

Environmental Insight



Upcoming Volunteer Event!

Naval Station Everett @ Wednesday, April 22, 1245-1500. Shoreline cleanup effort.

Seeking a volunteer runner to assist with picking up bags along the shoreline!

Contact NSE's Stormwater Program Manager at (425) 304-3277 for questions or to sign up for the NSE volunteer event.

Impacts to Southern Resident Killer Whales



Stormwater runoff from industrial and municipal areas can carry pollutants to surface water, like the Puget Sound, that are harmful to killer whales. The Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) resides in the Puget Sound and are a listed Endangered Species. These whales are protected by the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and have a Recovery Plan established by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

SRKW are endangered due to overfishing, habitat loss, and contaminants such as PCBs. A 2023 study analyzed the levels of toxic metals in sediment in the Salish Sea to assess their potential to impede the recovery of these endangered killer whales as they eat contaminated prey.

Scientists analyzed sediment collected along the British Columbia coast between 2018 and 2020 to “assess the habitat quality of Chinook salmon and SRKW.”

From 36 chemical elements, they focused on six metals—mercury, cadmium, arsenic, nickel, copper, and lead—that settle in marine sediment and are inadvertently eaten by foraging animals. As predators catch contaminated prey, toxic levels build up, or ‘bioaccumulate,’ moving up the food chain to top predators. Mercury, cadmium, copper, and lead are of “particular concern due to their toxicity even at low concentrations.” Several studies have previously found evidence of their bioaccumulation in Chinook salmon and SRKW.

In most regions, concentrations of these six toxic metals were above the current “sediment quality guidelines” set by the Canadian Government. Hotspot maps revealed areas of high contamination in Chinook salmon-rearing areas. In fact, Chinook salmon chronically exposed to mercury, cadmium, copper, and lead have “increased mortality and reduced reproduction and growth.”

Of concern is that all six toxic metals were prevalent within the foraging areas of the SRKW in the Salish Sea, including harbors off the Strait of Juan de Fuca and in the Georgia Strait, home to the Port of Vancouver. The scientists concluded that “current levels of sediment mercury, cadmium, arsenic, nickel, copper, and lead may pose a threat to Chinook salmon and SRKW populations both directly and indirectly.”

While some metals occur naturally, they are more ubiquitous today due to “mines, metal smelters and refineries, landfill leachate, sewage treatment plants, and urban run-off.” The study findings highlight the urgent need for cleanup operations—and prevention—to reduce the threat to SRKW and their prey from these pollutants.

Also, by following MSGP and MS4 permit requirements and properly maintaining stormwater BMPs we can work together to help protect these beautiful whales.

References

1. Southern Resident Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*). <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/west-coast/endangered-species-conservation/southern-resident-killer-whale-orcinus-orca>
2. Southern Resident Killer Whales and West Coast Chinook Salmon. <https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/srkw-salmon-sources-factsheet.pdf>
3. Toxic metals in the Salish Sea food chain impede salmon and orca recovery. <https://www.wildorca.org/toxic-metals-in-the-salish-sea-food-chain-impede-salmon-and-orca-recovery/>

Environmental Policy and Plans as well as previous Newsletters are located at:

<https://cnrnw.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NS-Everett/Operations-and-Management/Environmental-Support-and-Compliance/>

NSE Environmental Staff
Environmental Office: (425) 304-3470

Program	Phone
Spills	(425) 304-3465
Natural Resources	(425) 304-3464
Stormwater, Wastewater, & UST/AST	(425) 304-3277
Air & Drinking Water	(425) 304-3466
Recycling	(425) 304-3071
Hazardous Waste	(425) 304-5987

Environmental Compliance, Assessment, Training, and Tracking System (ECATTS)

Just a friendly reminder from Environmental that per OPNAVINST 5090.1, all Navy, military, civilian, and contractor personnel are required to complete Environmental Awareness Training initially at least once every three (3) years. Completion of this training does need to be documented.

The good news is that this training is only one hour!

