Jim Beedle

QAGAN TAYAGUNGIN TRIBE
P.O. BOX 447
SAND POINT, ALASKA 99661
(907) 383-6968
Fax (907) 383-5814

February 25, 2009

Leo von Scheben, Commissioner
PO Box 112500
Juneau AK 99811-2500

Dear Commissioner von Scheben:

The Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point was pleased to hear that there was a recommendation to the Marine Transportation Advisory Board to increase ferry service in the Aleutian region from one time a month to twice a month from April through September. The Tribe supports this additional service as it will provide the transportation necessary for the area.

The ferry system is vitally important to the people in the area for transportation for medical and dental providers, trade, economic development, commercial fisheries, and regional meetings. Other important reasons for the ferry service to the area are vehicle transportation and infrastructure development. Finally, the ferry service provides the opportunity for area residents to visit family and friends.

Further, we support additional service be added to include the Pribilof Islands. Adding the ferry service to this area would connect the areas and provide necessary transportation that has not been available to date.

Thank you for considering this important matter. If you have any questions, I hope that you will contact me at (907) 383-5616.

Sincerely,

Marva J Hatch

Marva J Hatch
Executive Director

Jim Beedle

Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.

1131 E. International Airport Rd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1408
Phone (907) 276-2700
Fax (907) 279-4351

February 27, 2009

Leo Von Scheben, Commissioner
3132 Channel Drive
P.O. Box 11250
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Mr. Von Scheben:

Our Board Chairman, Mr. David Osterback has asked that the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. staff look into the need for expanding the State Marine Transportation in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Region.

The recommendation by Ms. Cathie Roemmich, Chair of the Marine Transportation Advisory Board, to allow the m/v Tustumena to make two trips a month out to the Aleutian Chain April through September will significantly address the critical need for additional passengers, vehicles, cargo space and duration of the service. For many years the limited space and time period prohibited residents on the chain from having adequate public marine transportation services. Therefore, we strongly support the recommendation by Ms. Roemmich and request your approval and support.

Sincerely,

Dimitri Philemonof
President/CEO

Aleut CORPORATION

Jim Beedle

January 6, 2009

Leo von Scheben
Commissioner of Transportation
3132 Channel Drive
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Dear Commissioner von Scheben,

As President of the Aleut Corporation I am writing this letter in support of increased marine service by the Alaska Marine Transportation System to the Aleutians from one (1) time a month in the summer to two (2) times a month. As you well know, the Aleutian communities are some of the most remote and inaccessible places in Alaska. Residents, students, cannery workers, even some of our Board members can only rely on air transportation which is unreliable much of the time due to weather and seat availability. Last year the canneries pre-purchased all airline seats during the busy fishing season and local people could only get seats by calling three (3) days in advance.

Presently the ferry stops at Sand Point, King Cove, Cold Bay, False Pass, Akutan, and Unalaska/Dutch Harbor. The initiation of service to St. George and St. Paul in the Pribilof Islands is also needed. These two communities have never had ferry service and are in desperate need of marine transportation to survive both economically and socially.

The ferry system plays a vital role in day-to-day living in our region. Besides transporting residents back and forth, the ferry enhances tourism, an increasingly important commodity. It is a valuable economic driver between communities and its decrease in service is widely felt.

Thank you for considering this important matter and I look forward to discussing it with you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Mack

Thomas Mack,
President, Aleut Corporation

One Aleut Plaza, 4000 Old Seward Highway, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 | Ph: 907.561.4300, 800.232.4882 | Fax: 907.563.4328 | www.aleutcorp.com

Shumagin *Corporation*
P.O. Box 189 • Sand Point, Alaska 99661
(907) 383-3525 • Fax: (907) 383-5356

February 4, 2009

James Beedle
Deputy Commissioner
Marine Operations
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Dear Commissioner Beedle,

We are very pleased and excited to learn of the recommendation to the Marine Transportation Advisory Board to increase ferry service to the Aleutian region from one time a month to two times a month in the summer. This change would benefit our area in that we could get much needed supplies from Anchorage on a more regular basis. Increased service would also benefit travel of family members to visit their relatives in other regions in this area. This would bring more tourists to our area and benefit the local businesses. When the ferry service was decreased we had to rely on much more costly local food supplies and other needed equipment items we need to live here.

We want to thank you for your kind consideration of this very important matter and If you have any questions I hope you will contact us. Again, thank you!

