and by placing notices in local newspapers.
- ROC coordinates with the operators of private vessels via the range control boats or marine radio to minimize delays when activities are taking place on the PRTR and public access to an operational area is restricted. ROC allows vessels to pass through the operational area on the PRTR during lulls in testing; delays for smaller craft are normally no longer than one-half hour, and, for larger vessels that must use the shipping channel in the middle of the range, are normally no longer than one hour (and in most cases, less than these times).
- Noise from an activity does not exceed the standards in the Outdoor Noise Management Process (NSWCDD, 2011, included as Appendix C). When there is a possibility that noise levels higher than policy standards may occur, mitigation measures are implemented to ensure that installation personnel and the public are not exposed to hazardous noise levels. Potential mitigation measures may include avoiding testing when weather conditions are likely to result in higher noise levels to avoid exposing the public to increased noise levels and/or single and double hearing protection for on-installation personnel conducting the testing.
- Impacts to wildlife during testing are avoided when possible or minimized. Before an activity begins, trained observers look for wildlife in the target area or test area, and alert operators if any are present. Either the test is postponed temporarily or the wildlife is startled within legally allowable means to encourage movement out of the area. Trained observers watch for wildlife that may move into the target area or operations area during tests, and the test is stopped while they clear the area. Dead animals are removed prior to tests on land to limit the chances of scavenging wildlife's entering the test area.
- Bald eagle protection zones around active bald eagle nests are respected during the planning and execution of test activities, and, as necessary, coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) occurs.

- Testing of new ordnance and EM directed energy and HE laser equipment scales up gradually, and monitoring takes place to ensure that higher intensity levels do not generate impacts.
- Trees, shrubs, and taller grasses and herbaceous plants that grow in range and Mission Area operating areas and are obscuring lines-of-sight are trimmed prior to tests.

For **activity-specific protective measures** NSWCCD would ensure that for chem/bio defense activities under the Proposed Action:

- Weather conditions are monitored and simulant releases modeled before chem/bio simulant tests to ensure that simulant releases stay on ranges and the Mission Area.
- Simulant concentrations are monitored during and after releases to provide feedback for future modeling and to verify that modeled levels are not exceeded. The SOP includes the distance at which vapors and aerosols are diluted to a safe level based on the simulants and maximum quantities used. It also specifies that release point will be selected so that the simulant cloud must travel this distance before landfall.
- Simulant releases are spaced so that no land or water area would be exposed multiple times to the same simulant.
- Prior to each chem/bio operation, coordination takes place with the NSF Dahlgren Environmental and Safety Divisions, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ), as applicable, concerning the types and quantities of simulants proposed for use.

In addition, NSWCCD is developing and will implement a new, formalized Project Environmental Review and Monitoring Process for ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, and chemical and biological defense projects under the Proposed Action. NSWCCD's Safety and Environmental Office will be responsible for carrying out the new process under the Environmental Management System (EMS). The Project Environmental Review and Monitoring Process will be integrated with the NSWCCD safety program and the NSF Dahlgren CWAP, and together with those processes will ensure that:

- All new proposed RDT&E projects either will be covered under the scope of this EIS or will have sufficient independent environmental planning (NEPA) documentation.
- New proposed RDT&E projects will incorporate all applicable protective measures, as agreed to in the EIS Record of Decision and other decision documents and authorizations.
- Ordnance, EM energy, HE laser, and chemical and biological defense activity tempos and intensities will be tracked and compared to those analyzed in this EIS.
- Protective measures will be implemented, the effectiveness of the measures to achieve desired environmental outcomes will be continually assessed, and measures will be reviewed, reconsidered, and revised as needed to increase their effectiveness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| 1 | PURPOSE AND NEED | 1-1 |
| 1.1 | Proposed Action | 1-1 |
| 1.2 | Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action | 1-2 |
| 1.3 | NSWCDD Mission | 1-7 |
| 1.4 | Range Complexes, Mission Area, and Special-Use Airspace | 1-11 |
| 1.4.1 | Potomac River Test Range (PRTR) Complex | 1-11 |
| 1.4.2 | Explosives Experimental Area (EEA) Range Complex | 1-12 |
| 1.4.3 | Mission Area | 1-17 |
| 1.4.4 | Special-Use Airspace (SUA) | 1-17 |
| 1.5 | Mission Activities Addressed in This EIS | 1-18 |
| 1.5.1 | Mission Activities Involving Ordnance | 1-21 |
| 1.5.2 | Mission Activities Involving Electromagnetic Energy | 1-26 |
| 1.5.3 | Mission Activities Using Lasers | 1-34 |
| 1.5.4 | Mission Activities Involving Chem/Bio Simulants | 1-40 |
| 1.6 | Range Operations | 1-46 |
| 1.6.1 | Frequency of Testing | 1-46 |
| 1.6.2 | Range Control and Safety | 1-49 |
| 1.6.3 | Use of Aircraft and Vessels for Activities | 1-50 |
| 1.6.4 | Target Areas | 1-55 |
| 1.7 | Authority, Relevant Statutes, and Regulations | 1-56 |
| 1.8 | Scope of the EIS | 1-57 |
| 1.9 | Public Involvement | 1-58 |
| 1.9.1 | EIS Public Involvement Process | 1-58 |
| 1.9.2 | Scoping Meetings and Comments | 1-59 |
| 1.9.3 | DEIS Public Hearings | 1-60 |
| 1.9.4 | FEIS Process | 1-61 |
| 1.10 | Issues Eliminated from Further Analysis | 1-61 |
| 2 | PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES | 2-1 |
| 2.1 | The Proposed Action | 2-1 |
| 2.2 | Alternatives Development Process | 2-2 |
| 2.3 | Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis | 2-4 |
| 2.3.1 | Full Range Use Alternative | 2-4 |
| 2.3.2 | Locations other than NSF Dahlgren | 2-5 |
| 2.4 | Description of the No Action Alternative | 2-6 |
| 2.4.1 | Ordnance Activities | 2-7 |
| 2.4.2 | Electromagnetic (EM) Energy Activities | 2-7 |
| 2.4.3 | Laser Activities | 2-8 |
| 2.4.4 | Chemical Defense Activities | 2-8 |
| 2.4.5 | PRTR Use | 2-9 |

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| 2.5 | Description of Alternative 1..... | 2-9 |
| 2.5.1 | Alternative 1 Proposed Ordnance Activities..... | 2-10 |
| 2.5.2 | Alternative 1 Proposed Activities Using Electromagnetic Energy..... | 2-12 |
| 2.5.3 | Alternative 1 Proposed Activities Using Lasers..... | 2-14 |
| 2.5.4 | Alternative 1 Proposed Activities Using Chemical and Biological Simulants | 2-16 |
| 2.5.5 | Alternative 1 PRTR Use | 2-22 |
| 2.6 | Description of Alternative 2..... | 2-22 |
| 2.7 | Preferred Alternative..... | 2-23 |
| 2.8 | Comparison of Environmental Impacts | 2-23 |
| 3 | AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT | 3-1 |
| 3.1 | Land Use, Plans, and Coastal Zone Management..... | 3-3 |
| 3.1.1 | NSF Dahlgren | 3-3 |
| 3.1.2 | Dahlgren Area and Potomac River Shoreline..... | 3-8 |
| 3.1.3 | Special-Use Airspace (SUA) | 3-28 |
| 3.1.4 | Coastal Zone Management | 3-28 |
| 3.2 | Socioeconomics | 3-31 |
| 3.2.1 | Demographic Profile..... | 3-31 |
| 3.2.2 | Economic Profile | 3-34 |
| 3.2.3 | Housing..... | 3-43 |
| 3.2.4 | Environmental Justice..... | 3-46 |
| 3.2.5 | Protection of Children..... | 3-52 |
| 3.3 | Utilities..... | 3-59 |
| 3.3.1 | Electricity | 3-59 |
| 3.3.2 | Water and Wastewater | 3-59 |
| 3.3.3 | Other Utilities..... | 3-60 |
| 3.4 | Air Quality | 3-61 |
| 3.4.1 | National Ambient Air Quality Standards..... | 3-61 |
| 3.4.2 | Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change | 3-62 |
| 3.4.3 | Stationary and Mobile Sources | 3-63 |
| 3.4.4 | Other Sources..... | 3-64 |
| 3.5 | Noise..... | 3-67 |
| 3.5.1 | Noise Fundamentals..... | 3-67 |
| 3.5.2 | Department of Defense Guidelines on Noise..... | 3-69 |
| 3.5.3 | Existing Noise Conditions | 3-72 |
| 3.5.4 | Existing Conditions Noise Modeling..... | 3-84 |
| 3.5.5 | Vibration Noise..... | 3-100 |
| 3.6 | Cultural Resources | 3-111 |
| 3.6.1 | Regulatory Framework | 3-111 |
| 3.6.2 | Areas of Potential Effect (APEs) | 3-111 |
| 3.6.3 | Consulting Parties | 3-118 |
| 3.6.4 | Noise and Vibration Monitoring | 3-121 |
| 3.6.5 | Prehistoric Context..... | 3-130 |
| 3.6.6 | Historic Context..... | 3-134 |
| 3.6.7 | Archaeological Resources..... | 3-145 |

