



**Contact:** Scott Kathey  
831-647-4251

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
January 13, 2011

## **NOAA Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Overflight Rule Change for Four National Marine Sanctuaries on West Coast**

Future aeronautical charts would include a reference to overflight regulations for four West Coast national marine sanctuaries under technical changes proposed by NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. The proposed change would not create a new regulation but would clarify existing overflight regulations that have been in place for many years in the Channel Islands, Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones and Olympic Coast sanctuaries.

Currently, overflight restriction zones for the sanctuaries are not clearly depicted on FAA aeronautical charts. NOAA is working with the FAA to change the notation on aeronautical charts from "recommended" to "required," which would provide appropriate notice to pilots and ensure the protection of resources under NOAA's stewardship.

Regulations for Monterey Bay, Channel Islands, Gulf of the Farallones and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuaries all restrict low altitude overflights within specified zones in each sanctuary (subject to certain exceptions) in order to protect marine mammals and seabirds from disturbance by aircraft.

At Monterey Bay, Channel Islands and Gulf of the Farallones, flights below 1,000 feet are restricted within the designated zones. At Olympic Coast, flights below 2,000 feet are restricted within one nautical mile of Flattery Rocks, Quillayute Needles or Copalis National Wildlife Refuge, or within one nautical mile seaward from the coastal boundary of the sanctuary.

A detailed description of the proposed changes is available at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/management/fr/75fr76319.pdf>. The public comment period has been extended and comments on the proposed changes will be accepted through Feb. 7, 2011.

Comments may be submitted electronically via the eRulemaking Portal ([www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov)), FDMS Docket Number NOAA-NOS-2009-0237; or by mail to Debra Malek, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, 1305 East-West Highway, 11th floor, Silver Spring, Md., 20910.

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NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
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