

First of 3 New Coast Guard Cutters Arrives to Homeport in Kodiak, Alaska



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KODIAK, Alaska – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter John Witherspoon (WPC 1158) arrived at the cutter's new homeport in Kodiak, Tuesday. The cutter is scheduled to be commissioned during a ceremony in April.

The Witherspoon is the first of three Fast Response Cutters (FRCs) scheduled to be homeported at Coast Guard Base Kodiak and is now the fourth FRC currently based in Alaska. While these ships will be homeported in Kodiak, they will operate throughout the 17th Coast Guard District to include the U.S. Arctic, Gulf of Alaska, and Bering Sea.

The crew of the Witherspoon will carry out integral Coast

Guard missions such as maritime law enforcement and security, living marine resources, and search and rescue. They will provide security for Alaskan coastal communities as they continue to utilize the ocean for their livelihoods while preserving Alaska's living marine resources in conjunction with our partner agencies.

"The crew is humbled to be associated to a namesake honoring Capt. John G. Witherspoon, a trailblazer who found enjoyment and purpose in leading and mentoring others," said Lt. Cmdr. Adam Young, commanding officer of the Witherspoon. "It is fitting that the cutter's first sail was no tall order, stretching more than 7,000 nautical miles from Key West to Kodiak. Throughout the last five months, the crew displayed remarkable teamwork and resilience, a true testament to the core values Capt. Witherspoon epitomized throughout his illustrious career. I couldn't be prouder of the team we have onboard, and I look forward to experiencing the beauty of Alaska once again."

The new FRCs arriving in Alaska are designed to replace the service's fleet of 110-foot cutters that are projected to be decommissioned this year. The Coast Guard is currently scheduled to have six FRCs operating throughout Alaska by the end of 2025 to reinforce our maritime boundaries and shorten on-scene response times to support search and rescue efforts and better serve the people of Alaska.

FRCs feature advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance equipment as well as over-the-horizon response boat deployment capability and improved habitability for the crew. The ships can reach speeds of 28 knots and are equipped to coordinate operations with partner agencies and long-range Coast Guard assets such as the Coast Guard's National Security Cutters.

FRCs are 154-foot multi-mission ships designed to conduct drug and migrant interdictions; ports, waterways and coastal

security operations; fisheries and environmental protection patrols; national defense missions; and search and rescue. Each cutter is designed for a crew of 24, has a range of 2,500 miles and is equipped for patrols up to five days. The FRCs are part of the Coast Guard's overall fleet modernization initiative.