

Agencies with Overflight Regulations In Northern and Central California Coastal Areas

Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries

Prohibited or otherwise regulated activities include: Taking any marine mammal, sea turtle, or bird within or above the Sanctuary, except as authorized... [[15 CFR §922.82 \(a\)\(11\) and §922.132 \(a\)\(6\)](#)]

Take or taking means: (1) For any marine mammal, sea turtle, or seabird listed as either endangered or threatened pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect or injure, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct; (2) For any other marine mammal, sea turtle, or seabird, to harass, hunt, capture, kill, collect or injure, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. For the purposes of both (1) and (2) of this definition, this includes, but is not limited to, to collect any dead or injured marine mammal, sea turtle or seabird, or any part thereof; to restrain or detain any marine mammal, sea turtle or seabird, or any part thereof, no matter how temporarily; to tag any sea turtle, marine mammal or seabird; to operate a vessel or aircraft or to do any other act that results in the disturbance or molestation of any marine mammal, sea turtle or seabird. [[15 CFR §922.3](#)]

Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

Prohibited or otherwise regulated activities include: Disturbing marine mammals or seabirds by flying motorized aircraft at less than 1,000 feet over the waters within one nautical mile of the Farallon Islands, Bolinas Lagoon, or any Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) as designated by the State of California, except to transport persons or supplies to or from the Islands or for enforcement purposes. Failure to maintain a minimum altitude of 1,000 feet above ground level (AGL) over such waters is presumed to disturb marine mammals or seabirds. [[15 CFR §922.82 \(a\)\(8\)](#)]

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Prohibited or otherwise regulated activities include: Disturbing marine mammals or seabirds by flying motorized aircraft, except as necessary for valid law enforcement purposes, at less than 1,000 feet above any of the four zones within the Sanctuary described below. Failure to maintain a minimum altitude of 1,000 feet AGL above any such zone is presumed to disturb marine mammals or seabirds. [[15 CFR §922.132 \(a\)\(6\)](#)]

Pilots are required to remain above 1,000 feet AGL whenever flying within any of the four zones described below:

1. From mean high water to 3 nautical miles (nmi) offshore between a line extending from Pt. Santa Cruz on a southwesterly bearing of 220° true and a line extending from 2 nmi north of Pescadero Pt. on a southwesterly bearing of 240° true;
2. From mean high water to 3 nmi offshore between a line extending from the Carmel River mouth on a westerly bearing of 270° true and a line extending due west along latitude parallel 35.55488° N off of Cambria;
3. From mean high water and within a 5 nmi seaward arc from a center point of 36.80129° N, 121.79034° W (the end of the Moss Landing ocean pier as it appeared on the most current NOAA nautical charts as of January 1, 1993); and
4. Over the Sanctuary's jurisdictional waters of Elkhorn Slough east of the Highway One bridge to Elkhorn Road.

California Department of Fish and Game

“It is unlawful to fly any aircraft, including any airplane or helicopter...less than 1,000 feet above water or land over the California Sea Otter Game Refuge...except for rescue operations, in case of any emergency, or for scientific or filmmaking purposes under a permit issued by the Department after a review of potential biological impacts.” The Sea Otter Game Refuge requires pilots to fly above 1,000 feet AGL and extends inland to Highway 1, and out 3 nautical miles in designated areas. [[FGC 10501.5\(a\)](#)]

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Within a wildlife refuge: “The unauthorized operation of aircraft, including sail planes and hang gliders, at altitudes resulting in harassment of wildlife, or the unauthorized landing or take-off on a national wildlife refuge, except in an emergency, is prohibited. National wildlife refuge boundaries are delineated on updated FAA aeronautical charts.” [[50 CFR 27.34](#)]

Not on a wildlife refuge: “Except as otherwise authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 as amended, no person shall...(2) use an aircraft to harass any wildlife; or...” Definition: 19.4: Harass means to disturb, worry, molest, rally, concentrate, harry, chase, drive, herd, or torment.” [[50 CFR 19.11](#)]