



Rocket Lab's Hungry Hippo Fairing Arrives at Virginia Launch Site Ahead of First Neutron Flight

January 26, 2026

LONG BEACH, Calif., Jan. 26, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Rocket Lab Corporation (Nasdaq: RKLb) ("Rocket Lab" or "the Company"), a global leader in launch services and space systems, today announced the arrival of its "Hungry Hippo" captive fairing – a world-first for a commercial rocket – to Virginia for its Neutron rocket.

Neutron's "Hungry Hippo" fairing



Neutron's "Hungry Hippo" fairing has been delivered to Wallops Island in Virginia and transported to Rocket Lab's Neutron Assembly and Integration Complex.



After clearing qualification testing late last year, the Hungry Hippo has been delivered to Wallops Island in Virginia and transported to Rocket Lab's Neutron Assembly and Integration Complex. In the coming days engineers and technicians will complete their inspections following its delivery and prepare the fairing for further pre-launch testing at Neutron's nearby launch and test site,

Rocket Lab Launch Complex 3.

Hungry Hippo's arrival marks another step toward Neutron's debut that will usher in a new era of commercial space access. With a launch, return, and launch again ethos that mimics commercial aviation, Neutron will bring innovation and competition to today's global space industry that strengthens America's industrial base and ensures its access to space with reliable and modern launch capabilities.

Neutron "Hungry Hippo" key facts:

- Neutron will be the world's largest reusable carbon composite rocket, capable of launching up to 13,000 kg (33,000 pounds) of payload and cargo to space for missions involving national security, space science and human exploration, and constellation deployment for satellite internet, Earth observation, global connectivity, and more.
- With a focus on rapid reuse and reducing launch costs, Neutron's "Hungry Hippo" fairing halves remain attached to the rocket throughout the entire mission, including launch, payload deployment, and return to Earth – a world-first for a reusable commercial rocket.
- Whereas typical rockets' fairing halves fall away during launch and are disposable or require collection at sea for reuse, Neutron's fairing halves open and close for second stage deployment within a matter of seconds - streamlining operations for a high-cadence launch service for commercial, civil, and national security missions.

Images: [Neutron | Flickr](#)

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About Rocket Lab

Rocket Lab is a leading space company that provides launch services, spacecraft, payloads and satellite components serving commercial, government, and national security markets. Rocket Lab's Electron rocket is the world's most frequently launched orbital small rocket; its HASTE rocket provides hypersonic test launch capability for the U.S. government and allied nations; and its Neutron launch vehicle in development will unlock medium launch for constellation deployment, national security and exploration missions. Rocket Lab's spacecraft and satellite components have enabled more than 1,700 missions spanning commercial, defense and national security missions including GPS, constellations, and exploration missions to the Moon, Mars, and Venus. Rocket Lab is a publicly listed company on the Nasdaq stock exchange (RKLB). Learn more at www.rocketlabcorp.com.

About Neutron

Rocket Lab's Neutron launch vehicle is a powerful new solution designed to deliver a cost-effective, reliable, and responsive launch service for commercial and government missions and to help solve bottlenecked launch across the global space industry. Designed for reusability, responsive launch, and orbital insertion accuracy for up to 13,000 kg of payload, Neutron will set a new standard for performance and reliability for the highest-priority defense and national security missions, commercial satellite constellations, and civil space exploration. Neutron utilizes a unique design that brings the Stage 1 and payload fairing back to Earth as a single, integrated stage that maximizes cadence in a 13-ton to orbit reusable performance capability. The advanced design of Neutron includes carbon composite for all of the rocket's major structures and an innovative upper stage that enables high-performance for complex satellite deployments, including the deployment of satellite mega-constellations. Neutron is powered by nine Archimedes engines on Stage 1, and one vacuum-optimized Archimedes engine on Stage 2. Neutron operates from Rocket Lab Launch Complex 3 (LC-3) located at Wallops Island, Virginia from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS).

Forward Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. We intend such forward-looking statements to be covered by the safe harbor provisions for forward looking statements contained in Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act") and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"). All statements contained in this press release other than statements of historical fact, including, without limitation, statements regarding our launch and space systems operations, launch schedule and window, safe and repeatable access to space, Neutron development, operational expansion and business strategy are forward-looking statements. The words "believe," "may," "will," "estimate," "potential," "continue," "anticipate," "intend," "expect," "strategy," "future," "could," "would," "project," "plan," "target," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, though not all forward-looking statements use these words or expressions. These statements are neither promises nor guarantees, but involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other important factors that may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, including but not limited to the factors, risks and uncertainties included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2024, as such factors may be updated from time to time in our other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"), accessible on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov and the Investor Relations section of our website at www.rocketlabcorp.com, which could cause our actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the forward-looking statements made in this press release. Any such forward-looking statements represent management's estimates as of the date of this press release. While we may elect to update such forward-looking statements at some point in the future, we disclaim any obligation to do so, even if subsequent events cause our views to change.

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/51bfef9e-6183-4f7c-983a-053dceb660f0>