

03/06/14

PRESENTA-

TION:

JUNEAU

ACCESS

ROAD

<TARGET><BILL></BILL><SUBJECT>03-06-14 PRESENTATION
JUNEAU ACCESS ROAD</SUBJECT><COMM>HTRA28</COMM></TARGET>



Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Why Extending Roads and Shortening Ferry Links
is a Sound Policy Choice

Jeff Ottesen, Director of Program Development
March 6, 2014



Outline

- If possible, why should Alaska build roads where ferries now operate?
 - Answer: Lowers long term costs for state and user while greatly expanding capacity and travel flexibility
- Some examples how this policy is approached in similar settings, both here and around the world.
- Why decision affects all Alaskans; the ongoing ferry subsidy is significant and alternatives deserve consideration.
- Specifics of Juneau Access Project (Mike Vigue)



Advantages of Dayboats

- Dayboat: is a ferry intended to operate 12 hours or less, from a home port, typically making 1 or more round trips per day.
- Advantages:
 - No hotel or restaurant functions required
 - Crew return home each night
 - Large capital and operating savings are typical



Why Consider a Road At All?

- Roads are far less costly to state in capital and operating costs over time
- Roads greatly increase capacity, frequency, travel opportunity and offer significant travel time and user cost savings.
- Ferries essentially restrict demand, reducing flexibility, making travel costly or prohibitive
- Ferry subsidies are very high. Without significant change these costs continue in perpetuity.

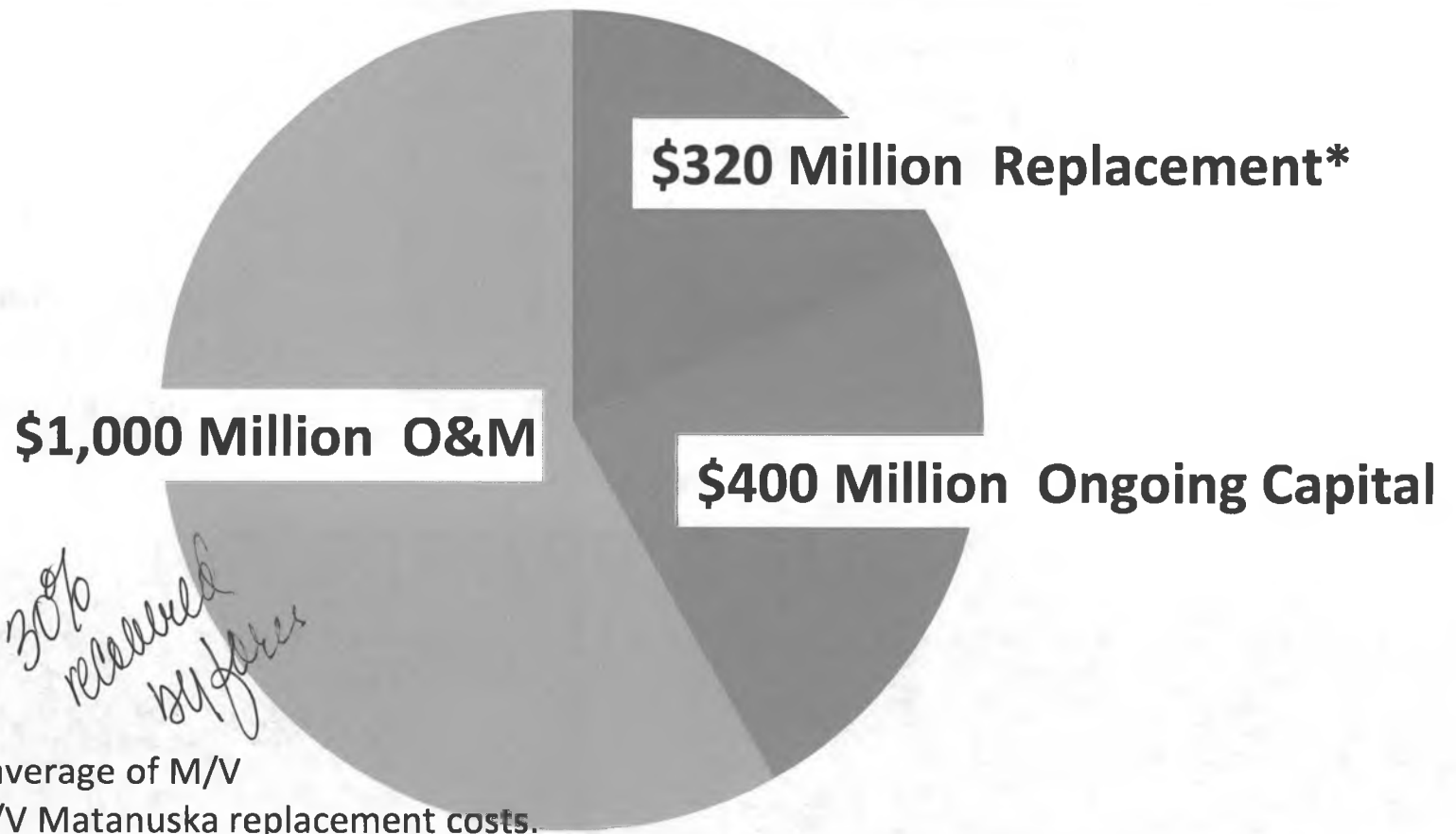


Advantages of Preferred Plan

- Ferry mainline operating distance can be reduced by 186 miles per voyage (Auke Bay to Skagway RT)
 - Based on Auke Bay as northern terminus of mainline service.
- Capacity in corridor significantly increased
- Capital costs substantially lowered
 - Unlike roads, ferry capital costs have little residual value upon replacement
- With proposed Alaska Class ferries and road, between 1 & 2 mainliners can be eliminated

