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MEDIA ADVISORY

NOAA sponsors third annual right whale festival *FREE Public Event Marks the Start of Right Whale Migration Season*

NOAA Fisheries Service, Sea to Shore Alliance and other dedicated partners are hosting the third annual Right Whale Festival at the Sea Walk Pavilion on Jacksonville Beach, Fla., Saturday, **November 19**. The festival celebrates the endangered North Atlantic right whale's annual return to the southeast coast. These southern waters are the only known calving area for the species.

The family oriented event is FREE to the public and begins at 9:00am with a beach clean-up and 5K run. There will be displays, educational booths, games, prizes, live music, food and activities for children. For an entire schedule of events visit www.rightwhalefestival.org

Each winter right whales migrate south, more than 1,000 miles away from their feeding grounds off Canada and New England to the warm coastal waters of South Carolina, Georgia and northeast Florida. Festival attendees will be able to learn more about this migration pattern and the on-going efforts to protect the species. Marine mammal researchers and conservation group representatives will be available during the event to answer questions.

More information on North Atlantic right whales

For more information on the North Atlantic Right Whale please visit <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/mm/rightwhales/rwconservation.htm>

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources.

On the web:

NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>
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