

Date	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Street	Mailing	City	State	Zip Code	Comment
11/16/2006 6:54	Smith	Will	Coastal Expeditions						<p>I am writing to urge you reconsider the locations and planning process for mine and antisubmarine warfare sonar training exercises, in light of the threats posed to marine wildlife by sonar training. There are seven different species of endangered whales that migrate along the coast of South Carolina, namely the Atlantic Right Whale whose numbers total around 300 worldwide, and are also threatened by the lobster harvest in Canada. In addition, South Carolina coasts are home to a number of species of concern and an abundance of diverse wildlife affected by sonar. The use of Sonar has been proven, beyond doubt, to be extremely damaging and often life threatening to marine wildlife. Protecting marine mammals and preserving national security are not mutually exclusive. Before testing, the Navy needs to put in place and make public a well thought out, responsible plan that outlines and identifies ways to protect wildlife and endangered species in training areas. NRDC has suggested the plan could include common sense precautions during peacetime testing or training with sonar, such as putting rich marine mammal habitat off limits; avoiding migration routes and feeding or breeding areas when marine mammals are present; testing and training with sonar primarily in areas with few marine mammals; listening with passive sonar to ensure marine mammals are not in the testing area before switching on active sonar; increasing the volume of active sonar gradually to give nearby marine mammals a chance to flee; and curtailing active sonar drills when marine mammals are detected. Until such a plan is in place, I respectfully request the Navy to delay any training exercises off of our coasts. We are at a stage where this issue has begun to get heated. Taking advantage of the situation to come to a mutual agreement before the lawsuits and court orders change the lay of the land is strongly advised. A seriously concerned citizen and activist whose livelihood depends upon the presence of marine mammals as a naturalist and wilderness kayak guide.</p>