



Alaska editorial: Ripple effect

Posted: January 20, 2013 - 12:11am

This editorial first appeared in the Ketchikan Daily News:

It seemed like smooth sailing toward updating the Alaska Marine Highway System ferry fleet until early December. Now, it's unclear what the ripples in the water represent, but it is a cause of unease in Ketchikan.

Bert Stedman, R-Sitka, representing Ketchikan and District Q had, while in the powerful position of co-chair of the state Senate Finance Committee, worked with the administration and House to secure \$120 million for the first of the Alaska Class ferries. The potential of more than one had been discussed. Another \$50 million had been secured for a second new ferry.

Ketchikan fully expected all of the ferries to be built at Alaska Ship & Drydock, bringing at least a dozen years of business to the shipyard and the community. Additionally, 129 full-time, year-round, high-paying jobs at the shipyard and another 76 jobs in businesses providing goods and services to the yard had been projected.

It was believed that the Alaska ships should be built at a State of Alaska-owned shipyard. It seemed nonsensical for a shipyard owner to utilize another shipyard.

For that result, the state had returned federal funds destined for the first ferry. The rules that apply to federal projects disappeared.

Then the state adopted a procurement method — construction manager/general contractor — in proceeding with the ferry project and Ketchikan Shipyard.

Elliott Bay Group — the ferry designers — the state Department of Transportation and the shipyard had been working on the final ferry design. That design was scheduled to be completed in the upcoming summer. It would be followed by a maximum price proposal from Alaska Ship & Drydock.

But the estimated cost of building the first ferry began to significantly exceed what Stedman had made available, the latest estimate being between \$150 million and \$167 million. That, combined with the operating cost that included a crew of between 21 and 25, caused DOT to re-evaluate the ferry project.

State officials decided to scrap the Alaska Class Ferry concept. Gov. Sean Parnell, along with DOT Commissioner Pat Kemp, announced the decision to a stunned audience at the Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce weekly luncheon Dec. 4.

In one of Alaska's most fiscally and politically conservative communities, no one applauded when Gov. Parnell stated the decision would save the state money.

Instead, that queasy feeling acquired in rough seas set in collectively throughout the luncheon crowd and the community.

DOT planned to build two smaller ferries (between 250 and 300 feet), neither of which would be large enough to replace the 1960s-built, 350-foot, mainline ferries. The age of those ferries prompted the concern that initiated the new-ferry project. That those ferries provide the lucrative Ketchikan-Bellingham service was a consideration.

The state has not subjected the administration's new direction to the same economic analysis that it applied to the Alaska Class concept.

DOT has held up this analysis as proof that the Alaska Class ships would not save money. However, the report states the only way AMHS will save money is by significantly reducing the size of the fleet.

DOT says it will do this type of economic analysis for the proposed smaller ships once the design is available.

Parnell says he believes two smaller ships could be built for \$120 million. Not only will any cost for them undoubtedly increase, but it will never be less expensive than it is in the early part of this decade to build and replace aging mainline ferries. Delays only increase the cost. Of course, delays in new ships also mean the increased likelihood of necessary repairs, which would be expected to take place at the state's shipyard in Ketchikan.

Meanwhile, DOT has the Juneau Access Improvement Project on its schedule, with a \$520 million pricetag. That's one price. Other prices likely will be forthcoming.

The Juneau road would be a surfaced highway; the Alaska Class Ferry is a marine highway. It's highways and highways, transportation and transportation. Both are important to Southeast transportation. But, the Alaska Class Ferry price sounds like a good deal compared to the Juneau project.

Public hearings are scheduled in 2013 on the project that would improve the transportation system to and from Juneau within Lynn Canal. A final supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and a Federal Highway Administration Record of Decision are scheduled to be released, according to the DOT website for Alaska's Southeast Region.

This isn't to say that the Juneau project isn't worthwhile. It is. But, it's interesting that the new, smaller (hopefully less expensive) ferry will be utilized in Lynn Canal where a (much-more-expensive-than-an-Alaska-Class-ferry) road will be built.

It also begs the question of what happens when state officials determine that road project is too expensive.

It was pleasing when the Parnell administration came into office that it continued on the course set by the Murkowski administration in regard to ferry replacement. But Parnell says the project has evolved from its original small-boat concept into the larger Alaska Class project. Such a statement indicates Parnell is trying to keep what he views as the original concept on course. But through the years it seems like the idea of replacing ferries takes a new turn with each change at the helm.

The recent announcement that the captain in charge of the Marine Highway System, Michael Neussl, is retiring — not shortly after Parnell's December speech to the Chamber — adds to the ripples surrounding the ferry replacement project.

Part of the problem with changing course, regardless of the reason, is that it creates a certain amount of apprehension. With Ketchikan's experiences when the state studies and then changes direction and studies again, i.e. the Gravina Access Project over the past couple decades, it isn't surprising the community is wondering what's next.

