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## Press Release

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# Public Forum on Potential Effects of Proposed Navy Sonar Range—Monday, August 14

**Ocean, NC** – Want to find out more about the potential impacts of the proposed Navy sonar range off the NC coast? Want to know what questions remain?

The North Carolina Coastal Federation and numerous partners including Environmental Defense, the Southern Environmental Law Center and the Natural Resources Defense Council are hosting a free public forum on the proposed range from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 14 at the Duke University Marine Laboratory auditorium in Beaufort.

The forum will examine the Navy's plans for the proposed range, current scientific knowledge about its potential effects and the gaps in scientific knowledge about its effects on commercially and recreationally important fish, sea turtles, marine mammals and bottom habitat. Dr. Larry Crowder from Duke University will discuss what's known about sonar and sea turtles; Dr. Ann Pabst of UNC Wilmington will talk about potential effects on marine mammals; Dr. Joe Luczkovich from East Carolina University will discuss fish acoustic response and potential behavioral impacts; and Mike Street from the NC Division of Marine Fisheries will provide information on bottom mapping and catch data from the area.

A stakeholder panel concerned with commercial fishing, recreational fishing and sea turtle protection will also provide perspectives and reactions to the project. Also, environmental groups actively following the issue will summarize the environmental impact process involved in siting the range and explain what happens next.

The goals of the forum are to inform citizens about effects the range could have on our coastal ecosystem and natural resources and to highlight areas where scientific information about the project is lacking and where more study is needed to determine the effects. The Navy plans to hold a stakeholder meeting in October to gather questions and concerns about fish and fisheries. The public forum, which is completely independent from the Navy's meeting, will provide participants with information they can use at the Navy's meeting.

The forum is free, but pre-registration is required. To register, please call the Coastal Federation at 252-393-8185 or e-mail your contact information to [nccf@nccoast.org](mailto:nccf@nccoast.org). If you have questions, please contact Christine Miller at [christinem@nccoast.org](mailto:christinem@nccoast.org) or 252 393 8185.