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Making Waves: Port of Hueneme Hosts “Sustaining the Seas Summit” in Recognition of World Oceans Day

Ocean experts, policymakers, and community leaders dive into the challenges facing our oceans and explore innovative solutions to protect California’s waters

PORT HUENEME, CA – August 18, 2026 – The Port of Hueneme marked World Oceans Day with its fourth annual “Sustaining the Seas Summit” on Tuesday, August 18, at the Channel Islands Maritime Museum in Oxnard.

The Summit brought together Port of Hueneme staff, environmentalists, maritime companies, and community organizations for robust discussions on sustainability and the challenges facing the world’s oceans.

“We have an ambitious but achievable goal to reach zero-emissions status at the Port of Hueneme by 2030,” said Oxnard Harbor District Board President Jason Hodge. “As leaders in clean port operations, it’s exciting to bring together leading minds in environmental stewardship in pursuit of real progress when it comes to protecting our oceans.”



Oxnard Harbor District Board President Jason Hodge delivers opening remarks at the 4th annual Sustaining the Seas Summit



Observed annually on June 8, World Oceans Day raises awareness about the critical role the world's oceans play in our ecosystems and communities. It highlights issues related to plastic waste, biodiversity, climate change, and wildlife.

This year's keynote speaker, Ocean Rainforest's Regulatory and Engagement Lead Kaira Wallace, delivered a presentation titled "Kelp us Farm," in which she highlighted aquaculture and explored innovative approaches to sustainably harvesting kelp for human consumption. Wallace's work focuses on navigating the complex environmental permitting processes while building a sustainable seaweed industry.



Kaira Wallace delivers a keynote speech at the Port of Hueneme's Sustaining the Seas Summit

Other sessions included "Below the Bubbles: A Dive into Underwater Noise," and "Whale Routes Revealed: A Youth Conversation on the Deep."

The Summit also serves as a backdrop for the Port of Hueneme and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to present their "Blue Whales Blue Skies" awards to shipping lines that have agreed to participate in NOAA's Vessel Speed Reduction Program that provides incentives to companies for incorporating sustainable shipping practices across their global supply chains. By lowering speed, vessels reduce the risk of whale strikes and decrease greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and underwater noise.

This year's recipients included Glovis, K Line, Champion Tankers, MOL ACE, Wallenius Wilhelmsen, Maersk, and NYK Line.



Sean Hastings, Policy, Information and Management Officer – NOAA Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District Air Pollution Control Officer Ali Reza Ghasemi prepare to present the Blue Whales Blue Skies Awards.

“The ocean is central to everything we do at the Port of Hueneme and we all must work together to protect its future,” said Kristin Decas, CEO and Port Director of the Port of Hueneme. “The Blue Whales Blue Skies Program illustrates how collaboration with our great ocean line customers can support the health of our marine ecosystem. We’re proud to recognize so many companies for doing their part to make our waters cleaner, quieter, and safer.”

The Port of Hueneme was the first Port Ambassador for the Blue Whales Blue Skies Program. In 2017, the organization became the first port in California to achieve Green Marine certification. The third-party certification program measures environmental performance across the maritime industry. During its 2025 recertification, the Port achieved its highest scores on record.

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About the Port of Hueneme: *The Port of Hueneme is one of the most productive and efficient commercial trade gateways for niche cargo on the West Coast. Five locally elected Port Commissioners govern the Port. The Port consistently ranks among the top ten U.S. Ports for automobiles and fresh produce. Port operations support the community by bringing \$2.8 billion in economic activity and creating 25,000 trade-related jobs. Trade through the Port of Hueneme generates more than \$236 million in direct and related state and local taxes, which fund vital community services. In 2017, the Port of Hueneme became the first Port in California to become Green Marine certified and was voted the Greenest Port in the U.S. at the Green Shipping Summit.*