It had been full speed ahead with the Alaska Class Ferries from Ketchikan's perspective. Maybe the community expected more than had been promised. But whatever the case, there is a nervousness, and it is hoped the Parnell administration can make enough progress with its new plan of two small ships to replace one large one — or is it three large ones? — to calm the sea of concern.

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House Transportation Committee
Alaska State Legislature
House of Representatives
Representative Peggy Wilson - Chair

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 24, 2013
To: Suzi Lowell, Chief Clerk
From: Representative Peggy Wilson, Chair
House Transportation Committee
Re: Notice of Joint House and Senate Transportation Committee Meeting

Tuesday January 29, 2013 Room 124 1:00-3:00 pm

+DOT/PF Aviation Overview - Deputy Commissioner Steve Hatter

+Mobility Coalition Update - David Levy

+ Confirmation - Pat Kemp DOT/PF *waiting for OK from Gov's Office (Heather)*

Thursday Jan 31, 2013 Room 124 1:00-3:00 pm

<No Meeting Scheduled>

+ Indicates will be teleconferenced

Rebecca Rooney

From: Kristin Hathhorn <hathbat@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2013 9:28 AM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Ferry Comments

Dear Representative Wilson,

As a longtime resident of Haines and one that relies on the ferry system for dependable, safe, and comfortable transportation I appreciate the hard questions you and your committee are asking DOT. It is inconceivable that they would change the original design (and a possible compromise in safety) to save what amounts to a small amount of funds. In the end, 2 smaller vessels would show how insufficient they would be in handling the extreme conditions of Southeast and in particular the Upper Lynn Canal.

Let's hope DOT sees that their decision needs to be reversed.

Sincerely,

Mark Battaion

Rebecca Rooney

From: Emily Davis <edavis@kakeschools.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2013 1:03 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson; Representative_Eric_Feige@legis.state.ak.us; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Representative_Craig_Johnson@legis.state.ak.us; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Senator_Dennis_Egan@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Hollis_French@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Anna_Fairclough@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: Ferry Ideas from kids

Students have written responses in regards to the ferry changes. Please take a moment to read how students who ride the ferry often for personal and for sports travel feel about it.

Student Responses to the Ferry System

Student 1

How often do you ride the Alaska State Ferry? Well for me, I usually ride it every few months or so. The ferry that I ride the most would probably be the Taku. The Taku is getting a little old now, so I think we should have one that has the same amount of cabins. It should also have a cafeteria, somewhere to just sit around, and public and private bathrooms. I think that the cafeteria is the most important place on the ferry.

The reason why I think we need a new ferry is because of how old the Taku is. It is over fifty years old. Private and public bathrooms are important because you need a private bathroom in the cabin and a public bathroom for when we are not in the cabins. Another reason why we need the ferry is because it gives you a place to sleep, eat, play, and use the bathroom. Planes cost a lot of money to travel on and ferries don't cost as much as air planes do.

In conclusion ferries are more fun than planes, this is why I think we need to a new ferry.

Student 2

The main topic I want to talk about is the ferry. I think that it is good that you guys are replacing the ferries with new ones because the ferries are about fifty years old and will start to break down rapidly.

What I think you guys should add to the new ferry is a bigger game room with new games. Also, you should make a separate room for basketball teams, and a room for the kids.

I think it would be better to have separate rooms for the basketball teams and the kids because the teams could probably bully the younger kids. What do you think should be done on the ferry? Overall, that is what I have to say.

Student 3

Did you know the Taku is over fifty years old? it was built around 1960. I think it's time to make a new ferry.

If I got to remodel the Taku, I would keep all of the staterooms and the lounges. However, I'd change the bathrooms, solarium, the game room, all of the doors, the cafeteria, the gift shop, and the floors. The bathroom stalls are old and they should get 2-ply tissue paper. I would remove the solarium and put a basketball court up there. I'd d' that because a lot of people in SE Alaska play basketball and especially during Gold Medal time. The Taku gets crowded when all the basketball teams are on there and it would keep kids/teens out of trouble. The cafeteria could use better tables and chairs too. On the taku, the floors are super hard. There are many people that have to sleep on the floor, so might as well make it comfortable. I'd also suggest wifi.

In conclusion, I really want to make the Taku a better ferry ride. Many people would love it!

Rebecca Rooney

From: jennifer talley <mellingbar@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2013 1:59 PM
To: Sen. Anna Fairclough
Subject: alaska class ferry comment

Hello,

My name is Jennifer Talley. I am a nurse who resides in Haines and works in Juneau. The ferries are an integral part of, not only my life, but of several others, who, like myself, commute to work from smaller Southeast Alaska communities.

Winter weather in Upper Lynn Canal can be hideous. There were a few times this winter when the ferry had to cancel due to weather and that was the LeConte. Originally, the Fairweather was "designed" to do sailings in the Upper Lynn Canal and that has not worked.

Obviously, Governor Parnell has never ridden the ferry in the winter, or, he would not have unilaterally made a decision to change the design of them, unless there is a hidden agenda here undermining the marine transportation system of Alaska. This is not representative of what the communities of Southeast Alaska want.

