

News and stories

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams arriving Thursday at Naval Station Norfolk

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NAVAL STATION NORFOLK, Va. – The U.S. Navy's newest is on its way to Hampton Roads.

Officials say the USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams will arrive Thursday if all goes as planned.

The USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams is on its way from San Diego, California, as part of her maiden voyage.

The Navy's Military Sealift Command was delivered the USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams in February 2018. It is the second purpose build ESB in the Navy's fleet. The USS Lewis B. Puller, the Navy's first ESB, is operating now in the Middle East.

The 784ft.-long vessel features a 52,000 square-foot flight deck, fuel and equipment storage, repair spaces, magazines, and mission-planning spaces. Able to accommodate up to 250 personnel, USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams will support multiple missions, such as air mine counter measures, counter-piracy operations, maritime security operations, humanitarian aid and disaster relief missions and crisis response operations. The ship has hybrid-manned crew with a combination of military personnel and civilian mariners,

according to Navy officials.

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams is named after the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima.

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams is the expeditionary sea base-variant of the expeditionary transfer dock (ESD) which includes USNS Montford Point (T-ESD 1), USNS John Glenn (T-ESD 2) and USS Lewis B. Puller (T-ESB 3). USS Lewis B. Puller was later commissioned as a warship and currently carries the "USS" designation.

The third expeditionary sea base, USNS Miguel Keith (T-ESB 5), is currently under construction by General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO) in San Diego, California.