

New Home Port for Ferdinand R. Hassler



NOAA's survey ship, the Ferdinand R. Hassler, arrived at her new home port of New Castle, New Hampshire, USA, earlier this month and began her first New Hampshire survey project. Hassler was commissioned in Norfolk, Virginia, in June 2012. She has been undergoing sea trials, training and certification, and responded to Hampton Roads' request for rapid survey assistance after Hurricane Sandy last year.

Hassler will operate mainly along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, Caribbean Sea and Great Lakes, acquiring data to update NOAA's nautical charts. Her mission, however, is not limited to collecting bathymetry, explains retired NOAA Capt. Andy Armstrong, co-director of the [Joint Hydrographic Center/Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping](#) at the University of New

Hampshire.

Local government officials have provided a warm welcome to *Hassler's* crew. The first cooperative project is coming up, during the survey project that started this week. While charting the approaches to New Hampshire, *Hassler* will be a testing platform for a new autonomous underwater vehicle currently being analysed by the Office of Coast Survey and UNH researchers.

The *Ferdinand R. Hassler* is a mapping vessel. The 124-foot ship will conduct basic hydrographic surveys of the sea floor using sidescan and multibeam sonar technologies. The ship is also equipped to deploy buoys and unmanned submersibles and conduct general oceanographic research. Her twin-hull design is particularly suited to NOAA's mission to map the ocean floor, as it is more stable than a single-hull vessel.

Image: NOAA Ship Ferdinand R Hassler entering New Castle as home port. Image courtesy: NOAA.

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