Creating a smaller ferry is a bad mistake and should not happen. There is no need to waste money on a ferry that will not be able to function in the winter. Nor is there a need to waste money on an access road which is not supported. With the money that would be needed to create a road from Juneau to, another ferry terminal, you could build at least two reliable, large, state of the art ferries. This seems like a more pragmatic use of money.

Our fleet of ferries is aging and they need work.

The ferry system is one of the best things about Southeast Alaska. It is part of the fabric of the culture and should be a priority to maintain. The ferries continue to see a steady rise in ridership.

As my representatives, I would like you to fight to maintain the original design of the Alaska Class Ferry. I want something that is reliable for me to get back and forth to work. I want funds going to the ferry system to be well spent and thought out. I want money to go into a transportation system that already exists.

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Talley
PO Box 1086
Haines, Alaska
99827
907 314 0864

Rebecca Rooney

From: Richard Folta <rjfolta@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2013 2:48 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: alaska class ferries

Representative Wilson:

Having lived by Lynn Canal almost all my life and frequently traveling on the ferries during the often severe Canal winter weather, we were shocked by the Governor's unilateral action to ignore the public input and change the new ferry design to shuttles instead of building the Alaska Class ferries for Haines and Skagway destination.

Dick and Julie Folta, Haines

Rebecca Rooney

From: Rob Goldberg <artstudioalaska@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 21, 2013 12:00 AM
To: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Cc: Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Shuttle ferries

To: Alaska State House and Senate Transportation Committee Members

Re: Shuttle Ferries

On Thursday, January 17th I listened with interest to the transportation committee's hearing on the Alaska Class ferry. As a bit of background, I am a business owner in Haines and chairman of the Haines Borough Planning Commission. I have been following, and commenting on, the Juneau Access project for twenty years or more. Here are my comments on what I heard at the meeting:

Shuttle Ferries – I was glad to hear Capt. Falvey say that the state is not considering open-decked Puget Sound type ferries. They will not work in Lynn Canal, and the concept should not be brought up again. I think the 280 foot ships he described can work, provided they are designed with ocean-type hulls and are powerful enough to fight the winter winds in Lynn Canal. Since a ship's size increases by a factor of the cube, a ship this size would have considerably more volume than the 235 foot LeConte.

The LeConte is a great ship, and has served Alaska well, but it is sometimes overmatched by the wind and sea conditions in Lynn Canal. As was mentioned at the meeting, four runs of the LeConte have been canceled so far this winter (two right before Christmas as Haines and Skagway residents were trying to make connections for holiday visits), and many more probably should have been. From October 15th through December 29th, 2012 Lynn Canal had incessant gale, storm and hurricane force winds. Many of the LeConte's runs from Juneau to Haines arrived late, with the ship heavily laden with ice and nearly everyone on board sick. As a passenger, it is not a fun experience. A larger ship is needed.

In these times of economic uncertainty it is very important that the State of Alaska make a well researched choice and a good investment. As a small business owner, I can't afford to buy an expensive tool that can't do the job. The state can't either. The mistakes that were made with the purchase of the fast ferries Fairweather and Chenega must not be repeated.

The fast ferries were advertised as being capable in all sea conditions, but early on, running against a gale in Lynn Canal, the Fairweather suffered structural damage. Friends of mine who were on that run said that the seas were breaking against the windows of the forward observation lounge. Now those ships are kept in port when the wind is greater than 35 kts. and the seas are 7 feet or more. They are not reliable even in summer in Lynn Canal.

Routing – The two ship concept brought up at the meeting is a new one to me. I don't remember it being in any of the Juneau Access documents. At the meeting it was said that one ship would run between Juneau and Haines and the other between Haines and Skagway.

I have long advocated for a ferry that would overnight in Haines. In addition to the employment for Haines residents, it also means convenient connections to the jet in Juneau. Currently, with the ferry leaving Juneau in the early morning and returning in the evening, travelers from Haines and Skagway have an expensive hotel stay in Juneau on both ends of a trip Outside.

Costs - If the cost of one, 350 foot Alaska Class ferry has exceeded the state's budget of \$120 million, how is it that DOT thinks we can buy two, 280 foot ships for that price? I understand from what I heard at the meeting that the smaller ships would not have staterooms, crew quarters or a galley. Does the omission of these items from the shuttle ferries really save enough money to buy an entire additional ship?

Rep. Kreiss-Tomkins asked a good question at the meeting about additional costs involved with the roll-on, roll-off design. Currently only the Juneau terminal can accommodate an end-loading ferry. How much will it cost to retrofit the existing terminals? Will the Haines terminal have to be greatly expanded to accommodate two ferries at once?

Fiscal Responsibility and the Road – If the newly designed shuttle ferries are capable of operating daily, year-round, between Juneau, Haines and Skagway, there is no reason to build a road. In these times of economic uncertainty it will be very difficult for DOT to justify spending \$520 million or more on a road if we have two new ferries operating efficiently with low maintenance and operating costs. As I stated in a previous letter, I am one of the few people who have spent time on the east side of Lynn Canal. I can tell you from my mountaineering experience there that it is no place to try to force a road. Rocks and boulders fall constantly. Avalanches roar all winter and spring. The road would be closed much of the winter. An East Lynn Canal road would consume vast quantities of the state's money that would be better used in other places.