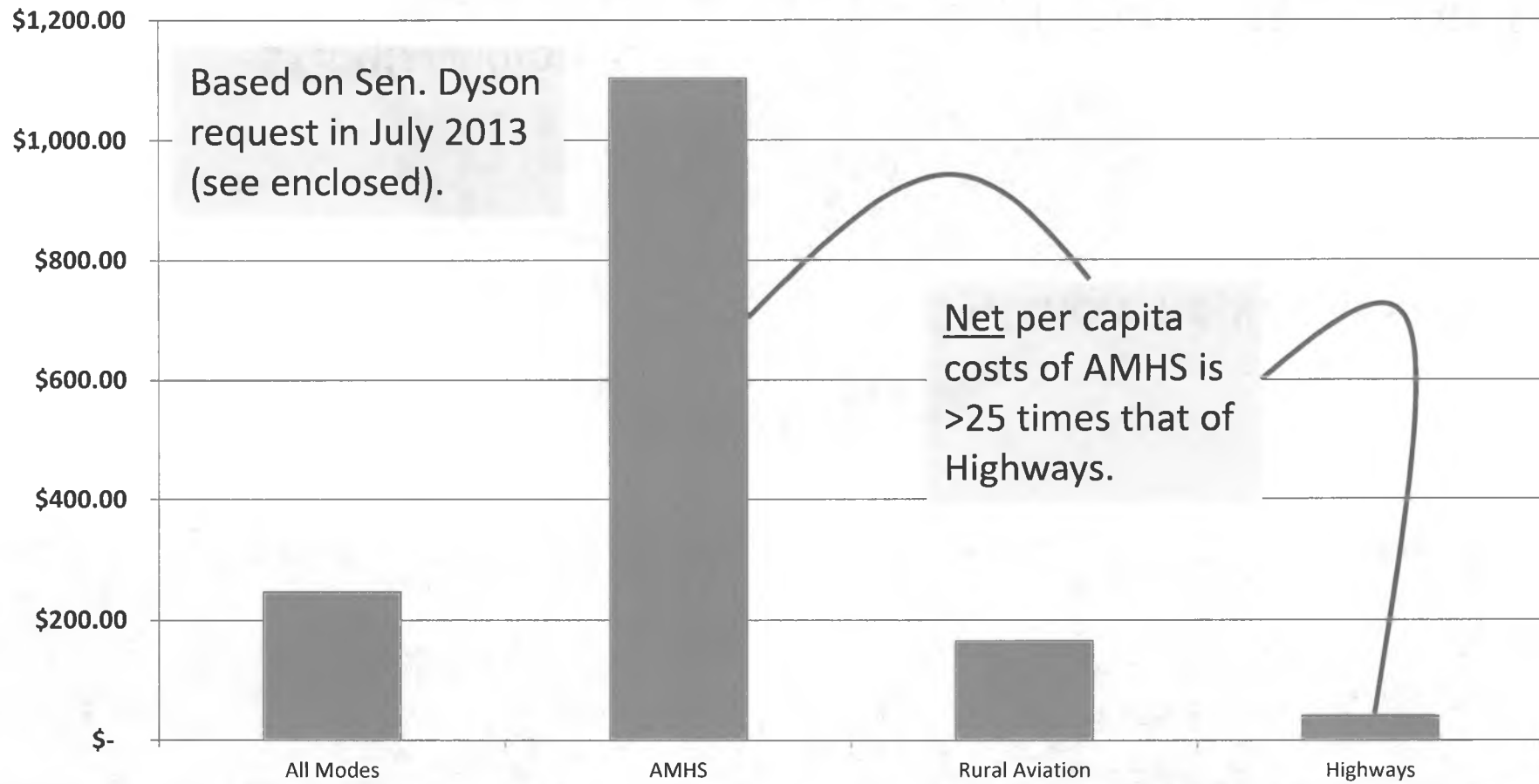


50 Year Mainliner Cost: \$1.72 B





Modal Net Per Capita Costs Per Population Served





Alaska Modal Gross Operating Costs

DOT&PF SFY 2015 Request (Millions)



>99% of travel is achieved by highways and aviation. This requires less than one-half of DOT&PF's operating budget.

- Highways
- Rural Aviation
- AMHS



Other Ferry Systems

- Both Norway and Canada have recently focused on reducing or eliminating ferries, where possible
 - Canada's Prince Edward Is. bridge built with 33 year pledge of subsidy to finance new bridge.
 - Norway's ambitious effort to systematically reduce ferry crossings, with bridges and tunnels on Highway E-39 far more challenging than Juneau Access project.
- In Alaska, Metlakatla, Prince of Wales Island and proposed King Cove-Cold Bay ferries are also models of applying roads, dayboats.



Norway Highway E39



Ferry on E-39 Highway; one of 8 remaining.



Take Aways

- Replacing or shortening ferry routes with roads, and using dayboats is a rational public policy response:
 - It lowers public and private costs
 - It offers superior service to travelers
 - The actions in other places including Canada and Norway demonstrate that perpetual ferry subsidies are strong motivation to make changes.
- As stewards of transportation choices and their future costs, there is strong merit to building the preferred alternative.



Juneau Access Improvement Project

Michael Vigue



Purpose and Need

- To provide improved surface transportation to and from Juneau within the Lynn Canal corridor that will:
 - Provide the capacity to meet transportation demand in the corridor
 - Provide flexibility and improve opportunity for travel
 - Reduce travel times between the communities
 - Reduce State costs for transportation in the corridor
 - Reduce user costs for transportation in the corridor



- Draft SEIS is an important element of the NEPA process providing an opportunity for the general public and interested parties, including governmental entities and regulatory agencies to comment on the project.
 - The Final SEIS will respond to all comments made on the Draft SEIS.
- FHWA and DOT&PF analyzed each alternative based on:
 - Consistency with 2004 Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan
 - Travel demand and capacity
 - Flexibility and opportunity to travel
 - Travel times
 - Total project life costs
 - Maintenance costs
 - User costs
 - State costs
 - Environmental impacts



Travel Capacity and Demand Alternative 2B (2020)

- Current and predicted summer vehicle capacity in Lynn Canal corridor:
 - 154 vehicles per day (2012)
 - 1,484 vehicles per day (2020)
- Current and predicted summer traffic in Lynn Canal corridor:
 - 71 vehicles daily (2012)
 - 1,345 vehicles daily (2020)



Current Situation compared to Alternative 2B - Haines

Current AMHS operation

- Juneau to Haines (summer)
 - 93 vehicles per day (capacity)
 - 7.2 hours one way
 - \$2.76 per mile (\$215 for family of 4)
 - Approximately 1 round trip per day (Juneau to Haines)

Alternative 2B

- Juneau to Haines (summer)
 - 848 vehicles per day (capacity)
 - 3.0 hours one way
 - \$.64 per mile (\$31.20 for family of 4)
 - 8 round trips per day (Katzehin to Haines)



Current Situation compared to Alternative 2B - Skagway

Current AMHS operation

- Juneau to Skagway (summer)
 - 61 vehicles per day (capacity)
 - 9.1 hours one way
 - \$3.08 per mile (\$286 for family of 4)
 - Approximately 1 round trip per day (Juneau to Skagway)

Alternative 2B

- Juneau to Skagway (summer)
 - 636 vehicles per day (capacity)
 - 3.4 hours one way
 - \$.64 per mile (\$59.52 for family of 4)
 - 6 round trips per day (Katzehin to Skagway)



Project History

- Juneau is the largest community on the North American continent not connected to the continental highway system.
- In 1997 FHWA issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project.
- In 2000 Governor Knowles declared Alternative 2, an East Lynn Canal Highway, the State's preferred alternative but suspended work on the project and ordered construction of 2 fast vehicle ferries.
- In 2002 Governor Murkowski directed that the EIS be completed.
- A Supplemental Draft EIS was released in 2005, with a Final EIS in January 2006 stating the East Lynn Canal Highway as the Preferred Alternative.
- A Record of Decision (ROD) was issued by FHWA in April 2006.



