Resolution of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Regarding Coast Guard Discharges in Sanctuary Waters

Whereas, the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (GFSAC) recognizes the cooperative relationship the U.S. Coast Guard has with the Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries and the challenges faced by the Coast Guard in accomplishing its missions; and

Whereas, the Advisory Council also recognizes the importance of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary being able to maintain the same high standards of conservation in the expanded Sanctuary areas as have been maintained in the original area of the Sanctuary since it was designated in 1981; and

Whereas, the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council has reviewed NOAA’s proposed Coast Guard discharge alternatives, and our recommendation is to support Sewage/Graywater Alternative 3 and Training Alternative 3 as interim measures until improved technologies and advanced treatment on modern vessels become available to the service; and

Whereas, in consideration of the precautionary principle and recognizing the advantages of adaptive management, the Advisory Council favors a permitting approach to provide the U.S. Coast Guard with the continued ability to maintain their operations now and in the future as circumstances indicate, without such being a precedent, rather than adding a permanent exception to the Sanctuary regulations; and

Now therefore be it resolved, that after review of NOAA’s proposed Coast Guard discharge alternatives, the Advisory Council hereby recommends supporting Sewage/Graywater Alternative 3 and Training Alternative 3 – the “no action” alternatives.