In an early version of the Juneau Access EIS, DOT estimated the cost of the East Lynn Canal road at about \$260 million, but they had made their estimates without ever putting people on the ground. After repeated questions from myself, and others, the state hired Golder Engineering to analyze the proposed route. Their report detailed over one hundred major geologic hazards along the route. Largely because of Golder's report, the construction estimate for the road is now \$520 million. The Golder Engineering report should be required reading for all legislators.

Thank you for reading my comments.

Sincerely,
Rob Goldberg

Rob Goldberg and Donna Catotti
Catotti and Goldberg Art Studio
PO Box 1154 Haines, AK 99827 USA
907-766-2707
artstudioalaska.com

Rebecca Rooney

From: Kathleen Menke <ci@akmk.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 20, 2013 1:20 PM
To: Senator_Dennis_Egan@legis.state.ak.us; Rep. Peggy Wilson
Cc: Rep. Lynn Gattis; Sen Hollis French; Rep Bob Lynn; Sen Fred Dyson; Rep Craig Johnson; Rep Eric Feige; Sen Anna Fairclough; Rep Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: Transportation/AMH

Dear Senator Egan and Rep. Wilson: (and copied to others on the Transportation Committees in the Senate and House):

Please include this written testimony as my official record of testimony before the Transportation Committee, as next Thursday afternoon I will be preparing to board the ferry to Juneau and will be unable to testify in person.

We, in Haines, appreciate the questions and oversight of the House Transportation Committee. I was one of the people watching from live videoconference your last meeting.

Items necessary for the Committee to address are public process, substantive issues such as carry capacity and safety, reliability, and flexibility, and costs.

I address each here below as a twenty year resident of Haines and a thirty-year traveler of the Alaska Marine Highway.

#1 Public process

Public process is not being followed on appointments to oversight of AMH. The public being served requires that intent of state statute be applied with regard to appointment of Director, or Deputy Commissioner, or one accountable person in charge of AMH. The current change of organization actually makes no one clearly accountable or answerable to the public. That was clear at your last meeting when Reuben Yost said little, Pat Kemp alluded to the Governor (but not to another actually pulling many of the strings--Robin Taylor), and John Falvey was asked to speak on operations but was given neither title nor authority over decision making.

Following is an e-mail exchange between Robin Taylor and Pat Kemp that clearly shows decisions are being made without regard to public process. If our legislators won't ensure public process is followed and that we have one person clearly accountable for decisions made regarding the Alaska Marine Highway, who will? Clearly not our Governor.

Having Robin Taylor calling the shots out of the eye of any public accountability is disturbing. Questions should be asked as to why Mike Nuessl was asked to resign after Pat Kemp was appointed? Why someone with no ferry experience (Reuben Yost) is now the Deputy Director over the AMH? And about the Parnell, Taylor, Kemp, Yost avenue of communications with each other but not with the public? At the very least our legislators should be ensuring adequate public process.

----- Original Message

From: taylork13@c
omcast.net

Rebecca Rooney

From: mark and mardell <mardiz@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 19, 2013 1:27 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Please support Ak Class Ferry

Representative,

Please support the proposed Ak Class Ferry. I am against Gov. Parnell's unilateral decision to build a smaller vessel. A safe, reliable, large Ak Class Ferry is a better option for S.E. Alaska's severe winter weather.

Thank You very much, Mark S. Kistler

Rebecca Rooney

From: mark and mardell <mardiz@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 19, 2013 1:14 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Please support Ak Class Ferry

Representative,

Please support the proposed Ak Class Ferry that Gov. Parnell has unilaterally stopped in leu of a smaller vessel. A safe, reliable, large Ak Class Ferry will be a better option for the sometimes severe winter weather in S.E. Alaska.

Thank you very much, Mark S. Kistler Haines, Ak

Rebecca Rooney

From: John MacKinnon <John@agcak.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 16, 2013 7:51 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Cc: Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Cathy Munoz
Subject: Shuttle Ferry

I had the honor of being a Deputy Commissioner of Transportation for Highways and Facilities from 2003 to 2008. During that time, I had the pleasure of working with the first two Deputy Commissioners for Marine Highways, Tom Briggs and John Torgerson. Tom Briggs was one of the principle founders of the Inter-Island Ferry Authority (IFA), and John Torgerson...well, he needs no introduction. Although in 2003 the Department had been split into three silos – Highways, Aviation and Marine Highways – there was considerable collaboration within the Department among the silos.