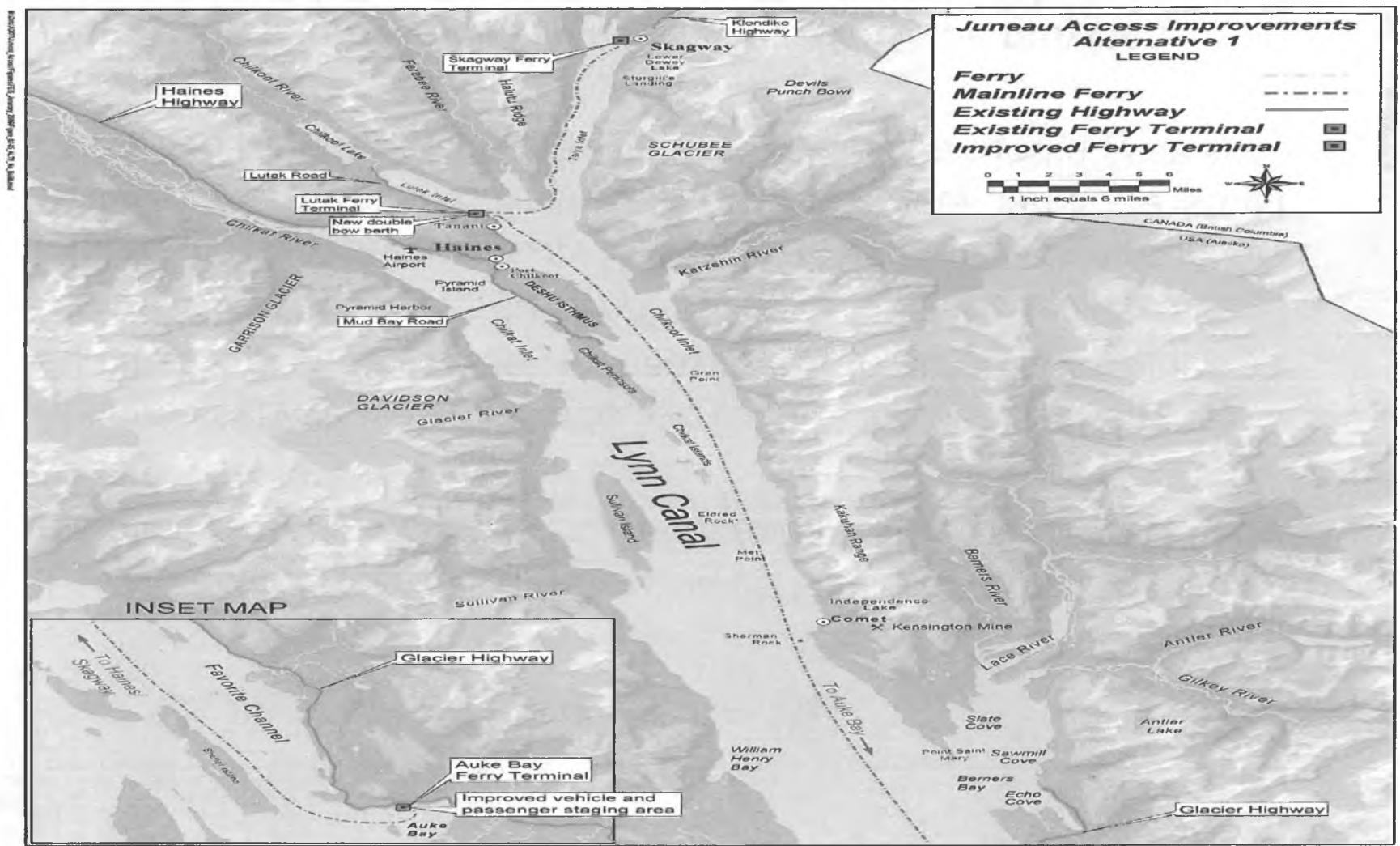
Project History

- In August 2006 a lawsuit was filed in District Court.
- In February 2009 the District Court vacated FHWA's ROD concluding that the State and FHWA failed to consider an alternative for improved ferry service using existing ferries and terminals.
- DOT&PF appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in May 2011. The 3 judge panel ruled 2-1 to uphold the District Court decision.
- As a result the DOT&PF and FHWA initiated preparation of an Supplemental EIS in January 2012.
- This Supplemental EIS evaluates the Court ordered alternative, known as Alternative 1B, Enhanced Service with existing AMHS Assets.



Alternative 1 – No Action

- The No Action Alternative (Alternative 1) includes a continuation of mainline ferry service in Lynn Canal and incorporates two Day Boat Alaska Class Ferries (ACF).
- Mainline service would include two round trips per week in the summer and one per week in the winter with Auke Bay-Haines-Skagway-Haines-Auke Bay routing.
- During the summer, one Day Boat ACF would make one round trip between Auke Bay and Haines six days per week, and one would make two round-trips per day between Haines and Skagway six days per week.
- In the winter, ferry service in Lynn Canal would be provided primarily by the Day Boat ACFs three times per week.



**Figure 2-5
Alternative 1: No Action Alternative**



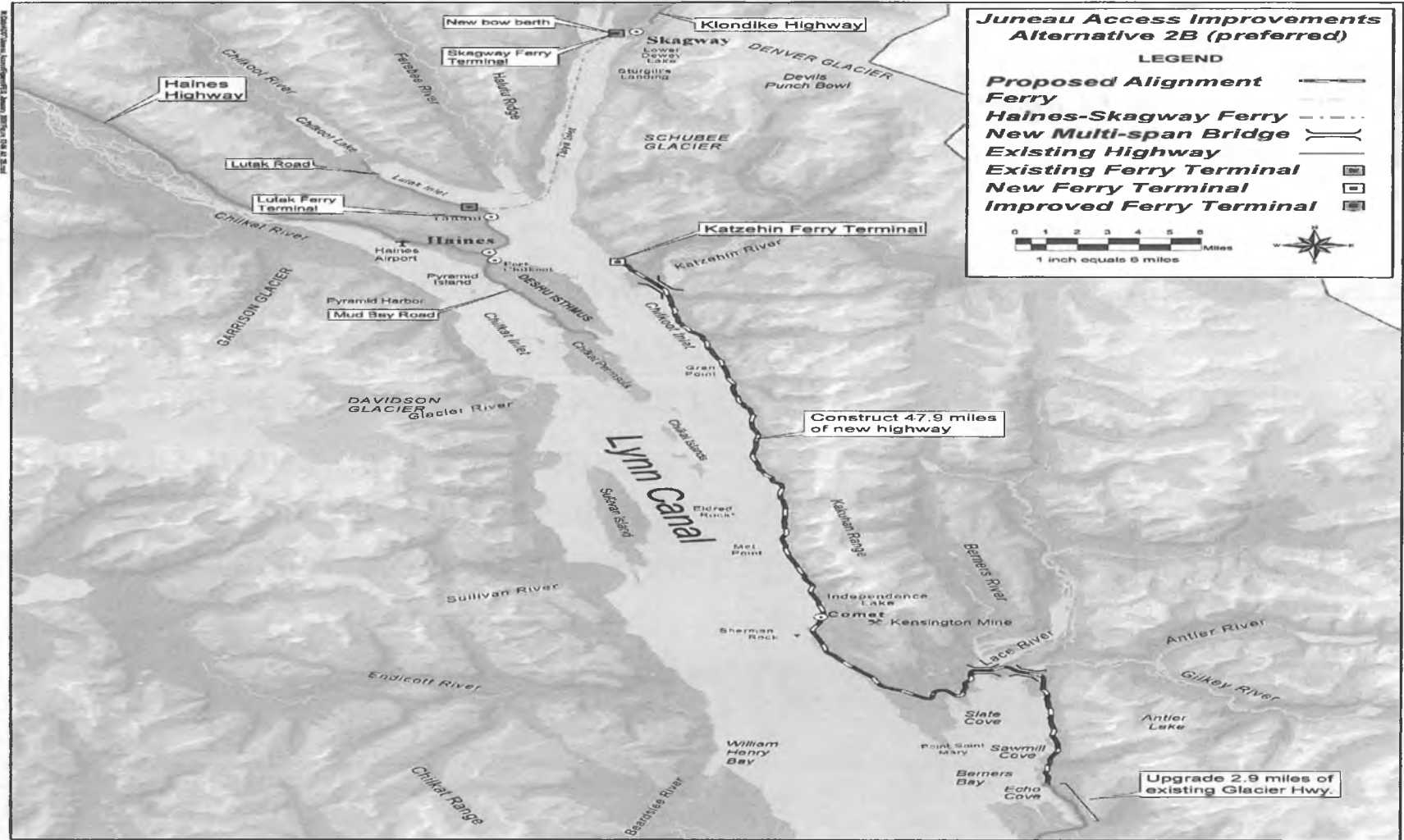
Alternative 2B- East Lynn Canal Highway

- Alternative 2B would construct the East Lynn Canal Highway (50.8-miles including 47.9 miles of new highway and upgrade to 2.9 miles of the existing Glacier Highway) from Echo Cove around Berners Bay to a new ferry terminal two miles north of the Katzehin River.
- Ferry service would connect Katzehin to Haines and Skagway.
- During the summer months, one Day Boat ACF would make eight round-trips per day between Haines and Katzehin, a second Day Boat ACF would make six round-trips per day between Skagway and Katzehin.
- The Haines-Skagway shuttle ferry would make two trips per day.
- During the winter, one Day Boat ACF would make six round-trips per day between Haines and Katzehin, and a second Day Boat ACF would make four round-trips per day between Skagway and Katzehin.



Why not end the road in Skagway?