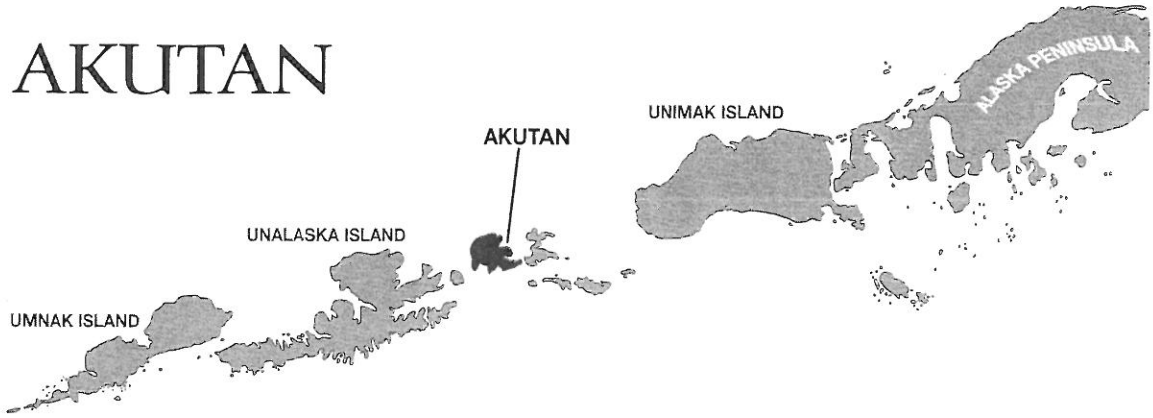
Arleen N Gardner

Arleen Gardner, President
Shumagin Corporation
PO Box 189
Sand Point, Ak 99661
president@shumagin.com
907-383-3525 x127

CITY OF AKUTAN

P.O. Box 109
Akutan, Alaska 99503-3952

Phone (907) 698-2228
Fax (907) 698-2202



February 23, 2009

James Beedle
Deputy Commissioner of Marine Operations
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Mr. Beedle:

The City of Akutan is pleased to hear that a recommendation is in progress to increase ferry services in the Aleutian Region for certain under-served communities from one to two times per month during the summer months. We welcome this recommendation and view this as a step forward to addressing critical transportation issues in our region.

Akutan is preparing for a complete infrastructure facelift. Major capital projects such as the airport construction at Akun Island, boat harbor construction at the head of Akutan Bay, an electrical power system distribution line upgrade, and geothermal power reconnaissance and exploration are a few of the projects shovel-ready to turn dirt this summer. In anticipation of these significant undertakings, movement of equipment and personnel will be a major challenge if work is to proceed timely and efficiently. Obviously, one trip or even two trips per month will not suffice to meet the demand for crucial delivery of freight and personnel. Some of these are multi-year projects and will rely heavily on the availability of marine transportation for at least two years to transport the workforce and cargo.

The City of Akutan is currently served exclusively by an 8-passenger, 65-year-old World War II Grumman Goose amphibious aircraft. The Goose has been operating under a Congressional exemption for aging aircraft for years, and Penair has stated the plane has only a few operational years left. Flights into Akutan are on an irregular basis due to weather-related conditions. For this reason, layovers at Dutch Harbor or in Akutan itself can be anywhere from one day to a week. Very often, in order to get off the island, Akutan residents and visitors must arrange with Trident Seafoods, for the 4-5-hour boat ride on one of their company vessels, if space becomes available. Akutan residents typically only book space on a ferry if their travel arrangements coincide with the very limited May-September Alaska Marine Highway ferry schedule. These limited opportunities make it possible for residents to "load up" on critical purchases in less expensive cities to bring their bulk supplies back to the city. Weight restrictions on the Grumman Goose preclude this type of buying and shipping.

The City of Akutan strongly urges you to act on this recommendation. Increasing ferry service to more than once a month will benefit the community and region tremendously and provide significant social and economic benefits to our region. Your favorable consideration of this very important matter is highly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 907-698-2241 if you have any further questions.

Cordially,

Mayor Joe Bereskin

SWAMC

Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference

3300 Arctic Boulevard, Suite 203 Anchorage, AK 99503 p: 907.562.7380 f: 907.562.0438 www.swamc.org

Alaska Peninsula
Aleutian Chain
Bristol Bay
Kodiak Island
Pribilof Islands

November 20, 2008

Dear Marine Transportation Advisory Members,

The Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) is a vital link to thirty one coastal communities around Southeast, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, and the Aleutians. For many of these communities ferry service is more than adequate to support the economic and social needs of its residents and visitors. Unfortunately, this level of service does not extend to all communities and regions equally. The communities serviced by the *M/V Tustumena* (Tusty) along the Aleutians are not only underserved but count their ferry visits in dockings per year rather than in dockings per week or day as is the case in some communities.

