



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 4, 2014

Contacts:

Kristi Birney, Environmental Defense Center, 805-963-1622

Dave Van Mullem, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, 805-961-8853

Sean Hastings, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, 805-729-5598

Katie Zacharkiw, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, (301) 608-3040

Slowing ships down for cleaner air and whale protection Six global shipping companies to participate in trial incentive program for Santa Barbara Channel

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — A coalition of government, non-profit and marine industry groups today announced the launch of a new trial incentive program in the Santa Barbara Channel to slow cargo ships down to reduce air pollution and increase protection of endangered whales.

Six global shipping companies, COSCO, Hapag Lloyd, K Line, Maersk Line, Matson, and United Arab Shipping Company are participating in the speed reduction incentive program and have identified ships in their fleets that will transit between Point Conception and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, from July-October 31, 2014, at speeds of 12 knots or less (reduced from typical speeds of 14-18 knots). Participating companies will receive \$2,500 per transit through the Santa Barbara Channel.

The trial program, developed and implemented by the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, and the Environmental Defense Center, is modeled after successful speed reduction incentive programs at the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles where over 90% of the shipping lines participate.

Ship strikes are a major threat to recovering endangered whale populations. In addition, ships emit greenhouse gases and air pollutants, and account for more than 50% of ozone-forming nitrogen oxides in Santa Barbara County.

"Few people realize that ships off our coast, especially those moving at faster speeds, are a risk to endangered whales and the quality of the air we breathe," said Kristi Birney of the Environmental Defense Center.

"Reducing ship speeds to 12 knots or less reduces emissions of smog-forming air pollutants that harm our health," said Dave Van Mullem, Director, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District. "We are pleased to be part of this partnership to achieve common goals, and excited about the potential for improving air quality in our county."

"Slowing ships down reduces the likelihood that a ship strike on a whale will be fatal," said Chris Mobley, Superintendent for the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. "We are extremely pleased with the positive response from the shipping industry to test non-regulatory, innovative

approaches to protect human health and the marine environment while maintaining vibrant maritime commerce.”

Currently, the program has funding to support 16 transits and the initial response has been extremely positive. The coalition received more than 30 ship transit requests to be included in the trial and is seeking additional funding to expand the trial.

“The Pacific Merchant Shipping Association is committed to finding solutions to both the air quality and whale protection issues based upon the best possible science,” said TL Garrett, Vice President, Pacific Merchant Shipping Association. “Our members are participating in this voluntary program to advance the science in order to find sustainable strategies to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and providing enhanced protection for the whales off our coasts.”

Maersk Line representative, Dr. Lee Kindberg, Director, Environment & Sustainability, North America, added, “The Santa Barbara Channel program is a logical extension of our other environmental initiatives. We appreciate this opportunity to help demonstrate the environmental and operational impacts of speed reductions in sensitive areas.”

A key to launching this vessel speed reduction program is participation from local and national foundations. The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation will manage the incentive payments with funding from the Santa Barbara Foundation and the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District. Payments will be provided upon verification of the ships’ speeds through the Channel, using Automatic Identification System monitors that receive speed and location data from the transponders on ships as they transit.

For additional information, see attached factsheet and map, or visit: [http://www.ourair.org/
http://channelislands.noaa.gov/management/resource/ship_strikes.html
http://environmentaldefensecenter.org/learn/current_cases/save_the_whales/index.html](http://www.ourair.org/http://channelislands.noaa.gov/management/resource/ship_strikes.html/http://environmentaldefensecenter.org/learn/current_cases/save_the_whales/index.html)

###

The **Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District** is a local government agency that works to protect the people and the environment of Santa Barbara County from the effects of air pollution.

NOAA’s Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1980 to protect marine resources surrounding San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa and Santa Barbara islands. The sanctuary spans approximately 1,470 square miles, extending from island shorelines to six miles offshore, and encompasses a rich diversity of marine life, habitats and historical and cultural resources.

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. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our other [social media channels](#).

The **Environmental Defense Center**, a non-profit law firm, protects and enhances the local environment through education, advocacy, and legal action and works primarily within Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo counties. Since 1977, EDC has empowered community based organizations to advance environmental protection. Program areas include protecting coast and ocean resources, open spaces and wildlife, and human and environmental health. Learn more about EDC at www.EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org