UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

June 21, 2010

Kimberly Kler
EIS/OEIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Northwest
1101 Tautog Circle, Suite 203
Silverdale, Washington 98315

Re: Comments on the Final EIS for Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Undersea Warfare Center and Keyport Complex Extension.
EPA Project Number: 03-062-DOD

Dear Ms. Kler:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the U.S. Navy's (Navy) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the proposed **Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC), and Keyport Complex Extension** (CEQ # 20100176) in Gray Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap and Mason Counties, WA. Our review was conducted in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Clean Air Act § 309.

In our comments on the draft EIS in October 2008, EPA expressed environmental concerns with the project due to its potential impacts to water quality and critical habitat in Puget Sound and to protected resources in the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. We requested additional information in the FEIS regarding anticipated disturbance to benthic organisms and measures to avoid and/or mitigate impacts, including an exclusion of the proposed surf zone landing activities in the sanctuary.

The final EIS was responsive to our concerns on the draft EIS. In particular, we appreciate Navy assurances that, during implementation of the project, there would be minimal disturbance to benthic sites and no interference with ecosystem processes in and around the project area, thus preserving water quality within affected waterways and critical habitats. We are also pleased that the Navy made additional changes to the final EIS based on other agencies' and the public's comments. Your responses address our concerns.

If you have questions or you would like to discuss the above comments, please contact Theo Mbabaliye, of my staff at (206) 553-6322 or me at (206) 553-1601.

Sincerely,

Christine B. Reichgott

Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit

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