| | | | |
|-------------|---------------|--|-------|
| | 3.6.8 | Historic Architectural Resources | 3-156 |
| | 3.6.9 | American Heritage Rivers..... | 3-166 |
| 3.7 | | Hazardous Materials and Waste Management..... | 3-167 |
| | 3.7.1 | Legal Framework | 3-167 |
| | 3.7.2 | Hazardous Materials and Waste at Dahlgren..... | 3-169 |
| | 3.7.3 | Hazardous Material and Waste Management Program | 3-169 |
| | 3.7.4 | Environmental Restoration Program (ERP)..... | 3-172 |
| | 3.7.5 | Operational Range Waste Management..... | 3-173 |
| | 3.7.6 | Range Sustainability Environmental Program Assessment..... | 3-177 |
| | 3.7.7 | Munitions Constituents in PRTR Sediment and Water | 3-180 |
| 3.8 | | Health and Safety | 3-185 |
| | 3.8.1 | Safety Measures for All Activities..... | 3-185 |
| | 3.8.2 | Ordnance Activities Safety | 3-196 |
| | 3.8.3 | Electromagnetic Energy Activities Safety | 3-199 |
| | 3.8.4 | Laser Operations Safety | 3-205 |
| | 3.8.5 | Chemical and Biological Simulant Activities Safety..... | 3-208 |
| 3.9 | | Geology, Topography, Soils, and Sediments..... | 3-227 |
| | 3.9.1 | Geology..... | 3-227 |
| | 3.9.2 | Topography | 3-228 |
| | 3.9.3 | Soils..... | 3-228 |
| | 3.9.4 | Sediments..... | 3-249 |
| | 3.9.5 | Seismic Activity..... | 3-250 |
| 3.10 | | Water Resources | 3-255 |
| | 3.10.1 | Surface Water..... | 3-255 |
| | 3.10.2 | Wetlands and Floodplains..... | 3-286 |
| | 3.10.3 | Groundwater | 3-288 |
| 3.11 | | Potomac River Aquatic Biological Resources..... | 3-297 |
| | 3.11.1 | Vegetation..... | 3-297 |
| | 3.11.2 | Plankton | 3-301 |
| | 3.11.3 | Aquatic Invertebrates | 3-303 |
| | 3.11.4 | Fish..... | 3-314 |
| 3.12 | | Potomac River Birds | 3-355 |
| | 3.12.1 | Migratory Birds..... | 3-355 |
| | 3.12.2 | Waterfowl | 3-355 |
| | 3.12.3 | Raptors | 3-358 |
| | 3.12.4 | Wading Birds, Gulls, and Shorebirds | 3-367 |
| 3.13 | | NSF Dahlgren’s Biological Resources | 3-369 |
| | 3.13.1 | NSF Dahlgren’s Ponds, Streams, and Creeks..... | 3-369 |
| | 3.13.2 | NSF Dahlgren’s Vegetation..... | 3-370 |
| | 3.13.3 | NSF Dahlgren’s Wildlife | 3-374 |
| | 3.13.4 | Special Interest Areas (SIAs)..... | 3-380 |
| | 3.13.5 | Hunting and Fishing..... | 3-381 |
| 3.14 | | Protected Species | 3-387 |
| | 3.14.1 | Laws and Regulations | 3-387 |
| | 3.14.2 | Fish..... | 3-388 |
| | 3.14.3 | Sea Turtles and Terrestrial Reptiles..... | 3-395 |

3.14.4 Birds 3-408
3.14.5 Marine Mammals 3-409
3.14.6 Insects 3-413
3.14.7 Plants 3-413

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.....4-1

4.1 Land Use, Plans, and Coastal Zone Management..... 4-3
 4.1.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-3
 4.1.2 Alternative 1..... 4-6
 4.1.3 Alternative 2..... 4-11
4.2 Socioeconomics 4-15
 4.2.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-15
 4.2.2 Alternative 1..... 4-26
 4.2.3 Alternative 2..... 4-29
4.3 Utilities..... 4-33
 4.3.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-33
 4.3.2 Alternative 1..... 4-33
 4.3.3 Alternative 2..... 4-34
4.4 Air Quality 4-35
 4.4.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-35
 4.4.2 Alternative 1..... 4-41
 4.4.3 Alternative 2..... 4-44
4.5 Noise 4-47
 4.5.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-47
 4.5.2 Alternative 1..... 4-48
 4.5.3 Alternative 2..... 4-49
4.6 Cultural Resources 4-57
 4.6.1 Archaeological Resources..... 4-58
 4.6.2 Historic Architectural Resources 4-61
4.7 Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Management..... 4-75
 4.7.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-75
 4.7.2 Alternative 1..... 4-78
 4.7.3 Alternative 2..... 4-80
4.8 Health and Safety 4-83
 4.8.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-83
 4.8.2 Alternative 1..... 4-94
 4.8.3 Alternative 2..... 4-100
4.9 Geology, Topography, Soils, and Sediment 4-103
 4.9.1 No Action Alternative..... 4-103
 4.9.2 Alternative 1..... 4-106
 4.9.3 Alternative 2..... 4-108
4.10 Water Resources 4-111
 4.10.1 Surface Water..... 4-111
 4.10.2 Wetlands and Floodplains..... 4-119
 4.10.3 Groundwater 4-125
4.11 Potomac River Aquatic Biological Resources 4-127

| | | |
|--|--|--------------|
| 4.11.1 | No Action Alternative..... | 4-127 |
| 4.11.2 | Alternative 1..... | 4-154 |
| 4.11.3 | Alternative 2..... | 4-160 |
| 4.12 | Potomac River Birds..... | 4-167 |
| 4.12.1 | No Action Alternative..... | 4-167 |
| 4.12.2 | Alternative 1..... | 4-176 |
| 4.12.3 | Alternative 2..... | 4-178 |
| 4.13 | NSF Dahlgren’s Biological Resources..... | 4-181 |
| 4.13.1 | No Action Alternative..... | 4-181 |
| 4.13.2 | Alternative 1..... | 4-190 |
| 4.13.3 | Alternative 2..... | 4-195 |
| 4.14 | Protected Species..... | 4-201 |
| 4.14.1 | No Action Alternative..... | 4-201 |
| 4.14.2 | Alternative 1..... | 4-220 |
| 4.14.3 | Alternative 2..... | 4-229 |
| 5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND NEPA CONSIDERATIONS..... | | 5-1 |
| 5.1 | Past and Present Actions..... | 5-2 |
| 5.1.1 | NSF Indian Head Activities..... | 5-5 |
| 5.1.2 | Marine Corps Base Quantico Activities..... | 5-5 |
| 5.1.3 | Blossom Point Research Facility Activities..... | 5-7 |
| 5.1.4 | Fort A.P. Hill Activities..... | 5-10 |
| 5.1.5 | Naval Air Station Patuxent River and Webster Field Annex Activities..... | 5-12 |
| 5.1.6 | Morgantown Generating Station Coal Barge Facility..... | 5-16 |
| 5.1.7 | Morgantown Generating Station Flue Gas Desulfurization System..... | 5-18 |
| 5.1.8 | Morgantown Generating Station Coal Blending and Gypsum Loadout Facilities..... | 5-21 |
| 5.1.9 | Residential Development in Colonial Beach..... | 5-22 |
| 5.2 | Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions Relevant to the Proposed Action..... | 5-22 |
| 5.2.1 | Fort A.P. Hill Army Compatible Use Buffer Program..... | 5-23 |
| 5.2.2 | Potomac Land Conservation..... | 5-24 |
| 5.2.3 | Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial Bridge Improvement Project..... | 5-26 |
| 5.2.4 | Villages at Swan Point..... | 5-29 |
| 5.2.5 | St. Mary’s County Regional Airport..... | 5-30 |
| 5.3 | Summary of Cumulative Impacts Relative to the Proposed Action..... | 5-31 |
| 5.4 | NSWCDD Range Activities..... | 5-33 |
| 5.4.1 | Recreational and Commercial Use of the Potomac River..... | 5-33 |
| 5.4.2 | Property Values, Development, and Preservation Efforts Along the Potomac River..... | 5-34 |
| 5.4.3 | Electric Power Capacity on NSF Dahlgren..... | 5-34 |
| 5.4.4 | Noise in the Vicinity of NSF Dahlgren and the PRTR..... | 5-35 |
| 5.4.5 | Health and Safety of Residents near NSF Dahlgren and the PRTR..... | 5-35 |
| 5.4.6 | Potomac River Surface Water Quality..... | 5-35 |
| 5.4.7 | Natural Resources on NSF Dahlgren..... | 5-36 |
| 5.4.8 | Aquatic Biological Resources of the Potomac River..... | 5-36 |