- The 1997 Draft EIS analyzed the road continuing to Skagway with the National Park Service (NPS) on record with no 4(f) impacts.
 - 4(f) stipulates that FHWA cannot approve the use of land from publicly owned historical sites unless there are no feasible and prudent alternatives and harm to the property from use is minimized.
- Between 1997 and 2002 NPS updated their master plan and identified the Skagway and White Pass District National Historic Landmark (NHL) as a 4(f) resource.
- In 2004 FHWA and DOT&PF consulted with the NPS regarding the (NHL).
- In 2005 a letter from the U.S. Department of Interior made clear the NPS position that the NHL was protected by 4(f)
- FHWA determined that the NHL was protected under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act.
- Continuation of road to Skagway will not be included in this Federal-aid project. It could be re-evaluated at a later date as a separate project.





Preferred Alternative

- After careful review and consideration of the updated information and analysis conducted in support of the Draft SEIS, FHWA and DOT&PF continue to prefer Alternative 2B.
- This is determined with regard to the Purpose and Need elements as well as comprehensive cost and impact analyses.
- In addition to completing the NEPA process there are several Federal actions necessary:
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit
 - National Marine Fisheries Service Endangered Species Act consultation
 - National Marine Fisheries Service Marine Mammals Protection Act Incidental Harassment Authorization
 - U.S. Forest Service Right of Way easement



Current Project Schedule

- Cooperating Agency Review of Draft SEIS ended February 22, 2014
- Public Comment period on Draft SEIS begins April 2014
- Public Hearings in Juneau, Haines, Skagway will be held in May 2014
- Final SEIS/ROD in late August 2014



Conclusion

- The current Lynn Canal transportation system is the largest bottle neck in the state. It deserves a better and more efficient alternative.
- The proposed Juneau Access project is justified:
 - Capacity meets transportation demand in the corridor
 - Offers flexibility and improved opportunity for travel
 - Reduce travel times between the communities
 - Reduce state costs for transportation in the corridor
 - Reduce user costs for transportation in the corridor



Additional Information

Description of other alternatives.



Alternative 1B- Enhanced Service with Existing AMHS Assets

- Alternative 1B includes all of the components of Alternative 1, No Action, but focuses on enhancing service using existing AMHS assets without major initial capital expenditures.
- *Enhanced services included as part of Alternative 1B are a 20 percent reduction in fares for trips in Lynn Canal and extended hours of operations for the reservation call center.*
- Mainline service would include two round trips per week in the summer and one per week in the winter with Auke Bay-Haines-Skagway-Haines-Auke Bay routing.
- *During the summer, the M/V Malaspina would make one round-trip per day seven days per week on a Skagway-Auke Bay-Skagway route, while one Day Boat ACF would make one round trip between Auke Bay and Haines six days per week, and one would make two round-trips per day between Haines and Skagway six days per week.*
- *In the winter, ferry service in Lynn Canal would be provided primarily by the Day Boat ACFs three times per week.*

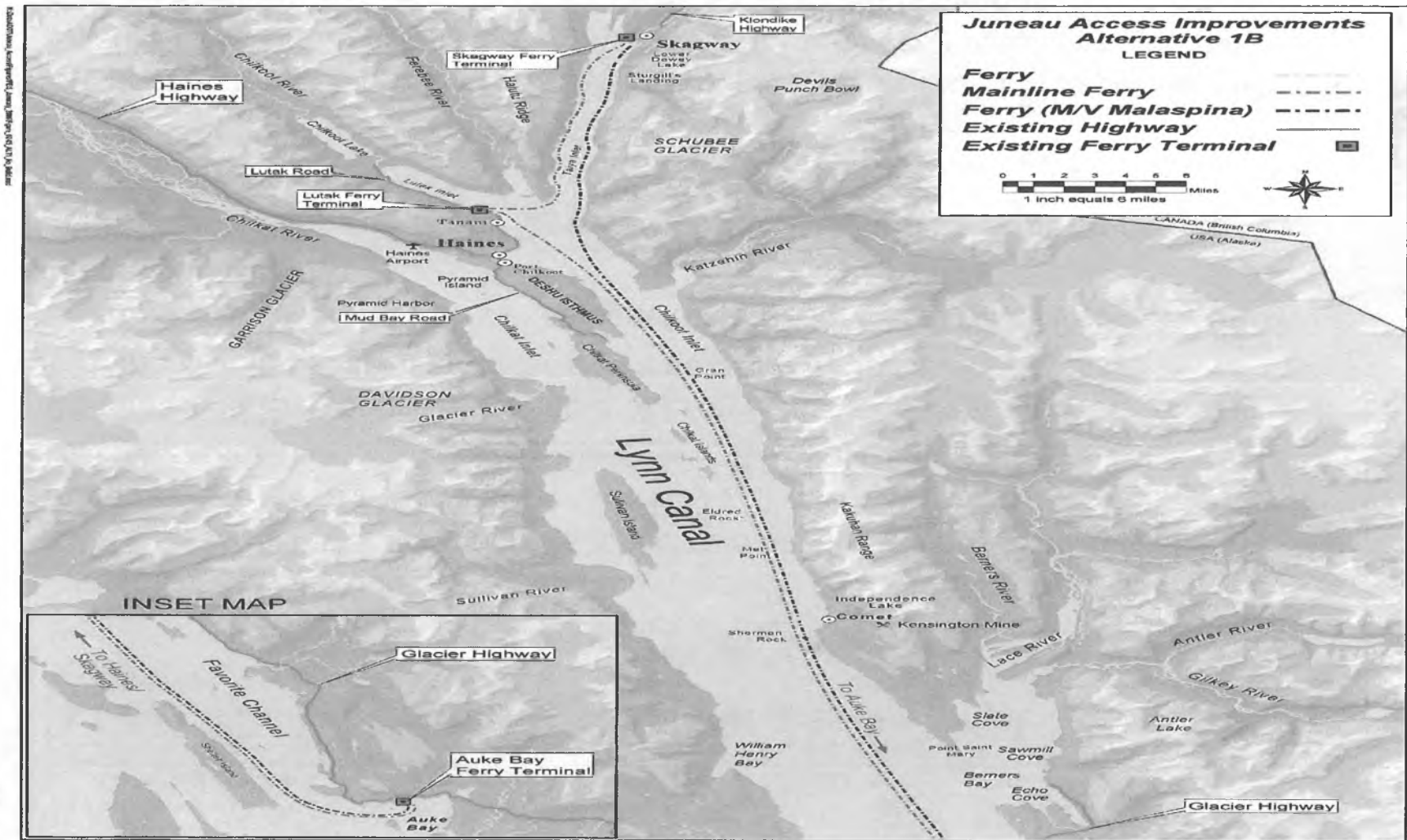


Figure 2-6
Alternative 1B: Enhanced Service with Existing AMHS Assets



Alternative 3 – West Lynn Canal Highway

- Alternative 3 would upgrade/extend the Glacier Highway (5.2 miles including 2.3 miles of new highway and upgrade to 2.9 miles of the existing Glacier Highway) from Echo Cove to Sawmill Cove in Berners Bay.
- New ferry terminals would be constructed at Sawmill Cove in Berners Bay and at William Henry Bay on the west shore of Lynn Canal, and the Skagway Ferry Terminal would be modified to include a new end berth.
- A new 38.9-mile highway would be constructed from the William Henry Bay Ferry Terminal to Haines.
- A new conventional monohull ferry would be constructed and would operate between Haines and Skagway.
- Mainline ferry service would end at Auke Bay.
- During the summer, two Day Boat ACFs would make six round-trips per day between Sawmill Cove and William Henry Bay (total of 12 trips each direction), and the Haines-Skagway shuttle ferry would make six round-trips per day.
- During the winter, one Day Boat ACF would make four round-trips per day between Sawmill Cove and William Henry Bay, and the Haines-Skagway shuttle ferry would make four round-trips per day.

