

# Marine Life Protection Act Initiative



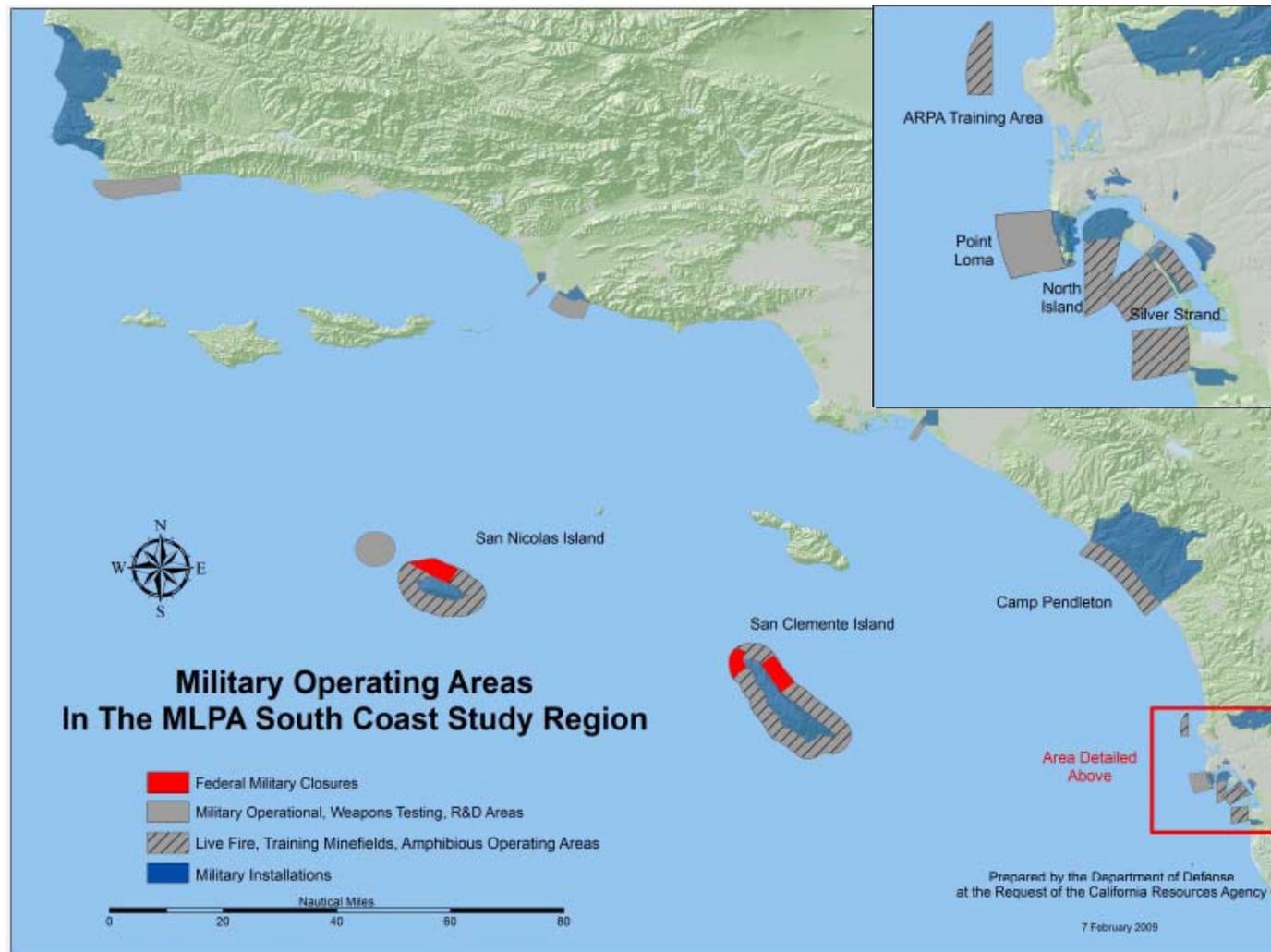
## Draft Analysis of Military Activities in the MLPA South Coast Study Region

