

Big Growth in Responsible Shipping: Announcing 2025 Vessel Speed Reduction Season Results and Rankings

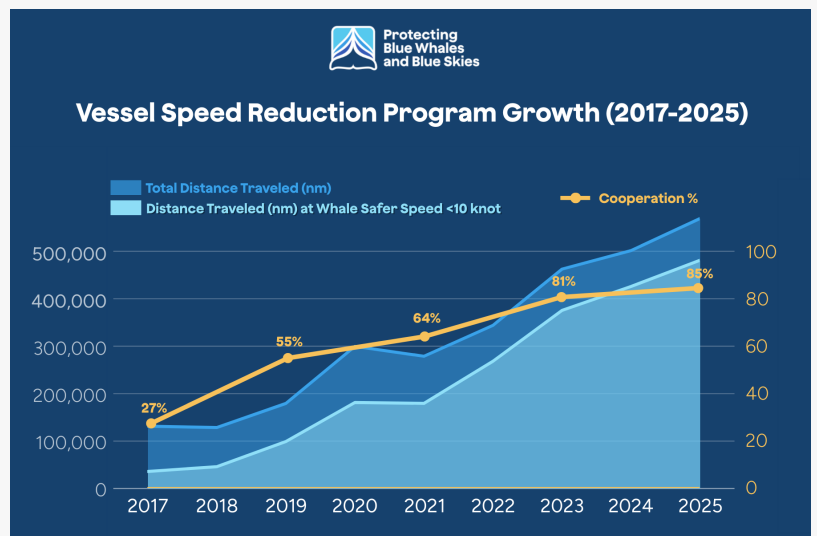
Shipping Industry Rises to Challenge of Larger Zones and Higher Award Thresholds

CA, UNITED STATES, February 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies \(BWBS\)](#) is proud to report the [2025 Vessel Speed Reduction \(VSR\) Season results](#) from the efforts of participating shipping lines. Over the VSR Season, from May 1, 2025 to January 15, 2026, 787 participating vessels traveled over 481,000 nautical miles at whale-safer speeds of 10 knots or less. This is up from ~425,900 nautical miles and 743 participating vessels in the prior 2024 VSR Season.

The VSR zones were expanded in 2025 to include Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS), increasing the coverage of important whale habitat off California's coast by ~2,600 square miles. To support greater conservation impact, the award category thresholds based on a fleet's total distance traveled at 10 knots or less were also increased, Blue Sky (50-69%), Gold (70-89%) and Sapphire (90%+). For each category below, awardees are listed in order by highest total fleet distance at whale-safer speeds.



Photo Credit: Adam Ernster



The BWBS Program grew significantly from 2017 to 2024, with whale-safe transit miles increasing nearly five times as the overall fleet cooperation rate climbed from 27% to 85%.

Top Sapphire Award Winners with 90%+ cooperation rate (up from 85% in 2024) include these twenty-two lines: CMA CGM; MSC; COSCO; NYK-RoRo; Yang Ming; OOCL; Hapag-Lloyd; Marathon Petroleum; OSG Ship Management; ConocoPhillips Polar Tankers; CSL Americas; Wan Hai Lines; Scorpio Group; Seaspans Corporation; Swire Shipping; BP Shipping Ltd.; Campbell Shipping Company; GoldenKing Ship Management Co.; Toyofuji Shipping Co.; Unity Ship Management; Hakuyo Kisen KK; and Nhat Viet Transportation Corporation.



Gold Award Winners with 70-89% cooperation rate (up from 60-84% in 2024) include these ten lines: Maersk; ONE; Evergreen; Mol ACE; Wallenius Wilhelmsen; Liberty Maritime; Eastern Pacific Shipping; Unisea Shipping Ltd; CanforNav; and Weihai Weitong Marine Shipping Co.

Blue Sky Award Winners with 50-69% cooperation rates (up from 35-59% in 2024) include these ten lines: Hyundai (UCC); K Line; Hyundai Glovis; D'Amico Group; Swire Bulk; Champion Tankers AS; Anglo-Eastern Shipmanagement; MT Maritime Management USA; Asan Merchant Marine Co. LTD; and Shih Wei Navigation.

BWBS also provides special recognition to program ambassadors that have demonstrated a high level of commitment to shipping with or working with participating shipping lines. Ambassadors play a critical role in growing awareness for responsible shipping and supporting the efforts of top performing lines. These companies are:

Sapphire Award (90%+ eligible shipments with participating lines): JAS Worldwide, Who Gives A Crap, and Nomad Goods

Gold Award (70-89%): The Block Logistics, and Port of Oakland (port award level determined by percent of calls by participating lines)

BWBS is especially proud that two of our logistics and freight forwarder companies are ranked in our top award categories, and helping more companies find opportunities to ship whale-safer.

"Being recognized once again as a Sapphire Ambassador is both an honor and a responsibility we deeply value. BWBS continues to show that collaborative action can deliver real impact,

protecting whales, reducing emissions, and helping raise our industries' standards. We are proud to work alongside carriers and partners who share this commitment and continue advancing sustainable practices together," said Andrea Goeman, SVP Global QHSE & Sustainability for JAS Worldwide.

"Meaningful change happens when good intentions meet practical action. Our role is to serve as a connector — supporting BWBS' mission by translating its goals into real-world shipping decisions through data visibility, education, and transparent reporting that enable growing importers to participate meaningfully," said Sami Romano, Sales Enablement & Marketing Manager for The Block Logistics.

Whale Protection and Air Quality

Two distinct but well-aligned issues are at the heart of BWBS: protecting coastal air quality and endangered whales.

First, ship strikes are one of the top threats to whales globally and are of greatest concern in whale hot spots that overlap with major international shipping and cruise routes — as is the case for California's coastal waters. Ships transit at whale-safer speeds of 10 knots or less, reduce the risk of fatal ship strikes by as much as 50%. Ocean noise from ships is also reduced.

Second, air pollution is a major issue for California - with its onshore winds, unique geography and climate, and density of mobile source emissions . Notably, ocean-going vessels account for as much as 50% of some coastal counties' air pollution. Ships transiting at 10 knots or less, can reduce air pollution by ~30%.

For these reasons, BWBS has worked for over a decade to engage and support voluntary industry action on VSR requests by verifying cooperation, analyzing the environmental benefits, and celebrating industry cooperation and leadership. Efforts by industry to achieve high cooperation rates with VSR is no small feat, which is why they will be celebrated in an upcoming BWBS award ceremony.

"We are so proud to recognize the sustained and growing efforts by the commercial cargo industry on these voluntary conservation measures, and especially want to recognize the lines that achieved Sapphire this year, as well as those that enrolled for the first time. Each whale-safer voyage makes a measurable impact, and we're looking forward to sharing the final environmental benefits calculations from the 2025 season in the coming months." - Jess Morten, California Marine Sanctuary Foundation

Becca Tucker
Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies
becca@californiamsf.org

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