

## International Ocean Noise Coalition

# U.S. Navy – OUTLAW or STEWARD of the SEA?

### OUTLAW ACTIONS:

1. U.S. Navy declares itself **EXEMPT** from the Marine Mammal Protection Act in January 2007.
2. U.S. Navy **REFUSES**, in February 2007, to comply with a request from the California Coastal Commission to use additional safety measures to reduce harm to whales during sonar exercises off its coast.
3. U.S. Navy admits that during at least 12 war-game exercises in Hawaii over the next two years, it will expose over 10,000 endangered humpback whales to mid-frequency sonar levels **TEN to ONE BILLION TIMES LOUDER** (depending on the whales' distance from the source) than the sonar levels that led to the Bahamas stranding. The Navy claims these exercises will have no impact on the whales.
4. U.S. Navy **CIRCUMVENTS** the National Environmental Policy Act by not writing Environmental Impact Statements for the expansion of war-game exercises planned for the next two years in Hawaii, in the Gulf of Mexico, off the Atlantic coast, off Washington State and around Guam.

### STEWARDS of the SEA WOULD:

1. **OBEY** and **UPHOLD** the Marine Mammal Protection Act.
2. **HEED** the California Coastal Commission's request to protect marine life.
3. **CEASE** circumventing the National Environmental Policy Act.
4. **REFRAIN** from exposing endangered whales to mid-frequency sonar levels of 173 to 253 decibels which has been shown to cause stranding, and death of whales at exposure levels of 150-160 decibels or less in the Bahamas.



On March 16, 2000, the Navy's use of mid-frequency active sonar in a single transit led to a mass stranding of 17 whales, including this one (photo courtesy of Ken Balcomb)

### IMPACTS of ACTIVE SONAR:

1. Active sonar trials have been correlated with the mass strandings and death of dolphins and whales in the Bahamas, the Canary Islands, the Mediterranean, the Florida Keys, Madeira and other active sonar test sites the world over.
2. Other impacts on marine mammals include hemorrhaging around the brain, ears, and lungs; hearing loss; formation of excess nitrogen causing the bends; and interference with communication, navigation, and mating.
3. The Navy's own research shows adverse effects on human divers exposed to active sonar including dizziness, memory loss, and seizures.

## WHICH CHOICES WOULD YOU MAKE AS STEWARDS of the SEA?

*For more information on ocean noise and to find out how you can help contact Dr. Marsha Green, [mlgreen@pacifier.com](mailto:mlgreen@pacifier.com) or go to [www.oceannoisecoalition.org](http://www.oceannoisecoalition.org)*