**DRAFT Presentation for the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force  
Presented to the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team  
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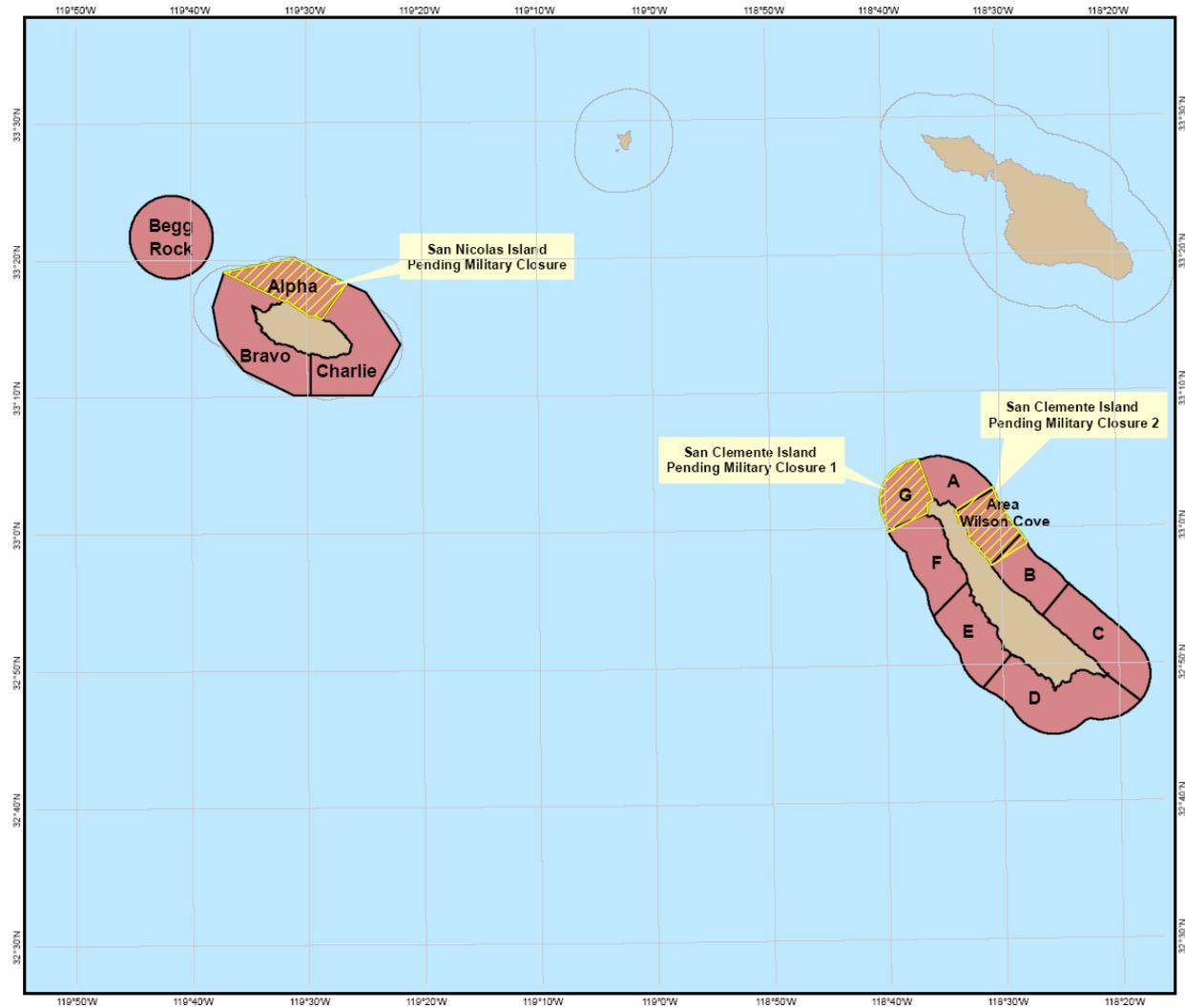


# Military Use Areas in the Study Region





# Military Activity Areas / Pending Closures





# Analysis Overview

- Categorized activities based on potential impact to seafloor and marine life
- Determined frequency of activities
- Created matrix of impact categories and frequencies for each military activity in each military use area



## Categories of Potential Impact

- **Category A:** Direct and acute damage to seafloor habitat or marine life or causes direct disturbance likely to reduce survival/reproduction
- **Category B:** Likely contacts the seafloor and may cause damage to habitat or sea life, though does not do so in such an immediately destructive manner
- **Category C:** Activities probably do not contact or directly damage the seafloor and habitat but can be damaging to marine life
- **Category D:** Does not contact the seafloor or if so only in a limited way and likely causes disturbance or temporary displacement of marine life but does not necessarily reduce survival



## Category A Examples

**Category A:** Direct and acute damage to seafloor habitat or marine life or causes direct disturbance likely to reduce survival/reproduction