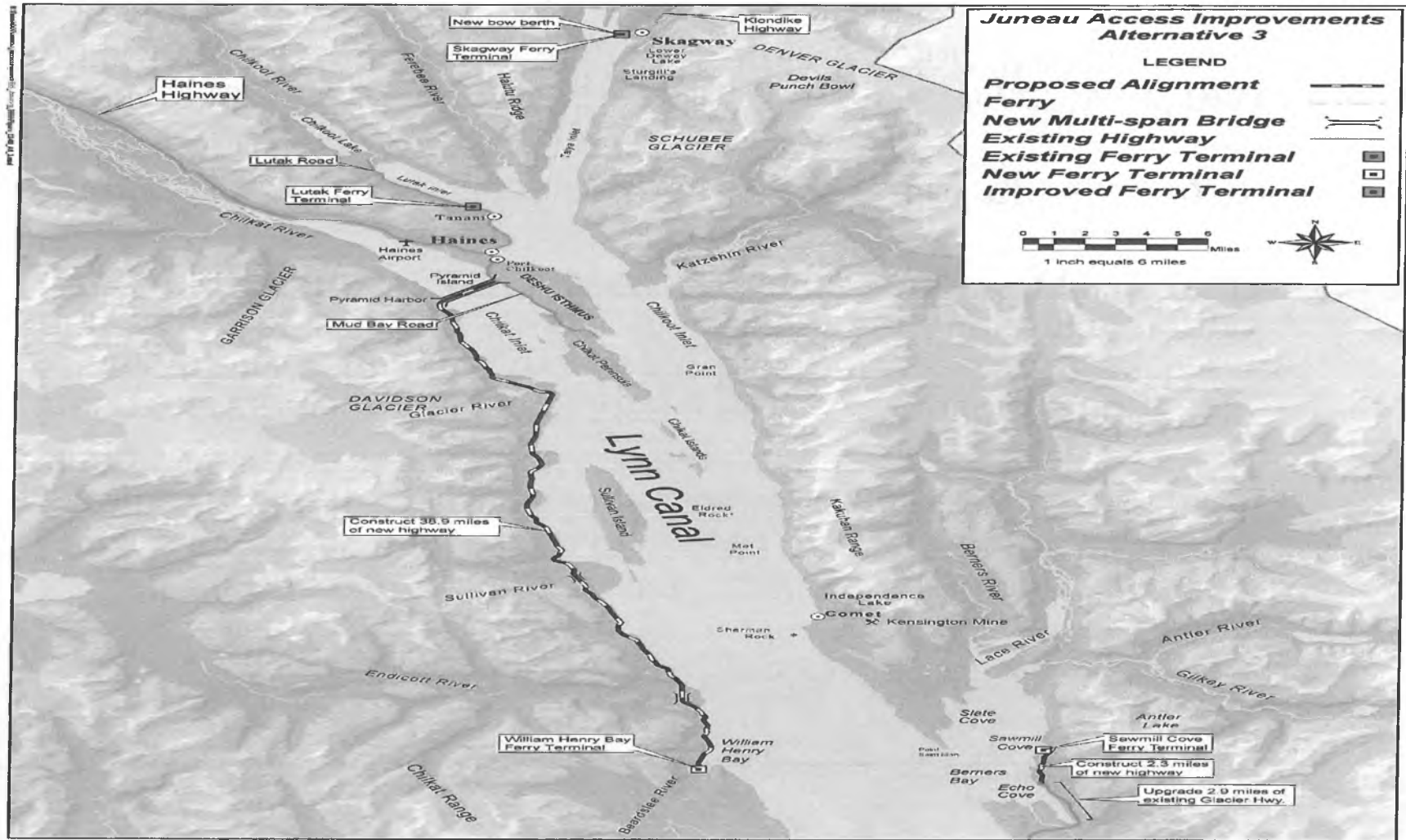


Figure 2-8
Alternative 3: West Lynn Canal Highway



Alternatives 4A thru 4D

- All four marine alternatives would include continued mainline ferry service in Lynn Canal with a minimum of two trips per week in the summer and one per week in the winter with Auke Bay-Haines-Skagway-Haines-Auke Bay routing.
- Each marine alternative includes a new conventional monohull shuttle that would make two round-trips per day between Haines and Skagway six days a week in the summer and a minimum of three round-trips per week between Haines and Skagway in the winter.
- The AMHS would continue to be the NHS route from Juneau to Haines and Skagway.
- These alternatives assume the following improvements will have been made independent of the JAI Project before the alternative comes on-line:
 - improved vehicle and passenger staging areas at the Auke Bay and Haines ferry terminals to optimize traffic flow on and off the Day Boat ACFs
 - expansion of the Haines Ferry Terminal to include new double bow berths



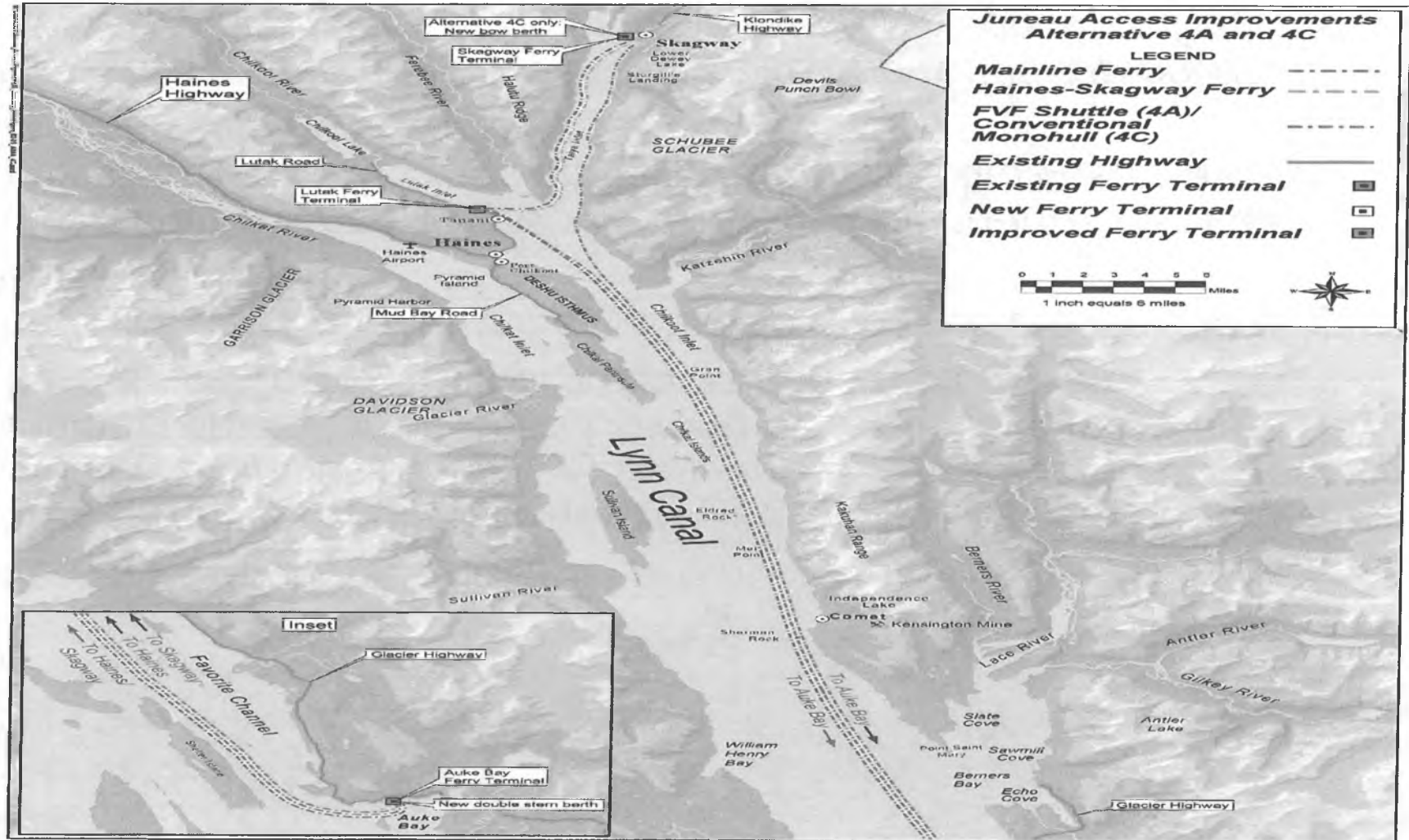
Alternative 4A – FVF from Auke Bay

- Alternative 4A would construct two new fast vehicle ferries (FVF).
- No new roads would be built for this alternative
- The Auke Bay Ferry Terminal would be expanded to include a new double stern berth.
- *The FVFs would make two round-trips between Auke Bay and Haines and two round-trips between Auke Bay and Skagway per day in the summer.*
- *During the winter, one FVF would make one round-trip between Auke Bay and Haines and one round-trip between Auke Bay and Skagway each day.*