| | | |
|--------------|--|------------|
| 5.4.9 | Protected Species | 5-37 |
| 5.5 | Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change | 5-37 |
| 5.6 | Unavoidable Adverse Impacts | 5-37 |
| 5.7 | Relationship between Short-Term Uses of Man’s Environment and the Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity | 5-38 |
| 5.8 | Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources..... | 5-38 |
| 6 | PROTECTIVE MEASURES..... | 6-1 |
| 6.1 | Environmental Management..... | 6-2 |
| 6.1.1 | NSWCDD Environmental Management System (EMS)..... | 6-2 |
| 6.1.2 | NSWCDD Safety Program | 6-3 |
| 6.1.3 | NSF Dahlgren Comprehensive Work Approval Process (CWAP)..... | 6-5 |
| 6.2 | Protective Measures | 6-6 |
| 6.2.1 | General Safety and Environmental Protective Measures..... | 6-6 |
| 6.2.2 | Activity-Specific Protective Measures | 6-7 |
| 6.2.3 | Summary | 6-8 |
| 7 | REFERENCES..... | 7-1 |
| 7.1 | Chapter 1 (Purpose and Need) References | 7-1 |
| 7.2 | Chapter 2 (Proposed Action and Alternatives) References | 7-2 |
| 7.3 | Chapter 3 (Existing Conditions) References..... | 7-3 |
| Section 3.1 | (Land Use) References..... | 7-3 |
| Section 3.2 | (Socioeconomics) References | 7-6 |
| Section 3.3 | (Utilities) References | 7-8 |
| Section 3.4 | (Air Quality) References..... | 7-9 |
| Section 3.5 | (Noise) References..... | 7-10 |
| Section 3.6 | (Cultural Resources) References..... | 7-10 |
| Section 3.7 | (Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Management) References..... | 7-15 |
| Section 3.8 | (Health and Safety) References | 7-15 |
| Section 3.8 | (Health and Safety) Photographs and Images..... | 7-24 |
| Section 3.9 | (Geology, Topography, Soils, and Sediments) References | 7-24 |
| Section 3.10 | (Water Resources) References..... | 7-26 |
| Section 3.11 | (Potomac River Aquatic Bio Res) References..... | 7-31 |
| Section 3.11 | Potomac River Aquatic Bio Res – Photographs and Images..... | 7-39 |
| Section 3.12 | (Potomac River Birds) References..... | 7-40 |
| Section 3.12 | Potomac River Birds - Photographs and Images | 7-43 |
| Section 3.13 | (NSF Dahlgren's Bio Res) References..... | 7-43 |
| Section 3.13 | NSF Dahlgren's Biological Resources - Photographs and Images..... | 7-45 |
| Section 3.14 | (Protected Species) References..... | 7-45 |
| Section 3.14 | Protected Species - Photographs and Images..... | 7-52 |
| 7.4 | Chapter 4 (Environmental Consequences) References..... | 7-52 |
| Section 4.2 | (Socioeconomics) References | 7-52 |
| Section 4.3 | (Utilities) References | 7-54 |
| Section 4.4 | (Air Quality) References..... | 7-54 |

Section 4.6 (Cultural Resources) References..... 7-55

Section 4.7 (Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Management) References
..... 7-55

Section 4.8 (Health and Safety) References 7-55

Section 4.9 (Geology, Topography, Soils, and Sediments) References 7-58

Section 4.10 (Water Resources) References 7-59

Section 4.11 (Potomac River Aquatic Bio Res) References..... 7-60

Section 4.12 (Potomac River Birds) References..... 7-64

Section 4.13 (NSF Dahlgren's Bio Res) References..... 7-65

Section 4.14 (Protected Species) References..... 7-67

7.5 Chapter 5 (Cumulative Impacts and NEPA Considerations) References 7-70

7.6 Chapter 6 (Mitigation and Protective Measures) References 7-76

8 DISTRIBUTION AND NOTIFICATION LIST8-1

9 LIST OF PREPARERS AND REVIEWERS.....9-1

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|--------------|--|------|
| Table 1-1 | Laser Power | 1-35 |
| Table 3.1-1 | Housing Units – 2000 & 2010 | 3-8 |
| Table 3.2-1 | Population 1990-2010..... | 3-31 |
| Table 3.2-2 | Population Projections for 2020..... | 3-32 |
| Table 3.2-3 | Age Distribution (2010)..... | 3-33 |
| Table 3.2-4 | Households (2010)..... | 3-33 |
| Table 3.2-5 | Race and Ethnicity 2010 | 3-34 |
| Table 3.2-6 | NSWCDD Civilian Employment and Place of Residence (2009)..... | 3-35 |
| Table 3.2-7 | Income and Poverty (\$)..... | 3-37 |
| Table 3.2-8 | Employment 2005 and 2009..... | 3-37 |
| Table 3.2-9 | Unemployment Rates (August 2011)..... | 3-38 |
| Table 3.2-10 | Resident Employment by Industry (2009) (In Percentages, Except for Total Employment)..... | 3-39 |
| Table 3.2-11 | Employment in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining (2006-2010)..... | 3-41 |
| Table 3.2-12 | Potomac River Fisheries Commission Harvest Reports for 2001-2010 | 3-42 |
| Table 3.2-13 | Total Housing Units 2000, 2006, and 2010 | 3-43 |
| Table 3.2-14 | Housing Tenure (2010)..... | 3-43 |
| Table 3.2-15 | Housing Occupancy Status (2010)..... | 3-44 |
| Table 3.2-16 | Housing Units in Structure (percent) (2006-2010) | 3-45 |
| Table 3.2-17 | Median Year Housing Constructed, Median Gross Rent and Median Value (2006-2010)..... | 3-45 |
| Table 3.2-18 | Community of Concern Thresholds (percent) | 3-48 |
| Table 3.2-19 | Minority and Low-Income Communities of Concern | 3-51 |
| Table 3.2-20 | Concentration of Children Thresholds (percent) | 3-53 |
| Table 3.2-21 | Unusual Concentrations of Children..... | 3-54 |
| Table 3.4-1 | Virginia and National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Pollutants.. | 3-62 |
| Table 3.4-2 | NSF Dahlgren 2011 Annual Emissions Statement | 3-64 |
| Table 3.5-1 | Typical Sound Levels | 3-68 |
| Table 3.5-2 | Navy Land Use Compatible Guidelines | 3-70 |
| Table 3.5-3 | Army Land Use Planning Guidelines | 3-71 |
| Table 3.5-4 | Peak Impulse Noise Guidelines | 3-72 |
| Table 3.5-5 | Range of Measured 2007 Peak Noise Levels (in dBP) during Large-Gun Firing Events..... | 3-78 |
| Table 3.5-6 | Airborne Peak Noise Levels from 5”/62 Live Firing Measured in 2009 at Historic Structures | 3-79 |
| Table 3.5-7 | Measured Peak Noise Range from EM Launcher Shots (October 2006 – January 2007)..... | 3-83 |
| Table 3.5-8 | Measured Peak Noise Range from EM Launcher Shots (April 2007 – October 2008)..... | 3-84 |