The mission of the AMHS is *"to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation of people, goods, and vehicles among Alaska communities, Canada, and the "Lower 48," while providing opportunities to develop and maintain a reasonable standard of living and high quality of life, including social, education, and health needs."* Given the current level of service that the Tusty provides to those communities west of Kodiak the AMHS has dramatically failed in its mission. With only seven (7) round trips per year, one a month between April and October, it is easy to understand why this mission cannot be accomplished in these communities. This level of service would not be tolerated in any other region, and the time is right for a fair and equitable distribution of the State's ferry resources.

Within recent memory a schedule which included two trips per month between the busy months of May and September was implemented and it proved to be a popular schedule with residents, businesses, and visitors alike. The communities of southwest Alaska would like to see this schedule re-implemented as soon as possible. The outcome would be an additional six (6) trips per year with two trips per month between April and September and one trip in October.

The way to achieve this is to have the Legislature appropriate sufficient funds in the AMHS budget to allow the *M/V Kennicott* to operate a full schedule during those months where two trips in the Aleutians are planned. During its additional weeks of operation the *M/V Kennicott* would operate in Prince William Sound taking the place of the Tusty so that it would be free to make the run to Unalaska. No new boats, no new schedules, just the appropriate funding allocated to operating the *M/V Kennicott* for an additional two weeks for six months a year.

The Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference (SWAMC) and other organizations have spent considerable effort in promoting the southwest as a viable visitor destination. When we speak to travel professionals of what the region has to offer the one thing that stands out in their minds is the idea of taking a ferry trip from Homer or Kodiak out along the

Aleutians to Dutch Harbor. Timing and availability are two major hurdles we have yet to overcome. This suggested schedule would help considerably in making available additional space not only for residents and businesses but also for visitors, thereby, increasing economic opportunities for the region.

Access for these communities is vital for their continued well being as well as for the expansion of opportunities and for an increased quality of life: two important pieces of the AMHS mission. SWAMC and the communities along the southwest ferry route would request that the Marine Transportation Advisory Board support them in their efforts to secure the funding required to ensure two trips out along the Aleutians is possible between April and September each year.

SWAMC is a state designated ARDOR and a federally recognized Economic Development District. The SWAMC region includes Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Bristol Bay, and contains 52 communities with a population of around 30,000. SWAMC's mission is to advance the collective interests of Southwest Alaska people, businesses, and communities. SWAMC helps promote economic opportunities to improve quality of life and influences long-term responsible development.

Sincerely,

Michael Catsi
Executive Director

AKUTAN COLD BAY NELSON LAGOON

ALEUTIANS EAST

BOROUGH

FALSE PASS KING COVE SAND POINT

February 9, 2009

Mr. James Beedle
Deputy Commissioner of Marine Operations
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Dear Mr. Beedle:

We were pleased to hear about the recommendation made to Governor Palin and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities from Cathie Roemmich, Chair of the Marine Transportation Advisory Board, to increase ferry service in the Aleutian Region from one time per month to two times per month in the summer. We welcome this recommendation because an increase in ferry service will benefit our region in several important ways.

Residents rely heavily on the ferry every summer for transporting vehicles purchased from Anchorage. The decrease in service last year dramatically increased competition for car space on the ferry. Reservations for vehicle transport are difficult now. Residents also use the ferry to transport their vehicles to Anchorage for repairs and maintenance. There is currently a one-month wait to get their vehicles back, if not longer, because of the competition for car space. A ferry service increase to two times per month would cut this wait time in half, to a more bearable two weeks.

Increased competition for vehicle space on the ferry has also sharply cut down on the amount of building supplies and other goods bought into our communities during the summer. Loading a truck and trailer with building supplies and groceries from Anchorage is the economical choice and saves a tremendous amount of money, compared to barging the supplies in from Seattle. It also makes Anchorage the regional depot for goods and supplies that Alaskan communities rely on, instead of purchasing from the Lower 48.

Having two ferries per month allows inter-regional travel to occur. When we had this service before, it was common for people to visit friends and relatives in other communities on the Alaska Marine Transportation System route. Many people would often ride the second monthly ferry back to their home town. Because of the current one-month turnaround, inter-regional travel has been sharply reduced.

