

# USS Wichita departs Naval Station Mayport to support Operation NANOOK TUUGAALIK 2026



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CARIBBEAN SEA – (July 4, 2021) – The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Billings (LCS 15) participates in a maritime training exercise with the Freedom-variant littoral combat ships USS Wichita (LCS 13), and USS Sioux City (LCS 11), July 4, 2021. This exercise marks the first time three Freedom-variant littoral combat ships are deployed and operating together. Sioux City, Wichita, and Billings are deployed to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations to support Joint Interagency Task Force South's mission, which includes counter-illicit drug trafficking missions in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication

Specialist 2nd Class Marianne Guemo/Released)

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. — Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Wichita (LCS 13) departed Naval Station Mayport, Aug. 7, to participate in Operation NANOOK TUUGAALIK 2026, the maritime component of Canada's premier Arctic exercise.

Operating alongside naval forces from Canada, Denmark, and France, Wichita will strengthen interoperability with allied and partner nations while conducting advanced maritime operations across the Labrador Sea, Davis Strait, and Greenlandic fjords. The deployment reinforces shared commitments to regional security, freedom of navigation, and stability throughout the North Atlantic and Arctic.

"Operation NANOOK TUUGAALIK provides an exceptional opportunity to train alongside our closest Allies in one of the world's most strategically important maritime regions," said Cmdr. Richard Dunn, commanding officer of Wichita. "Our Sailors are prepared to operate in the High North, strengthen allied interoperability, and demonstrate the professionalism and adaptability that define the U.S. Navy."

Throughout the exercise, Wichita will participate in maritime domain awareness operations, search and rescue scenarios, tactical maneuvering, and integrated naval training designed to improve multinational coordination in Arctic and sub-Arctic environments.

Operation NANOOK is the Canadian Armed Forces' signature Arctic operation and demonstrates the collective ability of Allied and partner nations to operate together in the High North. The annual TUUGAALIK maritime phase enhances readiness through realistic training that strengthens interoperability, improves maritime awareness, and reinforces the rules-based international order.

As part of the U.S. Navy's forward maritime presence, Wichita's participation reflects the United States' enduring

commitment to Arctic security and cooperation with Allies and partners in an increasingly strategic region.

Reactivated in 2018, U.S. 2nd Fleet commands assigned maritime forces across the western and eastern Atlantic and the Arctic, employing combat-ready naval forces to defend the maritime approaches to the United States, strengthen NATO interoperability, and deter aggression alongside Allies and partners.