| | | |
|--------------|---|-------|
| Table 3.5-9 | Measured Peak Noise Range from EM Launcher Shots (December 2008 – January 2009) | 3-84 |
| Table 3.5-10 | Existing Baseline Large-caliber Projectiles Fired Annually | 3-85 |
| Table 3.5-11 | Comparison of BNOISE2-predicted Average Peak Noise Levels with Maximum Peak Noise Measurements for the 5"/62 Caliber Gun | 3-98 |
| Table 3.5-12 | Existing Baseline Small-Arms Rounds Fired Annually | 3-99 |
| Table 3.5-13 | Ground and/or Foundation Vibration Measurements | 3-108 |
| Table 3.5-14 | Potential Building Damage and Airborne Vibration Levels | 3-109 |
| Table 3.5-15 | Wall Vibration Measurements | 3-110 |
| Table 3.6-1 | National Register-Listed Resources Outside NSF Dahlgren | 3-123 |
| Table 3.6-1 | (Continued) National Register-Listed Resources Outside NSF Dahlgren | 3-124 |
| Table 3.6-1 | (Continued) National Register-Listed Resources Outside NSF Dahlgren | 3-125 |
| Table 3.6-2 | National Register-Eligible Resources Outside NSF Dahlgren | 3-125 |
| Table 3.6-2 | (Continued) National Register-Eligible Resources Outside NSF Dahlgren | 3-126 |
| Table 3.6-2 | (Continued) National Register-Eligible Resources Outside NSF Dahlgren | 3-127 |
| Table 3.6-3 | Archaeological Resources Within or Potentially Within the Archaeological APE | 3-156 |
| Table 3.6-4 | Proposed Residential Historic District (1994) | 3-161 |
| Table 3.6-4 | (Continued) Proposed Residential Historic District (1994) | 3-162 |
| Table 3.6-4 | (Continued) Proposed Residential Historic District (1994) | 3-163 |
| Table 3.6-5 | Proposed Main Battery Historic District (1994) | 3-163 |
| Table 3.6-5 | (Continued) Proposed Main Battery Historic District (1994) | 3-164 |
| Table 3.6-6 | Proposed Wharf Area Historic District (1994) | 3-165 |
| Table 3.6-7 | Proposed Airfield District (1994) | 3-165 |
| Table 3.7-1 | Appendix A Sites | 3-174 |
| Table 3.7-1 | (Continued) Appendix A Sites | 3-175 |
| Table 3.7-2 | Appendix B Sites | 3-176 |
| Table 3.7-3 | Summary of Perchlorate Detections | 3-179 |
| Table 3.8-1 | Examples of Safe Distances for Continuous Exposure to EM | 3-200 |
| Table 3.8-2 | Reference Levels for Exposure to Time-Varying Electric and Magnetic Fields | 3-204 |
| Table 3.8-3 | Physical Properties of Chemical Simulants | 3-211 |
| Table 3.8-4 | Common Household and Industrial Uses of Chemical Simulants | 3-212 |
| Table 3.8-5 | Lowest Published Toxicity of Chemical Simulants Approved for Use Previously by NSWCDD | 3-213 |
| Table 3.9-1 | Generalized Lithologic Units in the Vicinity of NSF Dahlgren | 3-227 |
| Table 3.9-2 | NSF Dahlgren Soils | 3-241 |
| Table 3.9-2 | (Continued) NSF Dahlgren Soils | 3-242 |
| Table 3.10-1 | Boundaries and Extents of Tidal Water Designated Uses | 3-261 |
| Table 3.10-2 | Tidal Water Designated Uses Dissolved Oxygen (DO) Criteria | 3-262 |
| Table 3.10-3 | Lower Potomac River and NSF Dahlgren Vicinity Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) | 3-263 |
| Table 3.10-4 | Surface Water Salinity (ppt) | 3-269 |
| Table 3.10-5 | Surface Water Temperature (°F) | 3-270 |
| Table 3.10-6 | Bottom Water Dissolved Oxygen (mg/l) | 3-273 |
| Table 3.10-7 | Water Clarity or Turbidity (Secchi Depth) (m) | 3-276 |

| | | |
|---------------|--|-------|
| Table 3.10-8 | Surface Water pH..... | 3-277 |
| Table 3.10-9 | B-IBI Scores at Fixed Benthic Monitoring Sites | 3-280 |
| Table 3.10-10 | Wetlands on NSF Dahlgren | 3-287 |
| Table 3.10-11 | Columbia Aquifer Water Quality..... | 3-296 |
| Table 3.11-1 | Submerged Aquatic Plants of the Tidal Potomac River | 3-299 |
| Table 3.11-2 | Changes in SAV Acreage in the Lower Potomac River (POTMH) | 3-300 |
| Table 3.11-3 | Invertebrate Species Found in the Lower Potomac River Estuary | 3-306 |
| Table 3.11-3 | (Continued) Invertebrate Species Found in the Lower Potomac River Estuary | 3-307 |
| Table 3.11-3 | (Continued) Invertebrate Species Found in the Lower Potomac River Estuary | 3-308 |
| Table 3.11-3 | (Continued) Invertebrate Species Found in the Lower Potomac River Estuary | 3-309 |
| Table 3.11-4 | Fish Species Expected to Occur in the PRTR Portion of the Potomac River..... | 3-318 |
| Table 3.11-4 | (Continued) Fish Species Expected to Occur in the PRTR Portion of the Potomac River..... | 3-319 |
| Table 3.11-4 | (Continued) Fish Species Expected to Occur in the PRTR Portion of the Potomac River..... | 3-320 |
| Table 3.11-4 | (Continued) Fish Species Expected to Occur in the PRTR Portion of the Potomac River..... | 3-321 |
| Table 3.11-4 | (Continued) Fish Species Expected to Occur in the PRTR Portion of the Potomac River..... | 3-322 |
| Table 3.11-5 | Life Stages of Ecologically and Economically Important Species Present in Potomac River Mixing Salinity Zone | 3-325 |
| Table 3.11-6 | Fish Egg Abundance in Potomac River Mixing Salinity Zone..... | 3-326 |
| Table 3.11-7 | Fish Larvae Abundance in Potomac River Mixing Salinity Zone | 3-327 |
| Table 3.11-8 | Fish Juveniles Abundance in Potomac River Mixing Salinity Zone | 3-328 |
| Table 3.11-9 | Fish Adults Abundance in Potomac River Mixing Salinity Zone | 3-329 |
| Table 3.11-10 | Fish Spawning Adults Abundance in Potomac River Mixing Salinity Zone .. | 3-330 |
| Table 3.11-11 | Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) Landings Data Finfish Landings (lbs.)..... | 3-335 |
| Table 3.11-11 | (Continued) Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) Landings Data Finfish Landings (lbs.)..... | 3-336 |
| Table 3.11-11 | (Continued) Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) Landings Data Finfish Landings (lbs.)..... | 3-337 |
| Table 3.11-11 | (Continued) Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) Landings Data Finfish Landings (lbs.)..... | 3-338 |
| Table 3.11-12 | Status of Federally-Managed Fish Species Occurring in the PRTR..... | 3-342 |
| Table 3.11-13 | Relative Juvenile Abundance Trends in Virginia Waters of the Chesapeake Bay | 3-343 |
| Table 3.11-14 | Species Identified as Having EFH in the Potomac River | 3-344 |
| Table 3.11-15 | Fishery Management Plans Designating Essential Fish Habitat in the Potomac River..... | 3-344 |
| Table 3.11-16 | Estuarine/Nearshore Habitat Impact Severity Index Scores..... | 3-353 |

