



April 27, 2009

The 2009 legislative session has concluded and I want to share my overview with you.

The most important progress coming from the Legislature provided funding for two additional 64-car ferries and to continue our current level of service. The Legislature also clearly rejected WSF Revised Long-Range Plan "Scenario B."

In the Revised Plan we sought direction from the Legislature on three key strategic issues:

1. Operational strategies to pursue.
2. A vessel procurement plan.
3. A funding plan to make WSF financially sustainable.

We received direction from the Legislature on two of those key issues.

The Legislature provided clear direction to pursue the operational strategies identified in the long-range plan. Specifically, it provided direction to pursue a pre-design study on a pilot vehicle reservation system and to return to the Legislature in the 2010 session with the results from the pre-design study. The Legislature would then decide whether to fund implementation of the pilot reservation program.

The Legislature also provided direction for a vessel procurement plan with funding for two additional 64-car ferries to be completed in the next two years. It also recommended building one 144-car ferry (after the completion of the two new 64-car ferries) pending funding availability. If funding is not available for a 144-car ferry, then there is an option to build another 64-car ferry instead. The final (fifth vessel) funded in the 16-year plan is a 144-car ferry.

The Legislature did not provide a funding plan that would make WSF financially sustainable. Given the state of the economy and the depth of the financial issues facing the ferry system, it is understandable that the Legislature was unable to resolve this issue this session. However, there is clearly a much greater understanding of the financial dilemma facing the ferry system now than at the beginning of the session. This knowledge base should help resolve the funding question in future sessions.

I want to thank everyone who worked very hard to help us make progress this session. The Governor and her staff, Secretary Hammond and WSDOT/WSF staff, the House and Senate Chairs, committee members and staff, customers, citizens and local elected officials, and our bargaining unit representatives all worked to address the needs of the ferry system and the people we serve. We have a long way yet to go to make the system financially sustainable, but I believe we made progress this session and that we are on the right path. Moving forward, the key issue over the next biennium is to identify and provide resources for a financially sustainable funding plan for the ferry system.

David Moseley's weekly updates are available on the WSDOT Ferries Division Web site at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/weekly](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/weekly).

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