

For Immediate Release

**Ten Northern California Tribes Call on Navy to
Address Impacts of Training and Testing to
Protect the Ocean and Tribal Ways of Life**

March 22, 2019

After more than three years of discussions with representatives from ten Northern California Indian Tribes, officials from the U.S. Navy's Northwest Training Range Complex (NWTRC) have informed the Tribes they have implemented measures to limit training and testing activities for the portion of the NWTRC that encompasses California state waters and adjacent U.S. territorial waters, out to 12 nautical miles from Northern California's shoreline. The new measures came into full effect at the end of 2018.

The ten sovereign Tribal Nations have been in discussions with the Navy to seek ways of ensuring that military training and testing in their traditional territories does not harm culturally significant marine life and Tribal cultural areas and ways of life. The federally recognized Tribes are engaged in a process of government-to-government consultation with the Navy regarding Tribal resistance to the Northwest Training and Testing program. The Tribes participating in the consultation are: Cahto Tribe of Laytonville Rancheria; Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians; Hopland Band of Pomo Indians; Little River Band of Pomo Indians; Pinoleville Pomo Nation; Potter Valley Tribe; Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians; Round Valley Indian Tribes; Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians; and Sherwood Valley Rancheria of Pomo Indians. In 1986, the Tribes established a Tribal consortium known as the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, which is facilitating and coordinating the consultation. This is thought to be the first time a collective consultation process has occurred between multiple

California Indian Tribal governments and a federal agency to address concerns about protecting the ocean and Tribal ways of life.

The Navy's obligation to consult with sovereign Indian Tribes under federal law provides a framework for the Tribal-Navy consultation meetings that have been facilitated by the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council. Since April 2015, Tribal and Navy representatives have been working to develop solutions that address the Tribes' opposition to the Navy's training and testing activities.

The Navy carries out military readiness training and testing in an area of the Pacific Ocean referred to as the Northwest Training Range Complex, which stretches from the US-Canada border to Northern California. The Navy's activities include a broad array of training and testing activities, including sonar, test missile firing and aircraft patrols. According to the Navy's estimates, less than one percent of the training has taken place off the coast of Northern California, but the Tribes have continued to oppose even this level of training, which they assert harms marine life and degrades areas of cultural importance.

The Tribes and the Navy have held six formal consultation meetings about the Tribes' opposition to the Navy's training and testing activities, and the monitoring and mitigation measures needed to address impacts of the Navy's activities planned for the Northwest Training Range Complex.

In October 2017, the Navy concluded its initial public comment "scoping period" on its supplement to the 2015 Final EIS that will cover the next five-year period of its training and testing program (2020-2025) for this region. The Navy plans to hold public meetings following its release of the 2020-2025 Draft Supplemental EIS in early 2019. People are urged to attend the public meetings in 2019 to express support for the Navy halting training and testing activities off California's shoreline. The Tribes and the Sinkyone Council have requested the Navy to

structure the public Supplemental EIS meetings in May 2019 to include a public open-mic forum, as provided at the Navy's previous public EIS meetings.

The change that came into effect at the end of 2018 for the area offshore from Northern California determined by the Navy to be exempt from future training and testing activities (from the Mendocino-Humboldt county line, north to the Oregon border), will be delineated in the Supplemental EIS the Navy is now preparing.

For more details about the Navy's plans, including public involvement, go to: <https://nwtteis.com>. The Navy has affirmed it is committed to continued open and meaningful engagement during this government-to-government consultation process in order to address the Tribes' opposition to the Northwest Training and Testing program.

Attachment: **Tribal Statement of Opposition to the U.S. Navy's Training and Testing**

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