| | | |
|---------------|---|-------|
| Table 3.12-1 | Maryland Midwinter Chesapeake Bay Waterfowl Survey Numbers from 2003 to 2007..... | 3-357 |
| Table 3.12-2 | Bald Eagle Nesting Along the Potomac River in Virginia from 2005 to 2011 | 3-361 |
| Table 3.13-1 | Bird Species of Concern Observed at NSF Dahlgren..... | 3-378 |
| Table 3.13-1 | (Continued) Bird Species of Concern Observed at NSF Dahlgren..... | 3-379 |
| Table 3.13-1 | (Continued) Bird Species of Concern Observed at NSF Dahlgren..... | 3-380 |
| Table 3.14-1 | Federal and State Status of Protected Species Potentially Found within Four Miles of NSF Dahlgren or within the PRTR..... | 3-389 |
| Table 3.14-2 | Sea Turtle Strandings in the Potomac River | 3-401 |
| Table 3.14-3 | Sea Turtle Incidental Captures in the Potomac River | 3-402 |
| Table 3.14-4 | Potomac River Marine Mammal Strandings 1995 - 2011 | 3-410 |
| | | |
| Table 4.2-1 | Population Projections 2000-2030..... | 4-16 |
| Table 4.4-1 | Modeled Maximum Air Concentrations | 4-38 |
| Table 4.4-2 | Modeled Maximum Air Concentrations after 10 Minutes..... | 4-39 |
| Table 4.4-3 | Predicted Maximum Surface Deposition Levels | 4-40 |
| Table 4.6-1 | Section 106 of NHPA – Criteria of Adverse Effect..... | 4-57 |
| Table 4.6-2 | Archaeological Resources within or Potentially within the Archaeological APE..... | 4-59 |
| Table 4.6-3 | Historic Architectural Resources outside NSF Dahlgren | 4-63 |
| Table 4.6-3 | (Cont'd) Historic Architectural Resources outside NSF Dahlgren..... | 4-64 |
| Table 4.6-3 | (Cont'd) Historic Architectural Resources outside NSF Dahlgren..... | 4-65 |
| Table 4.6-4 | Historic Architectural Resources within NSF Dahlgren-Mainside | 4-69 |
| Table 4.8-1 | Risk Characterization of Modeled Constituents in Fish Tissue..... | 4-86 |
| Table 4.8-2 | Risk Characterization of Modeled Constituents in Surface Water | 4-87 |
| Table 4.8-3 | Risk Characterization of Modeled Constituents in Sediments | 4-88 |
| Table 4.8-4 | Comparison of Magnetic Field Strength 80 ft from EM Launcher (Railgun) to IEEE Exposure Limits..... | 4-90 |
| Table 4.8-5 | Electric and Magnetic Field Exposure Limits | 4-93 |
| Table 4.11-1 | Summary of Modeled Concentrations of Metals in Water and Sediment in the PRTR..... | 4-129 |
| Table 4.11-2 | USEPA Water Quality Criteria for Metals | 4-131 |
| Table 4.11-3 | NOAA Sediment Quality Guidelines for Metals | 4-131 |
| Table 4.11-4 | Freshwater and Sediment Criteria for Explosives | 4-132 |
| Table 4.11-5 | Summary of Modeled Metal Concentrations in Water Compared to USEPA Water Quality Criteria in the PRTR..... | 4-133 |
| Table 4.11-6 | Summary of Modeled Metal Concentrations in Sediment Compared to NOAA Sediment Quality Criteria in the PRTR..... | 4-134 |
| Table 4.11-7 | Summary of Modeled Explosive Concentrations in Water Compared to Water Quality Values in the PRTR..... | 4-135 |
| Table 4.11-8 | Summary of Modeled Explosive Concentrations in Sediment Compared to Sediment Quality Criteria in the PRTR | 4-135 |
| Table 4.11-9 | Estimated 90 Percent Survivability Ranges (in ft) for Fish with Swim Bladders | 4-141 |
| Table 4.11-10 | Fish Tissue Residue-Based Toxicity Screening Values for Metals | 4-142 |

| | | |
|---------------|---|-------|
| Table 4.11-11 | Modeled Fish Tissue Concentrations Compared to Metal Toxicity Screening Values in the PRTR | 4-143 |
| Table 4.11-12 | Simulant Aquatic Toxicity Endpoints..... | 4-150 |
| Table 4.11-13 | Maximum Predicted Simulant Exposure Concentrations | 4-151 |
| Table 4.12-1 | Screening Hazard Quotients for the Great Blue Heron | 4-171 |
| Table 4.13-1 | Screening Hazard Quotients for the River Otter..... | 4-184 |
| Table 4.14-1 | Estimated Impact Radii for Dolphins for a 155 mm Detonation | 4-210 |
| Table 5-1 | CTR Closures from 2005 to 2009..... | 5-16 |
| Table 5-2 | Protected Land Area in Counties Bordering the Lower Potomac River..... | 5-24 |
| Table 5-3 | Summary of Cumulative Impacts | 5-32 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | | |
|----------------|--|-------|
| Figure 1-1 | Location of Naval Support Facility [NSF] Dahlgren | 1-3 |
| Figure 1-2 | Electromagnetic [EM] Energy..... | 1-5 |
| Figure 1-3 | Potomac River Test Range Complex | 1-9 |
| Figure 1-4 | Range Complexes and Mission Area | 1-13 |
| Figure 1-5 | Potomac River Test Range Primary Gunnery Firing Area..... | 1-15 |
| Figure 1-6 | Special-Use Airspace [SUA]..... | 1-19 |
| Figure 1-7 | Facilities Using Electromagnetic (EM) Energy | 1-29 |
| Figure 1-8a | Diffuse Reflections from Laser Beam’s Striking a Rough Surface | 1-37 |
| Figure 1-8b | Specular Reflections from Laser Beam’s Striking a Mirror-like Surface | 1-37 |
| Figure 1-9 | High-Energy Laser Current Operation Locations | 1-41 |
| Figure 1-10 | 100 kW High-Energy Laser Eye-Hazard Zones..... | 1-43 |
| Figure 1-11 | Chemical Simulant Operations Area | 1-47 |
| Figure 1-12 | Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Runways | 1-53 |
| Figure 3.1-1 | Land Use – Mainside..... | 3-5 |
| Figures 3.1-2a | Study Area Points of Interest – Upper and Middle Danger Zones..... | 3-11 |
| Figure 3.1-2b | Study Area Points of Interest – Lower Danger Zone | 3-13 |
| Figure 3.1-3 | Public Access to Water..... | 3-19 |
| Figure 3.1-4 | Nearby Military Installations..... | 3-23 |
| Figure 3.2-1 | NSWCDD Occupations..... | 3-36 |
| Figure 3.2-2 | Census Tracts with Environmental Justice Minority Populations..... | 3-49 |
| Figure 3.2-3 | Census Tracts with Environmental Justice Low-Income Populations | 3-55 |
| Figure 3.2-4 | Census Tracts with Concentrations of Children..... | 3-57 |
| Figure 3.5-1 | Peak Noise Measurement Locations | 3-75 |
| Figure 3.5-2 | EM Launcher Firing Peak Noise Measurement Locations..... | 3-81 |
| Figure 3.5-3 | Existing CDNL Noise Contours | 3-87 |
| Figure 3.5-4 | Existing Baseline CDNL Noise Contours with 25 8”/55 Gun Shots in LDZ | 3-89 |
| Figure 3.5-5 | Existing Composite PK 50 Noise Contours with 8”/55 Gun Firing..... | 3-91 |
| Figure 3.5-6 | Existing Peak Noise Contours with 25 8”/55 Gun Shots in LDZ | 3-93 |
| Figure 3.5-7 | Existing Composite PK50 Noise Contours without 8”/55 Gun Firing..... | 3-95 |
| Figure 3.5-8 | Existing Baseline Small Arms ADNL Noise Contours..... | 3-101 |
| Figure 3.5-9 | Existing Baseline .50 CAL Peak Noise Contours | 3-103 |
| Figure 3.5-10 | Ground-borne Vibration Resulting from Buried 1,000-lb Detonation..... | 3-105 |
| Figure 3.6-1 | Archaeological Area of Potential Effect..... | 3-113 |
| Figure 3.6-2 | Historic Architectural Area of Potential Effect | 3-115 |
| Figure 3.6-3 | Selected Historic Structures, Measurement Sites, and Target Areas | 3-119 |
| Figure 3.6-4 | Terrestrial Archaeological Resources Within or in the Vicinity of APE | 3-149 |
| Figure 3.6-5 | Historic District Locations | 3-159 |
| Figure 3.7-1 | Distribution of Large-caliber Projectiles in the Middle and Lower Danger Zones | 3-181 |

