

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

HOUSE and SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE FILES, 2005-2006 3064



Investment Priority: Job Training

- **Preparing Alaskans for the future's opportunities**
 - Fairbanks Pipeline Training Center
 - AVTEC
 - Distance training videoconferencing
 - Dormitory remodel
 - Facility replacement



Investment Priority: Resource Development

- **Oil and gas development**
 - Unified Permitting Process
 - Frontier Basis Geologic Assessment
 - Bristol Bay Energy Development
 - Geologic Data for new North Slope Exploration
 - Pipeline Corridor Geologic Hazards
 - Shallow Coring Program



Investment Priority: Public's Safety

- **Tools to respond effectively**
 - APSIN re-design
 - Online fire, life safety plan review system
 - Crime lab design
- **Emergency preparedness**
 - ALMR, satellite phones
 - Alert warning system
- **Correctional system upkeep**



Investment Priority: Public's Health

- **Safe water, sewer**
 - VSW and community projects
- **Immunization, Disease Registry**
- **Safe community housing**
 - Bring the Kids Home
 - Pioneer Homes code compliance
 - AHFC programs



Governor's Capital Budget Proposals

Investment Priority: Transportation

- \$481 million of overall capital budget
- State match of \$90 million for \$405 million
 - Aviation: \$16 million
 - Highways: \$74 million
- State harbors, docks, AMHS - \$41 million
- Community priorities
 - Pt. Mackenzie Road
 - Port of Anchorage
 - Seward Dock
 - Whittier boat harbor



Governor's Transportation Initiative:

- Prepare Alaska's infrastructure for tomorrow's opportunities
 - Alaska Railroad extension
 - Juneau Access
 - Roads to Resources
 - Parks Highway
 - Dalton Highway



Investment Priority: Economic Development

- **Tourism destination promotion, development**
 - Morris Thompson Cultural, Visitor Center
 - Tongass Coast Aquarium
 - Anchorage Museum
 - Alaska Native Heritage Center
- **Maintain parks, campgrounds**

Capital IT Projects

	B	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	Dept	Project Title	Project Total	1002 Fed Rcpls	1003 G/F Match	1004 Gen Fund	1027 Int Airprt Rev	1050 PFD Fund	1081 Info Svcs	1106 Post-Sec Rcpt	1112 IntApiCons	1139 AHFC Div	1156 Rcpt Supp Svcs	1175 Blic & Corp
2	Administration	ETS Infrastructure Projects/Workplace Alaska Migration Project	5,510,500						5,510,500					
3	Administration	Emergency 911 Compliance-Coordination Project/Network Security	2,689,500						2,689,500					
4	Administration	Electronic Case Management System	350,000			350,000								
5	Administration	DMV Information Technology Projects and Equipment	850,000										850,000	
6	Commerce	Re Engineering Automated Business Licensing System	250,000											250,000
7	Education	Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education HELMS Imaging Enhancement	95,169							95,169				
8	Environ Cons	Infrastructure, Data Exchange, Analysis and Integration	950,000	950,000										
9	Fish & Game	Electronic Commercial Catch and Production Reporting Program Development	500,000										500,000	
10	HSS	Revenue Management and Cost Allocation System	471,600	70,800		400,800								
11	HSS	Juvenile Offender Management Information System Software Upgrade	299,200			299,200								
12	HSS	Women, Infants, and Children Payment System	6,000,000	6,000,000										
13	HSS	Early Intervention and Infant Learning Program Management Information System Upgrade	150,000	150,000										
14	HSS	Immunization and Disease Registry	2,049,900	369,000		1,680,900								
15	HSS	Medicaid Management Information System Completion	17,911,600	16,120,400	1,791,200									
16	Labor	Wage and Hour Internet Application for Certified Payroll	228,000			228,000								
17	Natural Resources	Unified Permitting Process Phase 3	800,000			800,000								
18	Natural Resources	Statewide Digital Mapping	10,325,000	8,325,000		2,000,000								
19	Public Safety	APSIN Redesign, Migration Phase Year 1	4,000,000	1,000,000		3,000,000								
20	Public Safety	Security Audit Requirements	300,000			300,000								
21	Public Safety	APSIN Data Conversion	800,000			800,000								
22	Public Safety	Network Infrastructure	800,000			800,000								
23	Public Safety	Online Fire and Life Safety Plan Review System	530,000			530,000								
24	Revenue	Child Support Services Computer Replacement Project Phase 2	147,250	97,185									50,065	
25	Revenue	Permanent Fund Dividend Computer Replacement Project	125,000					125,000						
26	Revenue	AHFC Facility Management Monitoring Project	250,000									250,000		
27	Transportation	Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN)	1,200,000	1,200,000										
28	Transportation	Advanced Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) Projects	400,000	400,000										
29	Transportation	Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport Integration with DOT&PF Maintenance Management System	100,000				100,000							
30	Transportation	Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport Technology Infrastructure Upgrades	2,000,000								2,000,000			
31	Transportation	Statewide Electronic Document Management System	650,000	650,000										
32	Transportation	Statewide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Development	300,000	300,000										
33	Transportation	Statewide Highway Data Equipment Acquisition and Installation	900,000	900,000										
34	Transportation	Statewide Intelligent Transportation Systems Implementation Plan (IWAYS)	1,500,000	1,500,000										
35	Transportation	Statewide Intelligent Transportation Systems Operations and Maintenance (IWAYS)	750,000	750,000										
36	Transportation	Statewide Maintenance Management System	200,000	200,000										
37		TOTAL	\$64,382,719	\$38,982,385	\$1,791,200	\$11,188,900	\$100,000	\$125,000	\$8,200,000	\$95,169	\$2,000,000	\$250,000	\$1,400,065	\$260,000
38														
39		General Fund Total	\$12,980,100	20.2%										
40		Federal Funds Total	\$38,982,385	60.5%										
41		Other Funds Total	\$12,420,234	19.3%										

Dept. Admin.
Presentation 4/12/06

SB 231

Public
Testimony

The following information is being written as a result of not being able to testify regarding Senate Bill 231. On Friday evening, April 28th, I was there for two hours, but due to a glitch in the system was denied that privilege.

This pertains to the much debated road from Juneau to the Katzechin River area.

My testimony centers around snow and land mass avalanche problems. This area is loaded with both. Juneau has received much publicity as being the "Avalanche Capital of the United States" and toying with it in Lynn Canal will certainly reinforce this image.

I have lived in Juneau for 88 years and have been able to witness and appreciate the tremendous impact of these events: the earliest one being the land mass avalanche on South Franklin Street that killed 14 people when I was a young man. This was also at a time when constant snow avalanches were a yearly occurrence on the Thane Road south of Juneau. Human lives were lost and the property damage was extensive. Huge avalanches have occurred on Mt. Juneau and in the Basin Road area throughout the years with some near misses of human targets.

I have had extensive avalanche training both here in Juneau and in Sun Valley, Idaho. While working with the Ski Patrol in Sun Valley in 1939, four skiers lost their lives. Ten hours later we dug out their bodies. They died from suffocation (not a pretty sight) and those who do not respect avalanches would soon get the picture if they were involved.

I have followed the Lynn Canal Road Project from its start and the Department of Transportation has furnished me with all their extensive written material. I often wonder what the huge price tag is for this. The 1991 (Appendix B) included substantial information on snow avalanches, but nothing on land mass ones, which also can be a major problem. It was easy to detect that the Department of Transportation did not want to focus on this activity as it is extremely difficult and costly. I have spent a lot of time studying this technical appendix and have discussed my findings with at least two of their personnel.

Now, on Thursday, April 27th, I received Appendixes J, W, and X. Reuben Yost promised to set these aside for me. I spent most of Friday checking the new expanded material and found some startling facts. As an example, a price for snow sheds is \$11,200,000 each. Avalanche chutes number 20 and 21 need avalanche sheds. This would be a total of over \$22 million for just those two locations. After all this study, and trying to be conservative, I find a minimum of 13 avalanche paths that should have snow shed treatment. Some of them will only require dollar amounts of \$2,800,000 to \$4,200,000.

The expensive area is a 1,600 foot expanse for the sheds. The others have a distance of 400 to 600 feet. Other worrisome areas are avalanche chutes, two of which have a maximum width of 2,115 feet. This area was not shown with a cost estimate.

From all my study, I detect that the Department of Transportation does not want to use snow sheds simply because it will increase the cost. These snow sheds are recognized by leading avalanche experts in the world as the best method to provide as much safety as possible. The Department of Transportation would plan helicopter placement – firing a 105 mm Howitzer from Anyaka Island, but, as we have witnessed in the Thane shooting, this has a very limited success rate.

The use of a Howitzer is also “iffy” due to winter weather which affects the use of helicopters to take personnel to these few locations. It takes a minimum of seven people each time this method is used. The Department of Transportation reports very emphatically spell out that weather forecasting in this area is very different.


It is plain to see that with all of the above snow avalanche problems they do not want to consider land mass operations which the weather forecasters will tell you can happen anytime we have 6 inches or more of precipitation in a concentrated period of time.

To sum all this up – maintenance and rescue cost, which receive no Federal aid, will be substantial and only very rough estimates can be given at this time. Where will all this funding come from?

It will be interesting to see the kind of bid response that comes from construction firms, especially if this project is going to be done in a section-at-a-time operation.

I will be available anytime to answer any questions.

Sincerely,


Dean Williams
1401 Martin Rd
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-2391



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Group report: Place fast ferry in Lynn Canal - McDowell Group recommends 'hub and spoke' in north Panhandle

Juneau Empire (AI)
November 26, 2001
Author: BILL McALLISTER
THE JUNEAU EMPIRE

Estimated printed pages: 3

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A fast vehicle ferry should replace the Malaspina in Lynn Canal and the Alaska Marine Highway System should move to a "hub and spoke" system in the northern Panhandle, linking small towns directly to Juneau, according to a study released today.

The study by The McDowell Group, a Juneau-based research and consulting firm, is a starting point for state officials in determining how to amend the Southeast Transportation Plan.

The plan to date hasn't been specific about transportation improvements for Lynn Canal because of controversy about a proposed road to Skagway. Gov. Tony Knowles suspended work on an environmental impact statement for the road, and city voters narrowly endorsed improved ferry service over the road in an advisory ballot question last year.

The McDowell report agrees with the organizing principle of the Southeast plan, which is to match service levels with demand and use high-speed vessels to make day trips and eliminate overnight crew costs.

"I think that fleshes out where the department was going anyway," said Joe Geldhof, a lawyer for marine engineers who was a leader in last year's campaign to support better ferry service instead of a road. "This is welcome news and hopefully this will tone down the rhetoric of people who have been throwing bombs at the Marine Highway System for years without any basis. ... I've always thought the Marine Highway System is doing the best they can under difficult circumstances."

But the Southeast Conference, an advocacy organization of governments, businesses and individuals throughout the region, is going ahead with its own study of how to operate the Marine Highway System "in a more business-like fashion," said Executive Director Loren Gerhard. "It's not intended to criticize anybody who's currently operating or who had a part in implementing the system."

And Murray Walsh, transportation chairman for the Juneau Chamber of Commerce, noted that the state has yet to operate a fast vehicle ferry.

"That's the linchpin of the whole thing - whether fast vehicle ferries can be had at a reasonable price," Walsh said. "We're all still waiting to see how the first one turns out. ... It's kind of a nail-biter right now."

The state hopes to award a contract for a fast vehicle ferry in January, said Capt. George Capacci, general manager of the Marine Highway System. It would be deployed as a Sitka-Juneau dayboat in 2004. The state is going through the bidding process a second time because the final bidder in the previous round, who offered to build the ship for \$35.99 million, was found to be "nonresponsive" to specifications in the request for proposals.

Nevertheless, the McDowell report calls for a fast vehicle ferry in Lynn Canal "as soon as possible." Even before then, the state should deploy a shuttle between Haines and Skagway, the firm advises. That way, the Malaspina could alternate dayboat service between Haines and Skagway, cutting its daily operations to 12 hours or fewer.

At the summer peak, the fast vehicle ferry could make two runs a day, the report says. Each week in the winter, the Lynn Canal communities could expect one mainliner and three to four fast vehicle ferry trips.

Walsh said he's disappointed that the report doesn't address the possibility of a new ferry terminal at

Cascade Point, on Berners Bay, which would reduce travel times.

In the northern Panhandle, McDowell would change the whole concept of routing, from a circuit to a hub-and-spoke. A fast passenger-only ferry could serve all communities except Yakutat, supplementing the LeConte. Routes would be based on linking small communities with Juneau as directly as possible, rather than making trips among them.

"Better service is actually less frequency," Capacci said.

McDowell recommends first leasing a fast passenger-only ferry and then buying one later, if it proves successful. Eventually, a fast vehicle ferry also could be deployed.