- Amphibious assault training; staging area for beach assaults.
- Explosive ordnance disposal operations
- Mine training operations
- Underwater detonations
- Bombing exercises
- Torpedo operations
- Air-to-surface bomb exercises and gun exercises
- Sand mining operations



## Category B Examples

**Category B:** Likely contacts the seafloor and may cause damage to habitat or sea life, though does not do so in such an immediately destructive manner

- Sonobuoy test and evaluation
- Bombing exercises (inert)
- Anti-surface missile
- Underwater activities to recover missiles
- Shallow water training range permanent instrumentation for anti-submarine warfare exercises
- Fuel offloading facilities
- Landing craft air cushion (LCAC) landing site



## Category C Examples

**Category C:** activities probably do not contact or directly damage the seafloor and habitat but can be damaging to marine life

- Active SONAR
- Weapon system accuracy trials (WSAT)
- Air-to-ground bombing
- Underwater missile launches
- Mine training range for aerial mining exercises (water targets)
- US Marine Corps Expeditionary Firing exercises (live-fire with mortars)
- Artillery firing



## Category D Examples

**Category D:** does not contact the seafloor or if so only in a limited way and likely causes disturbance or temporary displacement of marine life but does not necessarily reduce survival

- Surface ship radiated noise measurements (SSRNM)
- Small boat mooring to buoys
- Diver and swimmer operations
- Fleet training exercises (FTX) with land based pyrotechnics
- Rifle range safety zone, small arms fire.
- Parachute drop zone
- Over-the-beach live-fire (insertion/extraction)



# Summary of Impact Categories

- **Category A activities:**
  - likely not consistent with ecological goals of the MLPA due to ecological impacts on marine habitats and species
- **Category B and C activities:**
  - may or may not be consistent with ecological goals of the MLPA
  - cumulative ecological impacts depend on number, type and frequency of activities
- **Category D activities:**
  - may be consistent with ecological goals of the MLPA



# Military Activities by Location & Category

| Location  | Impact Categories |   |    |    |
|---|-------------------|---|----|----|
|   | A                 | B | C  | D  |
| San Clemente Island A                                 | 6                 | 4 | 1  | 12 |
| San Clemente Island Pending Closure 2 (Wilson Cove)   | 0                 | 3 | 2  | 17 |
| San Clemente Island B                                 | 0                 | 4 | 5  | 15 |
| San Clemente Island C                                 | 18                | 6 | 10 | 13 |
| San Clemente Island D                                 | 18                | 7 | 10 | 14 |
| San Clemente Island E                                 | 5                 | 6 | 5  | 12 |
| San Clemente Island F                                 | 6                 | 7 | 5  | 13 |
| San Clemente Island Pending Closure 1 (Area G SWAT I) | 0                 | 0 | 0  | 10 |
| San Nicolas Island Alpha Pending Closure              | 0                 | 1 | 2  | 2  |
| San Nicolas Island Bravo                              | 0                 | 1 | 2  | 2  |
| San Nicolas Island Charlie                            | 0                 | 3 | 2  | 2  |
| Begg Rock   | 0                 | 1 | 2  | 2  |
| Camp Pendleton  | 7                 | 3 | 3  | 7  |
| San Diego - Coronado and Silver Strand                | 5                 | 4 | 3  | 11 |
| ARPA Area (off La Jolla)                              | 0                 | 1 | 1  | 0  |
| San Diego - Point Loma                                | 2                 | 1 | 1  | 2  |
| Point Mugu  | 0                 | 0 | 1  | 3  |
| Seal Beach  | 1                 | 0 | 0  | 1  |
| Vandenberg  | 0                 | 0 | 2  | 3  |



# Frequency of Military Activities

\*Frequency of activities not yet evaluated.

| Location  | Impact Categories |   |    |    |
|---|-------------------|---|----|----|
|   | A                 | B | C  | D  |
| San Clemente Island A                                 | 6                 | 4 | 1  | 12 |
| San Clemente Island Pending Closure 2 (Wilson Cove)   | 0                 | 3 | 2  | 17 |
| San Clemente Island B                                 | 0                 | 4 | 5  | 15 |
| San Clemente Island C                                 | 18                | 6 | 10 | 13 |
| San Clemente Island D                                 | 18                | 7 | 10 | 14 |
| San Clemente Island E                                 | 5                 | 6 | 5  | 12 |
| San Clemente Island F                                 | 6                 | 7 | 5  | 13 |
| San Clemente Island Pending Closure 1 (Area G SWAT I) | 0                 | 0 | 0  | 10 |
| San Nicolas Island Alpha Pending Closure              | 0                 | 1 | 2  | 2  |
| San Nicolas Island Bravo                              | 0                 | 1 | 2  | 2  |
| San Nicolas Island Charlie                            | 0                 | 3 | 2  | 2  |
| Begg Rock   | 0                 | 1 | 2  | 2  |
| Camp Pendleton  | 7                 | 3 | 3  | 7  |
| San Diego - Coronado and Silver Strand                | 5                 | 4 | 3  | 11 |
| ARPA Area (off La Jolla)                              | 0                 | 1 | 1  | 0  |
| San Diego - Point Loma                                | 2                 | 1 | 1  | 2  |
| *Point Mugu   | 0                 | 0 | 1  | 3  |
| *Seal Beach   | 1                 | 0 | 0  | 1  |
| *Vandenberg   | 0                 | 0 | 2  | 3  |



