

The Central Coast—Built to Prove What's Next in Autonomous Systems and Advanced Air Mobility

California's Central Coast is one of the world's most dynamic and mature hubs for Autonomous Systems and Advanced Aircraft innovation and production. Spanning six counties from Santa Cruz to Ventura, the region is home to market-leading electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) and uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) firms, world-class dual-use research assets, versatile testing environments, and deep engineering and precision manufacturing expertise.

Advanced Aircraft technologies—including eVTOL vehicles, hydrogen-fueled aircraft, and drones—are poised to transform transportation, logistics, defense, emergency response, and wildfire abatement. As adoption accelerates, the Central Coast is uniquely positioned to shape the emerging low-altitude economy.

The Uplift Central Coast Coalition, led by the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, REACH, and the Economic Development Collaborative, unites the six-county region to grow the Autonomous Systems and Advanced Aircraft sectors.

UPLIFT COALITION IS A COLLABORATION OF:

REACH
Ideas • Action for a Thriving Central Coast

MB Monterey Bay
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

EDC ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COLLABORATIVE



KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

A CONCENTRATION OF EVTOL AND UAS LEADERS

Home to three of the four leading U.S. eVTOL companies—Archer Aviation, Joby Aviation, and Wisk Aero—alongside a deep concentration of UAS innovators, counter-UAS leaders, and Advanced Aircraft supply chain manufacturers.

COMPLEMENTING AUTONOMOUS SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP AND UNCREWED UNDERWATER VEHICLES (UUV)

The region's Advanced Aircraft ecosystem extends to autonomous water vehicles, with Naval Base Ventura County's Point Mugu Sea Range serving as a hub for UUV testing, R&D, and commercialization alongside its UAS mission.

A DUAL-USE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ENGINE

Federal defense assets—including the Naval Postgraduate School, Naval Base Ventura County, two NavalX Tech Bridge locations, and the JIFX program—alongside UC Santa Cruz, Cal Poly SLO, and UC Santa Barbara anchor a dynamic culture of innovation.

EXTENSIVE TESTING ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Uncongested airspace, diverse terrain, military facilities including Point Mugu Sea Range, Camp Roberts, and Fort Hunter Liggett, and the CAAMCI FAA-aligned multi-airport network make this one of the most versatile Advanced Aircraft testing environments in the country.

A DEEP AND SPECIALIZED TALENT PIPELINE

Seven decades of aerospace and precision manufacturing, combined with university engineering programs throughout California, has produced deep talent in advanced engineering, production, and aviation systems—sustained through apprenticeships, community college training, and high school STEM programs.

A REGION MOBILIZED FOR GROWTH

Business, government, civic leaders, military agencies, and K-16 institutions share a long-term strategy focused on talent, business attraction, testing access, infrastructure, and state incentives that strengthen the region's competitive position.

Join a region harnessing the power of **convergence**: where innovation meets opportunity, collaboration meets scale, and momentum meets its moment. There's no place like this.

FOR THE FULL REGIONAL PROSPECTUS AND DETAILED MARKET DATA, VISIT: UPLIFTCENTRALCOAST.ORG



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COLLABORATIVE

Economic Development Collaborative (EDC)

Ventura and Santa Barbara counties and their surrounding air-sea-land terrain form the operational proving ground of the Central Coast and a hotbed of autonomous systems growth. With one of the nation's densest surface-to-sea test ranges and defense research assets, this region enables companies to validate performance in complex, real-world environments, employing the mission-ready talent graduating from these programs to accelerate commercialization while strengthening national security capabilities.

MULTI-DOMAIN TESTING & DUAL-USE COMMERCIALIZATION ENGINE

Unmatched terrain, defense relationships and proximity to commerce centers build the Central Coast advantage. Successful business attraction also encourages spin-offs.

THE ULTIMATE DUAL-USE RESEARCH HUB

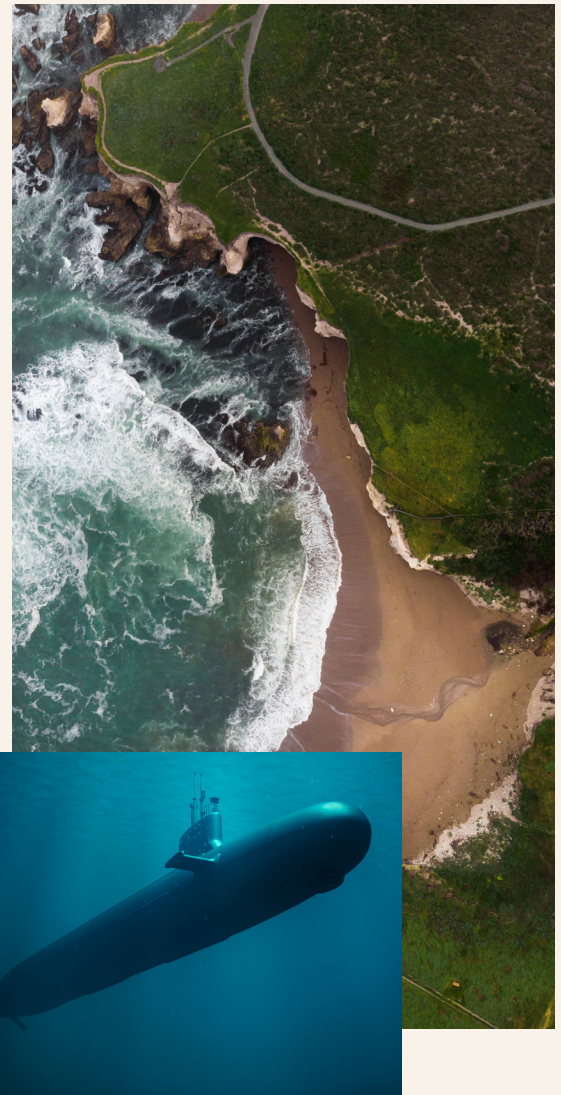
Ventura County is home to the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit Lemoore Detachment (DET) Point Mugu, located at Naval Base Ventura County, which supports the Navy's future fleet of Northrop Grumman MQ-4C Triton long-range UAS. ANTX-Coastal Trident (ANTX-CT) exercise program hosted at Naval Base Ventura County and the Port of Hueneme is an annual collaborative event where the Navy, local law enforcement, academia, and industry partners test emerging maritime and port security technologies in real-world environments.

A DEEP AND SPECIALIZED TALENT PIPELINE

Mission-ready talent supports all growth: beyond filling open roles, a strategic, forward-looking approach to talent development ensures a workforce capable of supporting current operations and driving future expansion and innovation across all business units.

BEYOND FLIGHT: AUTONOMOUS SYSTEMS FOR SEA

Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) is a primary hub for uncrewed surface and undersea systems development, hosting specialized squadrons that test and operate large uncrewed surface and undersea vessels (USVs/UUVs). Key projects tested or based there include the Manta Ray UUV, Boeing's Orca Extra-Large UUV, and various autonomous surface drones like Sea Hunter and Seahawk.



ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS:

- California State University, Channel Islands (CSUCI)
- Moorpark College
- Oxnard College
- Ventura College
- California Lutheran University (CLU)
- Thomas Aquinas College
- CET - Oxnard
- University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB)
- Santa Barbara City College (SBCC)
- Allan Hancock College
- Antioch University Santa Barbara

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