

**Municipa  
lity  
of  
Anchorage**



*P.O. Box 390  
Girdwood, Alaska 99587  
<http://www.muni.org/gbos>*

*GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF  
SUPERVISORS  
Sam Daniel & Jerry Fox, Co-Chairs  
Robert Snitzer, Eryn Boone, Mike Edgington*

*Ethan Berkowitz, Mayor*

March 13, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510-0203

Dear Senator Murkowski,

We appreciate this opportunity to share our views regarding the U.S. Navy's planned training event known as Northern Edge. Our community voiced concerns regarding the timing and location of the Northern Edge and the U.S. Navy's pre-selection of training dates from 1 to 12 May 2017. Recorded public testimony at meetings and forums since September 2016 highlights undue risks to our commercial fisheries and the well-being of our local businesses. As such, I am writing to request your engagement with the U.S. Navy to address our concerns. The U.S. Navy has not adequately engaged our community nor responded to our public comments in its proposed mitigation package.

We united with six other Alaskan coastal communities in passing a Resolution requesting that the U.S. Navy move its training to Fall/Winter months, thereby, reducing impacts on our resources. The Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) failed to use best available science when evaluating the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on social, biological, and physical resources. It concluded no adverse impacts despite statements regarding unknown behavioral and distribution shifts in fish due to explosions; mortality of fish due to noise, chemicals, and sonar; and direct contradictions from National Marine Fisheries Service.

The U.S. Navy has not followed up with my community. In December, they indicated they would revisit in Spring 2017 to further engage Alaskan communities. They are scheduled to return for an "informal discussion rather than presentation" with Native Village of Eyak and Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak in late March 2017, a mere four weeks before the scheduled training<sup>1</sup>. This Government to Government Consultation follow up does not include the general public of Valdez.

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<sup>1</sup> Email correspondence from ANASTASIA D. SCHMIDT, Capt, USAF Director, Public Affairs on 28 February 2017 to Summer is for Salmon Staff member, Christina Hendrickson

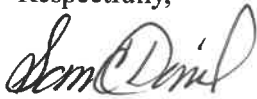
- The U.S. Navy relocate its training area to the far southeast corner of the current designated training area, off the Continental Shelf areas of the Gulf of Alaska, and away from seamounts; and
- The U.S. Navy to conduct its training exercises after the middle of September and before the Spring, so as not to impact migrating salmon and other species.

Girdwood depends on healthy salmon runs and wildlife. Therefore, as your constituents we ask that you make a direct request to the U.S. Navy to postpone the on-water portion of Northern Edge 2017 and all future training exercises in the Gulf of Alaska to occur only after mid-September and before mid-March.

Now is the time to engage the U.S. Navy, who selected these dates in advance of receiving a Letter of Authorization from the National Marine Fisheries Service and publishing a ROD. It troubles me, personally, and my community that the U.S. Navy presented 1-12 May 2017 as firm during their limited engagement with our community.

Thank you, Senator, for your response and involvement on this issue.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sam Daniel".

*Sam Daniel, GBOS Co-Chair*

CC: Summer is for Salmon  
*Media Outlets*