

Press Release - For Immediate Release

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EPA Faults Navy's Study

Coupeville, WA --- "The USEPA has identified disturbing inadequacies in their review of the Navy's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for an expanded EA-18G Growler training mission at NASWI", stated Maryon Attwood, President of Citizens of Ebey's Reserve (COER). The EPA in a March 8th comment letter to the Navy gave the DEIS an EC-2 rating, or Environmental Concerns with insufficient information." COER expressed similar concerns in its extensive comments on the DEIS, and "welcomes this supportive high-level EPA validation," commented Attwood.

At \$80 million per jet, the Navy is seeking to nearly double the number of Growlers from 82 to 160 at NASWI. As a result, it needs to greatly increase its Flight Carrier Landing Practices (FCLP's) by up to 600% in noise sensitive areas. FCLPs are conducted at very low altitudes, mostly under 500 feet and produce toxic noise levels of over 130 decibels. This is why the EPA wants a more reliable analysis of the noise and its impacts," noted Attwood.

"COER's noise experts indicate that the noise modeling used by the Navy needs on-site validation, which unsurprisingly is exactly what the EPA has noted," concluded Robert Wilbur of COER. "For more than 4 years COER has asked the Navy to do real noise monitoring of Growler flights rather than just computer modeling. Those requests were ignored, so COER paid for limited on-ground testing in high-populous high-noise areas. The results were alarming," stated Wilbur.

The EPA review also found that the health impacts of noise have been inadequately addressed in the DEIS and recommends a supplemental health assessment. That adds new weight to the Washington State Board of Health and the Washington State Department of Health's similar request for the Navy to conduct a Health Impact Assessment.

Cate Andrews of COER continued, "we are encouraged that the EPA has asked the Navy to identify the measures being taken to prevent further contamination to the sole source aquifer on Whidbey Island from fire fighting chemicals." The Navy's DEIS pointedly left out any investigation of the contaminated water issues around their airfields on Whidbey Island – even though that investigation was going on while the comment period was open.

Finally, the EPA's comments encourage the Navy to consider current science and studies on health effects and wildlife impacts associated with noise and have provided the Navy with a short list of recommended studies. The Washington State Department of Health has also completed a research review and has concluded that noise is a Public Health issue. In the State's comments, to the Navy, they encouraged the Navy to include non-auditory, as well as, auditory impacts of aircraft noise. The EPA has now asked that all of that health

information be put into one section of the final EIS.

To read the actual comments from the EPA, Region 10, and to read more about Citizens of Ebey's Reserve visit: citizensofebeysreserve.com.

The Citizens of Ebey's Reserve (COER), today's activists for a rural and peaceful Whidbey Island, have been working since late 2012 to protect the peace, health, safety, sustainability, and environment of our community and other communities of Puget Sound.

COER works in a coalition of organizations that share the common goal of defending the Puget Sound, Olympic Peninsula and the Olympic UNESCO World Heritage Site, The San Juan Islands, and all of the Pacific Northwest Coast against increased military expansion, encroachment, and harmful operations of the Growler over-flights – and working toward relocating them to a safer, welcoming and standard-sized 21st century training location.

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