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For immediate release

Acoustic Ecology Institute Releases Sonar FactCheck *Digs into the science and practicalities of conflicting Navy/NRDC talking points*

Over the past five years, the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has been holding the Navy's legal and regulatory feet to the fire on all aspects of its active sonar training program. NRDC has insisted that "common sense" precautions can allow Naval training to proceed without undue harm to marine wildlife; the Navy has responded with increasingly detailed complaints that the additional measures impede its ability to train effectively, while touting its own efforts to assure marine mammal safety.

But neither the Navy nor NRDC statements can be taken at face value. This AEI FactCheck report decodes the rhetoric coming from both sides, clarifying the areas where each appears to be on solid ground, and conversely, where they are over their heads in hyperbole. **The report, available at AcousticEcology.org/srSonarFactCheck.html, addresses three key topics:**

Dead Whales: How Common?

Behavioral Reactions: Millions of Whales Affected, or Negligible Impact?

Additional Mitigation: Common Sense Precautions or Undermining Sailor Safety?

Unlike our other Special Reports, which aim to be concise, this FactCheck attempts to lasso all relevant perspectives, providing the context necessary to understand the complexities of this continuing story.

During this fall and winter, the sonar debate will ramp on on several fronts:

- The Supreme Court will hear the Navy's appeal of the California 9th Circuit Court of Appeals February ruling that affirmed a District Court's right to impose additional safety measures on sonar training in the Southern California Naval Training Range.
- The Navy will continue releasing Draft EISs for sonar training on eleven offshore training ranges covering most of the US coastline; the first final EISs will also be released. Behavioral impacts of sonar are moving front and center in the debate over these EISs.
- An ongoing legal challenge to the mid-frequency active sonar program as a whole will be moving forward, now that Navy legal maneuvers aimed to derail it have been set aside.

AEI's Special Reports and Spotlight Reports offer a uniquely comprehensive yet concise look at key issues. Earlier this year, our annual summary of new science and policy developments in ocean noise, ***Ocean Noise: What We Learned in 2007***, was widely praised by top agency staff, academic researchers, and NGOs for its clarity and thoroughness. AEI followed this in April with the first-ever comprehensive overview of ***Wind Turbine Noise Impacts***, which has quickly become a key source for other researchers and for rural town and county staff faced with writing ordinances to regulate this new industry. AEI's ***Special Report: Naval Active Sonars*** is continually updated with the latest news, and also includes clear descriptions of the varied technology, current deployment, safety standards, and legal developments, along with links to US and allied military and regulatory sites, NGOs, and academic research.

For more information:

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