

San Francisco / Pacifica Exemption Area

Federal Register v.57, no. 182, September 18, 1992:

“The boundary excludes a small area of approximately 71 square nautical miles off the north coast of San Mateo County and the City and County of San Francisco. The excluded area encompasses the anticipated discharge plume of the combined sewer overflow component of the City and County of San Francisco's sewage treatment program, the shipping channel providing access to and from San Francisco Bay, and the Golden Gate dredged material disposal site associated with this channel. NOAA has determined that the nature and level of these activities are not appropriate for inclusion within a national marine sanctuary. By excluding this small area from the Sanctuary, NOAA will be able to focus Sanctuary management on the long-term protection of other areas that contain nationally significant resources and qualities and are less heavily impacted by human activity. By excluding the anticipated discharge plume of the combined sewer overflow from the sanctuary, a buffer zone has been created protecting sanctuary resources and qualities from the discharge.”

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As part of the JMPR Update:

GFNMS staff may facilitate a public process in the next 5 years to consider whether the San Francisco Exemption Area (a.k.a. “the donut hole”) should be included into the MBNMS.

Such an action would require changing the MBNMS regulations and designation document and require coordination with MBNMS staff, and approval from the MBNMS Superintendent.

San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, City of Pacifica Mayor and City Council support inclusion of ‘the donut hole’

Administrative Process for Expanding Sanctuary

