

NOAA cuts ribbon on renovated Ketchikan, Alaska port facility



A long line of special guests, including NOAA Administrator Dr. Rick Spinrad (5th from the left), participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the NOAA-renovated port facility in Ketchikan, Alaska, on August 21, 2023. (Image credit: NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations)

[Release from NOAA](#)

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Today, federal, tribal, state and local officials joined NOAA leadership to cut the ribbon on the agency's newly renovated port facility in Ketchikan, Alaska. The celebration was held to dedicate the facility and recognize the important partnerships in the area.

The facility will provide vessel support for NOAA research ships. The facility will also support [NOAA Ship Fairweather](#), which is homeported in Ketchikan.

"Having a home base for NOAA to operate from in Alaska is integral to our science, and mission to ensure safe navigation and the growth of our blue economy," said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. "This facility incorporates the latest green technology and is climate-ready with a state of the art floating pier to accommodate not only Ketchikan's tidal flux, but future sea level changes."

[NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations](#) awarded an \$18.7 million contract in April 2021 to Alaska-based Ahtna Infrastructure & Technologies, LLC to make major improvements to the facility.

The project, which was partially funded by the state of Alaska, includes the construction of a new office building, floating pier, and boat ramp. Additional improvements include updated power, sewer, communications, and water utility systems for servicing visiting ships.

“This state of the art facility positions us to better support emerging technologies, such as uncrewed systems, and be more efficient in our operational readiness for Alaska-focused science,” said Rear Adm. Chad Cary, deputy director of the [NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps](#) and NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations. “It also positions us closer to the Arctic, which will continue to grow in importance for our fisheries and seafloor mapping missions.”

The 15 research and survey ships operated, managed and maintained by NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations, comprise the largest fleet of federal research ships in the nation. NOAA ships range from large oceanographic research vessels capable of exploring the world’s deepest ocean, to smaller ships responsible for charting the shallow bays and inlets of the U.S. The fleet supports a wide range of marine activities, including fisheries surveys, nautical charting and ocean and climate studies. NOAA ships are operated by NOAA Corps officers and [civilian professional mariners](#).