Budgets were lean in those years, and we all were looking for ways to keep services up and costs down, both short and long-term. In Marine Highways, Tom Briggs was a proponent of the two highly successful operations in southern Southeast Alaska – The IFA owned and operated M/V Prince of Wales operating between Ketchikan and Hollis on Prince of Wales Island, and the AMHS owned M/V Lituya operating between Metlakatla and Ketchikan. Both ships are considered “shuttle ferries”; they operate with smaller crews on 12 hours days; they have a “home port” they return to; they provide excellent service, and, most important, they have the lowest operating subsidy by just about any relevant metric.

We looked at operating costs, subsidies (operating and capital) and the service levels. The decision and the direction then was to copy the successful shuttle ferry model of the IFA and the M/V Lituya in southern southeast and apply it to northern southeast. Funds appropriated to the vessel replacement fund were put on the street for the design of a shuttle ferry class vessel for southeast.

Like sometimes happens, this shuttle ferry changed course and became an “Alaska Class Ferry”, a larger and more expensive ship with a 24/7 crew. More expensive to build and more expensive to operate. a 50 year old model. If there were a commensurate increase in service with the increase in operating costs, then we should continue with the Alaska Class Ferry. But there isn't. It's the AMHS culture that drives it.

In the 1990's, when Canada changed some of their laws, it became difficult for some of our citizens to cross their border to travel from the contiguous US to Alaska. As a result, ferry travel from Bellingham increased significantly, the boat filled and they started leaving people behind. A business model would have been to increase the cost of fares until no traveler was left behind. A business model would have a ship on a route actually making a profit. The AMHS solution was to keep the ticket costs the same and add a second ship to the route. The result was two ships losing money on a potentially profitable route. It's the AMHS culture.

In conclusion, because of the volume of traffic and the length of the routes, the AMHS will always need a subsidy, but changes to the operating model can keep service levels at an acceptable level - or even improve them. The shuttle ferry model works and will help achieve a more sustainable transportation system. Apply a business model to the AMHS. DOT and the Administration did not hijack the "Alaska Class Ferry" they put the well thought out and sustainable "shuttle ferry" back on course.

John MacKinnon, Executive Director

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Rebecca Rooney

From: Gerard Garland <garlandg@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2013 6:08 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: Governor Parnell's Ferry Plan

Dear Representative Wilson and Representative Kreiss-Tompkins:

The governor's plan for two small, drive-on, drive-off ferries instead of a larger Alaska Class ferry is a bad idea. I live in Haines, and there are many days, especially in the winter, when anything smaller than the LeConte would not be up to the task. Some days, even the LeConte sailing is cancelled due to strong winds, heavy seas, and occasional icing conditions. Like 95 mph sustained winds at Eldred Rock.

Honestly, what is the matter with the man? Has he ever ridden the ferry to Haines in marginal conditions? If so, he would know that the smaller ferry would be inadequate.

Thanks so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gerard Garland

Haines

Rebecca Rooney

From: Sherrie <riversidealaska@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2013 11:44 PM
To: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Lynn Gattis;
Representative_Craig_Johnson@legis.state.ak.us;
Representative_Bob_Lynn@legis.state.ak.us; Representative_Eric_Feige@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: SUPPORT ALASKA CLASS FERRY PURCHASE

Dear Chairman Wilson and Members of the House Transportation Committee,

I am writing to urge you to not support the Governor's recent proposal to purchase two small roll on-roll-off ferries rather than the Alaska Class ferry approved by the legislature to replace aging vessels.

If you have spent any time in the Lynn Canal in rough weather, especially in winter, you know why this is a ill conceived plan. There have been recent sailings, even on the smaller ferries in the current fleet, when nearly every passenger was ill from the rough seas. Imagine if they'd been sailing on a little ferry of the type you'd see in Seattle crossing mild Puget Sound.

The proposal would seem ludicrous except for the fact that it is a solution based on a need that doesn't exist today. The promoters hope to use these small ferries at the end of their dream of the Juneau Access Road. The State Department of Transportation has dreamed of building a road up the Lynn Canal since before I got here almost 40 years ago. Its been proposed, studied and studied again and it hasn't happened.

Now with the national debt and calls for reigning in discretionary spending it is unlikely the Juneau Access Road will be built with federal funds until after these small ferries purchased in 2013 are beaten up by winter in the Lynn Canal.

Please continue to support the purchase of an Alaska Class Ferry with a regular car deck to improve transportation in Southeast Alaska for the people living here now. Thank you for your support of southeast transportation needs and thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Sherrie Goll
PO Box 261
Haines, AK 99827

Rebecca Rooney

From: Sherrie <riversidealaska@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2013 11:44 PM
To: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Lynn Gattis;
Representative_Craig_Johnson@legis.state.ak.us;
Representative_Bob_Lynn@legis.state.ak.us; Representative_Eric_Feige@legis.state.ak.us
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Sincerely,

Sherrie Goll
PO Box 261
Haines, AK 99827

Rebecca Rooney

From: Gerard Garland <garlandg@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2013 6:08 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: Governor Parnell's Ferry Plan

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Thanks so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gerard Garland

Haines

Rebecca Rooney

From: Erv Hagerup <solo9619@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 19, 2013 9:15 AM
To: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Peggy Wilson; lynncanalconservation@gmail.com;
Rep. Lynn Gattis; Representative_Craig_Johnson@legis.state.ak.us;
Representative_Bob_Lynn@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: Alaska Class Ferry

Good Morning,

My name is Ervin L Hagerup, and I was employed by AMHS in May of 1966, and retiring in April of 2001. Twenty of those years were served as Master on all the AMHS ships sailing in SE Alaska.

