



Ferry Notice

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Guemes Island Ferry Haul-Out Update

Nichol's Brothers Boat Builders (NBBB) has provided Skagit County with an updated schedule, bringing us closer to the completion of this project. The latest estimate has the Guemes ferry returning to service by mid-day on May 23rd, with a slight chance of an earlier return late on May 22nd.

Before resuming regular service, we're working closely with the U.S. Coast Guard to obtain an updated Certificate of Inspection and stability letter, ensuring everything is in top shape. Our team remains in constant communication to keep the process smooth and on track.

We appreciate your patience and can't wait to welcome Guemes back soon!



Engine No. 2 bolted to the new foundation.

What has been the cause of the delay?

The drydock work included a list of required tasks and a timeline for completion, as outlined in the contract with NBBB. Once work began, the contractor identified that certain tasks—particularly the fabrication and maintenance of the engine enclosures and foundations—required more time due to the complexity. These components are critical to the overall functionality of the ferry, and ensuring proper fabrication and maintenance is essential to the vessel's long-term reliability and performance.

What is the County doing to ensure compliance with the contract?

The County is reviewing options for enforcement of the contract with the shipyard to ensure the ferry is brought back into service as soon as reasonably possible. While we understand there is frustration with the delays and the resulting impacts on the island, the most important work we are focusing on is finishing the drydock work to the standards required by the U.S. Coast Guard. The safety and reliability of our ferry is our priority during this haul-out.

How have the drydock delays impacted the ferry budget?

There have been increased costs for the drydock work because of the delays, but until we have worked through the enforcement measures within the contract, we will not know the full impact to the overall ferry budget. We are planning to send out an update after the drydock work has been completed with more information on this question.

Why are we spending all this money on the drydock instead of building a new ferry?

The drydock work is very expensive; however, raising the necessary funds and building a new ferry will still take several more years. In the meantime, we must ensure the current ferry remains safe and reliable. This means keeping

up with the maintenance work required by the U.S. Coast Guard to stay in service. Several of our most recent service outages were due to engine and outdrive bracket issues. The drydock work has included the installation of brand new engines and new outdrive brackets to significantly improve the reliability of the ferry moving forward.

We appreciate hearing from you during the drydock work and we will continue to do our best to answer your questions and keep you updated as we finish up the haul-out.

Here is the work in progress or has been completed:

- New outdrive brackets and re-conditioned propellers have been installed.
- Engine enclosures are getting final coats of paint today and tomorrow, and foundations have been painted.
- The nonskid coating has been stripped on the car deck and one coat of primer has been applied.
- The hull and internal void spaces have been painted.
- Bilge piping below deck has been relocated to accommodate the new engines.
- New engine foundations and enclosures have been fabricated.



Engine Enclosure No. 1 with first coat of epoxy primer.

The following tasks still need to be completed before the ferry can reenter service:

- The outdrive brackets and surrounding areas of the hull still need to be painted.
- This weekend a second coat of epoxy primer and a non-skid topcoat will be applied to car deck.
- Engine No. 2 has been bolted to the foundation and connections for cooling, hydraulic, fuel, exhaust, etc. will be ongoing into next week. Electrical has started and is scheduled to be completed by mid-next week.
- Brand new engines and drivelines, rebuilt reduction gears, outdrives, and an auxiliary generator still need to be reinstalled onboard. Testing, trials, and commissioning are scheduled for late next week.
- USCG certificate of inspection credit for required drydock work and annual inspection credit.
- Incline test and issuance of a new stability letter.



New outdrive brackets.

The most recent update from NBBB **estimates** the drydock work would be completed on May 16th, with dock and sea trials from May 16th – May 19th, and then the ferry would sail back to Anacortes late May 19th or early May 20th. We would then need an additional three business days to complete the incline test for the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) stability letter. Only after the issuance of the new stability letter can the vessel re-enter regular service. Following this schedule, the soonest the vessel could be back on a normal sailing schedule would be May 23rd, with a slight possibility to return to service late May 22nd.

We will continue to send out updates on drydock work to the email listserv and social media channels. If you have any questions, please contact the ferry office at ferrycomments@co.skagit.wa.us or 360-293-6433. More information on the ferry can be found on our website: www.skagitcounty.net/ferry