Gerhard said he has heard concern in Angoon about the potential loss of freight and baggage capacity in moving the LeConte to hub-and-spoke service.

"The LeConte is the pipeline to those communities," Gerhard said. "They've just got to be careful with the details."

Capacci said the McDowell recommendations "make a lot of sense." But the sense of urgency expressed in the report might not be realistic, he said.

"As soon as possible" might be years and years and years," he said. "I love planners when they say that."

The Department of Transportation will decide within a couple of months whether to modify the McDowell recommendations in adopting the second addendum to the Southeast plan, Capacci said. Then a decision will have to be made about how high to rank the improvements in Lynn Canal and the northern Panhandle on the priority list for the region.

"It'll all have to compete," Capacci said.

Gerhard said the department can move relatively fast on some of the improvements, such as the Haines-Skagway shuttle. Capacci said the vessel would cost about \$10 million.

Bill McAllister can be reached at billm@juneauempire.com.

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In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north

Juneau Empire (AK)
 September 10, 2002
 Author: JOANNA MARKELL
 THE JUNEAU EMPIRE © 2002

Estimated printed pages: 3

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The Juneau Assembly on Monday voted 5-4 in favor of completing a Juneau access study, and its preferred alternative - a road into Juneau.

Deputy Mayor Ken Koelsch said he presented the motion at the end of Monday's meeting because of a pending legislative session-move vote and concerns about Juneau's isolation in the days leading up to the anniversary of Sept. 11.

"Hopefully, this sends a message to the state that we do want a road into Juneau," he said.

Alaska voters will consider a ballot proposition in November that would move legislative sessions from Juneau to Anchorage until facilities in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are available. Koelsch said his decision to put the motion before the Assembly was tied to a recent statements by move proponents that a road to Juneau would allay their concerns.

"If there was a road that went to Juneau, I don't think we'd be having this discussion," Alaskan Independence Party Chairman Mark Chryson told the Empire last month.

But other Assembly members objected to a lack of public notice on the motion. Marc Wheeler said the issue was divisive for the community and asked Koelsch to postpone Monday's action and give people time to comment.

"I don't see a problem with waiting a couple of weeks. Why do we feel we need to do this right now?" he said.

In an effort to reach a compromise, Wheeler offered an amendment that called for the completion of the environmental impact statement and deleted references to a road. The amendment failed in a 5-4 vote.

"We could have agreed last night to move forward with the EIS and that's what I supported, but here were five people more interested in driving wedges than solving problems," Wheeler said today. "It's not helpful to be divided as we go into a capital move fight. We need to be united."

In an October 2000 advisory ballot question, 5,840 Juneau voters supported improved ferry service with 5,761 supporting a road to Skagway. In January 2000, Gov. Tony Knowles chose fast ferries as the solution to transportation problems in the upper Lynn Canal and later vetoed \$1.5 million appropriated by the state Legislature to complete the EIS on Juneau access.

Assembly members Koelsch, Ranney, Wanamaker, Dale Anderson, Don Etheridge and Jeannie Johnson voted for Koelsch's motion and against Wheeler's amendment. Members Wheeler, Frankie Pillifant, Jim Powell and Mayor Sally Smith voted against Koelsch's motion and for Wheeler's amendment.

After spending three days at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer earlier this month talking to people about the legislative session move, Johnson said the road is an issue for voters.

"I agree that it's a perception issue," she said. "I feel strongly that we wouldn't be going through this if we had a road."

Powell said he was on the verge of changing his mind and supporting a road after spending four days at the state fair, but wanted more time to consider the issue. He has supported completing the access study.

"We're shooting at each other and we're in the middle of a very important issue and that's what bothers me,"

he said. "It's just not the right way to do this."

Smith said she thinks the EIS should be completed and has asked Gov. Tony Knowles and Lt. Gov. Fran Ulmer for their support in finishing it. She said she voted against Koelsch's motion because of a lack of public process.

"This is making me very, very, very sad. I can't explain how sad," she said. "Public notice is a part of the process and I believe we have a responsibility to support the public process."

Koelsch said his motion wasn't tied to the Oct. 1 city election, as suggested by some Assembly members. Wheeler, Pillifant and Etheridge are running for re-election.

"If it was going to be something like that it would have been brought up a long time ago," Koelsch said. "It's something that has bothered me since I sat at the airport on 9-11 and saw no planes flying, the ferry wasn't going and I'm trying to think how I would get my kids and family out of this town in case there was something headed towards me."

Koelsch said the public has had many opportunities to comment on the issue, and the Assembly's vote would have been split no matter when the issue was considered.

Smith later said she thought the Assembly could have had an unanimous vote on the issue had there been more time.

Joanna Markell can be reached at joannam@juneauempire.com.

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My Turn: Let's do the right thing, the right way

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 15, 2002
Author: JIM POWELL

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Late last Monday, at the very end of our Assembly meeting, a resolution supporting road access into Juneau was introduced and passed. A resolution is a formal policy statement by the Assembly on behalf of the City and Borough of Juneau. Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north During my seven years on the Assembly, I can never remember an important policy resolution being introduced or passed without proper notice and public involvement. This issue however, was not on the agenda and neither the public nor other members of the Assembly knew it was going to be brought up.

Access to our community is a critical issue, evoking strong emotions on all sides. With the capital move vote coming up, and questions about air travel raised by 9/11 in our past, it was probably appropriate to revisit the issue. What was wrong, however, was for the Assembly to act by ambush without giving the public on whose behalf we are speaking, the chance for any involvement.

I understand the belief by backers of this resolution that it is important in connection with the capital move fight. The tragedy of the way it was done was the 5-4 split vote, which weakened the message. The mayor has been lobbying for the resumption of the EIS to consider the road, but she as well as several of us felt compelled to vote against the resolution because of the manner it was done. Had backers of the resolution been willing to follow normal procedures, willing to allow the public we represent to be involved, it is certain that the resolution would have passed by a stronger margin.

As Assembly members, we have a responsibility to act in the best interests of our community. That does not give us the right to maneuver our actions in a manner that excludes the citizens of Juneau, the very people who elected us and we are supposed to be representing.

On Monday night, after every attempt to put the resolution on the normal track to discuss the issue and to allow public involvement was rebuffed, I made a comment about the appearance of pre-arrangement of votes. I've been taken to task for my remark by those saying such remarks hurt the reputation of the Assembly. The reputation of the Assembly is precisely my concern. I know all of my fellow Assembly members well and have faith in their integrity. People, however, properly pay more attention to what we do, than what we say and appearances can create wrong impressions. When the public is excluded as a vitally important issue is rammed through without notice it creates hostility and suspicion at a time we all need to be coming together as a community.

At the Palmer State Fair I helped staff the Juneau booth. We explained to people how a vote to move the Legislature would also remove their right to know the costs of the move. Similarly, Assembly members owe the Juneau public the right to know about important issues before Assembly members vote on them. In light of 9/11 and the capital move, Juneau's opinion on building the road may have changed since the public's vote. To fix this situation, the Assembly should reconsider the resolution at the Committee of the Whole, allow the public to be heard and then act in the light of day.

Jim Powell holds an areawide seat on the Juneau Assembly.

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September 11, 2002

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After listening to the City and Borough Assembly of Monday, I feel deeply disturbed. Not only was the public process ignored, but also the majority opinion expressed by the public in a vote on the Juneau preferred alternative (marine access) was completely disregarded. Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north How can I believe in the system and the Assembly if voting is discounted and public process waived? I didn't elect Assembly members to substitute their opinions over considerations of public due process and legally held referendums. The majority's reluctance to speak to the amendment may not mean a prior covenant, but it reflects a rushed process and a modicum of thought given to the possible repercussions. Was it too late at night? Or was it too difficult to read the scribbling of the instigator on the envelope of this ill-timed resolution?

The reasoning for this action was done in the name of the flag of "Don't Move the Capital" and this is what is best for the community. I feel that it is especially important during this time of local and national challenges to our existence as a nation and as a capital that we do not lose our focus or the practice of democratic process and the right to express opinions. My opinion evidently is not important to those who voted for the resolution supporting Juneau road access and the voting process doesn't count if it differs from the conclusion of the Assembly members making up the majority.

Chris Kent

Douglas

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Freedomless places

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 11, 2002

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The Assembly voted on a proposal to support completion of Juneau road access environmental impact study. They did this without any public comment or input. I was unable to exercise my right to voice my support or concerns. The public should know those that would undermine a public process. This serious offense leads us down a dangerous path.

Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north Mr. Koelsch is the Assembly member who slams a proposal through without public comment. He did this during the end of the meeting, not as a scheduled item or resolution. How dare he insult a process that allows him to be the input of the public! He disgraced his Assembly seat and damaged his agenda. He exemplifies a shady deal; a handshake bargain that's made in spite. The process he neglected tonight will be the process that works to end his political input in a democratic community and state.

Those feeling pressure to resolve this issue because of state opinion and not involve the people they represent also insults me! I am disgusted with Mr. Anderson, Mr. Etheridge, Mr. Wanamaker and Mrs. Johnson. They voted against tabling this to a future time when public comment would be available. They voted to have the EIS completed but never asked for any public input. Some cited the state fair as a place that clearly showed them that this was right for Juneau, and right for our community. The state fair may help clear their mind and give them a course of action but what about the people of their own community? Do they value our opinion? Do they want us to be part of our public process?

Here is my input into the Assembly's inability to represent your own community: The Assembly at its next public meeting should adopt a resolution that no further action on the Juneau access road EIS be taken until the community has an opportunity to show a majority support for completion through a vote on the initiative. Now, what will Mr. Koelsch do? I ask that he show some ability to represent the community and adopt this resolution, or fail and show his own contempt.

I commend Mr. Wheeler, Ms. Pillifant, Mayor Smith and Mr. Powell for attempting to allow public comment. This seems only a few steps away from taxation without representation and I wonder if Mr. Koelsch wants any of his decisions made for him without his input. I had absolutely no input into a decision that affects my community, my family and me. Why do I live in a place purporting to have a representative government if Mr. Koelsch wishes to make decisions for me? I am reminded of places without freedom. I am saddened because yet another part of my government decided to stop representing the people it serves. How very sad for this community.

Nathan P. Peimann

Juneau

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My Turn: Let Juneau voters decide

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 12, 2002
Author: Patrick McGonegal

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Who runs this town?

I'll start this letter with the opening paragraphs from an article in Tuesday's Empire:

"The Juneau Assembly on Monday voted 5-4 in favor of completing a Juneau access study and its preferred alternative - a road into Juneau.

"Deputy Mayor Ken Koelsch said he presented the motion at the end of Monday's meeting because of a pending legislative session-move vote and concerns about Juneau's isolation in the days leading up to the anniversary of Sept. 11.

"Hopefully, this sends a message to the state that we do want a road into Juneau," he said."

What I would like to know is where Ken Koelsch and the other four Assembly members were when the vote whether or not to build a road into Juneau was put to the ballot. Since these five don't seem to remember, I will remind them of the outcome. It was voted down. Ken Koelsch is speaking for himself and four other members of the Assembly. He is not speaking for those whom he was elected to represent.

In addition, although the article says otherwise, I would guess that Ken Koelsch's decision to wait until the end of Monday's meeting was not spurred by the "pending legislative session-move" but rather by a sincere hope that he could quickly shove this motion through with the least amount of public interaction.

Apparently, Mr. Koelsch is more beholden to the voters in Anchorage than he is to his own constituency. Tuesday's article states that Mr. Koelsch's decision was based on a statement by Alaskan Independence Party Chairman Mark Chryson. Chryson said, "If there was a road that went to Juneau, I don't think we'd be having this discussion." This is the reason Mr. Koelsch wants to build a road. What should we do if Mr. Chryson decides he wants us to build a 23-story, stainless-steel bumblebee in the Marine Park?

As educated people, I would think we would grant Mr. Chryson his right to his opinion and then allow the people who actually live in Juneau to decide what should be built in Juneau.

I was under the impression that this was how the system worked. The road issue was put on the ballot. It was voted down. Done. This doesn't mean it can't be put on the ballot again. This merely means that it is not the choice of the people now.

Mr. Koelsch's idea of the system is apparently much different, however. His idea is that if you can't get the people that elected you to agree with you, then you just make the decision without them (as quietly and quickly as possible).

I would like to say that I am not arguing for or against a road into Juneau. What I am arguing for is Juneau's right to make that decision. We voted on this issue and we decided not to build the road. I think in light of this, Mr. Koelsch and the other four Assembly members who sided with him owe their constituents an apology. I think they should recall their motion to begin this environmental study. If this motion is allowed to stand, it begs the question of why we even bothered to vote in the first place? If our decision as voters can be cast aside by five people in a single afternoon, what does that say about our right to determine what is best for our community?

I say let the voters decide.

Patrick McGonegal of Douglas is a Web designer and consultant.

