

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT STREET, SUITE 2000
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
VOICE AND TDD (415) 904-5200

RECORD PACKET COPY

**W12**

DATE: January 27, 2004

TO: Coastal Commissioners and Interested Parties

FROM: Peter M. Douglas, Executive Director
Elizabeth A. Fuchs, Manager, Statewide Planning and Federal Consistency Division
Mark Delaplaine, Federal Consistency Supervisor

RE: Negative Determinations Issued by the Executive Director
[Executive Director decision letters are attached]

PROJECT #:	ND-103-03
APPLICANT:	U. S. Air Force
LOCATION:	Vandenberg Air Force Base, Santa Barbara Co.
PROJECT:	Falcon Launch Vehicle Program
ACTION:	Concur
ACTION DATE:	12/17/2003

PROJECT #:	ND-112-03
APPLICANT:	U. S. Marine Corps
LOCATION:	Del Mar Area, Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base, San Diego Co.
PROJECT:	Replace fence with block wall
ACTION:	Concur
ACTION DATE:	1/9/2004

PROJECT #:	ND-113-03
APPLICANT:	Department of the Navy
LOCATION:	Naval Base Ventura County, Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co.
PROJECT:	Balloon Acoustic Tracking Test at Point Mugu
ACTION:	Concur
ACTION DATE:	1/9/2004

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December 17, 2003

Denise R. Caron
Chief, Conservation
Environmental Flight
30th Space Wing
U.S. Air Force
30 CES/CEVP
806 13th Street, Suite 116
Vandenberg AFB, CA 93437-5242

Subject: Negative Determination ND-103-03, Falcon Launch Vehicle Program, Vandenberg AFB, Santa Barbara County.

Dear Ms. Caron:

The Coastal Commission staff has reviewed the above-referenced negative determination for the Falcon Launch Vehicle program at Space Launch Complex-3W (SLC-3W) on Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB). The proposed program entails a maximum of three Falcon launch missions per year to place commercial and research payloads into earth orbit. The Falcon is a 68-foot-long, two-stage launch vehicle propelled by liquid fuels (the first stage would be recovered approximately 500 miles downrange and 300 miles west of Baja California). The Falcon is one-half the size of the Air Force's Atlas II launch vehicle, which was launched from SLC-3W and 3E through 1998. Noise levels from the proposed Falcon launches will be significantly less than those from previous Atlas II launches.


To support the launch program, the Air Force proposes to refurbish the decommissioned SLC-3W facility, including structural improvements, propellant tank installation, utility re-installation, entrance road re-paving, launch water retention basin resurfacing, and installation of security measures. All proposed modifications would occur within the existing and previously-disturbed area of SLC-3W. Construction work would last three to five months and the initial launch is scheduled for mid to late 2004.

The Commission previously concurred with a consistency determination (CD-049-98) for the Atlas V - Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program at SLC-3W. That concurrence was based in part on the finding that the proposed launching of Atlas V vehicles was similar to other launch programs on south Vandenberg AFB previously concurred with by the Commission, and that those programs had a monitoring record of not adversely affecting coastal resources, including threatened or endangered species and public habitat and recreation. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in an October 1, 2003, letter to the Air Force, stated that the proposed Falcon launch program at SLC-3W is not likely to affect these species or their critical habitat in a

manner or to an extent not already considered in the Service's 1999 biological opinion for the Atlas II launch program at the adjacent SLC-3E. The Service states that it reached this conclusion based on its review of the proposed Falcon launch program, a comparison between the Falcon and the existing Atlas II and Titan launch programs, the results of previous monitoring, and the Air Force's commitment to accomplish the same monitoring for the Falcon program that is described in the 1999 biological opinion for the Atlas II program.

After reviewing the accompanying Draft Environmental Assessment for the proposed Falcon launch program at Vandenberg AFB SLC-3W, the Commission staff agrees that the program will not generate new or additional adverse impacts on coastal resources not previously examined by the Commission in its concurrence with consistency determination CD-049-98 for launch activities at the adjacent SLC-3E. Under the federal consistency regulations, a negative determination can be submitted for an activity "which is the same as or similar to activities for which consistency determinations have been prepared in the past." We therefore concur with your negative determination made pursuant to 15 CFR Section 930.35 of the NOAA implementing regulations. Please contact Larry Simon at (415) 904-5288 should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,


(for) PETER M. DOUGLAS
Executive Director

cc: South Central Coast District Office
California Department of Water Resources
Governor's Washington, D.C., Office

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January 9, 2004

Lt. Colonel T.P. Lhuillier
Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff
Environmental Security
U.S. Marine Corps
ATTN: Patricia Martinez
Box 555008
Camp Pendleton, CA 92055-5008

Subject: Negative Determination ND-112-03, Construction of Block Wall in Del Mar Area,
Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, San Diego County.

Dear Lt. Colonel Lhuillier:

The Coastal Commission staff has reviewed the above-referenced negative determination for construction of a 1,100-foot-long, eight-foot-high block wall to replace an existing chain-link fence of equal length and height in the Del Mar area of Camp Pendleton. The existing and proposed fences delineate the boundary between a Camp Pendleton training area and Oceanside Harbor. The new wall is proposed in order to more effectively block the noise, dust, and visual impacts associated with training activities at Camp Pendleton. The proposed project will not affect coastal resources and will not block scenic public views to or along the shoreline. We therefore **concur** with your negative determination made pursuant to 15 CFR Section 930.35 of the NOAA implementing regulations. Please contact Larry Simon at (415) 904-5288 should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter M. Douglas".

(for) PETER M. DOUGLAS
Executive Director

cc: San Diego Coast District Office
California Department of Water Resources
Governor's Washington, D.C., Office

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January 9, 2004

James Danza
Space Resource Manager, Code N46VPW
Naval Base Ventura County
311 Main Road, Suite 1
Point Mugu, CA 93042-5001


Subject: Negative Determination ND-113-03, Balloon Acoustic Tracking Test at Point Mugu,
Naval Base Ventura County.

Dear Mr. Danza:

The Coastal Commission staff has reviewed the above-referenced negative determination for the Balloon Acoustic Tracking Test at Point Mugu during the week of January 12, 2004. The proposed activity involves the use of tethered, helium-filled balloons (flown to heights ranging between 80 and 1,650 feet) carrying sensitive acoustic, meteorological, laser, and communication instruments that will monitor several different fixed and mobile noise sources on the ground. Noise sources to be evaluated include commercial and military vehicles on RCA and Perimeter Roads and live gunfire at the Seabee Rifle Range. The proposed instrument and systems testing is required in order for the Navy to determine the effectiveness of this method of aerial surveillance and tracking of ground noise sources that could represent threats to United States military forces. The noise sources to be evaluated are routine events at Point Mugu and do not affect coastal resources. Laser operations in the tethered balloons are designed to meet safety standards for the safe use of lasers published by the American National Standards Institute. In addition, the three-day test is designed to avoid wetland and upland areas which provide habitat for endangered and threatened species.

In conclusion, the Commission staff agrees that the proposed balloon tracking test at Point Mugu will not adversely affect coastal resources. We therefore concur with your negative determination made pursuant to 15 CFR Section 930.35 of the NOAA implementing regulations. Please contact Larry Simon at (415) 904-5288 should you have any questions on this matter.

Sincerely,


(for) PETER M. DOUGLAS
Executive Director

cc: South Central Coast District Office
California Department of Water Resources
Governor's Washington, D.C., Office