

NOAA Leadership

Manson K. Brown, P.E.



Manson K. Brown, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction and Deputy Administrator for NOAA.

Manson K. Brown was sworn in as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction on March 18, 2015. He strategically drives Administration policy, programming, and investments for all NOAA observing systems, including in situ instruments and satellites, and the process of converting observations to predictions for environmental threats related to weather, climate, water, oceans, and space weather. He serves as NOAA Deputy Administrator and Chair of NOAA's Observing Systems Council.

A native of Washington, DC, he is the son of public servants. At the age of 17, he entered military service as a cadet at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. His journey with the Coast Guard spanned 40 years, propelling him to the rank of Vice Admiral. He commanded operations at every level, culminating as Commander of Pacific Area in San Francisco where he oversaw all Coast Guard operational activities throughout the Pacific Rim. Building on his technical competence as a registered professional civil engineer, his last assignment on active duty was as Deputy Commandant for Mission Support in Washington, DC, where he oversaw all aspects of human resources, engineering, information technology, acquisition, and logistics support for Coast Guard operations and people throughout the globe.

His other Coast Guard assignments ranged from duty as an engineering officer aboard the icebreaker Glacier during Arctic and Antarctic deployments to working as a Military Assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation (DOT). After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Honorable Norman Y. Mineta temporarily assigned him as DOT's Deputy Chief of Staff for six months. In 2004, he was asked to fill a key leadership gap in Iraq as the Senior Advisor for Transportation for the Coalition Provisional Authority where he oversaw restoration of Iraq's transportation systems, including major ports.

He holds Master of Science degrees in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and in National Resources Strategy from the National Defense University.

He received many awards and honors during his career. His top military decoration is the Coast Guard Distinguished Service Medal. In 1994, he became the first recipient of the Coast Guard Captain John G. Witherspoon Award for Inspirational Leadership. In 2012, he was honored with the Golden Torch Award by the National Society for Black Engineers. In 2014, he was honored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People with the Meritorious Service Award, an honor annually bestowed to a service member in a policy-making position for the highest achievement in military equal opportunity.

Married for 33 years, he and his wife, Herminia, are proud parents of three adult sons. He is an avid road cyclist and enjoys completing century rides.