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Quid pro quo?

*Juneau Empire (AK)
September 11, 2002*

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Is our government a business? It seems so, with Assembly member Koelsch and four others using the handy quid-pro-quo mechanism in the last major Assembly vote regarding road access. We'll scratch Anchorage's back, voting on a road, while they scratch ours, keeping the Capital-move dog on a leash.

Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north Is that it? What happened to public process? And if this has anything to do with September 11, all honor to all the families and victims, but isn't it more American to be democratic?

Ishmael C. Hope

Juneau

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My Turn: Squandering money, circumventing process

Juneau Empire (AK)

September 15, 2002

Author: TOM CASEY

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The road issue is important to Juneau, and reasonably people can disagree about it. But Deputy Mayor Ken Koelsch's recent actions are reprehensible.

Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north I'm only a part-time Juneau resident, but on the issue of the Assembly's recent road vote, this may help me to offer some perspective. When I'm not in Juneau, I live in New Haven, Conn. - just a bit closer to New York City than Juneau is to Skagway. Unlike Juneau and Skagway, New Haven and New York are connected by a bewilderingly dense network of roads and rails. Let me tell you what I observed last Sept. 11 - the day after I returned from Juneau. First, there was no mass exodus from the city - the good people of New York did not jump into cars or trains or boats in an effort to leave the city as Koelsch suggests. While our deputy mayor would like to find a way out of Juneau, most New Yorkers stayed put. In fact, as I noticed when I visited the city several days later, much manpower was employed to keep well-meaning non-residents out. I've never been a fan of then-New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, but which civic leader would you like to have around in a crisis? One who provides leadership, or one who looking for an escape hatch?

Next, given (1) the cost of a road (probably hundreds of millions of dollars), (2) the infinitesimal chance that Juneau (which doesn't rank in the nation's first few hundred largest metropolitan areas) would be a target, and (3) the small likelihood that a road would be helpful if such an unlikely event did happen, there is no sort of risk assessment that could reasonably lead to expenditure on a road.

As far as public safety is concerned, there are any number of things that would be more efficient at saving lives. One could probably buy every other car in Juneau and provide door-to-door electric taxi service. The risk reduction due to the drop in air pollution would far outweigh that due to road. Any number of silly ideas beats a road for the purpose of enhancing public safety.

If, in fact, one believes that our country and state need be more vigilant, a road would be not only wasteful, it would be an unpatriotic squander of federal and state resources. A true patriot would send his or her money to the FBI, the CIA, or would learn more about international political economy or foreign cultures in order to be a more informed citizen. One could fund the language acquisition and cultural training that are in such short supply within our security apparatus and the nation at large. Taking vast sums of limited funds to build a road detracts from these more constructive and practical activities.

Finally, I can't help but contrast the actions of our deputy mayor with those of civic officials in New York City (who really have something to worry about), who are bending over backward to engage the public in decision-making processes. What better way to "let the terrorists win" than to squander vast sums, and worse, circumvent public process and democracy itself, by calling a snap vote on an issue on which the voters have spoken. As several people have already pointed out, it is no secret that Koelsch called the vote for local political reasons. The road issue is an important one to Juneau. It had been settled through a very public process that included a citywide vote and commitment by the state to build fast ferries. Plans are moving forward, money has been spent, and the ferries are due to be delivered in the next few years. In attempting to reopen this issue, Koelsch did not even place the vote on the Assembly meeting agenda, nor was public participation solicited. This type of behavior is not what most Americans would fight to protect.

Ken Koelsch worries about how to get himself out of Juneau. His recent actions have made many Juneauites happy to offer him ticket.

Casoy is a Ph.D. candidate at Yale University. He lives in Juneau during the summer.

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Road has nothing to do with moving the capital

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 12, 2002

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Those who are convinced the capital-move efforts would be put to rest if only Juneau had a road might ask themselves why no one has ever suggested moving the capital to Haines. Haines, after all, has a road and would be the cheapest possible place to move the capital. The Haines' economy is depressed, land is plentiful, and the state could move the capital the short distance using its own resources, the ferries of the Alaska Marine Highway System.

What makes anyone think that Juneau with a road would be any more satisfactory to capital movers than Haines? The reason no one has suggested moving the capital to Haines is because a road has nothing to do with the capital move. The capital move is about the greed of developers and land speculators. On second thought, that's what the road to Juneau is about, too. There is a connection between the capital move and a road but it's not the one that the road boosters would have us believe. It's amazing how some people can turn a threat into an opportunity to get what they really want.

Judy Crondahl

Juneau

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Be realistic

*Juneau Empire (AK)
September 13, 2002*

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Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north Putting or not putting a road out of Juneau has been going on for years. What we really need to focus on is the cost of construction and upkeep. Who is going to pay for it? The city does not have the funds to put in new boat slips in the "improved" Douglas Harbor, the state can't afford to replace the worn out elevators that keep breaking down in the State Office Building. We need to be more realistic here. What are we doing considering more big spending in a time of shrinking government revenues?

LeImoml Matunding

Juneau

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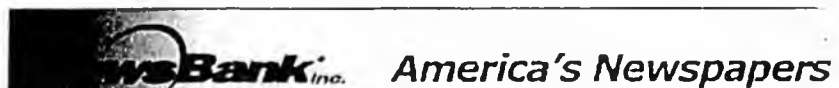
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September 13, 2002*

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Mr. Glotfely, of the North Pole Alaska Independence Party, wants to vacation in Alaska's capital, but he doesn't want to fly, ferry in, or swim. Related Letter:

Vacation access Only a road will do. Furthermore, he asserts that if we continue to "stonewall," his party will move the capital someplace he can vacation in. The only "stonewallers" I've seen are those holding the purse strings in one hand and scissors in the other. AIP leadership has already premised the move proposal on access to state leadership, not RV parks. Perhaps Mr. Glotfely didn't get that memo.

Ken Dunker

Juneau

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Road rage

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 13, 2002

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I thought we voted against a road out of town already.

Related Stories:

- In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north

September 10, 2002

- Empire editorial: It is time to send a strong, unified message to Alaskans

September 12, 2002 Now our home newspaper publisher, and a very simply majority of the Assembly and some other influential types are saying we will have that road, like it or not, or else the capital will surely migrate north or another terrorist attack will force us all to swim Lynn Canal to escape Armageddon and most likely against a minus tide, in the dead of winter.

Well, personally I can't see much value in ridiculous black humor, but I do know there are a whole bunch of irritated folks around town who have found very little humor in the non-participatory and non-democratic method used with the 5-4 coalition road-vote down at town hall.

I came here over 30 years ago to this "mainland island" a secluded town hemmed in by water, with big Taku winds, lots of rain and snow and those occasionally, gorgeous sunny days. The backyard was wilderness with about 30 miles of roads north and south. It's changed over the years but not all that much, really. One controlling factor is that usable land is relatively scarce to none. Mega-tourism has had the greatest measurable impact on our summers here, but things do settle down come fall.

Now there is business frenzy to punch a road through the pristine Berners Bay wilderness, and on through mile upon mile of major avalanche country up to a lukewarm Haines reception. Where, after connecting to an "escape route" to the outside world, we would also be inviting, to our town, every conceivable set of four-wheel-combos in North America. But I suspect that's got to be very good for business. But the road-barricades remain. Folks already said they like our "island home" just like it is.

Alan Munro

Juneau

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Road rage

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Hostage to bullies

*Juneau Empire (AK)
October 2, 2002*

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In all this talk of road access and a capital move I find one line of reasoning to be flawed. This is the line about Juneau needing to be more responsive to the rest of the state in managing our own affairs. I grew up in Washington, D.C., so this line is quite familiar. When you live in a capital city you get used to being beat up by the rest of the country. Alaskans need to make a distinction between the residents of the capital city and their local government, and the people who run the state government.

Washington, D.C., has half a million residents, almost as many as Alaska. The vast majority of these residents are not congressmen, lobbyists or bureaucrats, just regular working stiffs. DC residents have less say over what goes on in the federal government than the rest of the country because they do not have senators or a congressman to represent them.

We should not let others try to punish us in Juneau because they do not agree with decisions made by their governor and their Legislature. The CBJ Assembly did not close down a pulp mill in one town or prohibit oil drilling in another. We should not let a few disgruntled residents of other towns tell us how to manage our infrastructure. When an AIP member from North Pole says "build it and we will come, refuse and we will shut you down," it reminds me of an abusive husband telling his cowering wife that his violent temper tantrums are all her fault. It's the classic co-dependent scenario.

The CBJ Assembly needs to stop cowering and stand up for us to the bullies from around the state who threaten our livelihood. If access to state government services is a problem, then the legislators from around the state should work to improve customer service.

If Alaskans want better government, they should concern themselves with whom they are sending to Juneau to represent them, not what decisions we in Juneau make for ourselves about roads. If Juneau wants a road into town, we should get a road. If we continue to cave, the threats will not stop. If we send the signal that we will jump whenever they ring the capital move bell, we become hostage to a few bullies around the state rather than being able to manage our own affairs.

Tom Heutte

Juneau

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Paved with pork - Letter to the Editor

*Juneau Empire (AK)
September 30, 2002*

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The idea that a road to Juneau will save the Capitol is nuts. Those that want the move are not going to back off just because they can drive over 800 miles to go to work. In fact, the thought of the 60 or more avalanche chutes between Skagway and Juneau will cause most people to fly or ferry anyway.

I have always supported the Capitol staying in Southeast, but this road issue is starting to wear me down. The Haines/Skagway ferry routes are the closest to being successful yet are continually excluded from future planning because of this road issue. It's almost as if the system is being set up to fail just so a select few can get their preferred alternative. The costs of a road would put the meaning of "pork" on a different level.

The state is going broke and a toll road to Skagway is not going to help bail it out. A properly managed ferry, either state or privately managed, is the best alternative for the Upper Lynn Canal. For those of you who are using this as a political issue, I'd say be careful and look at the costs. A road is not going to save you or be the answer to your transportation problems.

Mike Korsmo

Skagway

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Change of scenery

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 19, 2002

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Forget the pea-brained thoughts of putting in an escape route road to the outside world. Some people come to Juneau because it cannot be driven to. It is for this reason Juneau still has the old-style of paying for gas after pumping. I'm sure a road out of town will change this policy to "pay before pumping" and bring all the related crimes like "grand theft auto" etc. A road out of town is the same progress which has turned the downtown into what it has become, Disneyland

The last time I was in Juneau was 25 years ago. I was on the Regal Princess and visited Juneau for 11 hours last Wednesday, Sept. 11. Downtown has lost all its original character and has been transformed into a Disneyland for tourists. I remember when Jerry's Meats was downtown, and the Red Dog was a real bar located across the street which real locals like Alan Munro would frequent. So-called progress has ruined my memory of downtown. I'm glad I was only in Juneau for only a few hours, so my depression was temporary.

juneauphotos.com pictures are great at showing the "Real Alaska" which happily has mostly long-distance shots of downtown. Somebody in your town must like the touristy look of San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf, because that's what it looks like with the stupid SF cable cars in Juneau. SF ruined the Wharf, and Juneau has done the same downtown. I hope Kake, Wrangle, Petersburg, etc., do not "progress" as Juneau before I get a chance to visit them.

Larry Steinberg

San Francisco

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Now is not the time

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 15, 2002

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Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north I commend Mayor Smith and Juneau Assembly members Pillifant, Wheeler and Powell for their votes on Sept. 9 against the motivation calling for a road into Juneau. The Assembly could have avoided public disagreement over the issue had the motion been limited to completing the access study. Instead, the motion was introduced and passed at the end of the Assembly meeting, with no opportunity for prior debate or public comment.

This action is likely to result in unintended consequences for Juneau. Other Southeast Alaska towns, especially Haines and Skagway, will be alienated by this gesture, which ignores their opposition to a road to Juneau. Construction of high-priority roads serving other areas in Southeast may be delayed by competition for funds. Legislative support of the Alaska Marine Highway System may be weakened by reopening the road issue at this time.

As long-time residents of Juneau, our family has many times used and enjoyed the Alaska Marine Highway since the inaugural voyage of the first ship, the Malaspina, in January 1963. It is a dependable and safe way to travel. A majority of Juneau voters favor ferry improvements over a road for Juneau access. With a growing population there may well be a future road, very costly to build and to maintain, but I, along with many other Juneau residents, believe this is not the time.

The Assembly's arbitrary action was divisive, contrary to the expressed wishes of a majority of Juneau voters, and not likely to have a beneficial effect on the capital move issue. Advocates of a capital move could have fresh ammunition: There would be little justification for a huge road project to Juneau if it were no longer the capital.

Mayor Smith's comment is appropriate: "This is making me very, very, very sad."

