



# **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY REPORT**

**Naval Innovation Center at Naval Postgraduate School,  
Monterey, California  
Environmental Assessment**

**April 2024**

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**Naval Innovation Center at Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California**  
**Environmental Assessment**  
**Public Involvement Summary Report**

This report summarizes public involvement and stakeholder outreach activities conducted by the United States (U.S) Department of the Navy (Navy) and public comments received during the public review and comment period for the *Naval Innovation Center at Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California Draft Environmental Assessment (EA)*, which ran from February 23, 2024, to March 25, 2024.

The purpose of public involvement and outreach was to: (1) notify the public and stakeholders of the availability of the Draft EA for review and comment; (2) inform the public and stakeholders about the Proposed Action, its purpose and need, the alternatives analyzed, and the findings in the Draft EA; (3) provide the opportunity for the public and stakeholders to comment on the Draft EA; and provide the opportunity for the public and stakeholders to submit information or comments regarding historic properties. Involvement and outreach efforts were conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and U.S. Navy guidance.

The Navy recognizes the importance of engagement with the public and stakeholders and made efforts to notify and inform the public in a timely manner, as described in this report.

**Summary of Activities**

**A. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

The Navy prepared materials to notify the public of the availability of the Draft EA for review and comment and provide information about the Proposed Action, National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process, and opportunity to submit comments. Notices were disseminated starting February 23, 2024, to initiate the public review and comment period. The following is a summary of those notices.

***Newspaper Advertisements***

Display advertisements were placed in three local and regional newspapers in Monterey, California. The advertisements were published beginning February 23, 2024, to coincide with the beginning of the public review and comment period. The advertisements published once in the weekly newspapers and for three consecutive publication days, including a Sunday, in the daily newspaper. Publication dates were dependent on the newspaper's publication frequency (daily or weekly).

Table 1 shows the newspapers and corresponding publication dates for each advertisement.

***Stakeholder Database/Mailing List***

A stakeholder database/ mailing list was developed to include elected officials, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, community and business groups, university/research institutions, and individuals to manage and document the distribution of project notifications.

**Table 1: Newspaper Publications for the Notice of Availability**

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Newspaper Coverage</b>	<b>Publication Frequency</b>	<b>Publication Dates</b>
<i>The Carmel Pine Cone</i>	Monterey Peninsula, Carmel, Pacific Grove	Weekly; Fridays	Friday, February 23, 2024
<i>Monterey County Weekly</i>	Monterey Peninsula, Big Sur, Carmel, Pacific Grove, Pebble Beach, Salinas, Seaside, Sand City, Marina, Del Rey Oaks	Weekly; Thursdays	Thursday, February 29, 2024
<i>The Monterey Herald</i>	Monterey Peninsula	Daily	Friday, February 23, 2024 Saturday, February 24, 2024 Sunday, February 25, 2024

***Postcard Mailer***

A postcard was mailed on February 22, 2024, to 78 elected officials, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, community and business groups, university/research institutions, and individuals.

***News Releases and Media Distribution***

The Naval Support Activity Monterey Public Affairs Officer distributed a news release to local, regional, and national print and broadcast (radio and television) media outlets and other key stakeholders (local elected officials, federal government agencies, local school districts) on February 23, 2024.

**B. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

***Project Website***

A project website was established to provide the public with easy access to the Draft EA; a project fact sheet; maps; commenting information; project information repositories; information on the Proposed Action, purpose and need, alternatives, and Naval Postgraduate School; information on the NEPA and public involvement processes; and commenting information. The website changes for the Draft EA public review and comment period went “live” at 11:59 p.m. PST on February 22, 2024. The website address is [www.NICMontereyEA.com](http://www.NICMontereyEA.com).

The website address was included in the newspaper advertisement, news release, fact sheet, and postcard mailer.

***Fact Sheet***

A 4-page fact sheet was updated to provide project information to the public and included the following topics:

- The Naval Postgraduate School
- Proposed Action
- Purpose of and Need for the Naval Innovation Center
- Alternatives
- The Naval Innovation Center
- Design Considerations
- Environmental Resources Analyzed

- National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act Processes
- Commenting Information

A downloadable copy of the fact sheet booklet was posted on the project website.

