



Washington State Ferries Weekly Update



April 24, 2015

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Gov. Inslee visits the Mukilteo/Clinton route

On Wednesday, we were very fortunate to host Gov. Jay Inslee as he visited the Mukilteo terminal and rode the Tokitae for one round trip between Mukilteo and Clinton. On board the Tokitae, the Governor held a meeting with local elected officials, community members, me and members of my staff to discuss the importance of investing in the ferry system. He also toured the pilothouse and met with the vessel's captain and crew. I so appreciate all the support Gov. Inslee has shown WSF. I want to applaud Captain Curt Larson and his whole crew, along with the "F" and "G" watches, for preparing the Tokitae for this event. The vessel was shining from the pilothouse to the car deck and really showed the pride and care that our professional crews demonstrate for all of our ferries. Thanks also to Terminal Supervisor Faith Jackson and the rest of the Mukilteo terminal staff for their help orchestrating the land side of this event. Pictured below on the left, Gov. Inslee, Secretary of Transportation Lynn Peterson, Captain Larson and I greet members of the Tokitae crew. On the right, the Governor and Capt. Larson pose on the deck of the Tokitae.



Summer reservations update

Our information technology specialists have determined that the online ferry reservations system stopped working last Tuesday, April 14, because it could not handle the high volume of users who attempted to make a reservation at the same time. We are performing continuous testing and system upgrades that will significantly increase our ability to handle hundreds of vehicle reservation requests simultaneously. To avoid overburdening the software, the first third of space on all Anacortes/San Juan Islands summer sailings will be [released incrementally](#) starting on Tuesday, April 28. We reopened summer reservations for the Anacortes/Sidney B.C. and Port Townsend/Coupeville routes on Wednesday. To make a reservation, go [online](#) or call WSF Customer Service at 1-888-808-7977.

Earth Day at WSF

Wednesday was Earth Day, and I am reminded of the important role WSF has in being responsible stewards of Puget Sound. We take pride in our commitment to reduce emissions and fuel costs through greater use of biodiesel and operational changes. We also are proud to maintain a "5-star" [EnviroStars](#) certification at 10 of our busiest terminals. What we do makes a difference in the health and well-being of our customers and the marine environment.

You're invited to the Samish open house and christening on May 20

Help us welcome the second Olympic Class ferry, Samish, to the fleet at an open house and christening event on May 20 at the Anacortes terminal. Drop by anytime between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to tour the vessel and enjoy

complementary refreshments. At 1:30 p.m. there will be a ceremony by the Samish Nation and First Lady Trudi Inslee will christen the new ferry. Check out our [blog](#) for the latest event updates and information.

Plan ahead: Tour de Lopez bike event this weekend

On Saturday, the annual Tour de Lopez bicycle event will take place on Lopez Island. Customers can expect increased traffic from Anacortes to Lopez today and tomorrow as participants arrive for this event. On Saturday, the 7:30 a.m. sailing to Orcas from Anacortes will make an unscheduled stop at Lopez Island to accommodate participants. The photo below shows cyclists arriving on Lopez for the 2013 tour.



Customer compliment

I really appreciate this comment. It's not often that we get to know what goes on behind the scenes in situations like our Seattle/Bainbridge Island customer describes below:

We are writing to commend the extraordinary assistance we received from [Second Mate] John Pelland and his "E" watch team on the 4:40 [p.m. April 15] Puyallup sailing from Seattle to Bainbridge Island. Parked at the head of the port-side ramp, our vehicle stalled, ultimately becoming fully disabled. The situation was about as bad as it gets for a commute run. Dozens of vehicles behind us had to back off. Three sailings were delayed. And, as you might imagine, tempers were taxed.

A bit about the situation: At first, as the ferry was landing at Winslow, we believed the battery had died. The crew gave us a jump. Then, for reasons that remain unclear, there was a loud, screaming sound from the engine area, followed by smoke pouring out from under the hood. Even then, we hoped we could be pushed off the boat. That plan evaporated when we discovered the gearshift had locked in Park. We could not shift into Neutral and, therefore, could not be pushed. Finally, a resourceful crew member ... found how to locate the lock-override mechanism by checking a YouTube video on the phone. ...By that time, the decision was made to leave the car in place so as not to delay the schedule any further. We rode back to Seattle on a partially loaded boat, and then back again, where the car was finally pushed from the boat and left overnight on the dock.

We go into this detail to let you know how complicated and potentially aggravating the incident was for all concerned. John and his team were professional, courteous, and helpful throughout. Undoubtedly, they absorbed some frustration and abuse from harried commuters. Certainly, they were mindful of the ferry schedule and the knock-on consequences of delay. To us, however, they showed nothing but resourcefulness, courtesy, and sympathy for our situation. They kept us informed of the options and of the decisions that were being made. They were careful with our vehicle and kept traffic moving as well as possible under difficult circumstances, remaining cheerful throughout.

While it was an unfortunate, embarrassing experience for us – nobody wants to be one of "those guys," particularly during the afternoon commute – it was made much less unpleasant by the efforts of John and his team. We wanted to express our appreciation to John and the "E" watch team in writing and, most especially, to make you aware of the exceptional work of your crew.

Please note: I will be on leave for the next two weeks. While I'm away, Elizabeth Kosa, WSF Chief of Staff, will be sending out these weekly updates. I look forward to my next update on May 15 after my return.

Lynne Griffith
Assistant Secretary WSDOT/Ferries Division

Hyperlinks in this email:

Summer reservations news release: http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/News/2015/04/20_WSF.htm

WSF Vehicle reservations home page: <https://secureapps.wsdot.wa.gov/Ferries/Reservations/Vehicle/default.aspx>

EnviroStars: <http://www.envirostars.org/index.aspx>

Samish christening and open house blog: <http://wsdotferries.blogspot.com/2015/04/youre-invited-to-our-samish-open-house.html>

Weekly updates are available on the WSDOT Ferries Division website at www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/weekly.

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