Ted Merrell

Juneau

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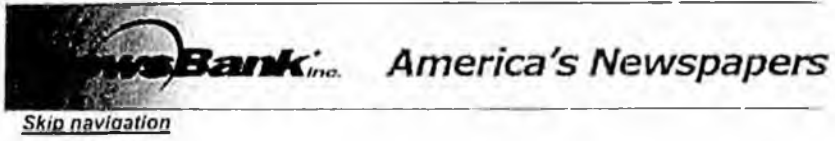
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*Juneau Empire (AK)
 September 15, 2002*

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In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north I got a great laugh from Assemblyman Ken Koelsch's rationale to push the EIS for the Road to Nowhere. Speaking of 9/11 and a road north, Koelsch said at the Monday night Assembly meeting, "How would I get my kids and family out of this town in case there was something headed toward me"?

So, Ken, where would you hide? The railroad tunnels of White Pass? Takini Hot Springs? If one truly fears missiles from Korea or hijacked airliners, there is no safer place than Juneau for many obvious reasons.

Perhaps the Assembly and the Alaska Committee need a joint retreat to deal with unwarranted fears rather than planning desperate motorcades to Whitehorse.

Chip Thoma

Juneau

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My Turn: New governor, new road ahead? Talk to Haines, Skagway

Juneau Empire (AK)
December 27, 2002
Author: WILLIAM J. "JEFF" BRADY
Estimated printed pages: 3

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As expected, new Gov. Frank Murkowski has decided to reopen the Juneau Access environmental impact statement process that was suspended by former Gov. Tony Knowles. Upper Lynn Canal residents should not be surprised by this news. If former Lt. Gov. Fran Ulmer had won, she too would have reopened the EIS process - such are the politics of trying to win votes in Juneau and debunking yet another attempt at a capital move statewide.

During the campaign, Murkowski said he would convince the communities of Haines and Skagway that their economies would improve with road access from Skagway to Juneau, the preferred alternative in the draft EIS. Skagway's economy probably would improve with a highway link to Juneau, but it's laughable to think that Haines' economy would benefit from a road that passes on the other side of Lynn Canal from their town. Maybe that's why no town meetings by the transition team were held in either upper Lynn Canal community.

It is our sincere hope that the voices of upper Lynn Canal will be heard by the new governor, and will have more weight in the completed EIS. Otherwise he will have a fight on his hands.

Nearly three years have passed since we applauded the decision by Knowles, who believed that the best way to improve access to Juneau was by implementing a system of fast, reliable ferries. We believe Knowles was correct in this assessment. Despite being vilified in Juneau, Knowles' decision to suspend the EIS was heralded by most citizens in Haines and Skagway, who viewed the EIS as biased in favor of the Juneau-Skagway road link.

The EIS, as drafted, inadequately addressed major areas of concern in upper Lynn Canal: safety concerns about the high concentration of avalanche chutes between Juneau and Skagway, and the potential for motorists and highway crews to be stranded or killed; realistic economic and social impacts on Haines and Skagway; and destruction of Skagway's most popular recreation area - the Dewey Lakes Trail system - by the proposed highway route into Skagway; and cost for road construction and winter maintenance.

Can these areas be adequately addressed to win over Haines and Skagway support for a road up the east side of Lynn Canal to Skagway? We doubt it.

That is why we continue to support improved, fast, reliable ferry service in Lynn Canal.

In his statement last week, Murkowski said he is open to looking at all options and routes in the renewed Juneau Access EIS. This is encouraging, because there are other alternatives than a road from Juneau to Skagway. In addition to the fast ferries, other options have emerged as serious contenders.

With the Tulsequah Chief Mine receiving a go-ahead from British Columbia's new government, the more traditional Taku route through the coastal mountains to Juneau can now be included in the EIS.

And there has been serious discussion in Juneau about a compromise route up east Lynn Canal that would stop at Katzebin opposite Haines, connecting with a short shuttle ferry to both Haines and Skagway. Such a proposal would be perceived as fair in upper Lynn Canal, and could win over opponents in both towns who worry about the road's impacts on their economies. But this shorter road would still have to be made safe from avalanches, and impacts on Berners Bay would remain a big concern for Juneau opponents.

During the campaign, Murkowski talked about how there hadn't been a new road built in Alaska in two decades. He obviously was talking about the South Klondike Highway to Skagway, which will turn 25 years old in 2003.

Skagway residents have surely benefited from their highway access. It has opened up many social and recreational opportunities and better connected us with our Yukon neighbors, but it hasn't been the economic savior that we all thought it would be. Our tourism numbers are strong, but many of us who stay all winter struggle to make ends meet, even with a year-round highway.

Yet the perception in Juneau among road proponents is that we are spoiled. "Why can't we have what you have?" was a common refrain seen in letters to the Juneau paper during the campaign. With daily jet and ferry service, a road to Juneau really isn't necessary, unless you live in Juneau and feel a need to drive somewhere. Many do, and they may get their wish from the new administration.

But if "the stars are aligned" to build Juneau a road in the next decade, then our new governor should "get down to earth." Include everyone in the process of improving Juneau access for the benefit of all in our region.

William J. "Jeff" Brady is publisher of the Skagway News.

Section: Opinion

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Opposing the road

Juneau Empire (AK)
January 16, 1998
Author: Peter M. Enlicknap
Estimated printed pages: 2

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We are opposed to any road up the Lynn Canal and specifically the East Lynn Canal Highway (Option 2) from Juneau to Skagway. The building of a road from Juneau is unnecessary; we have a ferry. The road would:

Devastate critical and endangered wildlife habitat;

Destroy the view shed and threaten a congressionally designated wilderness and roadless area;

Reduce access to Haines especially in the winter;

Destroy our local economy;

Waste money;

Cause enormous hardship on our entire community;

Place travelers at risk due to extreme avalanche hazards and inability of the ferry to cross in high winds or rough seas;

Create a public safety hazard for trapped travelers;

Increase the costs of the ferry system by taking away the profitable Lynn Canal route;

Create a hardship on travelers into the Interior of Alaska with reduced access and a toll;

Require building a substandard highway (too narrow) with extreme maintenance costs, which were not disclosed in the report;

Threaten our subsistence and commercial fisheries;

Reduced traffic over the Haines Highway may force a winter closure.

We fish the Lynn Canal and depend on its resources for our subsistence food, which will be impacted by the construction, habitat loss and increased competition for our food supply by "sportsmen" and tourists. The Lynn Canal is one of the most beautiful wild places in the entire country and people come to see it from around the world. This would be lost with a road. We would lose tourists and regular travelers through Haines. Haines would be cut off and our economy would suffer with the East Lynn Canal highway. Our business would suffer and we may be forced to leave. With less traffic in Haines the economy would be destroyed.

We believe the DOT internationally misled the public by slanting the EIS to favor Option 2 Information was withheld and other reasonable options were ignored:

At several public hearings on Juneau access held by DOT in Haines, ferry employees offered many suggestions on how to improve the existing ferry service. This information is ignored in the EIS and there was no option that explored improved ferry service based on existing resources. Instead, DOT slanted the study by having an expensive high speed ferry as the ferry option.

The dedication of an existing state ferry to the upper Lynn Canal was not evaluated as an option.

Purchasing an existing or lower-cost traditional ferry to service the Lynn Canal was not evaluated.

Implementing management strategies to improve existing service was not evaluated.

Air travel was not considered. Giving all Juneau residents the choice of a road to Skagway or subsidized air travel to Anchorage or Seattle may be far cheaper than the road and its maintenance. The state could purchase a jet and run daily service or just issue vouchers to Juneau residents to defray their air costs.

Peter M. Entlicknap

Haines

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Many road unknowns yet to be addressed

Juneau Empire (AK)
January 22, 1998
Author: SKIP ELLIOTT

Estimated printed pages: 3

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This letter is primarily for our elected officials and for the folks at the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Federal Highway Administration who have put so much effort into the Juneau Access proposals.

We have heard a lot recently from construction industry people who think a road to Skagway is a good idea, from groups that oppose a new road's environmental impacts, from the city governments of Haines and Skagway, which fear its economic impacts, and from average Juneau folks who would drive the road if it were built (but otherwise don't really care). However, we have heard very little from the people who actually do most of the traveling between Juneau and Skagway. It is this group, after all, who have the most to gain or lose by altering access.

I commend DOT on attempting once again to identify better alternatives to the current Lynn Canal ferry setup. The ferries are slow, inefficient, and terribly inconvenient. In the winter, the mainline ferries sometimes carry far more crew than passengers. Handing out free airline tickets would be cheaper for the state.

Sen. Bill Ray, who chaired the Senate Transportation Committee in the early 1980s, held many hearings and arranged several DOT studies on improving Juneau access. Although most of the discussion then was about a road on the west side of Lynn Canal, Sen. Ray also proposed that access could be improved by purchasing one or more high-speed marine vessels. He even arranged demonstration rides on a Boeing hydrofoil. Unfortunately, I believe that DOT wrongly interpreted the vocal opposition to the Boeing hydrofoil as a lack of support for overhauling the ferry system in Lynn Canal.

Some of these previous DOT studies concluded that an east Lynn Canal road compared poorly fiscally to improved ferry service. The current fiscal analysis amazingly concludes that this road will cost no more to build now than it would have fifteen years ago. It projects road maintenance costs that are indefensible. Its user assumptions are educated guesses, at best. Our elected officials and our fiscal managers should ask our DOT engineers and planners to provide a "range of deviation from those estimates with a 95 percent confidence factor." Statistics are otherwise meaningless.

The road access option presumably works economically based upon thousands of additional RVs paying a toll to come to Juneau. Has anyone at DOT considered where they'll all park when they get downtown? Has anyone assessed the impacts of a road on the ferry walk-on traffic? Not everyone owns a car capable of a substantial winter trip. Are these displaced walk-ons supposed to hitchhike in the future?

We must not forget the travelers whose transportation we are attempting to improve. Some problems with the current setup are obvious: 1) the ferries are too slow, 2) the ferry schedules are inconvenient, 3) it takes forever to load and unload vehicles, and 4) most ferries are larger than the winter traffic warrants. The solution: 1) buy, build, or lease a faster ferry, 2) dedicated to multiple daily runs among Skagway, Haines, and Juneau, 3) that is end-loading, and 4) is smaller.

Gov. Knowles, Lt. Gov. Ulmer, our legislators and our public servants at DOT should ask themselves the single most important question about the proposed East Lynn Canal Road. If they spend the one-quarter of a billion dollars required to build it, will this substantially reduce the number of complaints from voters dissatisfied with transportation in Lynn Canal?

Consider carefully that the Avalanche Hazard Index for the proposed road is 369.5. An index over 100 is deemed "very high." The required "mitigation" is described in the draft EIS as "controlled avalanche releases and highway closures." Ferry travelers now complain about the irregular schedules. Once aboard, however, they generally arrive at their destinations, warm and a bit rested. The same could not always be said of a driver stopped by one of the 58 avalanche paths identified in the DEIS.

Voter complaints could actually increase if a road were to replace the ferries. Politically, it makes far more sense to solve the problems we understand, than to replace them with a new set of unknowns.

The state is considering retiring one of its mainline ferries. This is a wonderful opportunity to replace it with a vessel specifically designed to provide faster, more frequent marine access to Juneau. Capital move opponents too should support a smaller, faster ferry. Recall the problems suffered by some Legislators and staff in recent weeks as they drove into Haines and Skagway. If you had just spent 17 hours driving from Anchorage to Haines, would you rather spend the next three hours napping on a warm ferry, or another two behind the wheel of your car worried about avalanches?

Skip Elliott was Skagway city manager from 1981 to 1986 and Skagway mayor from 1987 to 1988. He has lived in Juneau since 1991.

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Why proceed in haste on the road?

Juneau Empire (AK)

January 26, 1998

Author: Avis Hayden

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After listening to the road debate that has so polarized our community I would like to offer a perspective somewhere in between the two poles. Why not opt to expand ferry service for a period of five years and after that time evaluate the effect this upgraded service has had on the problem of access? If the travelers feel they have adequate access to the highway system, then the problem has gone away without serious environmental impact and financial outlay. However, if after five years the access problem still exists, it would seem prudent to move forward on building the asphalt road. In the meantime, the Department of Transportation and the community could work together to develop parameters for measuring the access problem and its change over five years.

Why proceed in haste? Why does this road need to be built now? I urge our community to consider a more gradual series of steps in making this important decision. Once the road is built, it cannot be unbuilt; the money and wilderness will be gone. However, if the ferry service is expanded, it can always be reduced and all that is lost is a modest annual operating expense. I urge us all to proceed with caution.

Avis Hayden

Section: Opinion and Letters

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Majority oppose road for good reasons

*Juneau Empire (AK)
February 1, 1998
Author: Kari Onstott*

Estimated printed pages: 1

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I continue to be amazed that people want to oversimplify the issues regarding the proposed Juneau access road.

