

March 13, 2019



Navy announces massive Growler Flight and Operations expansion decision – dismissing State officials and community opposition.

Sound Defense Alliance will continue to fight

In an unprecedented move and over the objections of thousands of citizens and local, state and federal officials, the Navy formalized its decision to add 36 EA-18G “Growlers” to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and to quadruple flight operations at Outlying Field Coupeville.

Navy Press Release: <http://www.whidbeyeis.com/Documents/06-19%20Growler%20Record%20of%20Decision.pdf>

The Navy’s Final Environmental Impact Statement lists significant impacts in multiple areas: deterioration of the Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve, reduction of affordable housing, increased over-crowding in Oak Harbor schools, additional classroom disruptions in both Oak Harbor and Coupeville, degraded visitor experience in State and local parks throughout the region, a 67% probability of nightly sleep disturbance near Coupeville Outlying Field, nine “outdoor speech interference” events per hour in schools and residential areas, 1,794 non-Navy individuals exposed to permanent hearing loss, and the likely imposition of Accident Potential Zones impacting 503 acres of both residential and commercial properties.

Maryon Attwood, Chair of the Sound Defense Alliance said, “In the past the Navy has been a good partner. **But across the region, our elected officials, community leaders, and citizens all agree that this proposal is just asking too much from our part of Washington. We are not only disappointed, we are outraged.** We will not be collateral damage to this expansion directed from Washington D.C. We are committed to continuing to work with our elected officials and people across the state and nation to get the Navy to listen and to achieve a better and sustainable outcome.”

Requests for modification or mitigation from state and federal officials such as the

Environmental Protection Agency, the Washington State Board of Health, the Washington State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Congressman Rick Larsen, Senator Maria Cantwell, and Governor Jay Inslee remain unaddressed by the Navy.

Lopez Island resident Cynthia Dilling, of Quiet Skies Over San Juan County, said, “As it currently stands, I’ve measured 121 decibels at my house. I regularly inform the base, but it doesn’t make any difference. **Throughout this process, the Navy has not once agreed to sit down and listen to any of the affected communities. I can only imagine what it will be like with this massive expansion**”

Larry Morrell from Port Townsend commented, “**This is not just a Whidbey Island problem.** The Growler Jet noise and the negative consequences of this expansion are going to impact the entire region. This decision by the Navy has the potential to damage every aspect of life in NW Washington. **Together we will work to find a solution that balances our national security and our state – we will not accept this decision as final.**”

The Sound Defense Alliance (SDA) is composed of over 20 member and affiliate groups throughout the region and was formed earlier this year to organize regional efforts to oppose this expansion and has quickly grown to over 25,000 members.



Sound Defense Alliance partners have planed events throughout the region to help citizens respond.

Mark your calendar for the event on Lopez:
Monday, April 8 at 7 PM.