My first Master's assignment in 1979 was on the M/V Chilkat, a 99 ft long ferry built by the Territory of Alaska in 1957. It replaced the Chilkoot on a run from Tee Harbor in Juneau to Haines.

Having been born and raised in Juneau, I spent my youth and subsequent career on the waters of Southeast Alaska, with fair amount of experience on the waters of Lynn Canal.

At present, I am Marine Pilot, licensed by the State of Alaska to Pilot Foreign Vessels on the waters of SE Alaska.

In all those years with AMHS, I ran in weather that slowed the Malaspina Class vessels to 6 knots in 80 to 90 knots of wind in Lynn Canal.

Now the political view of Juneau wanting a road connection to the Capital is understandable and even desirable. Someday that may actually happen.

But, to achieve that goal by having the State build inadequate vessels to deploy on the Lynn Canal run is counter to common sense and years of recommendations from the AMHS personnel and the Maritime Community in general.

I believe the best interest of the State of Alaska is served by building the Alaska Class Ferry that can be used on the Lynn Canal Run and if the road is ever built in Lynn Canal, then the Alaska Class Ferries could be used in other areas of Alaska. The State already has sold the M/V Chilkat, and the M/V Bartlett for that very reason. They were too small and not economically feasible to operate any longer. They were auctioned off to private owners at a fraction of their value.

On the other hand, the M/V Malaspina, which was scheduled to be scrapped a few years ago, is now being refurbished and put into service again with the ability to serve any where required by AMHS.

In my opinion to cancel the Alaska Class Ferry in favor of a couple smaller and less capable vessels is not the best use of limited State resources.

Thank you, I am,

Captain Ervin L. Hagerup, Master (retired 2001)
AMHS.

Rebecca Rooney

From: Bill Shattenberg <william@anchoralaska.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 17, 2013 2:21 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Lynn Canal ferries

Rep. Peggy Wilson

I would like to voice some concerns regarding the Lynn Canal ferry plan.

1, A new ferry terminal at Cascade Point would be about forty miles out of Juneau. An estimated cab fare for a walk on passenger to downtown Juneau would be about \$90.00 minimum. A walk on fare Haines to Juneau is \$37.00. A air flight Haines to Juneau is about \$125.00 This is not affordable transportation.

2, The State is already looking at vanishing oil dollars. Having to build, maintain, and manage two ferry terminals both on the North end of Juneau is not practical.

3, While the travel time may be less on board the ship the overall time with getting to and from the terminal will offset the shorter boat trip. What is the point of building something new that will not work better than what is already in place.

Basically it looks like DOT and the Governor want to build roads regardless of what local Alaskans may want or need.

Thank you for your time.

Bill Shattenberg

5362 Commercial Blvd.

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Ph.907-780-3690

Cell 907-321-3691

2wks
Pam Varni

Fax 907-780-3692

E-mail bill@anchoralaska.com

"The ordaining of laws in favor of one part of the nation, to the prejudice and oppression of another, is certainly the most erroneous and mistaken policy. An equal dispensation of protection, rights, privileges, and advantages, is what every part is entitled to, and ought to enjoy." Benjamin Franklin, 1774.

Rebecca Rooney

From: george figdor <figdor@aptalaska.net>
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2013 12:59 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson; Representative_Eric_Feige@legis.state.ak.us; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Representative_Craig_Johnson@legis.state.ak.us; Representative_Bob_Lynn@legis.state.ak.us; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Senator_Dennis_Egan@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Fred_Dyson@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Anna_Fairclough@legis.state.ak.us; Sen. Click Bishop; Senator_Hollis_French@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: Support Alaska-class Ferries

Dear Members of the Senate and the House Transportation Committees:

i urge you to fight for the Alaska-class ferry and reject the governor's slight of hand in trying to undermine our ferry system and incrementally impose a road on communities that have opposed it for decades.

I am a 40 year resident of Haines. While people in Haines do not often agree on issues, improved ferry service is one of those things that virtually everyone in this town sees eye to eye on. Like most residents of Southeast communities, we love our ferries and over the years have found the service pretty darn reliable, despite often harsh weather. Much community input went into the concept of the Alaska-class ferry.

Marine transportation is basic to the culture of Southeast. And we are proud to have this well run mass transit system in place, when so many other places in our nation are struggling to retrofit road-based transportation with mass transit.