Alternative 4C – Conventional Monohull from Auke Bay

- Alternative 4C would use Day Boat ACFs to provide additional ferry service in Lynn Canal.
- No new roads would be built for this alternative.
- The Auke Bay Ferry Terminal would be expanded to include a new double stern berth, and the Skagway Ferry Terminal would be expanded to include a new bow berth.
- In the summer, one Day Boat ACF would make one round-trip per day between Auke Bay and Haines, and one Day Boat ACF would make one round-trip per day between Auke Bay and Skagway.
- During the winter, one Day Boat ACF would alternate between a round-trip to Haines one day and a round-trip to Skagway the next day.



**Figure 2-9
Alternative 4A: Fast Vehicle Ferry (FVF) and Alternative 4C: Conventional Monohull Shuttle
Service from Auke Bay**

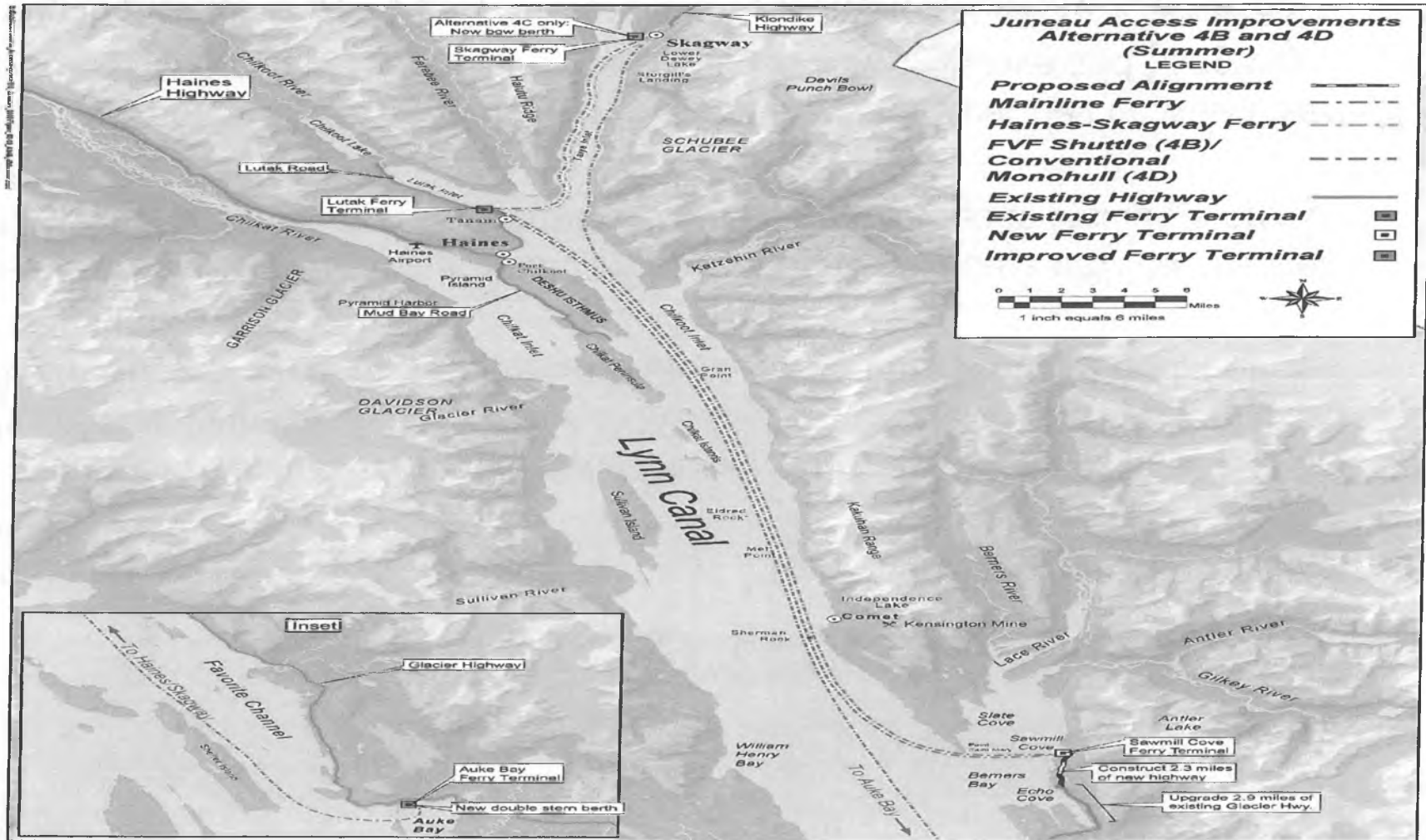


Alternative 4B – FVF from Berners Bay

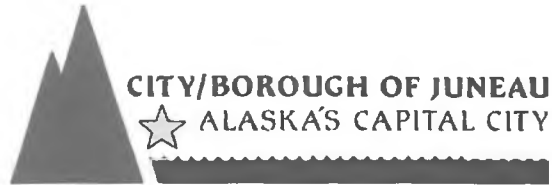
- Alternative 4B would construct two new FVFs.
- This alternative would upgrade/extend Glacier Highway (5.2 miles including 2.3 miles of new highway and 2.9 miles of the existing Glacier Highway) from Echo Cove to Sawmill Cove in Berners Bay where a new ferry terminal would be constructed.
- The Auke Bay Ferry Terminal would be expanded to include a new double stern berth.
- *In the summer, the FVFs would make two round-trips between Sawmill Cove and Haines and two round-trips between Sawmill Cove and Skagway per day.*
- *During the winter, one FVF would make one round-trip between Auke Bay and Haines and one round-trip between Auke Bay and Skagway each day.*



- Alternative 4D would use Day Boat ACFs to provide additional ferry service in Lynn Canal.
- This alternative would upgrade/extend Glacier Highway (5.2 miles including 2.3 miles of new highway and 2.9 miles of the existing Glacier Highway) from Echo Cove to Sawmill Cove in Berners Bay where a new ferry terminal would be constructed.
- The Auke Bay Ferry Terminal would be expanded to include a new double stern berth, and the Skagway Ferry Terminal would be expanded to include a new bow berth.
- In the summer, the Day Boat ACFs would make two trips per day between Sawmill Cove and Haines and two trips per day between Sawmill Cove and Skagway.
- During the winter, a Day Boat ACF would operate from Auke Bay, alternating between a round-trip to Haines one day and to Skagway the next day.



**Figure 2-10
Alternative 4B: Fast Vehicle Ferry (FVF) and Alternative 4D: Conventional Monohull Shuttle Service
from Berners Bay (Summer)**



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Telephone: (907) 586-5240; Facsimile: (907) 586-5385

Mayor@ci.juneau.ak.us

March 3, 2014

Honorable Dennis Egan
Chair Senate Transportation
Alaska Senate
State Capitol, Room 9
Juneau AK 99801

Honorable Peggy Wilson
Chair House Transportation
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 9
Juneau AK 99801

RE: Joint Senate and House Transportation Meeting with Juneau Access

Dear Senator Egan and Representative Wilson:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter of support for Juneau Access to the Joint Senate and House Transportation Committee.