ANCHORAGE OFFICE 3380 C Street, Ste. 205 Anchorage, AK 99503-3952 (907) 274-7555 *Fax:* (907) 276-7569 *Email:* admin@aleutianseast.org
KING COVE OFFICE P.O. Box 49 King Cove, AK 99612 (907) 497-2588 *Fax:* (907) 497-2386 *Email:* finance@aleutianseast.org
SAND POINT OFFICE P.O. Box 349 Sand Point, AK 99661 (907) 383-2699 *Fax:* (907) 383-3496 • *Email:* clerk@aleutianseast.org

Last year's decrease in ferry service also negatively impacted an increasing tourist market to East Aleutians Communities as it cut in half the number of berths available to tourists. This hurt local vendors who provide goods and services to tourists during stops. It also made local planning for an increasing tourist market more difficult, as the main transportation mode was cut in half.

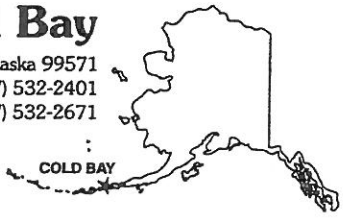
We strongly urge you to act on this recommendation. Increased service will provide significant social and economic benefits to our region.

Thank you for considering this important matter. If you have questions, please contact me at 907-383-2699.

Sincerely,

Stanley Mack
Mayor
Aleutians East Borough

City of Cold Bay
P.O. Box 10 • Cold Bay, Alaska 99571
(907) 532-2401
Fax (907) 532-2671



April 14, 2009

Governor Sarah Palin
Third Floor, State Capital
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

RE: Ferry Schedule

Dear Governor Palin,

At our City Council meeting held on January 20, 2009 there was extensive discussion on how the 2009 ferry schedule will cause extreme hardship for the residents of Cold Bay.

We have many visitors who like to take the ferry to Cold Bay get off and stay two weeks and catch the next ferry home. So when they said we will no longer have two a month it has a directly impact on our tourism.

Another concern of ours is how difficult it currently is to get a reservation from Homer to Cold Bay. The route gets filled up with vehicles and passengers who are getting on and off in cities prior to Cold Bay. If it is necessary to cut down on our route we asked the state Ferry System if there is a way to hold a certain amount of reservations for people out our way. Otherwise the more populated cities will continue to fill all the space available.

The last thing may seem trivial to you but it has become a tradition for small bush communities such as ours to look forward to the annual pumpkin run. Many families cannot afford the high prices of freight to send out pumpkins for the children. The pumpkin run will be greatly missed if the ferry does not come in October.

We urge you to seriously help in reinstating the ferry schedule to two ferry's a month and keeping the April – October schedule.

Sincerely,

Jorge Lopez
Mayor

cc: Ms. Cathie Rommich
Mr. Chuck Van Kirk

Cold Bay

February 1, 2008

Alaska Marine Highway System - Operations
Sandra Wright
7559 N. Tongass
Ketchikan, AK 99901

RE: Ferry Schedule

Dear Sandra,

At our last City Council meeting held on January 15, 2008 there was extensive discussion on how the 2008 ferry schedule will cause extreme hardship for the residents of Cold Bay.

We had many visitors who would take the ferry to Cold Bay get off and stay two weeks and catch the next ferry home. So this will directly impact our tourism.

Another concern of ours is how difficult it currently is to get a reservation from Homer to Cold Bay. The route gets filled up with vehicles and passengers who are getting on and off in cities prior to Cold Bay. If it is necessary to cut down on our route is there a way to hold a certain amount of reservations for people out our way? Otherwise the more populated cities will continue to fill all the space available.

The last thing may seem trivial to you but it has become a tradition for small bush communities such as ours to look forward to the annual pumpkin run. Many families cannot afford the high prices of freight to send out pumpkins for the children. The pumpkin run will be greatly missed.

We urge you to seriously reconsider changing the 2008 ferry schedule.

Sincerely,

John Maxwell
Mayor

Pauloff Harbor Tribe

P.O. Box 97
Sand Point, Alaska 99661

Phone: (907) 383-6075
Fax: (907) 383-6094

February 11, 2009

James Beedle
Deputy Commissioner
Marine Operations
3132 Channel Drive
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Dear James Beedle:

We were pleased to hear about the recommendation to the Marine Transportation Advisory Board to increase ferry service in the Aleutian region from one time a month to two times a month from April through October.

The ferry system is vitally depended on for the people that live in the region for: transportation to get to their jobs, go to their medical and dental providers, trade, economic development, tourism, and also to go visit family and friends.
Other important reasons are to get their vehicles out to be serviced or to transport a new purchased vehicle and/or equipment necessary for infrastructure development in the Aleutian Region.

Thank you for considering this important matter and if you have any questions I hope you will contact me. My email address is pauloff@arctic.net and my phone number is (907) 383-6075.

Sincerely,

Amber Karlsen
President