George Figdor
Haines, Alaska

Rebecca Rooney

From: hopkins@kpunet.net
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2013 10:50 AM
To: venables@aptalaska.net
Cc: mark.eliason@ustravel.us; rbressette@bridgedeck.org; gerry.hope@sitkatriben-sn.com; josh@touralaska.net; timothyjoyce@yahoo.com; dkelly@lynden.com; mkorsmo@aptalaska.net; mayor@ci.unalaska.ak.us; jcc@alaska.com; twodmax@aol.com; Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Open Decks and Knighthood Bows

Dear Robert and MTAB:

I watched yesterday's meeting between D.O.T. and the Transportation Committee. It is very concerning that D.O.T. Commissioner Kemp bypassed MTAB, the sudden change in the Alaska Class Ferry Project, and the emphasis on smaller (less cargo carrying capacity), perhaps "open-deck" or "Knighthood bow roll on/roll off" type vessels, with an entire new dockside infrastructure to accommodate them.

If my memory is correct, the very reason the State of Alaska sold the M/V E.L. Bartlett was because of its Knighthood bow, roll on/roll off design.

It was shortly before the sale of the Bartlett on eBay that the Stena Line's ferry Estonia sank in the Baltic Sea due to a compromised Knighthood bow. When a Knighthood bow is compromised, water rushes in fast onto the car deck and the vessel sinks quickly.

There are also times when the Lituya covers for the IFA on the route between Ketchikan and Hollis. Crossing Clarence Strait with an open deck vessel assures a saltwater bath for the vehicles onboard. Passengers ride in their vehicles, and when going down a large wave, apply their brakes.

It was a sight to watch the brake lights coming on as the bow dropped over a large wave.

It is nearly the same story - D.O.T. not listening to their customers, in fact, somewhat mocking them, the landside highway part of the Department trying to subvert the marine side, resulting in an overall diminishment of the Alaska Marine Highway System. This tug-of-war within the Department never ends, regardless of changing hands.

MTAB should be aware, however, of reduced cargo carrying capacity, open car decks, and Knighthood bows and their history. I am no expert, but I do know that Lynn Canal, which seems to be everyone's focus for the 3700 mile long Marine Highway, can be a mean place in the winter for any vessel not designed to meet those conditions.

Yours truly,

Captain William M. Hopkins
Ketchikan, Alaska

Rebecca Rooney

From: Nick Olmsted <olmstedkemp@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 17, 2013 3:40 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson
Subject: Ferry

Dear Representative Wilson,

As a 35-year resident of Tenakee Springs on Chichagof Island, I believe I can offer some insight regarding winter travel in Southeast Alaska. I've been aboard the Le Conte many times when screaming wind and heavy icing caused the wide-eyed passengers to say almost in unison "I wouldn't want to be on a boat even one inch smaller!" Typical winter storms in Lynn Canal and Chatham Strait would be an emergency nearly anywhere else in the world.

Nothing can replace a large, displacement hull vessel for safe, reliable transportation. The idea of a small, open deck ferry would be laughable if it were not so dangerous.

We have come to depend on ferry service for our island community. I don't care if the ferry schedule is frequent or convenient. I just want some fixed points in the calendar in order to schedule a dentist appointment, a wedding or an employment obligation. I have no objection to paying state employees to provide that service, any more than I object to my federal tax dollars supporting the US Coast Guard. Government exists to provide services that the private sector cannot.

Please press the "delete" button on Governor Parnell's harebrained scheme of an open-deck ferry, and reinstate the product of years of planning and discussion.

Sincerely,
Molly Kemp

To: Pat J Kemp
(DOT)
Cc: al johnson ; John
Sandor ; Ernie
Christian
Sent: Tuesday,
January 15, 2013 3:28
PM
Subject: Re:

Dear Pat:

The shuttle ferries
is the only way to go
and if we only built
30 miles of
connecting road we
could make the whole
system ten times as
efficient and generate
a lot more
revenue. ie: Haines
to Cascade, point base
the ferry in Haines
and it can make two
round trips per day
morning and evening
working only a ten
hour day. Please
revisit the taylor plan
for connecting roads
and shuttle ferries it
will work. I'd love to
help you on this one.

I don't know if
you are aware of it
but last January 16-
17, 2012, the entire
electrical grid for
southern southeastern
Alaska was maxed
out for two
days! The only thing
that kept it from
crashing was that
each town Petersburg,
Wrangell and
Ketchikan all turned
off those municipal
facilities which they
had converted from
diesel to electricity

and put them back on diesel. Thus all the swimming pools, municipal and school buildings went back on diesel heat. The system was maxed out at 42 megawatts and thank God all systems worked and there was no failure. We have added significant additional electrical load to the system in the last year and already Ketchikan is paying huge diesel surcharges as they are operating the diesel -- Bailey power plant already -- they ran out of hydro power a lot earlier than expected. I'm told that Petersburg has already put one new "Cat in a Can" diesel generator on line and has ordered another. Pat, Southern southeastern is out of power and has no new generation even on the drawing board, as they continue to hold meetings and debate who will own and who will operate facilities that they only dream of building. All of which they believe will be funded by large state or federal grants. They don't understand that NO Money is available or likely to come their way.

