



The American Waterways Operators

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Peter J. Schrappen, CAE
Pacific Region Vice President & Regional Team Lead

June 30, 2025

VSFB Falcon Launch EIS
ManTech International Corporation
420 Stevens Avenue, Suite 100
Solana Beach, CA 92075

Re: EISX-007-57-USF-
1728547807

Dear Sir or Madam:

The American Waterways Operators (AWO) is the tugboat, towboat, and barge industry's advocate, resource, and united voice for safe, sustainable, and efficient transportation on America's waterways, oceans, and coasts. Our industry is the largest segment of the nation's domestic maritime fleet, supporting over 270,000 jobs and moving 665 million tons of cargo each year safely and efficiently. On behalf of AWO's more than 300 member companies, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Department of the Air Force's Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Authorizing Changes to the Falcon Launch Program at Vandenberg Space Force Base.

AWO appreciates SpaceX's attention to maritime vessel traffic in this and previous environmental reviews and its collaboration with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) to release Notices to Mariners (NOTMARs) during launching and landing operations. This partnership helps keep mariners safe, cargo moving, and our nation's critical infrastructure secure. Understanding the value of this collaborative effort, AWO recommends that SpaceX continue to work with the USCG to ensure that Ship Hazard Areas issued in NOTMARs are properly marked and include any areas where potential hazards to navigation related to SpaceX launch or landing/reentry activity could impact maritime operations.

If the establishment of a Limited Access Area (LAA) is deemed necessary during launch or landings, we urge the project team and USCG to engage with local commercial vessel operators and allow for a public comment period of at least 45 days to ensure LAAs do not place unnecessarily onerous restrictions on vessel operations. Creating a permanent safety zone that can periodically be enforced, as proposed for Space X's Boca Chica launch site, gives vessel operators a more predictable impact on their operations and allows them to proactively plan transits to avoid temporarily restricted areas. The notice of enforcement of an LAA like a permanent safety zone should be given at least three days prior to the enforcement period.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Authorizing Changes to the Falcon Launch Program at Vandenberg Space Force Base. AWO would be pleased to answer any questions or provide further information to assist in the review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Schrappe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Peter Schrappe
Pacific Region VP & Regional Team Lead