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United States Coast Guard District 11
ATTN: LTJG Samantha Hu
Coast Guard Island Building 50-2
Alameda, CA 94501-5100

March 28, 2024

Letter of Opposition to the Proposed Removal of the Santa Cruz Lighted Whistle Buoy SC (LLNR 4080)

Dear Lieutenant Junior Grade Hu,

The Pacific Ocean's waters along the Santa Cruz coast are a community asset and provide both opportunities and the environment for commercial, recreational, research, and educational aquatic activities. Thousands of residents, visitors, and commercial operators use and enjoy the waters along the Santa Cruz coast every year, and the City of Capitola greatly benefits from this tourism.

Santa Cruz County has a rich history of countless children and adults learning basic boating and navigation skills in the waters between the Santa Cruz Mile Buoy and the shoreline. During heavy weather and emergencies at sea, mariners may not be able to program and operate small electronic devices and should be able to rely on available audible and visual aids for safe navigation.

Weather and sea conditions frequently combine to create hazardous conditions for boaters, paddlers, swimmers, and surfers with varying degrees of experience and ability. The Santa Cruz Mile Buoy serves as the only physical reference point visible from the shore and is usable for directing rescuers to victims and distressed vessels. The Mile Buoy serves as a safety demarcation between the open ocean and calmer, near-shore waters. The City of Capitola believes the Santa Cruz Mile Buoy is critical and indispensable to the safety of all mariners navigating waters along the Santa Cruz coastline.

The City of Capitola opposes the United States Coast Guard's proposed removal of the Santa Cruz Lighted Whistle Buoy (LLNR 4080), known locally as the "Mile Buoy," and urges the Coast Guard to continue to maintain its aids to navigation as essential infrastructure for the safety of mariners.

Sincerely,

Kristen Brown
Mayor of the City of Capitola