| | | |
|---------------|--|-------|
| Figure 3.8-1 | Safety Footprints | 3-189 |
| Figure 3.8-2 | Sample SOP/GOP/OPS Signature Page | 3-197 |
| Figure 3.8-3 | UXO-Impacted Areas | 3-201 |
| Figure 3.8-4 | Laser Safety Buffer Zone | 3-207 |
| Figure 3.9-1 | Geology - NSF Dahlgren..... | 3-229 |
| Figure 3.9-2 | Geology – PRTR | 3-231 |
| Figure 3.9-3 | Topography - NSF Dahlgren | 3-233 |
| Figure 3.9-4 | Topography – PRTR..... | 3-235 |
| Figure 3.9-5 | Soils – Mainside | 3-237 |
| Figure 3.9-6 | Soils – EEA | 3-239 |
| Figure 3.9-7 | Soil Restrictions-Mainside | 3-243 |
| Figure 3.9-8 | Soil Restrictions – EEA..... | 3-245 |
| Figure 3.9-9 | Sediments – PRTR | 3-251 |
| Figure 3.10-1 | Surface Water Resources – NSF Dahlgren | 3-257 |
| Figure 3.10-2 | Surface Water Resources – PRTR..... | 3-259 |
| Figure 3.10-3 | PRTR Bathymetry | 3-265 |
| Figure 3.10-4 | Water Quality and Benthic Monitoring Stations | 3-267 |
| Figure 3.10-5 | Potomac River Salinity Levels (1985-2006) | 3-271 |
| Figure 3.10-6 | Temperature-DO Scatter-plot Diagram..... | 3-274 |
| Figure 3.10-7 | Mean Surface Water pH | 3-277 |
| Figure 3.10-8 | Wetlands - NSF Dahlgren | 3-289 |
| Figure 3.10-9 | Floodplains - NSF Dahlgren..... | 3-291 |
| Figure 3.11-1 | Potomac River Hard Crab Landings (lbs) 1997-2010..... | 3-312 |
| Figure 3.11-2 | Potomac River Oyster Landings 1997-1998 to 2009-2010 (bu) | 3-314 |
| Figure 3.11-3 | Potomac River Oyster Bars | 3-315 |
| Figure 3.11-4 | Potomac River Fisheries Commission Commercial Harvest Areas 1 through 3..... | 3-333 |
| Figure 3.12-1 | Waterfowl Concentration Areas | 3-359 |
| Figure 3.12-2 | Bald Eagle Concentration Areas and Great Blue Heron Nests/Pairs | 3-363 |
| Figure 3.12-3 | Bald Eagle Nests..... | 3-365 |
| Figure 3.13-1 | Special Interest Areas | 3-371 |
| Figure 3.13-2 | Forest Cover Types..... | 3-375 |
| Figure 3.13-3 | Hunting Areas..... | 3-383 |
| Figure 3.14-1 | Sturgeon Captures in the Potomac River (1996-2010)..... | 3-391 |
| Figure 3.14-2 | Potomac River Shortnose Sturgeon Captures (1996-2010)..... | 3-393 |
| Figure 3.14-3 | Potomac River Atlantic Sturgeon Captures (1996 - 2010)..... | 3-397 |
| Figure 3.14-4 | Sea Turtle Strandings in the Potomac River (1991-2010)) | 3-403 |
| Figure 3.14-5 | Incidental Captures of Sea Turtles in the Potomac River (1991-2010)..... | 3-405 |
| Figure 3.14-6 | Northeastern Beach Tiger Beetle Occurrences..... | 3-415 |
| Figure 4.2-1 | Population Projections 2000-2030 | 4-15 |
| Figure 4.2-2 | King George County Subdivisions | 4-21 |
| Figure 4.4-1 | Decrease in Air Concentration over Time - DEM Test Run Example (Run 029)..... | 4-39 |
| Figure 4.4-2 | Decrease in Air Concentration over Distance – DEM Test Run Example (Run 027)..... | 4-41 |

Figure 4.5-1 Alternative 1 CDNL Noise Contours 4-51

Figure 4.5-2 Alternative 1/Alternative 2 Small Arms ADNL Noise Contours..... 4-53

Figure 4.5-3 Alternative 2 CDNL Noise Contours 4-55

Figure 4.6-1 Detailed View of Historic Districts 4-67

Figure 4.8-1 Magnetic Field Predictions..... 4-91

Figure 4.11-1 SAV in Relation to the PRTR 4-137

Figure 4.11-2 Spectrum of a Laser Propagating after Passing through 15 mm of Water 4-146

Figure 4.12-1 Bald Eagle and Great Blue Heron Areas in Relation to the PRTR 4-169

Figure 4.14-1 Distance to Areas of Sea Turtle and Marine Mammal Occurrence..... 4-205

Figure 5-1 Contributing Actions 5-3

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A

| | |
|-------|---|
| AA | Anti-Aircraft |
| ac | acre(s) |
| ACGIH | American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists |
| ACHP | Advisory Council on Historic Preservation |
| ACUB | Army Compatible Use Buffer |
| ADNL | A-weighted DNL |
| AET | Apparent Effects Threshold |
| AICUZ | Air Installations Compatible Use Zone |
| AOC | Area of Concern |
| APE | Area of Potential Effect |
| Army | Department of the Army |
| ASMFC | Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission |
| ASSRT | Atlantic Sturgeon Status Review Team |
| ATSDR | Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry |
| AWQC | Ambient Water Quality Criteria |
| A/m | Ampere(s) per meter (magnetic field strength) |

B

| | |
|---------|--|
| B | Magnetic Flux Density |
| BA | Biological Assessment |
| BCC | Birds of Conservation Concern |
| BCF | Bioconcentration Factor |
| BGEPA | Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act |
| B-IBI | Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity |
| BMP | Best Management Practices |
| BNOISE | DoD's Blast Noise Prediction Program |
| BNOISE2 | DoD's large-caliber weapon-noise model |
| BPRF | Blossom Point Research Facility |
| BRAC | Base Closure and Realignment |
| BSL | Biosafety Level |
| BUORD | Bureau of Ordnance (historic) |
| bw | Body weight |

C

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| C | Speed of light in a vacuum (186,000 miles/s [299,792,458 m/s]) |
| C3 | Computer Control Center |
| CAA | Clean Air Act |
| CATEX | Categorical Exclusion |
| CBD | Chemical/Biological Defense |
| CBDP | Chemical and Biological Defense Program |
| CBP | Chesapeake Bay Program |
| CBPA | Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (State of Virginia) |
| CCC | Criterion Continuous Concentration |
| CCD | Coastal Consistency Determination |
| CDC | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention |
| CDNL | C-weighted DNL |
| CEQ | Council on Environmental Quality |
| CERCLA | Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act |
| CETFAC | Counter Explosive Test Facility |
| CFR | Code of Federal Regulations |
| CH ₄ | Methane |
| cm | centimeter(s) |
| cm ² | square centimeter(s) |
| CMC | Criterion Maximum Concentration |
| CNO | Chief of Naval Operations |
| CO | Carbon Monoxide |
| CO ₂ | Carbon Dioxide |
| COC | Communities of Concern |
| COLPRO | Collective Protection |
| COMAR | Code of Maryland Regulations |
| COPC | Constituent(s) of Potential Concern |
| CRC | Chesapeake Research Consortium |
| CRI | Center for Research Information |
| CSEL | C-weighted sound exposure limit |
| CTR | Chesapeake Test Range |
| CWA | Clean Water Act |
| CWAP | Comprehensive Work Approval Process |
| CZMP | Coastal Zone Management Program |
| °C | degrees Celsius |

D

| | |
|-------|--|
| dB | Decibel(s) |
| dBA | A-weighted decibel(s) |
| DBE | Dibasic Ether |
| dBC | C-weighted decibel(s) |
| dBp | Peak Decibel(s) |
| DC | District of Columbia |
| DDT | dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane |
| DEA | Drug Enforcement Administration |
| DEEP | Diethyl Ethyl Phosphonate |
| DEIS | Draft Environmental Impact Statement |
| DEM | Diethyl Malonate |
| DEP | Diethyl Phthalate |
| DEWO | Directed Energy Warfare Office |
| DGS | Department of General Services (State of Maryland) |
| DHS | Department of Homeland Security |
| DMA | Dimethyl Adipate |
| DMMP | Dimethyl Methylphosphonate |
| DNL | Day-night average sound level |
| DO | Dissolved Oxygen |
| DoD | Department of Defense |
| DoN | Department of the Navy |
| DPGME | Dipropylene Glycol Methyl Ether |
| DPS | Distinct Population Segment |
| DRMO | Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office |
| DVP | Dominion Virginia Power |
| dw | dry weight |

