



**Update: December 12, 201**

*See the Call to Action on Page 2.*

## **PROGRESS! National Defense Authorization Act**

You have probably seen the news articles, press releases and TV stories. Progress is being made, but it is always a cautionary tale. The following provides an explanation that is not blown up by inaccurate assumptions.

The legislative committee of the Sound Defense Alliance (SDA) was successful in including **real-time noise testing in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)**. Congratulations are due because to be noticed by Congress is a big deal. Brian Silverstein of Quiet Skies was involved in this effort.

Of course, monitoring the noise doesn't reduce it, but it is an **essential first step towards making changes in operations**. Equally important is that this sends a strong signal from Congress to the Navy that this problem needs to be fixed.

Senator Cantwell and Congressmen Larsen and Killmer were involved in securing this recognition. U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and U.S. Representative Rick Larsen (D, WA-02) announced that their amendment to provide for real-time noise monitoring at two West Coast Navy installations will be included in the final compromise of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The legislation is expected to be considered by both houses of Congress this month.

"Noise from Growler training has caused much concern in local communities," Senator Cantwell said. "Publicly available real-time monitoring of Whidbey Island and the Olympic National Park will provide transparency and a basis for an accurate discussion on the impacts of the increased flight activity between the Navy, the state, and the communities involved. I'm pleased to see this provision included in the final defense package, and I encourage Congress to support its passage."

“On June 12, the House Armed Services Committee adopted my provision to require real-time noise monitoring at three Naval Air Stations and three Air Force bases because the challenge we face with jet noise on Whidbey Island is a challenge shared by other communities,” said Larsen, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee.

The Cantwell-Larsen provision in the NDAA compromise requires real-time monitoring of noise at two West Coast Navy installations. This includes field carrier landing practice at Naval Outlying Field Coupeville and Ault Field, which now see about 112,100 Growler operations annually.

The legislation authorizes \$1 million to perform the noise monitoring and requires the Secretary of Defense to provide for real-time monitoring of noise from flights at the installations. It also requires the results be made publicly available on a Department of Defense website.

It also requires the Secretary of Defense to work with the Director of the National Park Service and the Chief of the Forest Service to come up with a plan within six months for real-time noise monitoring above or adjacent to nearby public lands, including Olympic National Park, Olympic National Forest, and Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve.

## What's Next

The NDAA has yet to be approved by Congress and signed by the President. The good news is that the NDAA must be passed.

The language does not currently include noise monitoring of the Olympics, which is a huge omission. Nor is there any access to the raw data by the public, so we may only see what the Navy interprets as the results.

*Call to Action*

**Please write to the members of Congress - Killmer, Larsen and Cantwell to keep the pressure on.**

Contact information can be found at:

<https://www.quietskies.info/contact-legislators>

Thank them for including noise monitoring in the NDAA bill.

Request that noise monitoring must be included for the Olympic Peninsula.

Request that the Navy share the raw data of noise monitoring.

Keep reminding all parties that the end goal is a change in operations and moving Growlers elsewhere to solve the noise problem.

## **An Orcas Experience**

*We live on White Beach Road, and this has become a nightmare. My six-month-old has stopped napping. The older kids - three and seven - are scared, and don't understand why the sky is rumbling. Our windows vibrate.*

*We're right under the flight path and the noise is almost constant. On some days and certain times of almost every day, it IS constant.*

*We never chose to live under a flight path of anything, much less something called - so amusingly - a "growler".*

*Will there ever be an end to it? How can we make it stop?*

## **SDA Leadership Changes**

Mark Lundsten of Fidalgo Island is now the Chair of the Sound Defense Alliance (SDA). We thank Rhea Miller for her leadership as SDA became a regional organization and established strong connections with elected officials. Rhea is still representing Quiet Skies on the Board.

The SDA also decided to act without an Executive Director for awhile, so as of January 1, Larry Morrell is no longer the Executive Director.

## **Report Jet Noise**

There are now 160 Growlers, of which 118 are at NASWI. Currently, and through a couple of weeks into December, the Outlying Field at Coupeville (OLF) is closed down for maintenance, which means Ault Field will be even more active, with increased impact on San Juan County.

Please continue reporting Growler overflights on the County website. For tips on how to report jet noise, go to this webpage: <https://www.quietskies.info/access-the-county-report-site>

With the support of San Juan County, collection of jet noise reports has expanded beyond the County. This will provide consistent region-wide information for our elected officials.

## **RESTORE THE BALANCE**

Support the Sound Defense Alliance. We appreciate any size donation. Click here.

Remember to check for more information at the Quiet Skies and Facebook postings.

[www.quietskies.info](http://www.quietskies.info)

<https://www.facebook.com/quietskiesoversanjuancounty/>

**Please join the Sound Defense Alliance now.**

If you have not done this already, please sign up to be a member of the Sound Defense Alliance. <https://sounddefensealliance.org/take-action/join-us/>

Donations to the Sound Defense Alliance are greatly appreciated.