My comments about Juneau Access are offered largely in the context of budgets.

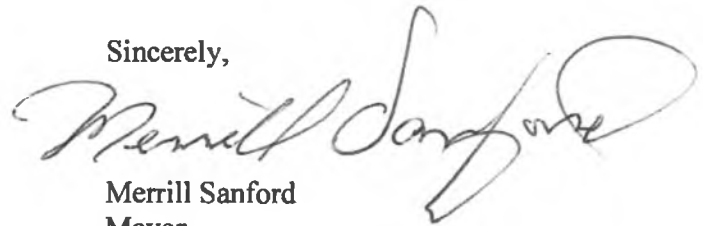
For some twenty years – as Chief of the Fire Department, a member of the CBJ Assembly and now as Mayor of Juneau, I have worked with budgets. It is always a struggle to find a balance between what we need and what we can afford and to consider both the capital cost of constructing vital infrastructure as well as ongoing operational costs. As the Transportation Committee considers Juneau Access, I trust that future sustainability of services will be seriously evaluated.

The official position of the City and Borough of Juneau is firmly in support of Juneau Access. Juneau also understands the critical importance of the Alaska Marine Highway System to all of Southeast Alaska. I firmly believe that the future of ferry service in Southeast depends on a system that is fiscally sustainable in light of declining state revenues but that still meets the basic needs of the traveling public and Alaska's roadless communities. History has proven that the cost of maintaining roads in Alaska is substantially less than operating and maintaining ferries. When Juneau Access is complete, two expensive mainliners will no longer be required for the northern Lynn Canal route, and ferry service to other Southeast communities will be more secure and even improved. In my mind, better ferry service for other Southeast communities with lower operating costs for the Marine Highway is one of the most important benefits of Juneau Access.

Equally important, again in light of state budgets, are the opportunities for expanded economic activity provided by this road. The benefits are not limited to northern Southeast. Construction of the road will employ hundreds of Alaskans from around the state. Once built, the road will support increased commerce from tourism and fisheries to numerous small businesses. This economic activity is vitally important to our region.

Juneau Access will serve to improve and secure transportation throughout the region and give us the boost needed to stabilize and grow our Southeast economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Merrill Sanford". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Merrill Sanford
Mayor

cc: Representative Cathy Munoz
Representative Sam Kito III
Kevin Jardell



HAINES BOROUGH, ALASKA

P.O. BOX 1209 • HAINES, ALASKA 99827

Administration 907.766.2231 • (fax) 907.766.2716

Tourism 907.766.2234 • (fax) 907.766.3155

Police Dept. 907.766.2121 • (fax) 907.766.2128

Fire Dept. 907.766.2155 • (fax) 907.766.3373

March 5, 2014

Senator Dennis Egan, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
Representative Peggy Wilson, Chair, House Transportation Committee

Dear Senator Egan and Representative Wilson,

As you know, the Haines Borough prefers improved ferry service over a hard link as the method for achieving the connection of Juneau to interior and western Alaska. Our reasoning is simple: the Alaska Marine Transportation System uses the existing highway that ties together the communities in the archipelago: Lynn Canal and the Inside Passage. Juneau is but one of the communities in that group. When considering the massive investment of state funds that would be required to build the East Side Road up Lynn Canal (some say more than half a billion dollars for the link from Juneau to Katazhin), there might be a greater benefit to a greater number of people to provide for regular, reliable ferry service between already established ports – forestalling the necessity to build the two new ports required by the current plan for the East Side Road.

The Haines Borough has been criticized for lobbying against this linkage on the basis that the project is about Juneau, not Haines. We beg to differ. Most of the proposed road travels through the Haines Borough. If the proposal were simply to extend the Eagan Highway, say to Kensington Mine, the Haines Borough would remain silent, if not actively in support. But that is not the stated objective. The stated objective is to drive a hard link from Juneau (overlooking the fact that a ferry will be required nonetheless) to the Haines Highway or the Klondike Highway.

Given that a hard link is the objective, we have repeatedly asked DOT/PF to reconsider the West Side linkage. Now we ask you to request a serious, numbers-based, presentation of this West Side road. We understand that some of the members of the Senate and House Transportation Committees are unfamiliar with the West Side option. This option travels up the very flat terrain of the west side of Lynn Canal.

The advantages of the West Side route are many. Though none of us on the Borough Assembly are civil engineers, we are told that the West Side route is less challenging

to construct and would be less problematic to maintain given that it is free of the many slide and avalanche zones that characterize the East Side route. Like the East Side route, it would provide land access to land that is already in various stages of development – commercial and residential; but unlike the East Side Route, in the future, the West Side link could connect the additional settled communities of Excursion Inlet and Gustavus. We understand that the larger goal of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is exactly that: to link communities with a road system. We think these advantages make the West Side route worthy of your consideration. We respectfully request that you request DOT/PF to brief you on the West Side Route; its advantages and disadvantages compared to the East Side Route, so that you can make an informed decision about the best way to improve Juneau Access and enhance our statewide transportation system.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Scott
Mayor, Haines Borough

Cc:

Senate Transportation Committee members: Sen. Fred Dyson, Vice-Chair; Sen. Anna Fairclough, Sen. Hollis French, Sen. Click Bishop.

House Transportation Committee members: Rep. Doug Isaccson, Vice-Chair, Rep. Kreiss-Tompkins, Rep. Bob Lynn, Rep. Craig Johnson, Re. Lynn Gattis, Rep. Eric Feige

Senator Bert Stedman

Members, Haines Borough Assembly
Julie Cozzi, Interim Haines Borough Manager
Michelle Webb, Interim Haines Borough Clerk

Rebecca Rooney

From: Chuck Collins <ccollinsak@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 04, 2014 9:30 AM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Sam Kito
Subject: Juneau Access road

I see that a scheduled hearing for the feasibility of this road is on Thursday. I would like to voice my positive opinion of the project. I would do so in person however, since I am working at Kensington I am not able to readily get into town to make the meeting. The project would be great for timely delivery of freight to one of SE Alaska's largest private employers, facilitate an easier commute for the worker's there. Might even cut down on the out of state hire. Mostly a thought about emergency services should be considered. Access for emergencies is very limited, not only to Kensington, but since both large mines support each other in mine rescue situations, Greenscreek is also effected.

Not to mention the economic benefit of shipping in and out of Juneau. Fish, beer and minerals leave to other locations both state and country wide. The benefit of local tourism and shopping, both from in flow and out flow. I know I would go to Haines and Skagway to visit.

Quality of life? How nice it would be to take a drive up one of the most beautiful canals and mountain scenery in the world. Just a nice picnic or scenic drive on a warm spring day. An easier connection to the rest of the State. No more complaints about SE not being connected to Alaska.

I am not an expert, but I would imagine it is a more cost effective transportation link than a new ferry and the inevitable upkeep associated with a vessel. Not to mention the capacity comparisons are in favor of a road.

Thus a short note asking and pleading to move forward with a road project for the benefit of all of us. Being held hostage by an elite few whom put personal views ahead of the greater good needs to be stopped.

--
Chuck Collins

Joshua 24:15

[Home](#) » [Transportation](#) » [Juneau Road](#)

Juneau Road

The proposed Juneau Road would add 50 miles of new road to the Juneau road system, dead-ending at a new ferry terminal on the Katzehin River. From there, drivers would have to catch a shuttle ferry to Haines or Skagway.

This two-lane road, estimated to cost well over \$500 million, would cross 36 avalanche chutes and miles of unstable, difficult terrain, creating an expensive to maintain and dangerous gauntlet for winter drivers and workers.

For the last 17 years, SEACC, our allies, and thousands of Alaskans have opposed this boondoggle. Unfortunately, sometimes bad ideas just don't go away, and we need you to speak up once more to stop the road.



