The Guemes Island Ferry Replacement Concept Design Report is out — which means the new vessel is officially at 30 percent design completion. Probably the most notable part of the 100-plus-page report, however, is the general arrangement drawing. In layman’s terms: The first sketches of how the new vessel will look.

Much like the existing vessel, the proposed new ferry will be double ended, with a three-tiered deckhouse on one side, and four vehicle lanes sized for trucks and emergency vehicles.

Overall, the new vessel will be longer and slightly wider than the current ferry, with estimated capacity of 32 vehicles and 150 passengers. Storage areas on either side of the deckhouse are intended for bicycles, handcarts or other items.

The Concept Design Report also takes an in-depth look at the benefits and tradeoffs of five different propulsion types — starting with the current geared diesel system, and expanding to consider diesel-electric, series hybrid, plug-in hybrid and all-electric propulsion.

To give context to each of the propulsion systems, Glosten implemented a scoring system (taking into consideration weight, complexity, reliability and other factors) to weigh the strengths and drawbacks of each type of propulsion.

Glosten also prepared a Transportation System Assessment and a Vessel Capacity Study, both of which lay the foundation for the concept design report.

All three reports are available online at skagit-county.net/ferry.

Click “Ferry Replacement Project” and scroll down below the concept design image to read the PDF reports.

Capt. Rachel Rowe | 360-416-1400 | rrowe@co.skagit.wa.us | skagitcounty.net/ferryreplacement
The Board of Commissioners heard updates on the process to design a new Guemes Ferry from design consultant Glosten at a special presentation Nov. 21. Glosten discussed in detail the concept design report and preliminary cost estimates for five separate propulsion system options. At the Dec. 1 Ferry Committee/Public Works meeting, Glosten presented this information to interested committee members and roughly 30 attendees from the public.

Glosten calculated the propulsion system capital costs (including shoreside infrastructure) for all five propulsion system options. At the Dec. 1 Ferry Committee/Public Works meeting, Glosten presented this information to interested committee members and roughly 30 attendees from the public.

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Approximately 106 people joined the Skagit County Board of Commissioners, Public Works and representatives from ferry consultant Glosten at a public meeting Nov. 2 at the Guemes Island Community Center. The Board discussed funding considerations, while Glosten addressed specific questions relating to ferry design and capacity. Find links to presentations and audio from the Nov. 2 meeting online: skagitcounty.net/ferry and click “Ferry Replacement Project.”

CRAB for the new Guemes Ferry simply means that Skagit County believes it has a viable project that could be eligible for funding; it doesn’t mean that any final decisions have been made. The concept design report, which represents 30 percent design completion, provides specifics to decision-makers at the state level.

We’re applying for up to $10 million in funding from the County Ferry Capital Improvement Program, administered by the County Road Administration Board (CRAB). The application will be submitted by the December 31 deadline.

During the first three months of 2018, Glosten and Skagit County will present the Guemes Ferry Replacement Project to a technical advisory committee that will conduct our application review.

Once the review has been conducted, the committee will issue a written report to CRAB. At their spring meeting in April, CRAB may decide to act on our funding request; however, they could wait as late as the summer meeting, in July. Submitting application materials to CRAB for the new Guemes Ferry simply means that Skagit County believes it has a viable project that could be eligible for funding; it doesn’t mean that any final decisions have been made. The concept design report, which represents 30 percent design completion, provides specifics to decision-makers at the state level.

No decisions have been made on a propulsion system; all five options are included in the application packet. Once we submit the application, we will continue our search for other funding sources, begin work on preliminary design (once a propulsion system has been selected), and continue our public outreach efforts.

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