



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex
1 Marshlands Road
Fremont, California 94555



Wednesday, September 05, 2012

Memorandum

To: Federal Aviation Administration

From: Gerry McChesney, Farallon National Wildlife Refuge Manager

Subject: Unmanned Aerial Systems approval

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has requested support from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Denver, Colorado, regarding a project to use both Raven and T Hawk Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) to monitor gull hazing technique efficacy on the South Farallon Islands, California during the periods March 1 – April 15, 2013 and October 1, 2013 – February 1, 2014.

The project proposal indicates a necessity to fly these systems at low altitudes (100 – 400' AGL). Since FWS operates in an oversight capacity, I am authorized to grant permission to the USGS National UAS Project Office for low level flights. Based on the proposal, I believe that these systems have the potential to be a significantly cost-effective tool for monitoring the effectiveness of hazing gulls on the islands, especially in remote portions that are otherwise difficult to access and view. They will increase the information we have available to successfully complete the Farallon Island Restoration Project and ultimately provide conservation benefits to the very rare Ashy Storm-Petrel and the rest of the Farallon Islands ecosystem.

Please feel free to contact me at any time at (510) 792-0222, ext. 222 or <gerry_mcchesney@fws.gov>. Thank you.

cc: Susan Goplen, USGS
Mark Bauer, USGS
Dan Grout, Island Conservation