# San Clemente Pending Military Closure 1

- **Category D (daily)**

- Low altitude aircraft overflights
- Maritime Interdiction
- Tactical recon and surveillance
- Fleet training exercises (FTX) with land-based pyrotechnics
- Land-based small arms fire surface danger zone
- Over-the-beach live-fire (insertion/extraction)
- Small arms range surface danger zone
- Sniper surface danger zone
- Naval Special Warfare and SEAL maneuver operations
- Basic through advanced Naval Special Warfare

**\*Activities described fully in Environmental Impact Statement**



## San Clemente Pending Military Closure 2

- **Category B**
  - Research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E), daily
  - Sonobuoy test and evaluation, weekly
  - Missile intercepts, nearshore, surface targets remotely operated, monthly
- **Category C**
  - Active SONAR, daily
  - Underwater missile launches, yearly
- **Category D**
  - 17 activities (next two slides)

\*Activities described fully in Environmental Impact Statement



## San Clemente Pending Military Closure 2

- **Category D (daily)**
  - Acoustic trials (ACTRL)
  - Low altitude aircraft overflights
  - Land-based small arms fire surface danger zone
  - Rifle Range safety zone, small arms fire
  - Small arms range surface danger zone
  - Sniper surface danger zone
  - Small boat training
  - Naval Special Warfare and SEAL maneuver operations
  - Basic through advanced Naval Special Warfare
  - Small boat mooring to buoys

**\*Activities described fully in Environmental Impact Statement**



## San Clemente Pending Military Closure 2

- **Category D (weekly)**
  - Surface ship radiated noise measurements (SSRNM)
  - Large anchorage and on/off loading.
  - At-sea bearing accuracy tests (ASBAT)
  - Parachute drop zone
  - Barge loading/offloading (in Wilson Cove)
- **Category D (monthly)**
  - Pier operations
  - Diver and swimmer operations

\*Activities described fully in Environmental Impact Statement



# San Nicolas Island Alpha Area

- **Category B**
  - Missile intercepts, nearshore, surface targets remotely operated, monthly
- **Category C**
  - Missile launch zone; missiles have booster rockets to get them up to speed that fall into the ocean and are not recovered, quarterly
  - Missile intercepts with falling debris, quarterly
- **Category D**
  - Low altitude aircraft overflights, monthly
  - Laser testing area, proposed; both shooting at and from San Nicolas Island, weekly

\*Activities described fully in Environmental Impact Statement



# Begg Rock

- **Category B**
  - Bombing exercises (inert), quarterly
- **Category C**
  - Missile launch zone; missiles have booster rockets to get them up to speed that fall into the ocean and are not recovered, monthly
  - Missile intercepts with falling debris, monthly
- **Category D**
  - Low altitude aircraft overflights, monthly
  - Laser testing area, proposed; both shooting at and from San Nicolas Island, quarterly

\*Activities described fully in Environmental Impact Statement



# Conclusions

- **San Clemente Island Pending Military Closure 1**
  - Military activities may be consistent with ecological goals of the MLPA.
- **San Nicolas Island Area Alpha**
  - Military activities may or may not be consistent with ecological goals of the MLPA; monthly/quarterly missile launch/intercept activities associated with falling debris.
- **San Clemente Island Pending Military Closure 2 (Wilson Cove)**
  - High number of frequent military activities in categories B, C and D may have ecological impacts on marine habitats and species.



## Conclusions (continued)

- **Begg Rock**
  - Military activities may or may not be consistent with ecological goals of the MLPA; monthly/quarterly missile launch/intercept activities associated with falling debris and quarterly inert bombing exercises
- **Additional Considerations**
  - Some military activities use multiple media and require contiguous unencumbered training space