I do not want it and I am not now, nor have I ever, based my decision on the belief that the ferries will be "lost."

Why is it so very difficult for some to believe there are many of us who simply do not believe the proposed access road would be best, financially or ecologically, for Juneau or the rest of the communities it will directly affect?

I happen to agree, with a majority of others, that Juneau and Alaska as a whole have greater, more pressing issues that need our attention and financial support (i.e. education, health care and maintenance of our existing roadways, just to name a few).

There are no "scare tactics" involved in my mind - I just believe it would be detrimental in far more ways than are readily apparent. Perhaps those who want the access road should stop to consider - if only for a moment - that it very well may be they who are in fact in the "minority."

Kari Onstott

Section: *Opinion and Letters*

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Transportation plan gets OK - Second channel crossing now 'near-term' project, not 'long-term'

Juneau Empire (AK)
July 19, 2001
Author: JOANNA MARKELL
THE JUNEAU EMPIRE

Estimated printed pages: 2

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The Juneau Assembly approved the city's Area Wide Transportation Plan on Wednesday after strengthening calls for a second crossing over Gastineau Channel, light rail and ways to reduce demand for driver-only car trips.

After nearly six hours of public testimony and debate over two nights this week, the Assembly unanimously adopted the document. The plan sets a framework for Juneau transportation projects during the next 20 years and offers recommendations about state, local and federal improvements.

Before passing the plan, Assembly members changed a reference to a second crossing over Gastineau Channel from a "long-term" to a "near-term" project once an environmental impact statement is finished.

They also changed a reference to North Douglas Highway resurfacing and widening to a near-term project. A priority calling for a bench road on Douglas Island was changed to medium-term project. The road, paralleling the existing highway, would serve through trips between the Douglas Bridge and North Douglas, according to the plan.

If a second crossing is built, the traffic on North Douglas Highway will need to be addressed, Assembly member Marc Wheeler said.

"There are serious safety concerns we need to address if we're going to do a second crossing," he said.

Assembly members also discussed wording that suggests the city implement policies to reduce driver-only trips by promoting buses, carpooling, bicycling, telecommuting and other solutions. Such policies would be presented as incentives under a change approved by the Assembly.

Assembly member Dale Anderson said that many of the plan's solutions would reduce the use of single-occupant vehicles and that has scared some of his constituents.

"This is a factor I've heard over and over. I'm totally opposed to a government mandate that restricts the use of the automobile," he said.

Assembly member Frankie Pillifant, who has advocated for such policies, said the aim isn't to ask people to give up their cars, but to offer choices.

"If you give more choices, you do a lot to relieve commuter misery," she said. "This is an opportunity for the community to look for other opportunities."

A motion offered by Jim Powell to study fixed-guideway systems, bus rapid transit, light rail and other mass transit options was approved by a 5-4 vote. Wheeler, Cathy Muñoz, Pillifant, Powell and Mayor Sally Smith voted in favor of the amendment. Anderson, Don Etheridge, Ken Koelsch and Deputy Mayor John MacKinnon voted no.

Anderson said light rail is expensive, not cost-effective and out of context for a community Juneau's size. He said he wanted the issue put to rest.

"We've done a great deal to make transit accessible to those who need it. I don't want the city and borough to put another dime into studying (light rail)," he said.

But Powell said the city has never studied the issue.

"A couple of years ago, people didn't think 30-minute bus rides were appropriate. There has never been an analysis done for this. ... Our community is very unique," he said.

Pillfant, who served on the city's Transportation Steering Committee, pulled out a noisemaker to celebrate when the plan was adopted as the audience applauded. The Assembly had a good dialogue about the document, and the projects will receive individual review as they come forward, she said.

Mackinnon said the plan has something for everyone.

"It's not a perfect document. But it is like a comprehensive plan. ... It speaks for the next 20 years of transportation needs and desires," he said.

Transportation Steering Committee chairman Koelsch said he was pleased the plan asks the state to construct interchanges on Egan Drive to replace traffic lights. The city will start to implement the plan this week, he said.

Joanna Markell can be reached at joannam@juneauempire.com.

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City asks feds for funds to study second crossing

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Juneau Empire (AK)
April 3, 2001
Author: JOANNA MARKELL
THE JUNEAU EMPIRE

Estimated printed pages: 2

The Juneau Assembly on Monday recommended that Congress reallocate funding to look into a second crossing over Gastineau Channel.

Under a resolution unanimously approved by the Assembly, the city asks Congress to move a nearly \$2.2 million federal appropriation from the stalled West Douglas Highway Project to study a second crossing.

Assembly member Ken Koelsch said the crossing might not be needed today, but will in the future.

"People in North Douglas need to know where it will be sited," he said. "So when it goes in, people will know and people with objections can make them now."

The Assembly added wording to the resolution to make any study of the crossing project part of the Juneau Area Wide Transportation Plan. The draft plan was released last week for public comment.

According to the plan, a second channel crossing from North Douglas would divert traffic from the Douglas Bridge but would not eliminate the need for improvements. The second crossing would include a highway and pedestrian crossing and provide secondary emergency access, according to the city.

Assembly member Dale Anderson said a second crossing was a priority when he was in high school.

Anderson is now past 50, he said. "It's high time we take the bull by the horns and do something we should have done when I was in high school," he said. "This is money we need to spend and we need to spend it now."

The resolution is a chance to get funding from Washington, D.C., Assembly member Jim Powell said. Alaska Rep. Don Young is the new chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and has asked for input from Alaska residents on transportation spending. According to the city, the money would come from federal highway funds.

During public comment, Bill Leighty said the second crossing should be examined more thoroughly than it would be in the areawide transportation plan.

"We need to have a community-wide discussion about the kind of community we want this to be," he said.

Assembly member Frankie Pillifant said the resolution would help prompt discussion about the project. And she said having a plan to back up the request would be helpful as the city asks for funding.

"Let's look at the demand that's in the community," she said.

Assembly member Marc Wheeler said a study would look into crossing alternatives and the project's impact on wetlands. He said he hoped planners would find an alternative that didn't include a wetlands fill.

City Engineering Director John Stone said a 1998 study on a second crossing gave a rough cost estimate of \$46 million. That total includes a bridge structure, approach road, design, administration, inspections and environmental studies. The city has applied for a federal grant for additional studies on a second crossing. Stone said the research would look into traffic and possible locations identified in earlier studies, and would build on data collected about the 10th Street and Egan Drive intersection.

Joanna Markell can be reached at joannam@juneauempire.com.

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City asks feds for funds to study second crossing

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Damaging spectacle

Juneau Empire (AK)
September 11, 2002

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Once again, Don Etheridge joined Koelsch & Company in steamrolling over public opinion and avoiding the possibility of public input. Related Story:

In split decision, Juneau Assembly backs road north On Monday night he voted to promote the road into Juneau, in spite of the citizen vote preferring improved ferry service. Furthermore, he would not even delay the discussion and the vote one week so that there would be an opportunity for a public hearing on the matter.

At a time when Juneau should be pulling together and presenting a united front for the capital move issue, the 5-4 Assembly majority blew it Monday night. At 10 p.m., they sprang the divisive issue of The Road, generating the damaging spectacle of our community in conspicuous conflict.

What's the point of high-priced facilitators to prepare for the Juneau Tourism Partnership? The principle of collaboration and compromise is not in this group's vocabulary. It's time for a change. We can begin by ending Etheridge's term on Oct. 1.

Dixie Hood

Juneau

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-----CHAIRMAN-----

MY NAME IS JIM BECKER. I AM A LIFE LONG JUNEAU RESIDENT AND HAVE BEEN A COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN FOR 35 YEARS.

JUST LAST WEEK I WATCHED YOUR PROCEEDINGS AS MY WIFE TESTIFIED BEFORE YOU ON BEHALF OF THE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION. LITTLE DID I KNOW THEN THAT WE WOULD HAVE A SHARED EXPERIENCE.

THE JUNEAU ACCESS ROAD WILL BE VERY BENEFICIAL TO THE SEAFOOD INDUSTRY IN JUNEAU AND NORTHERN SOUTHEAST ALASKA. THE NEW ROAD WILL PROVIDE VIRTUALLY A 24/7 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR TO EXISTING AND POTENTIALLY NEW MARKETS.

JUNEAU CURRENTLY HAS THREE WAYS TO SHIP SEAFOOD: ONE IS BY AIR, AROUND 53 CENTS PER POUND; TWO IS BY BARGE, UNDER 10 CENTS A POUND; THREE IS THE EXISTING FERRY/ROAD 23 CENTS A POUND . ALL OF THESE COSTS ARE EXPECTED TO RISE DUE TO INCREASING FUEL PRICES.

AIR IS THE MOST COSTLY, HAS LIMITED CAPACITY AND AT THIS TIME IS SOMEWHAT UNRELIABLE. BARGE IS THE CHEAPEST BUT ALL PRODUCTS MUST BE FROZEN. FROZEN MARKET RETURNS A MINIMUM PRICE TO THE INDUSTRY.

THE EXISTING FERRY/ROAD MODE. DONE ON A LIMITED BASIS NOW HAS SCHEDULING PROBLEMS, CAPACITY PROBLEMS AND CAN'T MEET CURRENT OR

FUTURE DEMANDS. THE BEST POSSIBLE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR TO SHIP SEAFOOD TO MARKET IS A NEW ROAD CONNECTED TO THE CONTINENTAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM.

THE JUNEAU ACCESS PROPOSAL NOW IS TO HAVE A SHORT FERRY LINK. WHILE NOT PERFECT IT IS STILL BETTER THAN THE EXISTING SITUATION

LOCAL SEAFODD PROCESSORS AND FISHERMEN AGREE THAT THE HIGHEST VALUE FOR OUR PRODUCT IS IN THE FRESH FISH MARKET. THE NEW ROAD WOULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH NEW FRESH FISH MARKETS THROUGHOUT THE LOWER 48.

THE EXISTING FERRY/ROAD MODE HAS PROVEN THAT THE MARKETS ARE THERE BUT TIME IS CRITICAL WHEN DEALING WITH FRESH PRODUCTS

INDUSTRY ESTIMATES ARE THAT AN AVERAGE OF 40-50 THOUSAND POUNDS A DAY OF SALMON, HALIBUT, BLACKCOD, COULD BE SHIPPED VIA THE NEW ROAD.

THE POTENTIAL PRODUCT IS THERE. THERE IS AN AVERAGE OF 10-15 MILLION POUNDS OF SALMON HAVESTED ANNUALLY IN THE LOCAL JUNEAU/ LYNN CANAL AREA.

I ALSO BELIEVE THAT TRUCKING SEAFOOD VIA THE NEW ROAD WOULD SPAWN BACK -HAUL OPPORTUNITIES, AS IN CARRYING GROCERIES, ETC. ONE WAY AND SEAFOOD THE OTHER, AS DEMONSTRATED IN OTHER ALASKA SEAPORTS LINKED TO THE CONTINENTIAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM SUCH AS KENAI AND SEWARD.

WITH THE ADVENT OF THE IFQ SYSTEM ON HALIBUT AND BLACKCOD, JUNEAU HAS BECOME A MAJOR SEAPORT. JUNEAU'S SHARE OF THE STATE RAW FISH TAX IS CURRENTLY AROUND \$400,000 A YEAR UP FROM \$70,000 SEVERAL YEARS AGO. IT IS ENTIRELY CONCEIVABLE THAT THAT NUMBER COULD DOUBLE WITH COMPLETION OF THE NEW ROAD.

IN CONCLUSION, THE NEW ROAD WOULD BE A CONSISTENT RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR THAT WOULD CREATE NEW MARKETS, CUT TRANSPORTATION COSTS, AND CREATE A ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO JUNEAU AND NORTHERN SOUTHEAST ALASKA.