E

| | |
|------|---|
| E | Electric Field Strength |
| E3 | Electromagnetic Environmental Effects |
| EA | Environmental Assessment |
| EC | Effective Concentration |
| EC50 | Lowest Effect Concentration Threshold/Effect Concentration 50 |
| EEA | Explosives Experimental Area |
| EEZ | Exclusive Economic Zone |
| EFH | Essential Fish Habitat |
| EHW | Explosive Hazardous Waste |
| EIS | Environmental Impact Statement |
| EJ | Environmental Justice |

| | |
|-------|---|
| ELMR | Estuarine Living Marine Resources |
| EM | Electromagnetic |
| EMF | Electromagnetic Field |
| EMI | Electromagnetic Interference |
| EMLF | Electromagnetic Launch Facility |
| EMREF | Electromagnetic Research and Engineering Facility |
| EMS | Environmental Management System |
| EO | Executive Order |
| EOD | Explosive Ordnance Disposal |
| ER | Environmental Restoration |
| ER-L | Effects Range – Low |
| ER-M | Effects Range – Median |
| ERP | Environmental Restoration Program |
| ESA | Endangered Species Act |
| ESRI | Environmental Systems Research Institute |
| ESQD | Explosive Safety Quantity Distance |

F

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| f | Frequency |
| FAA | Federal Aviation Administration |
| FBI | Federal Bureau of Investigation |
| FP | Federal Proposed |
| FE | Federal Endangered |
| FEIS | Final Environmental Impact Statement |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FGD | Flue Gas Desulfurization |
| FMP | Fishery Management Plan |
| FONSI | Finding of No Significant Impact |
| FS | Feasibility Study |
| FT | Federal Threatened |
| ft | foot/feet |
| ft/s | feet per second |
| ft/sec ² | feet per second per second |
| FW | Freshwater |
| °F | degrees Fahrenheit |

G

| | |
|------|---------------------|
| G | Gauss |
| g | gram(s) |
| g/kg | grams per kilogram |
| GAA | Glacial Acetic Acid |

| | |
|--------|--------------------------------------|
| gal(s) | gallon(s) |
| GARM | Groundfish Assessment Review Meeting |
| GEMS | Graphical Exposure Modeling System |
| GHz | gigahertz |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GOP | General Operating Procedure |
| gpd | gallon(s) per day |
| gpm | gallon(s) per minute |
| GPS | Global Positioning System |

H

| | |
|-------|---|
| H | Magnetic Field Strength |
| ha | hectare(s) |
| HAP | Hazardous Air Pollutant |
| HAPC | Habitat Area of Particular Concern |
| HARP | Historic and Archaeological Resource Protection |
| HE | High-energy |
| HERF | Hazards of Electromagnetic Radiation to Fuel |
| HERO | Hazards of Electromagnetic Radiation to Ordnance |
| HERP | Hazards of Electromagnetic Radiation to Personnel |
| HFC | Hydrofluorocarbon |
| HM | Hazardous Material(s) |
| HMX | Octahydro-1,3,5,7-tetranitro-1,3,5,7-tetrazocine |
| HMX-1 | Marine Helicopter Squadron – 1 |
| HPM | High-power Microwave |
| HQ | Hazard Quotient |
| hr | hour(s) |
| HRS | Hazard-Ranking System |
| HSDB | Hazardous Substances Data Bank |
| HSWA | Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments to RCRA |
| HW | Hazardous Waste |
| Hz | Hertz |

I

| | |
|--------|---|
| IBI | Index of Biotic Integrity |
| ICNIRP | International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection |
| ICPRB | Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin |
| ICRMP | Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan |
| IEEE | Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers |
| in | inch(es) |
| in/sec | inches per second |

| | |
|-------|--|
| in/yr | inches per year |
| INRMP | Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan |
| IPCS | International Program on Chemical Safety |
| IR | Infrared |
| IRIS | Integrated Risk Information System |

J

| | |
|---------|---|
| J | Current Density |
| JSLSCAD | Joint Service Lightweight Stand-off Chemical Agent Detector |

K

| | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| kg | kilogram(s) |
| K_h | Henry's Law Constant |
| kHz | kilohertz |
| km | kilometer(s) |
| K_{ow} | Octanol-water Coefficient |
| kV | kilovolt(s) |
| kV/m | kilovolts per meter |
| kW | kilowatt(s) |

L

| | |
|-----------|---|
| lb(s) | pound(s) |
| LC | Lethal Concentration |
| LC0 | Lethal Concentration Zero |
| LD | Lethal Dose |
| LD50 | Lethal Dose Resulting in 50 Percent Mortality |
| LDZ | Lower Danger Zone, PRTR |
| LGAC | Laser-generated Air Contaminant |
| LOAEL | Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level |
| LPPRP | Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan |
| LSRB | Laser Safety Review Board |
| λ | wavelength |

M

| | |
|-------|---|
| m | meter(s) |
| MA | mega amps |
| MAFMC | Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council |
| MBTA | Migratory Bird Treaty Act |
| MC | Munitions Constituent |
| MCB | Marine Corps Base |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| MCOPC | Munitions Constituent of Potential Concern |
| MD | Maryland |
| MDE | Maryland Department of the Environment |
| MDNR | Maryland Department of Natural Resources |
| MdTA | Maryland Transportation Authority |
| MDZ | Middle Danger Zone, PRTR |
| MEMC | Military Expended Material Constituent(s) |
| MeS | Methyl Salicylate |
| mi | mile |
| MILCON | Military Construction |
| mg | milligram(s) |
| mgpd | millions of gallons per day |
| MGS | Maryland Geological Survey |
| mg/cm ² | milligrams per square centimeter |
| mg/kg | milligrams per kilogram |
| mg/l | milligrams per liter |
| mg/m ² | milligrams per square meter |
| mg/m ³ | milligrams per cubic meter |
| MHT | Maryland Historic Trust |
| MHz | megahertz |
| MIDAS | Munitions Items Disposition Action System |
| MJ | megajoule |
| MK | Mark |
| ml | milliliter(s) |
| mlpd | millions of liters per day |
| mm | millimeter(s) |
| MMAP | Maryland Maritime Archaeology Program (Maryland Historic Trust) |
| MMD | mass median diameter |
| MMPA | Marine Mammal Protection Act |
| MOATS | Maginot Open Air Test Site |
| MPE | Maximum Permissible Exposure |
| mph | miles per hour |
| MPPRP | Maryland Power Plant Research Program |
| MR | Munitions Rule |
| MRI | Magnetic Resonance Imaging |
| MSA | Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act |
| MSL | Mean Sea Level |
| mW | milliwatt(s) |
| MW | megawatt(s) |
| MWH | megawatt-hour(s) |

| | |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| m/s | meters per second |
| µg | microgram(s) |
| µg/kg dw | micrograms per kilogram dry weight |
| µg/l | micrograms per liter |
| µm | micrometer(s) |
| µs | microsecond(s) |

N

| | |
|------------------|---|
| N ₂ O | Nitrous Oxide |
| NA | Not Applicable or Not Available |
| NAAQS | National Ambient Air Quality Standards |
| NAS | Naval Air Station |
| NAVFAC | Naval Facilities Engineering Command |
| NAVSEA | Naval Sea Systems Command |
| Navy | Department of the Navy |
| NAWCAD | Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division |
| NAWMP | North American Waterfowl Management Plan |
| ND | Non-detect |
| NDEC | Navy Directed Energy Center |
| NDW | Naval District Washington |
| NEFMC | New England Fishery Management Council |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act |
| NEW | Net Explosive Weight |
| NFPA | National Fire Protection Association |
| NHC | Naval Historical Center |
| NHHC | Naval History and Heritage Command |
| NHL | National Historic Landmark |
| NHPA | National Historic Preservation Act |
| NHZ | Nominal Hazard Zone |
| NIH | National Institutes of Health |
| NIOSH | National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health |
| nm | nanometer(s) |
| NM | nautical mile(s) |
| NMBSC | Non-migratory Bird Species of Concern |
| NMFS | National Marine Fisheries Service |
| NMP | Noise Management Procedure |
| NO ₂ | Nitrogen Dioxide |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| NOAEL | No Observed Adverse Effect Level |
| NOB | Natural Oyster Bar |
| NOEC | No Observed Effect Concentration |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| NOHD | Nominal Ocular Hazard Distance |
| NOI | Notice of Intent |
| NOS | National Ocean Service |
| NOSSA | Naval Ordnance Safety and Security Activity |
| NOTAM | Notice to Airmen |
| NOTES | Naval Ordnance Transient Electromagnetic Simulator |
| NO _x | Oxides of Nitrogen |
| NPL | National Priority List |
| NPS | National Park Service |
| NRC | National Research Council |
| NRCS | Natural Resources Conservation Service |
| NRL | Naval Research Laboratory |
| NSDWS | National Secondary Drinking Water Standard |
| NSA | Naval Support Activity |
| NSF | Naval Support Facility |
| NSWC | Naval Surface Weapons Center / Naval Surface Warfare Center |
| NSWCDD | Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division |
| NSWCDL | Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division at Dahlgren |
| NTP | National Toxicology Program |
| NWI | National Wetland Inventory |
| v | Frequency |

