

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PHOTO OPTION:

The endangered right whale is making a comeback; photo shows an inflatable right whale calf.

Sixth Annual Right Whale Festival Set for November 15 at Sea Walk Pavilion

Jacksonville Beach, FL – The sixth annual Right Whale Festival is set for 10am until 4pm on Saturday, November 15 at Sea Walk Pavilion. The fun event celebrates the annual return of the endangered North Atlantic right whale to its calving waters off our coast. Admission is free and highlights include live music with Split Tone, DANKA and The Crazy Daysies; local artists selling gift items; five right whale expert speakers; local food trucks; fun learning activities for kids; a beach cleanup with Keep Jacksonville Beautiful; 5K beach race and 2.5K beach walk with Performance Multisports; a silent auction tent with donated items; and local exhibitors promoting marine science education, conservation and outdoor recreation.

The festival was co-founded in 2009 and is sponsored by Sea to Shore Alliance and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Sea to Shore Alliance is a nonprofit that partners with NOAA and other groups to protect right whales. NOAA Fisheries is the federal agency responsible for the stewardship of the nation's living marine resources and their habitat.

JAXPORT is the Host Sponsor in a partnership with shipping companies that participate in the Right Whale Early Warning System designed to protect right whales. The shipping companies include Trailer Bridge, Diversified Port Holdings, TraPac Jacksonville, LLC, and Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics.

Ship strikes and entanglement in fishing gear are the major risks facing right whales during their annual migration along the east coast. The early warning system entails daily flights to spot right whales from the air. Sightings are reported to commercial and military vessels, harbor pilots, port authorities, and other professionals in the maritime industry. The effort has reduced the number of accidental ship strikes harming mother right whales and calves.

Other festival sponsors include Kayak Amelia, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University, Atlantic Pro Divers, Marine Science Research Institute at Jacksonville University, Georgia Aquarium, Freedom Boat Club, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, EU Jacksonville, First Street Gallery, HDR, Inc., University of North Florida, St. Johns Riverkeeper, Victory Casino Cruises, REI, AquaJax, Mayport Coastal Sciences Academy, Keep Jacksonville Beautiful, Zeta Brewing Company, North Florida Land Trust, Sun King Disc Sports, and Triple 3 Marketing. Learn more at RightWhaleFestival.com.