**Information Repositories**

Three information repositories were established in February 2024 to make documents available to members of the public without internet access. A CD-ROM of the Draft EA was mailed to each information repository:

- Monterey Public Library
- Pacific Grove Public Library
- Seaside Branch Public Library

**C. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*This section is intended to illustrate the main issues heard from the public during the Draft EA public review and comment period; it is not meant to capture all aspects of the comments or to serve as a legal record. Additionally, while all issues are presented below, not all are within the scope and purpose of the EA for the proposed facility.*

The public review and comment period ran from February 23, 2024, to March 25, 2024. Ninety-five (95) comments were received during the public comment period. Comments were submitted via postal mail (3) and email (92). Comments were received from government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and individuals.

Each comment was reviewed and categorized into specific resource areas or topics. One comment may include comments on multiple resource areas or topics. All comments were compiled, logged, and distributed to the EA project team and appropriate subject matter experts. The EA project team discussed the impact, significance, and relevance of the comments to the preparation of the Final EA. All comments submitted during the comment period will become part of the public record and will be considered in the Final EA.

Table 2 includes a summary of public comments to provide a brief overview of the general issues or concerns expressed during the public review and comment period.

**Table 2: Summary of Public Comments**

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Proposed Action and Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about a potential error in the Draft EA, section 3.10.1.1.3, where the sentence reads "This expansion would produce an estimated additional 3,500 acre-feet when complete," when the correct number should be 2,250 acre-feet.</li> <li>• Support for the project to be built on the Boiler Plant Site (Site 4) due to proximity to the Del Monte Hotel Historic District.</li> <li>• Support for the No Action Alternative to prevent the valuable ecosystem of Monterey becoming a target for potential bombing by adversaries.</li> <li>• Recommendation to use funding for a project that would open the Naval Postgraduate School campus to the local community.</li> <li>• Suggestion to relocate the proposed sites to nearby California State University Monterey Bay to solve potential traffic issues.</li> <li>• Concerns that both alternatives are placed in the Monterey Regional Airport's Safety Zone 4.</li> </ul>

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Environmental Analysis/General Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns that coastal zone management, hazardous materials and waste, public health and safety, recreation, and socioeconomic and environmental justice were not analyzed in the Draft EA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Concerns that the social, environmental, and economic impacts of the proposed Naval Innovation Center were not adequately evaluated.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Concerns that the Proposed Action does not comply with the Navy policy on reducing its footprint.</li> <li>• Request that in the EA, the Navy analyze housing, which would be needed for students, teachers, and visiting scientists.</li> <li>• Concerns for the degradation of a pristine area.</li> <li>• Concerns that the Navy Fault has been wrongly identified as the Cachagua Fault Line in multiple places in the Draft EA.</li> <li>• Concerns that the Navy claims potential impacts are negligible or nonexistent.</li> </ul>
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about carbon emissions.</li> <li>• Request for the Navy to include an estimate of carbon emissions and a list of emission mitigation measures.</li> <li>• Recommendation to use energy efficient construction equipment, as well as construction equipment that uses alternative fuels, whenever feasible.</li> <li>• Concerns for increased automobile traffic and emissions during the estimated construction period.</li> </ul>
Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation to implement a building design to harvest rainwater for landscape irrigation.</li> <li>• Concerns that there is not a large enough water supply to build and maintain the project.</li> <li>• Concerns for water quality given the project’s proximity to the coast.</li> <li>• Recommendation to use graywater by double plumbing the building to save water.</li> <li>• Concerns for the ongoing water crisis on the Monterey Peninsula and how this project could worsen the issue.</li> <li>• Concerns that in the Draft EA, the Navy inadequately analyzes the moratorium put in place by the State Water Resources Control Board.</li> <li>• Recommendation to use CAP Water &amp; Power International, Inc. to help with water requirements for the new building.</li> </ul>
Geological Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns that the region grows food for much of the state and that an increased military presence would degrade the soil.</li> <li>• Request for the Navy to further define the “seismic activity” of the area.</li> <li>• Request to name all earthquake faults shown on Figure 3-1.</li> <li>• Concerns that the proposed construction area is in a high liquefaction potential zone (when water-logged sediments at or near the ground surface lose their strength in response to strong ground shaking).</li> </ul>
Biological Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns that the Proposed Action would damage the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary.</li> <li>• Concerns for marine biodiversity given the project’s proximity to the coast.</li> <li>• Questions about needing approval from the California Coastal Commission and County Board of Supervisors.</li> </ul>
Visual Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request for the Navy to analyze visual impacts that may occur on Del Monte Avenue.</li> <li>• Concerns for increased light pollution.</li> </ul>
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about potential noise pollution impacts from construction and operation.</li> </ul>