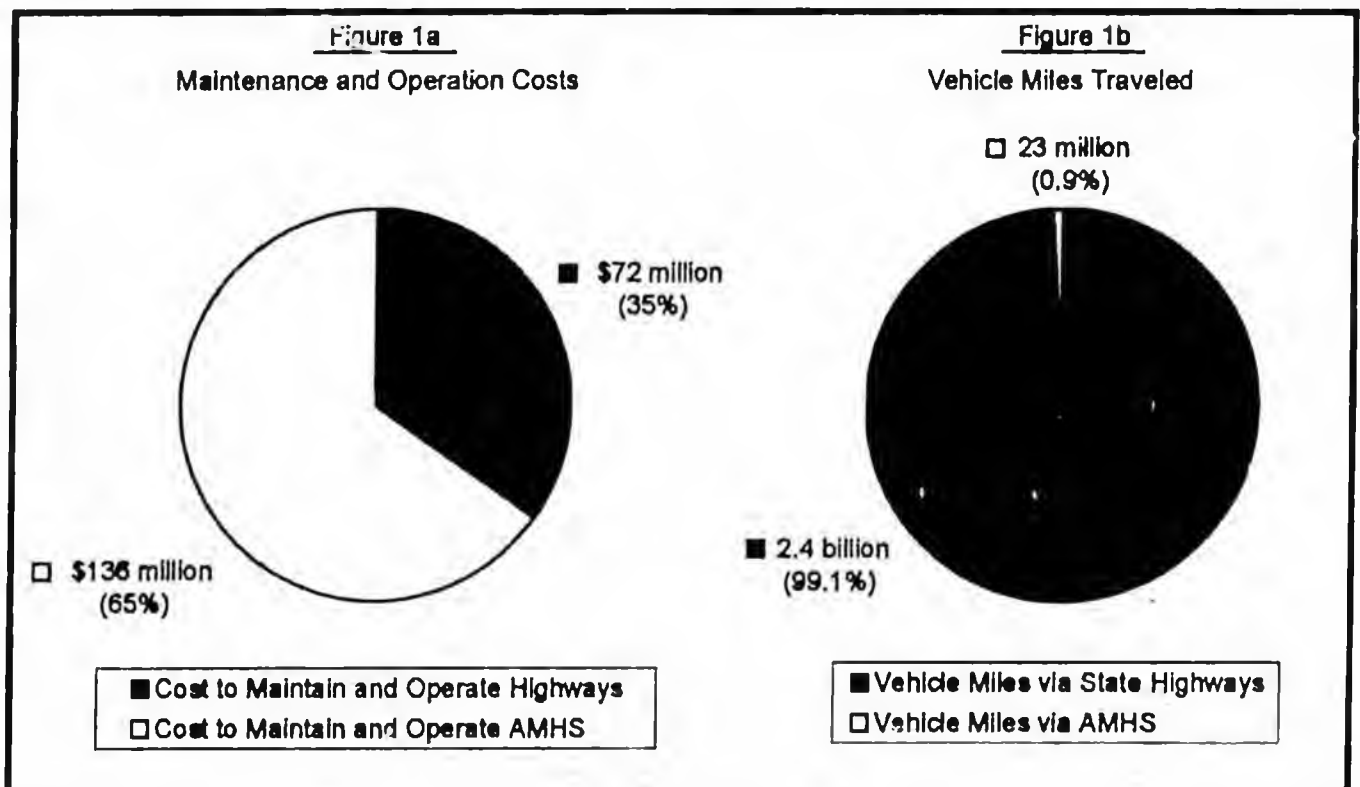
FRESH FISH MARKETS ARE TIME SENSITIVE, THE SHELF LIFE IS LIMITED AND ANY IMPROVEMENT WE CAN MAKE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO DELIEVER PRODUCTS TO MARKET IS ^{related} REFLECTED IN A POSITIVE FINANCIAL GROWTH TO THE INDUSTRY.

A REVIEW OF ROAD AND FERRY COSTS IN ALASKA

Alaska's ferry system is much more expensive to operate and maintain than our highway system.

In FY 2007, it will cost about \$208 million to operate and maintain Alaska's highways and ferry system (figure 1a). The ferry system will require about 65% of that amount (\$136 million) to transport less than 1% of the total vehicle miles traveled annually on state owned ferries and highways (figure 1b). On a cost per mile basis:

- The cost to transport a vehicle on a ferry is \$5.91 per mile.
- The cost to transport a vehicle on a highway is about 3 cents per mile.



Both modes of transportation generate revenue. In fiscal year 2004 (the most recent year highway revenue data is available):

- The highway system took in \$79 million from state gas taxes and licensing fees. Total cost to maintain and operate the highway system was \$56 million. The surplus of \$23 million went into the state general fund.
- The ferry system brought in \$45 million from fares, staterooms rentals, meals etc. Total cost to operate the system was \$90 million. The subsidy of \$45 million came from the state general fund.

A TEN YEAR SUMMARY OF AMHS COSTS						
YEAR	OPERATING WEEKS	OPERATING COST DATA			CAPITAL COST DATA	
		OPERATING COST	TRAVELERS PAID	STATE PAID	TERMINALS	VESSELS
1996	291	69.5	38.7	30.8	0.2	2.2
1997	304	69.9	38.6	31.3	5.3	81.4
1998	307	68.0	37.4	30.6	0.1	5.1
1999	315	74.0	38.8	35.2	11.8	22.1
2000	305	75.2	40.3	34.9	4.7	17.9
2001	292	81.7	37.6	44.1	11.1	16.3
2002	294	79.6	39.5	40.1	13.8	52.2
2003	327	85.6	41.2	44.4	9.4	23.0
2004	306	89.5	44.7	44.8	31.3	22.5
2005	349	100.8	46.1	54.7	25.1	13.4
		793.8	402.9	390.9	112.8	256.1

The cost to operate and maintain the system and purchase new vessels over the past 10 years was \$1,162,700,000.

Table 1

Table 1 shows annual operating and capital cost data for our ferry system over the last 10 years. The ten-year cost to operate and maintain the system and purchase new vessels and terminals totals almost \$1.2 billion. Of that amount:

- Ferries collected \$402.9 million in revenue.
- The remaining \$759.8 million was from the annual state operating and capital budgets.

With our aging ferry fleet and the replacement cost of one mainline vessel estimated at \$140 million, we must make the most efficient use of federal transportation funds in order to lower state general fund expenditures. Had even a fraction of the \$1.2 billion that was spent on ferries over the past 10 years been invested in roads, transportation corridors would be significantly improved and annual operating costs greatly reduced.

Constructing a road from Juneau north will eliminate the need for one and-a-half mainline ferries. One and-a-half ferries equates to a savings of over \$210 million in capital cost and about \$20 million per year in operating costs. A road meets all travel demand, reduces traveler costs 90% and reduces long-term capital costs and annual operating costs. A road eliminates one-third of the ferry system routing in Southeast Alaska and would result in at least a 15% reduction in the AMHS budget.

A new highway is the only viable way to improve transportation in Lynn Canal and is the first major step in saving our marine highway system from sinking in a sea of red ink.

Note: Information is provided by Capital Access Road Supporters (CARS)/March 23, 2006

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 17, 2003

Download report: www.bluewaternetwork.org

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New Study Reveals that New York Ferries are Hundreds of Times More Polluting Per Passenger than Cars, Buses or Trains

New York, NY -- A groundbreaking new study concludes that commute ferries operating in New York Harbor are far more polluting per passenger than cars, buses or trains. Unless they are cleaned up, by the time new federal air quality standards take effect in 2007, the ferries will be 100 to 1,000 times more polluting per passenger mile than new cars.

Rapid ferry expansion in New York Harbor is worsening the region's unhealthy air and threatening public health, and will for years to come if no action is taken. Bluewater Network is calling on New York City and state policymakers to require use of cleaner fuels and technologies before new ferries are put on the water and to clean up the existing fleet. The problem is that ferries operate on uncontrolled diesel engines that remain in service for 20 or 30 years or more.

"We are not saying that you should drive instead of taking the ferry, but that the fleet must be cleaned up now, not later," said Teri Shore, Clean Vessels Campaign Director for Bluewater Network, a national environmental group based in San Francisco that sponsored the new study.

The study found that ferries must become 95 percent cleaner in order to catch-up with emissions reductions being achieved by cars and buses. Cars have become 98 percent cleaner in recent decades. The results came from comparing diesel exhaust from three New York-New Jersey ferries to air emissions produced by landside alternatives in 2007.

"The comparison is stark," said Professor Alexander Farrell of University of California at Berkeley, a lead author of the study, titled, *Air Pollution from Passenger Ferries in New York Harbor*. "Passenger ferries have a long way to go before they can provide access and mobility while protecting the environment."

The study is the first to compare ferries with landside commute options in New York Harbor. The three routes analyzed were: Weekhawken to Pier 79 (38th St.), Manhattan to Atlantic Highlands, and Staten Island to Manhattan.

In every instance, the study found ferries produce more air pollution per passenger trip than landside alternatives for each route. Using 2007 as a baseline, when new standards for ferries, cars and buses go into effect, the study found that emissions of cancer-causing particulate matter were as much as 100 times higher per passenger than land modes. Releases of smog-forming nitrogen oxides were as high as 1,000 times greater per passenger than other modes. The findings were derived from New York commute patterns and ferry ridership.

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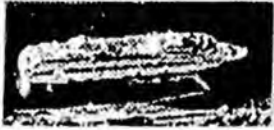
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ABOUT US CLEAN VESSELS PUBLIC LANDS GLOBAL WARMING SUPPORT US NEWS ROOM



Safeguarding the Seas

Stopping the pollution of our oceans by ships and fast ferries and preventing deadly collisions with whales

Fast Ferries: Clean Water Transit or More Dirty Diesel?



The next generation of commuter and passenger ferries must be at least 10 times cleaner than today's in order to achieve clean water transit. Speeding across waterways, fast ferries spew more dangerous pollutants into the air than either cars or transit buses - four to nine times more per passenger mile. Without use of cleaner fuels and technologies, by 2007, ferry air pollution will grow to 100 to 1,000 times more polluting per passenger mile.

While cars and buses have become 97 percent cleaner in recent decades, ferries continue to foul the air with toxic exhaust from dirty diesel engines. Any new commuter vessel put into service should, at a minimum, meet the emissions and other environmental standards established by the San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority. This standard requires new engines to be 85 percent cleaner than the 2007 federal air pollution standards. Neither international nor US EPA standards are adequate to prevent increased air emissions from ferry expansion compared to cars, buses, rail or other modes. As a result, the ferry industry must go farther and embrace non-diesel technologies such as hybrid-electric systems found in today's cleanest cars. Biodiesel, solar energy, wind power and, eventually, fuel cells are critical for making ferries a viable and clean transportation option.

To help relieve the traffic nightmares that occur every day on our nation's highways, ferry systems are being expanded. In many port areas including San Francisco, Seattle, New York and Miami, plans are underway to expand ferry fleets. But today's ferries come with a host of environmental problems.

Conventional marine diesel engines emit cancer-causing soot, smog-forming compounds, and air toxics that degrade the environment and threaten public health. When traveling at speeds of 30 knots or more, ferries are more likely to collide with whales and other marine mammals. As new ferry terminals are built along shorelines, sensitive wetlands can be disturbed or destroyed. Nearby communities may suffer dirtier air and face a proliferation of parking lots, disruptive artificial lighting, and commercial development around these new facilities.

The future of ferry systems is at a crucial crossroads. While in the planning phase, we have the opportunity to develop the most environmentally friendly systems in the world. Bluewater Network is leading the way by promoting the use of cleaner fuels and technologies, the design of low-wake vessels, and the protection of marine habitats.

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- Support Bluewater Network

Did you know?

Bluewater Network's report reveals that New York commuter ferries are far more polluting than cars or buses. Read and download the report (PDF), "Air Pollution from Passenger Ferries in New York Harbor."

Alcatraz Ferry Contract Awarded. Bluewater Network urges National Park Service to ensure that ferry operator complies with environmental commitments. Read our letter.

Ferry Fuel Standard Extended to all Harborcraft. The law requiring ferries in California to burn on-road diesel that Bluewater Network passed more than five years ago (**AB2135**) was extended by regulation to all harborcraft in 2005. **Read the Air Resources Board regulatory documents.**

Port Sonoma Gets \$20 M for ferry project. Bluewater Network opposes "pork" expenditure in **letter to Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey** and the **Water Transit Authority**.

Biodiesel on the Bay. Bluewater Network partners with Red & White Fleet during World Environment Week. Read the press release.

New Federal Air Pollution Initiative Will Help Reduce Ferry Exhaust on San Francisco Bay

Ferries Switching to Cleaner Fuels before 2010 Federal Deadline

New York 2003 Ferry Report and New California Ferry Standards. Read the New York report.

New Study reveals that New York Ferries are Hundreds of Times More Polluting Per Passenger than Cars, Busses or Trains. Read the full report.

Clean Ferry Coalition Applauds World's First Fuel Cell Ferry Project

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Read our Growing List of Victories:

2005

Ferry diesel fuel standard established by Bluewater Network bill extended to all harborcraft in California.

Bluewater Network partners with Red and White Fleet to sponsor Biodiesel on the Bay during World Environment Week in California.

2004

Collaborated with New York groups to derail ferry service through the Jamaica Bay and Gateway National Recreation Area to JFK Airport because it did not provide environmental protections from air and water pollution.

Bluewater Network helped US EPA and Blue and Gold Fleet launch pilot project to test emulsified fuel on ferry engines through West Coast Emissions Reduction Collaborative.

2003

Bluewater Network's New York ferry emissions report prompts city officials to clean up public

and private ferries by installing new technologies and testing alternative fuels.

Low-emissions mandate in new San Francisco Bay ferry plan passed into law along with environmental requirements to use biodiesel, build low-wake vessels and protect wildlife.

