

Why is electromagnetic radiation (electronic attack weaponry) from Growler jets not mentioned in any documents?

One context for this discussion is: Would you rather have a quiet Olympic Peninsula that contains a World Heritage Site (Olympic National Park, the 5th most visited in the nation) that is internationally noted for being the quietest place in the continental US, or would you mind living in an Electronic Warfare Range? Though no one would deny that our troops need to be properly trained and equipped, the Navy already has millions of acres and hundreds of thousands of square miles of airspace available in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Nevada, and that's just the Pacific Northwest.

The second context is: Do you believe that the electromagnetic radiation directed downward by trios of Growler jets practicing electronic attack in the skies over our communities is as safe as the Navy claims? If EM radiation is so safe, then why does the Navy keep reassuring the public that emitter EM radiation will only be directed upward? The implication is that it's dangerous if directed downward, and this is supported by the taped-off perimeter that will be erected around each emitter.

A third context is: How do you feel about the effects that declaring the place where we live to be an Electronic Warfare range will have on property values and livelihoods? Not once in any NEPA document has this been mentioned.

Nowhere does the [2014 Environmental Assessment \(EA\)](#) mention, discuss or explain the electromagnetic radiation that Navy Growler jets will be using to locate the ground transmitters and direct "[simulated harm shoots](#)." According to an ex-Navy expert, the amount, frequency and power required even to detect a ground signal from the air, let's say at 2,000 feet or higher, is very powerful and dangerous. No explanation of what this means has been made in any NEPA documents, yet Navy spokesmen have talked about it in news interviews. Nor will these jets will be flying alone, they will be in trios. According to the EA, any electromagnetic signal detected by the one jet flying in passive mode will be treated during training as an enemy signal, and will be "shot" by the other two flying in electronic attack mode. Nowhere has the Navy

explained how it will differentiate between the signal generated by a mobile emitter, designed to simulate, say, a “bad guy” with a cellphone or hand-held VHF radio, and hikers who happen to be using the same devices.

According to the EA, which discusses neither aircraft flight paths nor air and noise pollution, the purpose of this training is to produce fully combat-ready electronic attack squadrons. According to a Scoping Meeting Guide handed out by the Navy, “The missions of the VAQ squadrons include electronic surveillance and attack against enemy radar and communications systems. This involves the use of jamming equipment and anti-radiation missiles. The Growler has an advanced electronic system that allows it to identify targets and protect itself from those targets.”

The Navy cannot “maximize” the use of the proposed Electronic Warfare Range (EWR), nor can it produce “fully trained” or “combat-ready Tactical Electronic Attack squadrons” on the proposed EWR over our communities without electronic attack training being conducted there. Nor can the Navy meet the “Proposed Action and VAQ Mission and Training Goals” without electronic attack training being conducted on the proposed EWR. The Navy must study the impacts of this electronic attack training in the proposed EIS. It should also stop denying its true intentions regarding electronic attack training in its public statements.

Growler pilots from other countries will also be trained at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. What are the legal implications if a foreign pilot causes an accident or injury? Any jets potentially brought in by these non-US pilots are not being counted in the official documents the Navy has prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA.) Nor are other types of jets being counted, such as F-35s, which have been mentioned in defense industry trade magazines as slated to come to NASWI to train with the Growlers. [54 attack helicopters](#) have been reassigned to focus on the Pacific and [six PA-8A squadrons have been relocated](#) to Whidbey Island.

A [document referenced by the Navy’s EA](#) admits that human casualties are a possibility in using weapons associated with this type of warfare training. The casualties could primarily come as a result of disrupting

emergency services communications. Although the Navy has assured the public that they are working with other agencies to “deconflict” interference with civilian and emergency transmitting signals, not one civilian emergency services personnel who asked a specific question at either the Forks, Port Angeles or Pacific Beach public meetings received an adequate answer beyond, “We will work with the community.”

Naval Air Station Whidbey Island is slated to become the home of all Growler jets in the nation, and to be home to the nation’s electronic attack testing and training program. Residents of the Olympic Peninsula do not know enough about the potential effects from ionizing and non-ionizing radiation, both of which will be produced during the training, to feel confident enough to believe the Navy’s claims of “no significant impacts.”

We live here, we are not being given answers, and we deserve to know the truth.