



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
National Marine Sanctuary Program

West Coast Region
99 Pacific Street, Bldg. 200, Suite K
Monterey, CA 93940

January 7, 2011

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am sending you this letter and flyer to let you know that NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (NOAA Sanctuaries) is proposing to amend existing overflight regulations for Channel Islands, Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones and Olympic Coast national marine sanctuaries. Overflight regulations in national marine sanctuaries are not new and have been in place in most sanctuaries for decades. The proposed amendment would standardize the application of the existing regulations across the west coast sanctuaries to reflect a consistent and clear regulatory approach.

NOAA's primary goal is to ensure pilots are fully aware of the long-standing restrictions on low overflights within designated zones in west coast national marine sanctuaries. To that end, NOAA Sanctuaries is working with the FAA to revise the notation on aeronautical charts to indicate the sanctuaries overflight regulations. Improved pilot awareness of NOAA regulations for sensitive wildlife areas would result in improved compliance and thereby enhance protection of seabirds and marine mammals, and potentially reduce risk to pilots and aircraft from bird strikes.

NOAA published the proposed amendment on December 8, 2010 with a 30-day comment period (75 FR 76319). The public comment period has been extended an additional 30 days and comments will now be accepted through February 7, 2011 (76 FR 294). We welcome your comments, and request you post the flyer in a public area to encourage others in the aviation community to provide comment. Comments (identified by RIN 0648-AX79) will be accepted by any one of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- Mail: Debra Malek, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, 1305 East-West Highway, 11th floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

We welcome opportunities to work with you to provide information on sanctuary regulations that allow uses that are compatible with protecting our national ocean treasures.

Sincerely,

Carol Bernthal, Acting Regional Director
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

Olympic Coast
National Marine Sanctuary
115 E. Railroad Ave., Ste 301
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Cordell Bank
National Marine Sanctuary
P.O. Box 159
Olema, CA 94950

Gulf of the Farallones
National Marine Sanctuary
Building 991, Presidio of SF
San Francisco, CA 94129

Monterey Bay
National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940

Channel Islands
National Marine Sanctuary
113 Harbor Way
Santa Barbara, CA 93109



NOAA PROPOSES TO AMEND OVERFLIGHT REGULATIONS IN NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES



NOAA proposes to amend its existing regulations on low overflights within designated zones of CHANNEL ISLANDS, MONTEREY BAY, GULF OF THE FARALLONES, AND OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES (see 75 FR 76319 for proposed amendment published on December 8, 2010). The comment period has been extended an additional 30 days (see 76 FR 294, published January 5, 2011).

Comments may be submitted through February 7, 2011. You may submit comments identified by RIN 0648-AX79 by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submissions: submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>.**
- **Mail: Debra Malek, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, 1305 East-West Highway, 11th floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910.**

This would not be a new regulation, but rather would amend existing overflight regulations that have been in place in most sanctuaries for decades. The proposed amendment would standardize the application of the existing regulations across the west coast sanctuaries to reflect a consistent and clear regulatory approach.

NOAA's primary goal is to ensure pilots are fully aware of the long-standing restrictions on low overflights within designated zones in west coast national marine sanctuaries. To that end, NOAA Sanctuaries is working with the FAA to revise the notation on aeronautical charts to indicate the sanctuaries' overflight regulations. Improved pilot awareness of NOAA's regulations for sensitive wildlife areas would result in improved compliance and thereby enhance protection of seabirds and marine mammals, and potentially reduce risk to pilots and aircraft from bird strikes.

For more information about the proposed amendment, contact the following staff of the west coast national marine sanctuaries

- **Sean Hastings at (805) 884-1472 of Channel Islands;**
- **Scott Kathey at (831) 647-4251 of Monterey Bay;**
- **Karen Reyna at (415) 970-5247 of Gulf of the Farallones;**
- **Liam Antrim at (360) 457-6622 x16 of Olympic Coast.**