Fuel cell ferry oversight panel established at Bluewater Network's request to ensure that demonstration vessel is commercially viable and will utilize hybrid-electric propulsion and solar panels for auxiliary power.

2002

San Francisco ferry planners mandate a low-emissions standard that will make its proposed new fleet 10 times cleaner than today's ferries in response to Bluewater Network's recommendations.

Biodiesel fuel was tested in a San Francisco Bay ferry and a fuel cell ferry demonstration project was announced by ferry planners in response to Bluewater Network's education and advocacy efforts to make ferries cleaner.

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Read the Following to Learn More:

Making Fast Ferries Cleaner and Greener: overview of environmentally friendly solutions that Bluewater Network promotes

Read Bluewater's New York Ferry air pollution report hot off the press that reveals that New York Ferries are hundreds of times more polluting per passenger than cars, buses or trains.

New Ferry Expansion Comments: Bluewater Network's comments on the revised environmental review of ferry expansion on San Francisco Bay, May 2003

Ferry Expansion Comments: Bluewater Network's comments on ferry expansion and environmental review, October 2002

Alternative Fuels and Technologies for Ferries: fact sheet on environmentally fuels and technologies

Marine Diesel Engines and Air Pollution: fact sheet about the range of pollutants emitted from marine diesel engines

Clean Ferry Coalition: fact sheet detailing the coalition platform and a list of members

Ferry Expansion Scoping Comments: recommendations for evaluating the environmental impacts of the ferry expansion plan for San Francisco Bay

Call for Solar Ferries: resolution approved by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors calling for a hybrid solar-electric ferry on the busy Alcatraz route

Call for Cleaner Marine Transportation: resolution approved by the San Francisco Board of

Supervisors calling for ferry operators to adopt environmentally friendly policies

Solar Sailor: information about the world's first hybrid-electric, solar, and wind-powered ferry

Bay Area Transit Options Emission Report: ground-breaking paper that quantifies the air pollution generated by ferries

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Read Teri Shore's articles published in *Bay Crossings*:

Can Expanding Ferry Fleet Solve Wake and Air Quality Issues? (January 2003)

A Vision For San Francisco Bay (November 2002)

New York Ferry Fleet Expansion Causing Waves (September 2002)

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Get Answers to San Francisco's Frequently Asked Questions:

Why do fast ferries pollute more than cars or buses?

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Visit These Related Websites:

Solar Sailor: Advanced Watercraft Technologies solar alternative to diesel-powered ferries

San Francisco Bay Crossings: monthly publication featuring articles of interest on San Francisco Bay cultural, environmental, and maritime issues.

US Maritime Administration Workshop on Alternative Fuels for Ferries and Other Vessels: agenda from the November 2000 workshop to explore the potential for using alternative fuels aboard marine vessels

National Biodiesel Board: the national trade association representing the biodiesel industry

World Energy Alternatives: the largest provider of alternative fuel solutions for federal, state, utility, transit, municipal, and private fleets nationwide

San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority: regional agency developing a long-range plan for operating a comprehensive water transit system in San Francisco Bay

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Bluewater Network works to stop environmental damage from vehicles and vessels, and to protect human health and the planet by reducing dependence on fossil fuels. Bluewater is a division of Friends of the Earth - the U.S. voice of the world's largest network of environmental groups with one million supporters in 70 countries - rosa five continents

Bluewater Network -- a division of Friends of the Earth • 311 California, Suite 510 • San Francisco, CA 94104

Board of Game

Capital Budget Recommendations for Division of Wildlife Conservation

April 13, 2006

Because of the under-funding of the big game management and research component of the Division's operational budget, the Board of Game recommends that \$1.6 million of General Funds be inserted in the Capital budget for the Division of Wildlife Conservation. The purpose of these funds would be to primarily focus on providing critical wildlife population data, adequate program monitoring funds and assessment and program evaluations for implementing the Intensive Management law.

Based on preliminary information and some outdated population assessment data, the major areas needing more intensive scrutiny and possible proactive predator management programs include:

- Game Management Unit (GMU) 16A (Susitna R./Deshka R.)
- GMU 14B (Talkeetna R./Kashwitna R./Sheep Creek)
- GMU 17 (Nushagak R.)
- GMU 21 (Middle Yukon R./Galena/Shageluk)
- GMU 9 (Alaska Peninsula)
- GMU 18 (Yukon R. Delta)
- GMU 24 (Koyukuk R.)
- GMU 25 (Yukon Flats)
- Forty Mile Caribou Herd

These are in addition to the five areas already under intensive prey/predator management programs. These five areas include the following:

- GMU 19D East (McGrath)
- GMU 19 A & C (Middle Kuskokwim)
- GMU 13 (Nelchina Basin)
- GMU 16B (Susitna R./Alexander Creek/Skwentna R.)
- Portions of GMU's 12 & 20E (Tok/Taylor Highway)

Capital Budget Proposal

Sec.XXX DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME. Board Support Section. The sum of \$30,000 is appropriated from the general fund for Board of Game activities related to the review and revision of the Tier II subsistence proposals.

Note:

This appropriation is absolutely critical. With funds provided by the legislature, the Board of Game has conducted a review of the subsistence Tier II regulations with particular focus on the Nelchina caribou and moose hunts. New and innovative regulations were prepared and proposed for consideration at a Board meeting last May. The Board of Game was unable to finalize implementing regulations due to considerable opposition to portions of the proposals. These regulations have been assigned back to the Board Subcommittee for further discussions, particularly with residents of Unit 13, with the intent of bringing revised regulations before the Board in Fiscal Year '07. There is not enough funds available in the Board Support Section to allow for the Subcommittee work nor for an additional 2-4 day Board meeting. By providing these funds in the Capital Budget, it will not increase the base funding for the Section and will only be used for this specific purpose.

THE
FOLLOWING
DOCUMENT(S)
ARE
POOR
ORIGINAL
COPIES

I urge you to oppose including the proposed \$45 million of state general fund money in the capital budget for constructing the Juneau road extension. This funding could be more appropriately spent on education, health care, other transportation improvements, or other state needs.

The Juneau road extension will cost over a quarter billion dollars; will not directly connect Juneau with the highway system; will be built on North America's deepest fjord along 36 avalanche chutes; is opposed by the communities it purports to benefit; and will cost the state an estimated \$122 million to maintain over the next 35 years (twice that of the current Marine Highway System option).

Please consider other options for our limited general fund dollars than constructing this costly mega-project.

Sincerely,

Ken + Kelly Huse
Juneau, Alaska

27 April '06

Fax to: Rep B. Wehbrauch - (907) 465-2273
Sen. L. Green (907) 465-3805
Sen G. Wilken (907) 465-4714
Rep M. Chenault (907) 465-2833
Rep K. Meyer (907) 465-3476

Please DO NOT approve any money to start construction of the Juneau Road. Please put the money to better use... education, health care, + other state needs.

The ferry system is an access that works fine. It's safe too!

Thank you -

Laurie Dadourian

Laurie Dadourian

Bx 288

Juneau AK 99801

Alaska Marine Safety and Security Grant

Alaska is the nation's maritime state. No other region is more dependent on the vessels that ply their waters to transport consumables and natural resources vital to residents' welfare. Maritime security, the prevention of serious maritime casualties and responses to maritime emergencies can all be substantially improved through the application of emerging vessel tracking technologies. Since 9/11 the maritime industry and the Coast Guard have expended over \$4 million in providing an Alaska Automated Secure Vessel Tracking System (ASVTS) operated by the non-profit Maritime Exchange of Alaska. The appropriation of the requested Grant will represent the State of Alaska's continued commitment to assist the Coast Guard and marine industry's efforts to ensure safe, secure, efficient and environmentally sound maritime operations by expanding the capability of the vessel tracking system.

If approved, the requested Grant will:

1. Expand the operation of the existing Marine Exchange of Alaska's Automated Secure Vessel Tracking System Network Operations Center from 9-5 weekdays to 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.
2. Provide vessel tracking and after hours monitoring and support services that will enhance the safety and security of the State of Alaska Marine Highway System and the Department of Fish and Game vessels; assist the maritime security and disaster response functions of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management; and increase the environmental monitoring and response capability of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.
3. Provide funds for construction, maintenance and operation of 5 additional AIS (Automatic Identification System) receiving sites in Alaska.
4. Track the movements of all high capacity passenger vessels, tank vessels engaged in the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) trade, other crude oil and product tank vessels, liquefied natural gas carriers and anhydrous ammonia carriers transiting Alaskan waters.
5. Track the movements of other marine vessels such as container ships, refrigerated cargo carriers, fish processing vessels, tugs and barges and dry bulk carriers sailing Alaska waters to aid safety, security and environmental protection.
7. Track vessels that may provide assistance to vessels in distress to prevent loss of life and environmental damage.
8. Track the locations of vessels to provide risk assessment information to ADEC for identifying appropriate measures to minimize the threat of maritime incidents.
9. Track vessels operating in Glacier Bay waters to ensure environmentally sound maritime operations.

