

NOAA's latest mobile app provides free nautical charts for recreational boating

May 21 2013



MyNOAACcharts, a mobile app beta test for Android tablets, can easily integrate the user's location, the nautical chart, and all the navigational information from the U.S. Coast Pilot. Credit: NOAA

As recreational boaters gear up for a summer of fun on coastal waters and the Great Lakes, NOAA is testing MyNOAACcharts, a new mobile application that allows users to download NOAA nautical charts and editions of the U.S. Coast Pilot. The app, which is only designed for

Android tablets for the testing period, will be released on May 20.

MyNOAACharts, which can be used on land and on the water, has GPS built-in capabilities that allow users find their positions on a NOAA nautical chart. They can zoom in any specific location with a touch of the finger, or zoom out for the big picture to plan their day of sailing. The Coast Pilot has "geotagged" some of the major locations—embedding geographical information, such as latitude and longitude, directly into the chart so it is readable in the [app](#)—and provides links to appropriate federal regulations. The [app can be downloaded](#) from the [Google](#) Play app store.

"Easy and workable access to nautical charts is important for boating safety," said Rear Admiral Gerd Glang, director of NOAA Office of Coast Survey. "I've seen a popular t-shirt that has a 'definition' of a nautical chart splayed across the front: 'chärt, n: a nautical map that shows you what you just hit.' As creative as that is, a boating accident can kill. Keeping a nautical chart on hand – to avoid hitting something – can save lives."

The [beta test](#) for MyNOAACharts will expire this Labor Day, Sept. 2. Coast Survey will then evaluate usage and user feedback to decide whether to release a finished version of the app.

"Expanding the app across a multitude of platforms, ensuring easy accessibility to over a thousand charts and nearly 5,000 pages of U.S. Coast Pilot, will take considerable resources," Glang said. "We can do it if the boating community likes the app. We truly want the users to let us know if the app meets their needs."

Boaters without an Android tablet should not despair. The Office of Coast Survey provides free [BookletCharts](#), which are 8 ½" x 11" PDF versions of NOAA nautical charts that can be downloaded and printed at

home. The U.S. Coast Pilot is also available in a free PDF version. Those products, and information for purchasing other nautical products, are available at www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov.

Provided by NOAA Headquarters

Citation: NOAA's latest mobile app provides free nautical charts for recreational boating (2013, May 21) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-05-noaa-latest-mobile-app-free.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.