



Regulations for Safe Boating in the Potomac River Middle Danger Zone

Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD), Dahlgren, Virginia, provides the following information regarding its operations within the Middle Danger Zone (MDZ) of the Potomac River to promote watercraft safety in the vicinity. It does not apply to aircraft flying over the area.

1. The Potomac River MDZ is part of the large danger area described in the U.S. Coastal Pilot 3, Atlantic Coast, Sandy Hook to Cape Henry. Entry into this area is hazardous to watercraft when weapons testing is being conducted by NSWCDD for national defense purposes.
2. To ensure watercraft safety during testing in the MDZ, NSWCDD stations Range Control Boats (RCB) near the entrance to hazardous areas. These RCB are normally located near Lower Cedar Point (Buoy "R"), near the Potomac River – Nice/ Middleton Bridge, near Swan Point, Maryland (Buoy "O"), off shore near Colonial Beach, Virginia (Buoy "L"), and in the mouth of the Upper Machodoc Creek near Baber Point (Red #8 buoy).
3. When RCB are stationed in the MDZ, watercraft must not enter any portion of the danger area or operate in proximity thereof without first obtaining permission from the nearest RCB. A siren sounded from an RCB near the vicinity of watercraft is a signal to come alongside for instructions from the RCB captain on how to safely traverse the area and avoid hazardous operations.
4. Testing schedules are designed to minimize disruption to river traffic. Tests usually occur between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Occasionally, testing may take place at night or outside regular hours for special requirements or emergencies. In such cases, the Range Operations Center (ROC) will publish notifications to the public through NSWCDD's Public Affairs Office (PAO) and U.S. Coast Guard Broadcast Notice to Mariners.



NSWCDD ROC monitors VHF Marine Ship-to-Shore channels 14 and 16 during range operations on the MDZ and will respond to requests for range status.

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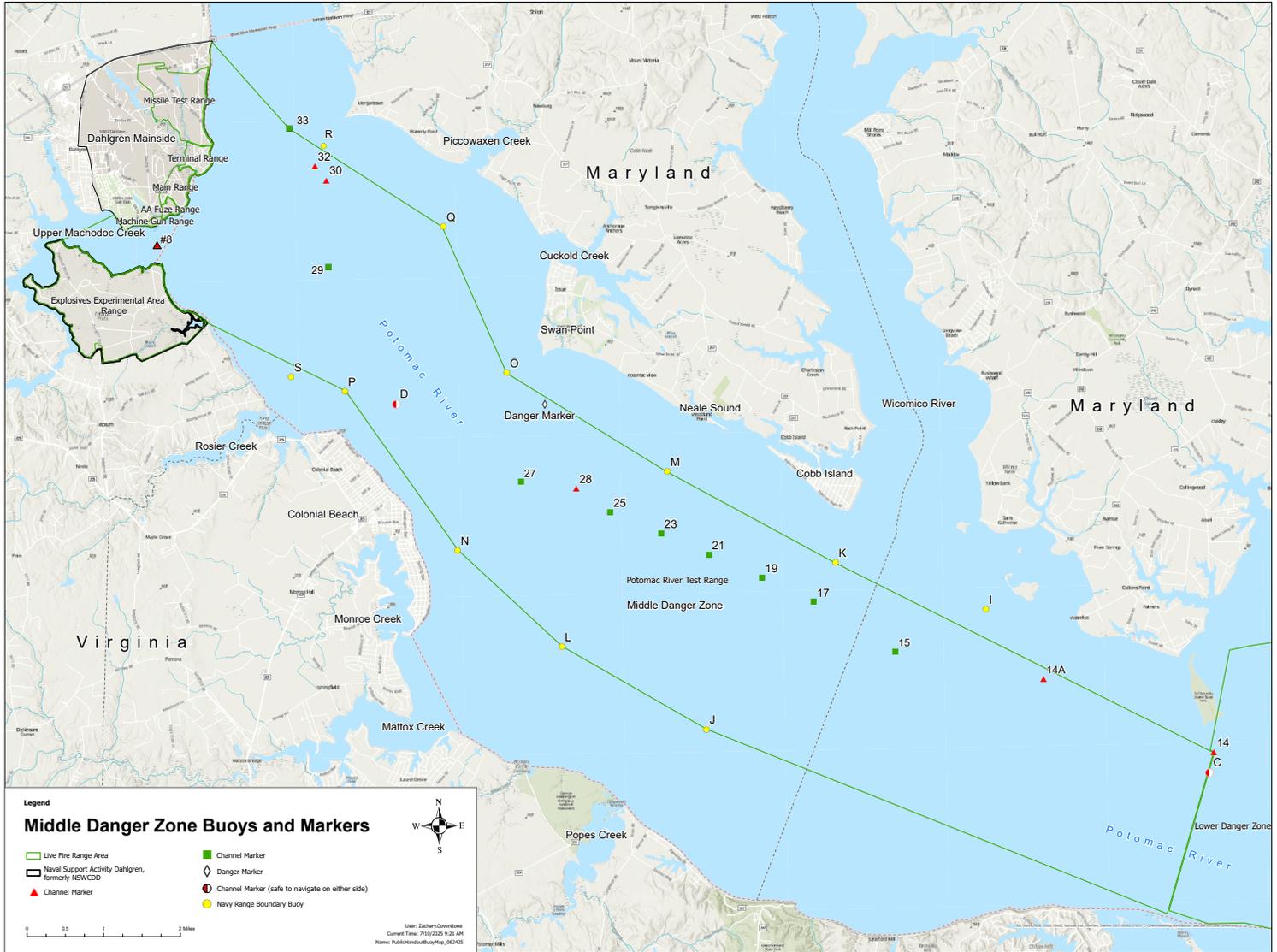
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5. When testing is in progress, entry into any part of the danger zone without specific clearance by proper authority (RCB Captains) is prohibited by regulations of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as authorized by federal law (Title 33, Sections 1 and 3 of the U.S. Code). NSWCDD strives to cooperate with, and assist, all watercraft operating in the Potomac River danger zones.

NOTE: The Middle Danger Area is Dahlgren's primary testing area on the Potomac River and is the area most often affected by boating restrictions. Very rarely will testing affect boaters in either the Upper or Lower Danger Area.

CAUTION! Live and inert military munitions have been fired into the Middle Danger Area of the Potomac River for over 100 years, creating a risk of encountering discarded military munitions or unexploded ordnance (UXO). These items are extremely hazardous and should not be touched or moved. If you discover a suspected munition or UXO, call 911 and request Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) support. Do not handle the item. Mark or photograph the location if safe to do so. EOD Mobile Unit 12 Detachment Dahlgren must also be notified via the 24-hour Naval District Washington Dispatcher at (540) 653-8291/8095. Stay at least 100 yards away from the Navy's shoreline; do not approach or anchor in this area.