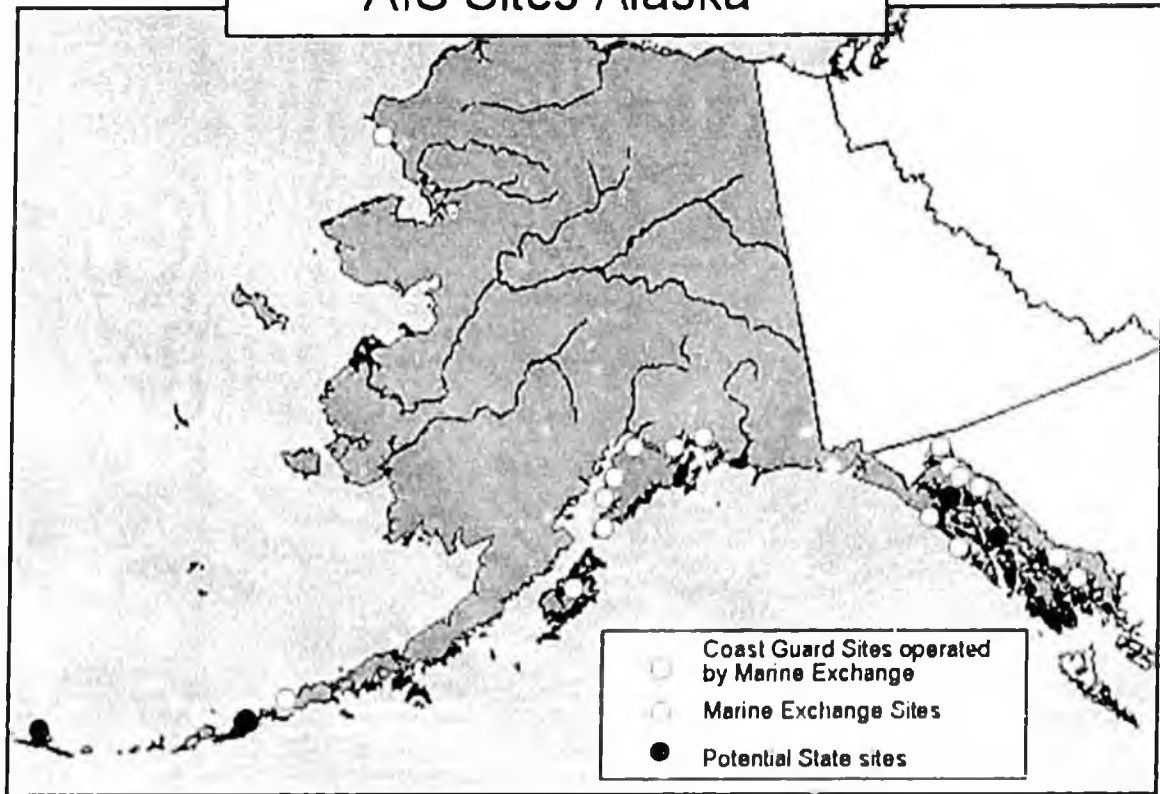


Founding Members

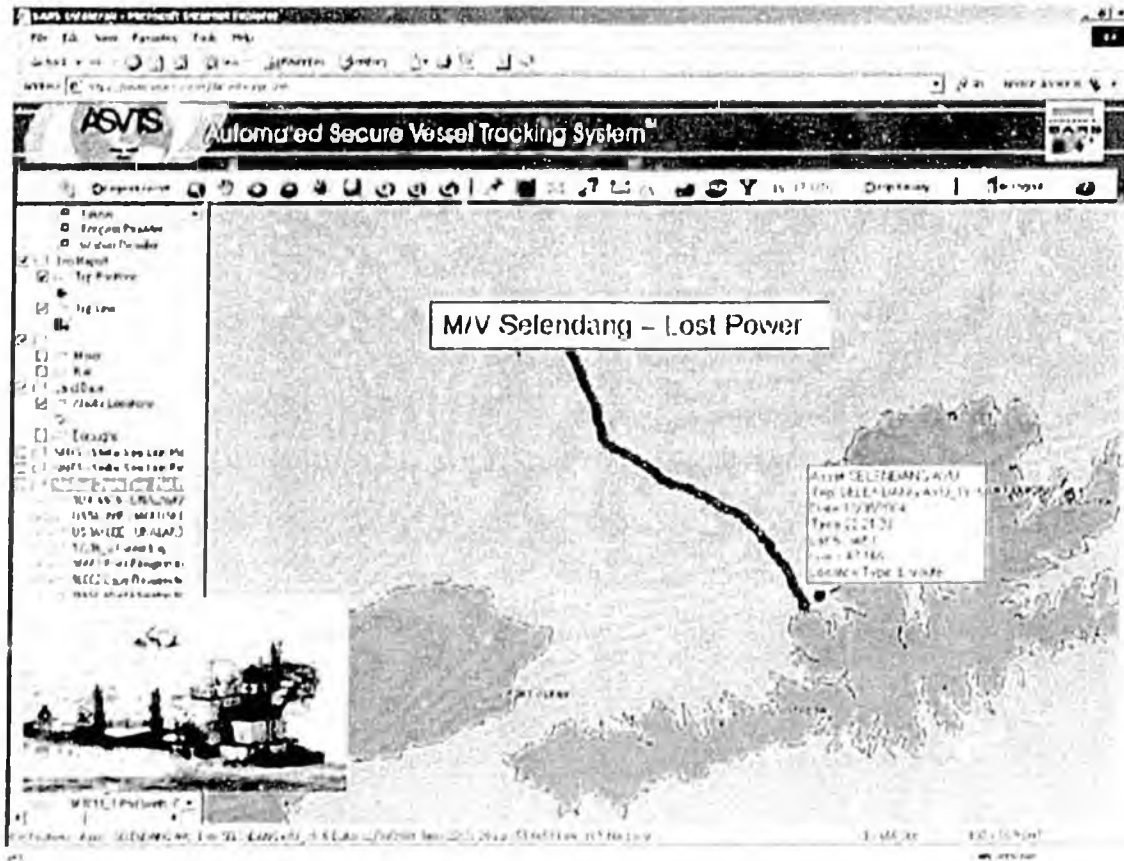


Founding Members of the Marine Exchange of Alaska

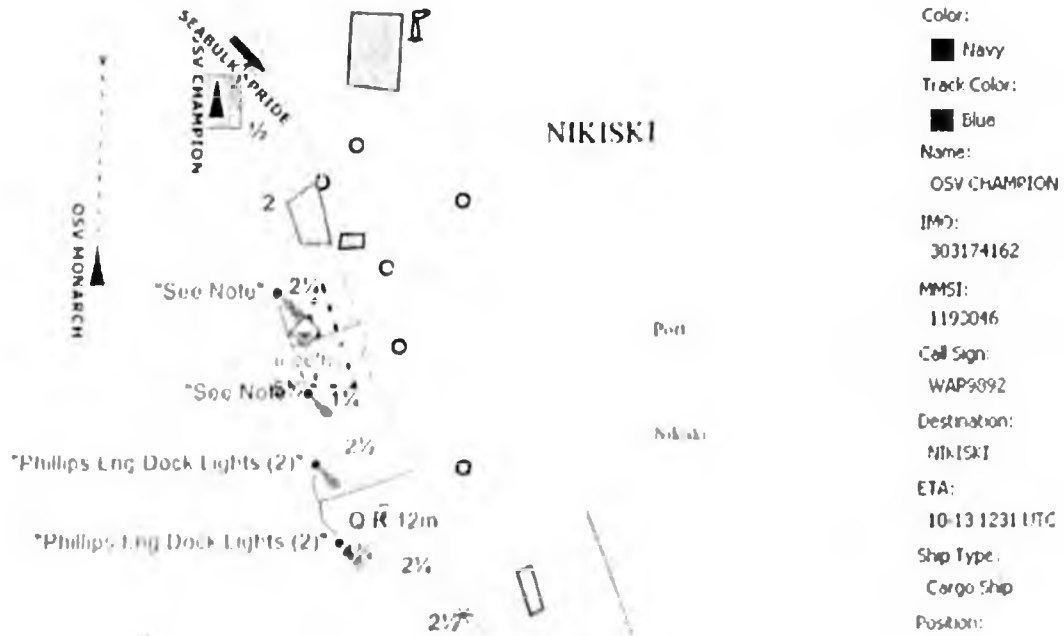
AIS Sites Alaska



Existing and Planned Automatic Identification System (AIS) Receiving Sites



M/V SELENDANG AYU Tracking Report from ASVTS



Screenshot from ASVTS showing T/V SEABULK PRIDE and response tugs

BUDGET: Construction of AIS sites, upgrades to hardware and software and expanded operation of the Alaska Maritime Center for two years.

1. The State is requested to allocate \$1.56 million in FY07, as described below, for the expanded operation of an Alaska Maritime Center and supporting systems for two years to complement the \$4.0 million expended by the Coast Guard and the maritime industry to date to develop this capability. The funds are allocated as follows:
 - a. \$184,000 to build and operate 4 Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) shore based receiving stations in Dutch Harbor, Western Aleutians, Glacier Bay, and Wrangell Narrows to augment the Coast Guard's AIS network operated by Marine Exchange of Alaska to provide expanded tracking of vessels.
 - b. \$397,000 to modify the software used to operate the Marine Exchange's Automated Secure Vessel Tracking System with Alaska navigational charts and satellite imagery, parsing and archiving/retrieval of vessel tracking data, and additional capabilities to aid State agencies in the execution of their mission.
 - c. \$110,000 for secure servers, software and communications systems co-located in a State of Alaska Homeland Security approved center to support the expanded ASVTS and to ensure redundancy and security of the system and information collected.
 - d. \$700,000 (\$350,000 each year) to expand the ASVTS watch from 40 hours a week to a 7x24 hour watch and provide the additional communications systems to support State agencies' needs.
 - e. \$49,000 for installation and two years operating costs of vessel tracking transponders for 10, State ADF&G and Department of Public Safety vessels
 - f. \$60,000 to develop and update protocols and procedures for having the Marine Exchange Operations Center serve as maritime command center for State agencies.
 - g. \$60,000 (\$30,000 per annum for two years), for rent, utilities and overhead for the Marine Exchange's Alaska Maritime Center

After initial funding, the operating costs of the system will be shared by the maritime industry, the federal agencies and the State Departments using the services.



Commander
Seventeenth Coast Guard District
Juneau, Alaska 99802-5517

28 April 2006

Dear Senator Green,

I understand the State of Alaska legislature is considering allocating funds to the Marine Exchange of Alaska to enhance their Automated Secure Vessel Tracking System (ASVTS).

The Seventeenth Coast Guard District welcomes any efforts by the State of Alaska to further improve the capabilities of this marine industry developed vessel tracking capability. The Coast Guard uses this system extensively every day to assist the execution of our maritime security, safety and environmental protection missions in Alaska.

The Coast Guard and marine industry have invested several million dollars over the last several years to build and operate this system that is providing maritime domain awareness. Expanding the operation of the Marine Exchange's Network Operations Center to 24 hours a day will substantially improve the value of this vessel tracking service. The development of additional AIS sites will also improve the coverage of ASVTS.

The operation of ASVTS has already provided critical assistance during our response to marine casualties and pollution incidents and has been instrumental in saving lives and property as well as preventing and responding to oil spills. Any efforts to expand this system's capabilities will lead to mutually beneficial outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James C. Olson".

James C. Olson
Rear Admiral U.S. Coast Guard

The Honorable Lyda Green
Alaska State Senator
Co-Chair Finance Subcommittee
Juneau, AK 99801

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

My career in Transportation in Alaska started in 1959. Over a span of 32 years I served as Chief Road Design Engineer, Director of Design, Director of Maintenance in the Dept. of Highways and SE Regional Director for 8 years in DOT@PF .

When the State started the Marine Highway system they recognized the need to shorten ferry runs in order to be more efficient and to provide better service to the public which they served. To that end, the Department of Highways began engineering work to extend the Highway South of Haines on the West side of Lynn Canal. Also Engineering work was commenced from Sitka to Rodman Bay. This link would have provided Sitka with Daily Ferry service. Unfortunately the Good Friday Earthquake set the State and the Department back years and we had to concentrate our resources to rebuild our damaged infrastructure.

By the time we got back to the plan to shorten the Ferry runs, the National Environmental Protection Act was in effect which allowed special interest groups to slow or stop projects they didn't want. Haines residents were very supportive of the road South of Haines. In fact Haines didn't have year round access to interior road system until the mid sixty's, as the Haines cutoff was not maintained in the winter. Their demand for year round access was instrumental in getting year round maintenance.

Skagway residence's were very supportive of the Skagway Carcross Road when it was built as it gave them access to the Alaska Highway and beyond.

The Department was also working on a project to extend the Mi'kof Highway across Dry Straits and up the Stikine River into Canada. We were also studying extending the road system North out of Ketchikan. The current SE Transportation to a large extent mirrors the plan envisioned in the sixty's.

The Juneau Access Road is equivalent to one and one half mainline ferries. As was envisioned in the very beginning, the system will be able to provide better service by not making the long run up Lynn Canal. You must also realize that four of the mainline ferries were built in the early sixty's and will have to go be replaced. They are single hulled vessels and at today's prices will cost about 150\$ million to replace each one. Will the money be there to replace them and at what expense to other projects? This has not been factored into the costs of no build.

The Marine Highway System is a vital need for Transportation in SE Alaska. For Years the hue and cry has been for better service. For over 40 years, the system has had some good managers but have not been able to answer the need for better service. The answer is shorter runs, more frequency of service at lower fares to the traveling public.

Wallace K. Williams (Sandy)
Box 765
Douglas, Alaska 99824
907-364-2243
swill38776@aol.com

GOOD AFTERNOON. My name is Wallace Williams, better known as Sandy. My career in Transportation in Alaska started in 1959. Over a span of 32 years I served as Chief Design Engineer, Director of Design, Director of Maintenance and Chief Research Engineer for the Dept/ of Highways and SE Regional Director for 8 years in DOT@PF.

My testimony is in support of the full funding request by the Administration for the Juneau Access Road. My comments are facts not myths.

You have been told that cutting the money making Lynn Canal run would cost the the Ferry System an additional 2.3 to 3.6 million\$ annually thus resulting in decrease ferry service to other communities. This is not true. The 1996 report was managed by staff of AMHS and did not analyze costs correctly. Lynn Canal is not a money making run. No runs by the AMHS are moneymakers. The 2.3 to 3.6\$ million cited in the report is passenger generated revenues. The total cost to provide transportation in Lynn Canal is historically double that amount. As an analogy, in FY2004 it cost 11.7\$ million to provide Lynn Canal service. Revenues were 6.0\$ million leaving a net loss to the state of 5.7\$ million. If Lynn Canal service were cut entirely AMHS revenues system wide would be reduced 6\$ million but the total cost to the state would be reduced 11.7\$ million Annually.

You have been told that Ferry riders would be forced to travel with a vehicle or pay pricey cab fares. This is not true. SEACC is quoting a newspaper article not a technical report. SEACC also fails to say a bus fare would be around 35\$. Similar to ferry terminals in Hollis, Sitka, Haines and when Juneau's downtown terminal was moved to Auke Bay in the 70's, travelers will have to use their own ground transportation to get to a terminal. The EIS examined potential bus service and in all likelihood, reliable transit system service will be implemented.

You have been told the building of the road will result in longer and less predictable travel times. This is not true. Not counting the time it takes to make early reservations and pay for tickets months in advance, the AMHS requires that vehicles traveling on a state ferry arrive at the ferry terminal two hours before departure. That means that the load, travel, and unload time to Haines on a mainline ferry takes 7.1 hours and on a fast ferry, when its running 4.5 hours. To Skagway it takes 9.1 and 3.8 hours respectively. These are facts and anyone that travels a ferry knows the rules. The Juneau access road will take 2.5 hours to travel to Haines and 3.0 hours to travel to Skagway. There is no required wait time to get on a shuttle ferry because it is on a first come, first serve basis. There are ample runs between the end of the road and Skagway or Haines .

You have been told that it will cost the State 45% more than the existing ferry system to maintain and operate. This is not true. The no- action alternative in the EIS is not the system that is currently operating in Lynn Canal. The no- action alternative was established in 2003 in compliance with the SE Transportation Plan wherein there would be only two mainline vessels serving SE Alaska versus the five mainline vessels now. According to the SE Plan Lynn Canal AMHS service would consist of three mainline trips per week, nine trips a week with the Fairweather and daily shuttle service between