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Infrastructure and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about traffic impacts on Highway 1 and Del Monte Avenue.</li> <li>• Concerns that Artificial Intelligence (AI) computing at the Naval Innovation Center would use massive amounts of electricity and water.</li> <li>• Requests for undergrounding new utility lines near the borders of Naval Postgraduate School.</li> <li>• Concerns that the infrastructure of Monterey could not accommodate the construction or completed building.</li> <li>• Concerns that the local transportation services were not consulted.</li> </ul>
Public Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns that the proposed sites are on a fault line making building dangerous.</li> <li>• Concerns that increased emissions would impact human health.</li> <li>• Concerns that wars and militarization makes everyone less safe rather than protect them, including in Monterey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Concerns that the Navy’s plans would lead to war-mongering and an increased military presence in Monterey.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Hazardous Materials and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about hazardous materials, such as asbestos, being released as air pollution during building renovation and demolition.</li> <li>• Concerns about heavy metal pollution.</li> </ul>
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation to employ local businesses to help with the design and construction of the Naval Innovation Center.</li> <li>• Questions about the impact on housing supply and cost, and concerns that housing is already in short supply.</li> <li>• Support for the project due to economic benefits and importance of the military to the local economy.</li> <li>• Concerns that in the Draft EA, the Navy did not evaluate the impacts on environmental justice.</li> <li>• Concerns that this action would disproportionately impact lower-income families.</li> <li>• Concerns about using taxpayer money for the Naval Innovation Center rather than using it to invest in resources that better support local communities and the environment.</li> </ul>
Mitigation Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request that the Navy implement bird strike mitigation measures because of the use of glass in the proposed building design.</li> <li>• Request that the Navy follow the guidelines of the Living Building Challenge; at a minimum, LEED Platinum and/or Passive Design.</li> <li>• Concerns that the Navy has not incorporated meaningful actions to reduce environmental impacts.</li> <li>• Request for the Navy to mitigate fugitive dust during the construction phase of the project.</li> <li>• Recommendation to construct electric vehicle charging stations in the new facility parking lots.</li> </ul>
Cultural Resources/Historical Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns for the former Hotel Del Monte grounds, which is a historical site.</li> </ul>
National Environmental Policy Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns that the Navy is not meeting the requirements of NEPA.</li> <li>• Request for the Navy to complete a full Environmental Impact Statement since the impact of this project would be “significant.”</li> </ul>
Other Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder that any stationary piston-type internal combustion engine of greater than or equal to 50 brake horsepower requires a permit.</li> </ul>

Resource Area/Topic	Issue/Concern
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation to build a center dedicated to the study of non-violent responses to violence rather than proceeding with the Proposed Action.</li> <li>• Recommendation to construct a facility that would better support and welcome the community, such as a recreation center.</li> <li>• Concerns that the proposed activities would pose a threat to humanity.</li> <li>• Concerns about impacts on tourism, which is a crucial part of the local economy.</li> <li>• Warning that opponents of the Naval Innovation Center would take legal action against the proposal.</li> <li>• Question regarding the percentage of innovation work at the Naval Innovation Center that would focus on ways to slow down climate change and rising sea levels.</li> <li>• Concerns for the safety of marine life due to sonar training.</li> <li>• Concerns that going to war and harming others to solve problems is outdated and irresponsible.</li> <li>• Concerns that spending money to fund wars is wasteful when recent wars are perceived to be failures.</li> <li>• Suggestion to use military funds to provide on- and off-base housing and bring military personnel home to their families.</li> <li>• Concerns that military spending would further increase poverty, homelessness, and food insecurity.</li> <li>• Concerns that the military budget is too large and that there are better ways to spend tax dollars.</li> <li>• Reminder to the Navy that California American Water is beginning a new desalination project, projected to begin in 2028, to help solve the water crisis in Monterey.</li> </ul>