

Navy plans to appeal sonar ruling

by UPI

LOS ANGELES - The U.S. Navy expects to appeal a federal judge's ban on using sonar in training missions off the Southern California coast. U.S. District Judge Florence Marie Cooper refused Monday to reconsider her ruling requiring the training missions to be done at least 12 miles offshore, the Los Angeles Times reported. The ban aims at protecting whales and dolphins, animals sensitive to underwater signals. The Navy had hoped to use the Santa Catalina basin as a stand-in for the Straits of Hormuz, where U.S. ships have recently been involved in confrontations with Iranian patrol boats. Cmdr. Jeff Davis, a Navy spokesman, said that the challenge to sonar use is giving the Defense Department "heartburn." "While we respect the court's decision and appreciate the care it took in crafting it, we cannot in good conscience send American sons and daughters into potential trouble spots without adequate training to defend themselves," Davis said. "This is a national security issue, and we must use all methods available to ensure that overly broad restrictions do not hamper our ability to train."

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