Top 4 Reasons to Oppose the Road

We can't afford it.

The road's estimated cost is \$524 million and counting. \$524 million does not include the maintenance and regular operations required to keep the road open once built. Alaska is in the middle of a revenue crisis. Every dollar spent on this boondoggle is a dollar not spent on our schools or communities. If we say yes to this road, we will be spending money on this every year for the next 40 years.

It's not safe.

The proposed route crosses through 36 avalanche zones and DOT estimates it will be closed 34 days every year due to avalanche and weather conditions. DOT estimates that 8 deaths will occur on this road in the next 30 years. No deaths have occurred in the 50+ years of ferry service in Lynn Canal. There has been no discussion about additional publicly funded emergency needs or highway patrol.

It would destroy Southeast Alaska's iconic coastline.

The road would cut through the gorgeous and productive ecosystems that Southeast Alaska is known for, including Berner's Bay, the Katzehin River Delta, and Lynn Canal. It will invade critical habitat for sea lions and mountain goats. Essential fish habitat will have to be dredged for the road's numerous bridges. Alternative options for transportation exist. This environmental impact is not necessary.

It will decrease, not increase quality of life.

Travelers won't be able to get to or from the ferry terminal without a car. This will effectively eliminate the walk-on option for ferry service. This will reroute traffic in ways that will hurt the economies of Haines and Skagway which rely on tourist dollars.

Take Action

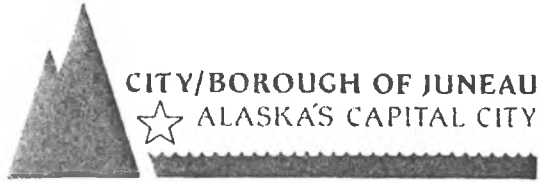
Sign the petition to Governor Parnell and Alaska Legislative leaders. The Governor has proposed spending \$35 million to start construction in Summer 2014, beginning with a road to the Kensington Mine. The time is now to stand up and ask the legislature to take this unnecessary and destructive project off the table.

Let's protect this place we call home! Thanks for taking the time to sign this petition.

change.org [Start a petition](#) [Browse](#) [Search](#)



Background Resources



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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Mayor@ci.juneau.ak.us

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I appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter of support for Juneau Access to the Joint Senate and House Transportation Committee.

My comments about Juneau Access are offered largely in the context of budgets.

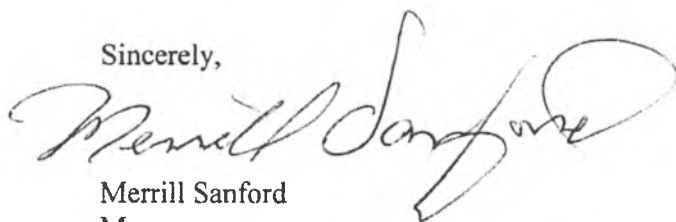
For some twenty years – as Chief of the Fire Department, a member of the CBJ Assembly and now as Mayor of Juneau, I have worked with budgets. It is always a struggle to find a balance between what we need and what we can afford and to consider both the capital cost of constructing vital infrastructure as well as ongoing operational costs. As the Transportation Committee considers Juneau Access, I trust that future sustainability of services will be seriously evaluated.

The official position of the City and Borough of Juneau is firmly in support of Juneau Access. Juneau also understands the critical importance of the Alaska Marine Highway System to all of Southeast Alaska. I firmly believe that the future of ferry service in Southeast depends on a system that is fiscally sustainable in light of declining state revenues but that still meets the basic needs of the traveling public and Alaska's roadless communities. History has proven that the cost of maintaining roads in Alaska is substantially less than operating and maintaining ferries. When Juneau Access is complete, two expensive mainliners will no longer be required for the northern Lynn Canal route, and ferry service to other Southeast communities will be more secure and even improved. In my mind, better ferry service for other Southeast communities with lower operating costs for the Marine Highway is one of the most important benefits of Juneau Access.

Equally important, again in light of state budgets, are the opportunities for expanded economic activity provided by this road. The benefits are not limited to northern Southeast. Construction of the road will employ hundreds of Alaskans from around the state. Once built, the road will support increased commerce from tourism and fisheries to numerous small businesses. This economic activity is vitally important to our region.

Juneau Access will serve to improve and secure transportation throughout the region and give us the boost needed to stabilize and grow our Southeast economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Merrill Sanford". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Merrill Sanford
Mayor

cc: Representative Cathy Munoz
Representative Sam Kito III
Kevin Jardell



HAINES BOROUGH, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 1209 • HAINES, ALASKA 99827
Administration 907.766.2231 • (fax) 907.766.2716
Tourism 907.766.2234 • (fax) 907.766.3155
Police Dept. 907.766.2121 • (fax) 907.766.2128
Fire Dept. 907.766.2155 • (fax) 907.766.3373

March 5, 2014

Senator Dennis Egan, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
Representative Peggy Wilson, Chair, House Transportation Committee

Dear Senator Egan and Representative Wilson,

As you know, the Haines Borough prefers improved ferry service over a hard link as the method for achieving the connection of Juneau to interior and western Alaska. Our reasoning is simple: the Alaska Marine Transportation System uses the existing highway that ties together the communities in the archipelago: Lynn Canal and the Inside Passage. Juneau is but one of the communities in that group. When considering the massive investment of state funds that would be required to build the East Side Road up Lynn Canal (some say more than half a billion dollars for the link from Juneau to Katazhin), there might be a greater benefit to a greater number of people to provide for regular, reliable ferry service between already established ports – forestalling the necessity to build the two new ports required by the current plan for the East Side Road.

The Haines Borough has been criticized for lobbying against this linkage on the basis that the project is about Juneau, not Haines. We beg to differ. Most of the proposed road travels through the Haines Borough. If the proposal were simply to extend the Eagan Highway, say to Kensington Mine, the Haines Borough would remain silent, if not actively in support. But that is not the stated objective. The stated objective is to drive a hard link from Juneau (overlooking the fact that a ferry will be required nonetheless) to the Haines Highway or the Klondike Highway.

Given that a hard link is the objective, we have repeatedly asked DOT/PF to reconsider the West Side linkage. Now we ask you to request a serious, numbers-based, presentation of this West Side road. We understand that some of the members of the Senate and House Transportation Committees are unfamiliar with the West Side option. This option travels up the very flat terrain of the west side of Lynn Canal.

The advantages of the West Side route are many. Though none of us on the Borough Assembly are civil engineers, we are told that the West Side route is less challenging

to construct and would be less problematic to maintain given that it is free of the many slide and avalanche zones that characterize the East Side route. Like the East Side route, it would provide land access to land that is already in various stages of development – commercial and residential; but unlike the East Side Route, in the future, the West Side link could connect the additional settled communities of Excursion Inlet and Gustavus. We understand that the larger goal of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities is exactly that: to link communities with a road system. We think these advantages make the West Side route worthy of your consideration. We respectfully request that you request DOT/PF to brief you on the West Side Route; its advantages and disadvantages compared to the East Side Route, so that you can make an informed decision about the best way to improve Juneau Access and enhance our statewide transportation system.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Stephanie Scott in black ink.

Stephanie Scott
Mayor, Haines Borough

Cc:

Senate Transportation Committee members: Sen. Fred Dyson, Vice-Chair; Sen. Anna Fairclough, Sen. Hollis French, Sen. Click Bishop.

House Transportation Committee members: Rep. Doug Isaccson, Vice-Chair, Rep. Kreiss-Tompkins, Rep. Bob Lynn, Rep. Craig Johnson, Re. Lynn Gattis, Rep. Eric Feige

Senator Bert Stedman

Members, Haines Borough Assembly
Julie Cozzi, Interim Haines Borough Manager
Michelle Webb, Interim Haines Borough Clerk