Navy Commissions Submarine USS Idaho

By Navy Chief Petty Officer Darren Moore, Submarine Readiness Squadron 32



Sailors assigned to the Virginia-class fast attack submarine USS Idaho (SSN 799) man the rails during a commissioning ceremony at Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Conn. on April 25, 2026. *Photo credit: U.S. Navy | John Narewski*

The U.S. Navy commissioned the submarine USS Idaho in a traditional ceremony at Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Connecticut, April 25.

The ceremony marked the culmination of a multiyear construction process and officially brought the USS Idaho into the fleet. It is the fifth Navy vessel named for the Gem State. The most recent predecessor, USS Idaho, was a battleship commissioned in 1919 that earned seven battle stars for its service during World War II, including action at Iwo

Jima and Okinawa, Japan.

Sen. James Risch of Idaho delivered the principal address as the ceremony's keynote speaker.

Hung Cao, acting Navy secretary, also delivered remarks, emphasizing the strategic importance of the new submarine.

"We are a maritime nation, bordering on both the Atlantic and the Pacific . Our commerce depends on safe and secure sea lanes of communication," Cao said. "President Trump's commission to our military is simple: to achieve peace through strength. The USS Idaho joins the fleet ready to answer the call to action, in any ocean, at any time."

Navy Cmdr. Chad J. Guillerault, commanding officer of the Idaho, addressed the attendees, speaking on behalf of the crew and the submarine's rich heritage.

"The Idaho connection is more than a name, it is a legacy – a legacy built before us that is being reborn today," Guillerault declared. "I am incredibly proud to be the commissioning captain of a vessel so steeped in tradition … and most importantly, honored to be the captain of a crew so mighty that they have outshone all those before them."

The ship's sponsor, Teresa Stackley, gave the traditional order to "man our ship and bring her to life," at which point the crew ceremonially ran aboard to man the submarine.

"This moment is for you, Cmdr. Guillerault, and your crew," Stackley said. "Please note that when you sail, my heart sails with you."

The Idaho is the 26th Virginia-class submarine and the eighth of the advanced Block IV configuration. The ship was christened on March 16, 2024, at the shipyard in Groton.

As the newest submarine to join the fleet, the Idaho brings cutting-edge warfighting capability to the nation's undersea

forces. Virginia-class submarines feature enhanced stealth, sophisticated surveillance capabilities and special warfare enhancements to meet the Navy’s multimission requirements.

These submarines are 7,800 tons, 377 feet in length and have a beam of 34 feet. They are powered by a nuclear reactor plant that will not require refueling during the planned life of the ship, reducing lifecycle costs and increasing operational availability.

The commissioning of the USS Idaho reinforces the Navy’s commitment to maritime superiority and national security. For 250 years, American naval power has projected strength across the globe. That mission continues and intensifies with the addition of the nation’s most advanced undersea assets.