



# Ferry Matters

*Guemes Island Ferry*

*A Skagit County Public Works Publication*

*Summer 2015*

## Ferry Manager's Corner

### Ferry Fare Revenue 2015

This edition of Ferry Matters is dedicated entirely to matters dealing with the ferry fare revenue target and a fare increase proposal being recommended by the Skagit County Public Works Department for 2015.

Included in this newsletter is information on the financial report, the fare increase proposal and why Public Works is making this recommendation. There is also information on upcoming public meetings.

You are invited to attend the public meetings, and to voice your opinion either in person or by mail or email.

My goal is to keep you as informed as possible about all matters related to ferry operations. So, if you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Also, please check our website often over the coming months so that you can get the latest updates to this information. And, if you haven't already, consider signing up for our ferry list serve. It's a great way to receive email updates, and signing up is easy! Simply go to the ferry webpage at [www.skagitcounty.net/ferry](http://www.skagitcounty.net/ferry), and use the link on the right hand side of the page.

#### Why a Fare Increase Now?

Recently, maintenance costs have been on the rise; specifically the ferry's dry dock costs. Therefore, the ferry's operating budget has increased to \$2 million - \$2.5 million per year.

To give you an idea of how much maintenance costs have increased, there was nearly a \$500,000 difference between 2010 dry dock costs and the lowest bid for the 2015 haul-out.

As the vessel and dock's mechanical, electrical and hydraulic equipment ages, expenditures will increase in order to keep things operating safely. Emergency shut-downs are extraordinarily painful and expensive, and can hopefully be avoided if we continue to maintain our equipment. Delaying maintenance to cut costs is simply not an option. And, it's not just maintenance; the entire cost of operating the ferry increases each year.

As many of you know, the last fare increase took effect June 1, 2011. The Board of Skagit County Commissioners signed Resolution R20100050, amended by Resolution R20110382, establishing the Guemes Island Ferry fare methodology. These resolutions set policy for the amount of operational expenditures that must be recovered by fare box revenue each year.

More information can be found in the 2015 Draft Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report available on our website. Fare box revenue met the revenue target in 2012, 2013 and 2014. However, without a rate increase, the fare box revenue will fall short of the revenue target for 2015. If a fare increase takes effect October 1, 2015, fare box revenue will meet the revenue target for 2015.

#### How Much More Will a Ticket Cost?

The proposed increase is, on average, roughly 20 percent for the non-peak season; some fares would be more, some fares would be less. For example, if the proposal is approved, a non-peak car and driver rate would increase by \$2 (or 25 percent), and a walk-on adult passenger would increase by 50 cents (or 14 percent). For more information, please see the proposed fare schedule on the back page of this newsletter.

#### Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report:

A draft of the 2015 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report is now available for public review at [www.skagitcounty.net/ferry](http://www.skagitcounty.net/ferry). Additionally, the draft report will be available for public comment through August 18, 2015.

The Department of Public Works will be recommending that a fare increase take place October 1, 2015 in order to meet the 2015 revenue target. More information regarding this proposal can be found in the report.

To submit comments, please contact Rachel Rowe, Ferry Operations Division Manager, at [rrowe@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:rrowe@co.skagit.wa.us). You can also submit comments, by mail, to Skagit County Public Works, Attn: Rachel Rowe or Attn: Commissioners, at 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. We ask that all comments be submitted in writing.

#### How Can I Get Involved:

There will be a series of public meetings that the entire Skagit County community is invited to attend. There has been some confusion regarding the community meeting and public

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We are pleased to provide you with pertinent ferry related information that we hope you will find helpful. This newsletter will be distributed via the list serve. The newsletter will also be posted on our website.