The key to our economic future is cheap reliable energy and without it----- tell the last guy leaving town to turn off the lights. The only way that new generation will be developed is if there is a market to sell the excess power into and to buy needed power from when we run low. The only corridor for access into southern Southeastern Alaska is the Bradfield! The federal law (T-lue) requires the Feds to give Alaska the corridor as soon as we survey it and delineate it's boundaries. This corridor should accommodate a road, pipeline and electrical intertie. Once the right of way has been conveyed from the feds to the state, the State of Alaska, need only grant permits and the intertie will be built by the private sector! Just like the Alaska Pipeline was built without state or federal funds and without the huge cost overruns and delays that would result if we waited for the government to fund, design and build it for us. The Canadians are building the new powerline up Hy.37 and down to the

Forest-Kerr (run of river hydro project) on the Iskut. That puts the North American Electrical grid within 50 miles of Tyee Lake via the Bradfield Corridor.

I have met with Valard Const. (The contractor building the Hy 37 powerline) They are ready and willing to not only build the intertie to Alaska they are willing to help finance the project. I have also met with Puget Sound energy and they are also interested as is AP&T, and a whole series of other hydro developers. Pat we need to have the Bradfield corridor surveyed as soon as possible. It is a prerequisite that must occur before any new development of electrical energy can take place. Please let me know how I might assist you in getting this project (surveying the corridor) off the ground. Robin

From: "Pat J Kemp (DOT)"
<pat.kemp@alaska.gov>
To: taylork13@comcast.net
Sent: Friday, January 11, 2013 9:11:21 PM
Subject: Re:

Hey Robin. It is really good to hear from you. Yeah, I'm back and it's a great opportunity to do some things. One of the first things we did was change this Alaska Class Ferry back to the shuttle ferries we envisioned. It started out as a shuttle then changed to an oversized Aurora that does nothing for us. So, right off the bat there's controversy, oh well. Hope you and Kay are doing well, stay out of trouble, haha. Pat

On Jan 11, 2013, at 7:19 PM,
"taylork13@comcast.net"
<taylork13@comcast.net> wrote:

Dear
Pat:
Great
to hear
you
got the
DOT
job. Now
lets
build
the
Bradfield
Road,
and
Intertie
. Best
of luck
Robin

#2 Substantive issues on the real need for the 350-foot, Alaska-class ferry or two or three more clones existing mainliner ferries.

Safety, reliability, and carrying capacity are essential to the health, safety, and economic stability of our SE Alaska communities. Flexibility for the entire AMH system can best be served by additional Alaska-class/mainliner ferries.

The health and safety of our children, elders, pets, and citizens of SE Alaska require no less than the 350-foot, Alaska-class ferry be built. Without clear safety and reliability and capacity, the economies of our SE Alaska communities is going to suffer. Last January I had a critically ill dog. The planes were not flying. The LeConte was cancelled. It was three days before I could get to Juneau on a ferry with the dog who subsequently died. It could just as easily been a person.

I recently was aboard the Taku with several regional wrestling teams from SE, heading from Juneau to Haines. Teams were from Metlakatla, Wrangell, Yakutat and elsewhere. The Taku is 352 feet. As we rounded the bend from Juneau heading north after a pleasant breakfast, we started rocking and rolling. Before long, the Captain announced, "Absolutely do not go out on the outer decks. We are locking down the elevator. Find something that is bolted down and hang on. We are in for some weather." Indeed we were in for five long hours of 70 knot winds and 14 foot waves. Most wrestlers and others, including myself, remained curled up on the floor somewhere, hanging on tightly to the nearest bolted down seat for the entire hard, hard ride that ensued.

Anyone who thinks anything less than a 350-foot, Alaska class ferry, will meet the safety and reliability needs of weather in the Upper Lynn Canal, or our capacity needs in the summer and frequently other times, really doesn't know what they are talking about.

As Senator Egan stated, any open-deck design is a recipe for failure. We already also know that the Fairweather and LeConte are not reliable for weather conditions in the Upper Lynn Canal.

#3 The cost factor seems to be a strawman, as Governor Parnell sent back to the feds money our Congressional delegation secured for the funding of this 350-foot, Alaska-class ferry.

In addition, if we are to be committed to picking one ship builder in Alaska for a project, then we must be willing to accept the cost overruns that will inevitably occur.

Third there are no actual costs tied to the change to smaller shuttle ferries. And budget and costs, as we learned from Comm. Kemp, are "fungible". Sometimes they include extra design costs, sometimes not. Sometimes they include costs for additional terminals or terminal modifications needed for the shuttle ferries, sometimes not.

We need to invest in the ferries that will meet our needs.

Thank you for your open-public processes and for taking testimony from Alaska communities affected by the recent decision by the Parnell Administration to abruptly change without public process. Please urge the Governor to restore both public process and the 350-foot, Alaska-class ferry that was developed through public process.

Regards, Kathleen Menke, Haines

Kathleen M.K. Menke
Crystal Images Photography and Publishing
Haines, Alaska
<http://www.akmk.com>