NOAA, partners cut ribbon on new pier, port facility in Charleston



Commerce Department Deputy Secretary Paul Dabbar and NOAA Administrator Neil Jacobs, Ph.D., (fourth and third from the right, respectively) joined other leadership and partners to cut a celebratory ribbon draped across the entrance to NOAA's newest pier and port facility in Charleston, South Carolina, July 8, 2026. Photo credit: NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations | Maideline Sanchez.

Leadership from the Department of Commerce and NOAA joined partners July 8 in celebrating the official opening of NOAA's newest facility for marine operations, NOAA's Charleston Port Facility. The facility, home to NOAA ships Ronald H. Brown and Nancy Foster, will enhance NOAA's capacity to conduct critical research missions in the Atlantic.

The ships in NOAA's Atlantic fleet collect data essential to

protecting marine mammals, coral reefs and historic shipwrecks, managing commercial fisheries, producing nautical charts that help keep mariners safe, and deploy and maintain buoys that gather oceanographic and weather information and warn of tsunamis.

“Today, we cut the ribbon on an innovative, next-generation maritime home port,” said NOAA Administrator Neil Jacobs, Ph.D. “This crucial investment in our marine infrastructure will help ensure NOAA’s fleet can continue to deliver the critical observations and data that protect lives, strengthen our economy, and advance our nation’s security.”

In 2023, NOAA awarded $59.8 million to Manson Construction Company to renovate the agency’s pier facility in North Charleston. The renovations included demolishing the existing pier and building a new 62-by-360-foot floating pier that includes shoreside power for ships. Additional improvements include a warehouse and a small boat pier for operations. The state-of-the-art floating pier, one of the largest in the country, was successfully launched and precisely positioned earlier this year.

“This pier and facility are integral to safe and efficient research ship operations in the Atlantic,” said Rear Adm. Chad M. Cary, NOAA Corps director and NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations assistant administrator. “The new infrastructure allows both NOAA ships homeported in Charleston to once again have designated berths and better accommodate research missions in the area.“