## Proposed Changes, Skagit County Ferry Rates

Proposed Rate Change Date: October 1, 2015

TICKET TYPE	Average by Ticket Type	2015 Non-Peak 10/1 to 5/19	Proposed Non-Peak	2015 Peak 5/20 to 9/30	Proposed Peak	Whatcom County Lummi Ferry Includes Surcharge \$3 per trip	Pierce County Stillicum Ferry Non-Peak	Pierce County Stillicum Ferry Peak
CAR & DRIVER	29.38%	8.00	10.00	10.00	12.00	13.00	17.80	22.30
SENIOR/DISABLED C&D	6.93%	7.00	8.00	9.00	10.00		14.85	18.65
ADULT PASSENGER	8.74%	2.50	3.00	3.50	4.00	7.00	5.30	5.30
Senior/Disabled/Youth PASSENGER	2.65%	1.50	2.00	2.00	2.50		2.65	2.65
ADULT BICYCLE	0.62%	3.50	4.00	4.50	5.00	7.00	5.30	5.30
S/D/Y BICYCLE	0.14%	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.50			
MOTORCYCLE	0.28%	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	8.00	9.60	12.00
Senior/Disabled MOTORCYCLE	0.01%	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00			
20 TRIP VEHICLE & DRIVER	18.53%	136.00	170.00	136.00	170.00			
10 TRIP CONVENIENCE VEHICLE & DRIVER	0.58%	80.00	100.00	100.00	120.00			
20 TRIP VEHICLE & S/D DRIVER	12.06%	119.00	136.00	119.00	136.00			
10 TRIP CONVENIENCE VEHICLE & S/D DRIVER	0.43%	70.00	80.00	90.00	100.00			
20 TRIP MOTORCYCLE	0.13%	85.00	102.00	85.00	102.00			
20 TRIP MOTORCYCLE & S/D RIDER	0.01%	68.00	85.00	68.00	85.00			
25 TRIP ADULT PASSENGER	5.20%	53.00	67.00	53.00	67.00	115.00		
25 TRIP S/D/Y PASSENGER	2.77%	32.00	40.00	32.00	40.00			
Vehicles < 25	3.72%	11.00	13.00	14.00	16.00			
Vehicles < 30	1.81%	16.00	19.00	20.00	23.00		36.05	45.10
Vehicles < 35	1.74%	21.00	25.00	26.00	30.00			
Vehicles < 40	1.65%	27.00	32.00	34.00	39.00		57.40	71.85
Vehicles < 45	0.96%	34.00	40.00	43.00	49.00			
Vehicles < 50	0.44%	42.00	49.00	53.00	60.00		95.80	119.75
Vehicles < 55	0.18%	51.00	59.00	64.00	72.00			
Vehicles < 60	0.26%	60.00	69.00	75.00	84.00		114.95	143.70
Vehicles < 65	0.56%	71.00	81.00	89.00	99.00			
TRCH MONTHLY TRIP CHARGE	0.01%	5.00	6.00	5.00	6.00			
STACKED LOGGING TRUCK	0.19%	80.00	95.00	80.00	95.00			
Extended Run (1 run at end of day) plus fare		100.00	120.00	100.00	120.00			
Guemes Special (crew call out) plus fare		450.00	500.00	450.00	500.00			
Charter Rate (3 hour min) plus fare		1,000.00	1,200.00	1,000.00	1,200.00			
\$ per hour, Charter Rate, plus fare		325.00	400.00	325.00	400.00			

## Community meeting, public hearing scheduled in August

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hearing relating to the creation of a Ferry District. In the 2015 Draft Revenue Target Report, the Department of Public Works mentions recommendations for a possible Ferry District, and Enterprise Fund. These proposals are not being presented to the Board at this time; in fact, these recommendations would be made to the Board later this year.

Please note that the public meetings are for the purposes of discussing a fare increase. We want your input!

### Community Meeting:

On Wednesday, August 5, 2015, the Board of Skagit County Commissioners will host a community meeting at the Guemes Island Community Center, 7549 Guemes Island Road, at 6 p.m. The entire Skagit County community is encouraged to attend, learn about and discuss agenda items including:

- 2015 Draft Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report
- Public Works Proposal for a Fare Increase
- Questions and Comments Related to Ferry Operations

County Commission Chair Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner Lisa Janicki and Commissioner Ron Wesen will all be present to discuss agenda items with Guemes Island residents and citizens County-wide.

### Public Hearing:

On Tuesday, August 18, 2015, the Board of Skagit County

Commissioners will hold a public hearing in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, Washington, at 8:30 a.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, to consider public testimony and consider changes to the Guemes Island Ferry Fare Schedule; specifically, 1) a 20 percent average increase to the non-peak fares; 2) a 17 percent average increase to the peak fares; and 3) rescind Resolutions R20110099, R20120139 and R20130190.

The Department of Public Works is recommending a fare increase for the purpose of establishing a rate structure for the Skagit County ferry system that will meet the 2015 required fare revenue target. This proposal may be approved, modified, or rejected by the Board of Skagit County Commissioners. Your views for or against this matter are invited by attendance, representation, or letter.

## Guemes Island Ferry

Skagit County Public Works Ferry Division

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