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## "Green Ship" USS Makin Island Brought to Life in San Diego

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**! Top Story**

From Surface Forces Public Affairs

NORTH ISLAND, Calif. (NNS) -- USS Makin Island (LHD 8) was formally commissioned today (Oct 24) in a ceremony on Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI).

The ship dubbed the "Prius of Navy warships," arrived in San Diego in mid-September, three years after her christening. She brought over 1,000 Sailors and their families to the San Diego community.

"I am proud this ship, and that her Sailors, Marines, and families will all call San Diego 'home'," said Congresswoman Susan Davis, the senior U.S. government official present. "It is great to have a new, 'green,' addition to San Diego. Each of you contributes to mission success and to our great community."

Adm. Patrick Walsh, commander, Pacific Fleet, the event's principal speaker, addressed the impact of Makin Island on the fleet.

"USS Makin Island represents the US Navy's long standing commitment to both the defense of our nation and ensuring security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond," said Walsh. "This commissioning also marks a new and significant chapter in the US Navy's history. The Navy will look to the USS Makin Island as the example as we move aggressively forward with plans to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and other hazardous chemicals."

Makin Island is the final amphibious assault ship built in the LHD-1 Wasp-class, but is the first of the class built with gas turbine engines and electric drive. The Navy projects that this advance will save nearly \$250 million in fuel costs over the ship's lifetime. The development is already paying off -- during the ships transit from Pascagoula, Miss., to San Diego, Makin Island consumed over 900,000 gallons less fuel than a steam ship completing the same transit, saving more than \$2 million in fuel costs. Other environmentally-friendly initiatives include the use of an electric plant to power auxiliaries, meaning no steam or associated chemicals; and the use of reverse osmosis water purification systems that negate the need for chemicals like bromine or chlorine.

"This warship significantly enhances our joint Navy and Marine Corps capability," said Vice Adm. D.C. Curtis, commander, Naval Surface Forces. "In support of our nation's maritime strategy, it possesses the ability to rapidly respond to emergent tasking anywhere, anytime."

It was quite a day for Capt. Bob Kopas, commanding officer, USS Makin Island, who guided the ship and her Sailors through over four years of construction and trials. He gave thanks to the crew for working together to reach a momentous occasion.

"You have shown the metal you are made of every day," Kopas said. "In Mississippi you demonstrated your humanity by rebuilding playgrounds that were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, and during our port visits in South America you demonstrated your compassion by volunteering your off-duty time to renovate schools and other community facilities. Over the past four years, the dedication and enthusiasm you have shown has been the 'flames' which have heated the metal of our ship, making her able to meet the challenges of our nation and the Navy over the next 40 years and beyond."

For more news from USS Makin Island, visit [www.navy.mil/local/lhd8/](http://www.navy.mil/local/lhd8/)



090717-N-0860R-088 CARIBBEAN SEA (July 17, 2009) The amphibious assault ship Pre-Commissioning Unit Makin Island (LHD 8) transits the Caribbean Sea. Makin Island departed Pascagoula, Miss., July 10 and is currently circumnavigating South America via the Strait of Magellan to its new homeport of San Diego. During its transit, the ship will make port visits in Brazil, Chile and Peru. Makin Island is the final amphibious assault ship built in the LHD-1 Wasp-class, but the first of the class built with Gas Turbine Engines and an electric drive. The ship is scheduled to be commissioned in October. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Glenn S. Robertson/Released)

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