

FROM THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



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Nearly all recreational boaters have access to GPS Chartplotters today. They have come down in price since first introduced and are relatively easy to use. Having them gives us a sense of security as they are great navigation tools! It's also a good idea to have a backup in the form of a chart as they can display a bigger picture with many details and, of course, electronics don't always function perfectly when effected by the marine salt air environment in our area. NOAA marine charts are great, but they are also large (i.e., around 3 ft x 4 ft) and difficult to manage on smaller boats – how do we make them more user friendly?

One popular chart for the greater Hilton Head is St Helena Sound to Savannah River (11513). It looks like the one on the left below. Great chart to frame and hang on your wall but too big for an 18 to 26 foot boat! How about making it more useful by cutting it into 11" x 17" pieces to make it easier to handle? Getting the chart pieces laminated will help them be more durable. Two pieces can be laminated back to back. The approximately 11" x 17" segment of the 11513 chart shows the courses out of Port Royal Sound to several fishing areas with compass bearings and distances premarked for easy reference.



Using a smaller chart piece like the one on the right is a great way to keep all on board posted on where you are relative to where you are going. It allows for identification of land masses and buoys to identify location. Should the GPS Chartplotter fail, the chart would be a good tool for helping to get back to the dock.

In the last issue of the Ocean Breeze, the Education article focused on the course Partner in Command. The use of the smaller chart allows the partner to see a "bigger" picture which will assist in taking over. Taking a couple of courses can help you have more fun on the water with your boat while being safer. Look on the ABCHH.org website to see what's available that would be interesting and helpful.

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