O

| | |
|----------------|---|
| O ₃ | Ozone |
| OB/OD | Open Burn/Open Detonation |
| ONR | Office of Naval Research |
| OPNAVINST | Chief of Naval Operations Instruction |
| OPS | Operation Procedures Supplement |
| ORC | Operational Range Clearance |
| ORM | Operational Risk Management |
| OSC | Operations Safety Committee |
| OSD | Office of the Secretary of Defense |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety and Health Administration |
| oz | ounce(s) |

P

| | |
|------|---------------------------|
| Pa | Pascal(s) |
| PAO | Public Affairs Office |
| Pb | Lead |
| PCBs | Polychlorinated Biphenyls |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| PEG | Polyethylene Glycol |
| PEL | Permissible Exposure Limit |
| PET | Polyethylene terephthalate |
| PFC | Perfluorocarbons |
| PFN | pulse forming network |
| pH | Potential of Hydrogen |
| P-IBI | Phytoplankton Index of Biotic Integrity |
| PIF | Partners in Flight |
| PIWG | Public Involvement Working Group |
| PK | peak sound pressure levels |
| PMMA | Polymethyl methacrylate |
| PM ₁₀ | Particulate Matter with Diameters up to 10 µm |
| PM _{2.5} | Particulate Matter with Diameters up to 2.5 µm |
| POTMH | Potomac Mesohaline |
| POTOH | Potomac Oligohaline |
| POTTF | Potomac Tidal Fresh |
| PPE | Personal Protective Equipment |
| ppm | parts per million |
| ppt | parts per thousand |
| PPV | peak particle velocity |
| PRFC | Potomac River Fisheries Commission |
| PRTR | Potomac River Test Range |
| PRTRC | Potomac River Test Range Complex |
| psi | pounds per square inch |
| PZ | Protection Zone |

| |
|----------|
| R |
|----------|

| | |
|--------|--|
| R-134 | 1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane |
| R-152a | 1,1-difluoroethane |
| RCA | Range Condition Assessment |
| RCRA | Resource Conservation and Recovery Act |
| RDT&E | Research, Development, Test And Evaluation |
| RDX | Royal Demolition Explosive (Hexahydro-1,3,5-trinitro-1,3,5-triazine) |
| Redox | Reduction-oxidation reaction |
| RF | Radio Frequency |
| RFW | Radio-frequency Warfare |
| RHA | Risk Hazard Assessment |
| RI | Remedial Investigation |
| RMA | Resource Management Area |
| RMP | Range Management Plan |
| ROC | Range Operations Center |

| | |
|-------|---|
| ROD | Record of Decision |
| ROPS | Range Operation Policy Statement |
| RPA | Resource Protection Area |
| RPMP | Real Property Master Plan |
| RSD | Range Safety Director |
| RSEPA | Range Sustainability Environmental Program Assessment |
| RSIP | Regional Shore Infrastructure Plan |
| RSSRA | Range-Specific Screening-Level Risk Assessment |
| R&D | Research and Development |

| |
|----------|
| S |
|----------|

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| S | Power Density |
| S _{eq} | Equivalent Plane Wave Power Density |
| s | second |
| SAFMC | South Atlantic Fishery Management Council |
| SAR | Specific Absorption Rate |
| SARA | Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act |
| SARC | Stock Assessment Review Committee |
| SARNAM | Small Arms Range Noise Assessment Model |
| SAV | Submerged Aquatic Vegetation |
| SAW | Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop |
| SCL | Straight Carapace Length |
| SCP | Shorebird Conservation Plan |
| SCS | Soil Conservation Service |
| SE | State Endangered |
| SEL | Sound Exposure Level |
| SF ₆ | Sulfur Hexafluoride |
| SHPO | State Historic Preservation Office/Officer |
| SIA | Special Interest Area |
| SIP | State Implementation Plan |
| SIPS | Sound Intensity Prediction System |
| SO ₂ | Sulfur Dioxide |
| SOH | Safety and Occupational Health |
| SOP | Standard Operating Procedure |
| sq ft | square foot/feet |
| SQG | Small Quantity Generator |
| sq km | square kilometer(s) |
| sq m | square meter(s) |
| sq mi | square mile(s) |
| sq NM | square nautical mile(s) |

| | |
|--------|--------------------------------------|
| SQuiRT | Screening Quick Reference Table |
| SRT | Status Review Team |
| ST | State Threatened |
| STEL | Short-term Exposure Limit |
| STSTS | Search and Track Sensor Test Site |
| SUA | Special-Use Airspace |
| SW | Saltwater |
| SWMU | Solid Waste Management Unit |
| SWP3 | Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan |

T

| | |
|--------|---|
| T | Tesla |
| TEP | Triethyl Phosphate |
| TMDL | Total Maximum Daily Load |
| TNT | 2,4,6-Trinitrotoluene |
| TRACON | Terminal Radar Approach Control |
| TSCA | Toxic Substances Control Act |
| TSDF | Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facility |
| TSS | Total Suspended Solids |
| TWA | Time-weighted Average |

U

| | |
|----------|---|
| UAV | Unmanned Aerial Vehicle |
| UDZ | Upper Danger Zone, PRTR |
| UGV | Unmanned Ground Vehicle |
| UMS | Unmanned System |
| UNEP | United Nations Environmental Program |
| US | United States |
| USACE | United States Army Corps of Engineers |
| USACHPPM | United States Army Center for Health Prevention and Preventive Medicine |
| USAEC | United States Army Environmental Command |
| USAF | United States Air Force |
| USAG ALC | United States Army Garrison, Adelphi Laboratory Center |
| USBEA | United States Bureau of Economic Analysis |
| USBLS | United States Bureau of Labor Statistics |
| USC | United States Code |
| USCPSC | United States Consumer Product Safety Commission |
| USDOL | United States Department of Labor |
| USDOT | United States Department of Transportation |
| USEPA | United States Environmental Protection Agency |
| USFWS | United States Fish and Wildlife Service |

| | |
|-------|---|
| USGS | United States Geological Survey |
| USHUD | United States Department of Housing and Urban Development |
| UST | Underground Storage Tank |
| USV | Unmanned Surface Vehicle |
| UV | Ultraviolet |
| UXO | Unexploded Ordnance |

| |
|----------|
| V |
|----------|

| | |
|----------|--|
| VA | Virginia |
| VAC | Virginia Administrative Code |
| VDCR | Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation |
| VDEQ | Virginia Department of Environmental Quality |
| VDGIF | Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries |
| VDH | Virginia Department of Health |
| VDHR | Virginia Department of Historic Resources |
| VDNR | Virginia Department of Natural Resources |
| VEC | Virginia Employment Commission |
| VIMS | Virginia Institute of Marine Science |
| VLSTRACK | Vapor, Liquid, and Solid Tracking Model |
| VOC | Volatile Organic Compound |
| VPDES | Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System |
| VR | Virginia Regulation |
| V/m | volts per meter (electric field strength) |

| |
|----------|
| W |
|----------|

| | |
|------|----------------------------|
| W | watt(s) |
| wk | week(s) |
| W/kg | watt(s) per kilogram |
| W/m | watts per meter (electric) |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| ww | Wet weight |
| WWI | World War I |
| WWII | World War II |

| |
|----------|
| Y |
|----------|

| | |
|----|---------|
| yd | yard(s) |
|----|---------|

Misc

- < less than
- ≤ less than or equal to
- > greater than
- ≥ greater than or equal to