

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 13, 2008

The Honorable Donald C. Winter
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Winter:

In our February 6 letter regarding the draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for the U.S. Navy's expanded use of the Northwest Training Range Complex (NWTRC) off the Oregon coast we asked you to extend the public comment period and hold additional public meetings in Oregon.

On February 10, several Navy representatives, including Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Don Schregardus, gave our offices a briefing on the draft EIS/OEIS and answered a number of questions. Unfortunately, it appears that some of those answers contained inaccurate or incomplete information.

During the briefing, Mr. Schregardus asserted that it was impossible to extend the public comment period to April 11 because it would push back the date for the final EIS/OEIS and thus violate a legal settlement with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

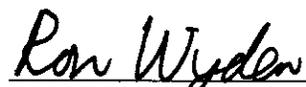
In the settlement agreement, which sets a schedule of environmental compliance for the Navy's various ranges (including the NWTRC), the Navy "confirms its intent to adhere to its range-wide compliance schedule" and agrees to notify plaintiffs (NRDC and other environmental groups) if it's going to miss that schedule. However, there are no penalties if the Navy falls behind schedule.

Our offices have since discovered that even before we sent our first letter, the NRDC had itself asked the Navy for a significant extension of the comment period.

This settlement was intended to require the Navy to comply with environmental laws, including preparation of environmental impact statements for its training ranges and refusing to adopt effective mitigation measures. Meaningful public comment is clearly part of this process, and to say that extending the comment period would violate the settlement is disingenuous at best.

These issues and the issues raised in our first letter, compel us to again ask that you extend the public comment period to April 11, 2009 and hold at least two additional public meetings in Oregon, including one in Tillamook County, to ensure that those who may be affected and wish to comment on the project may do so.

Sincerely,



RON WYDEN
United States Senator



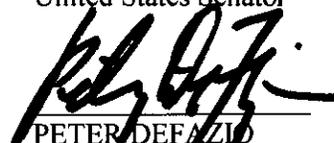
JEFF MERKLEY
United States Senator



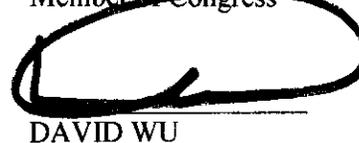
KURT SCHRADER
Member of Congress



EARL BLUMENAUER
Member of Congress



PETER DEFAZIO
Member of Congress



DAVID WU
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