The Department of the Navy’s web-based program providing environmental training is called Environmental Compliance, Assessment, Training, and Tracking System (ECATTS). At a minimum, (contractors, civilians, and military personnel) are required to take Environmental Management Systems Awareness Training. If you have taken this training since reporting onboard NAVSTA Everett, feel free to use ECATTS for more free, effective Environmental training. Additional ECATTS training with a focus on stormwater is required for some personnel working on NAVSTA Everett to satisfy the MS4 Stormwater Permit. EWCCs and key contractors will need to complete the additional ECATTS modules which will be sent out separately. All ECATTS training is self-paced and the web site can be accessed from any internet connected computer (including at home). If you have not taken the EMS Awareness training, please log in using this process and do so:

1. Logon to <https://ecatts.com/>
2. Click on middle blue circle “Access ECATTS view your training plan”
3. After short 2 minute video, click on “here” to proceed to the login and registration page
4. Under “New Users Register Here” if you have a .mil address you can click the yellow “click here” and obtain a password.
5. After inputting your password, you will be taken to a registration page. For the “Location, base or host installation,” please select NAVSTA Everett WA.
6. After you register, on the left side of the page click “EMS Training.” It will take you to the Naval Station Everett Environmental Management System Awareness page.
7. Click through the 13 pages and take the test. To get credit you must answer all the questions correctly. The ones you miss will be listed on the right side and when you retake the test you will only be asked the questions you previously missed.

MS4 Education Materials

A large part of our MS4 Stormwater Permit is public outreach and education. You will notice some outdoor stormwater signage and indoor postings around the base which is meant to educate and remind base personnel of the Navy’s commitment to stormwater compliance. The intent is to provide positive reinforcement as well as provide our contact information for reporting spills. Our program has both the pictured magnets available for posting on refrigerators in your command. If a command representative would like to come by and pick some up, please

let us know so we can arrange a time to meet you. Please help us keep these magnets attached to refrigerators and postings posted. EWCCs are our conduit to the tenant commands on base, and your support of our environmental programs goes a long way in ensuring your command’s understanding and compliance. If you need additional magnets or replacements, please let us know.





NAVY REGION NORTHWEST ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

We are proud of our environmental stewardship and are committed to operating in an environmentally responsible manner where national defense and environmental protection are, and must be, compatible goals.

Our vision is to be recognized as an environmentally friendly neighbor, actively engaged in community outreach, resource conservation and pollution prevention while effectively executing the Navy mission. With integrated support from tenant commands, our policies and decisions aim to instill a culture of environmental stewardship and continual improvement.

We are committed to comply with all applicable legal and other requirements which relate to our environmental aspects and impacts. When executing the Navy mission, the Chain of Command will support the attainment of environmental objectives and targets. We are also committed to:

- Continual Improvement
- Awareness
- Resource Conservation
- Environmental Compliance



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. R. Townsend".

J. R. TOWNSEND
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Navy Region Northwest

Recycling



QRP at Naval Station Everett

Did you know that the Integrated Solid Waste Program at Naval Station Everett is your installation's QRP? QRP stands for Qualified Recycling Program. All QRP's follow instruction DoDI 4715.23 as well as other instructions. The DoDI provides the regulations regarding what materials are eligible for recycling and what materials are excluded. Protecting the environment is one of the reasons for these lists; but also to protect the integrity of our defense programs. Recycle materials from the United States may be exported to all areas of the world. Something that may seem to be easily recycled could potentially end up in the wrong hands. This might include equipment manuals that require destruction put into a paper recycling bin or part from a ship placed into a recycle bin for metal. These guidance documents are put into place to protect all.

Some items that are excluded from being recycled through the QRP include; but are not limited to:

- Electrical and electronic items and components (e.g., computers, monitors, cell phones, fax machines)
- Materials that can be reused by the government for its original purpose without special processing
- Ships, aircraft, weapons, electrical components, and other material required to be demilitarized or mutilated
- All munitions list items (MLI) and Commerce Control List items (CCLI)

These are just a few of the materials found on Table 3 - QRP Excluded Materials.

If you have an item and are not sure what to do with it, check the NSN # and product information. There is a section that will designate the proper disposal method. Only DEMIL Code A items may be sent to your QRP.

There are many materials that are eligible to be recycled through the QRP. Table 1 from the DoDI 4715.23 provides a list. Some of the most common items that may be recycled include:

- All paper: office paper, newspaper, cardboard, etc.
- Plastics. Please note that your QRP is only accepting: PET #1 beverage bottles, HDPE #2 color or clear (milk jug and laundry detergent type bottles) and LDPE film that in CLEAR. All other plastics should be placed into the trash.
- Glass beverage bottles or food containers
- Scrap metal (types that are not on the excluded list)
- Wood pallets
- Lead-acid batteries
- Inkjet and Toner cartridges



This list contains many more items; but check with your Qualified Recycling Program to verify what they are currently accepting. For more information, please call the NSE Integrated Solid Waste Program at (425) 304-307.



Help keep wildlife wild and healthy. Please do NOT feed wildlife on base such as ducks, geese, gulls, raccoons, rabbits, squirrels, etc.. One way you can help reduce wildlife conflicts with people is by not feeding wildlife near human populations.