

6. PROPOSED SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

This section presents WSF's Draft Plan for service expansions through 2030. The Draft Plan is based on the situation assessment, and developed through the planning process described in earlier sections. The Draft Plan outlines key challenges, options considered and recommendations for each of the four service areas.

6.1 Draft Plan Overview

Exhibit 12 on the following page summarizes WSF's existing set of terminals, vessels, and routes, how each component will change between now and 2030, and when each change is planned to occur. There are three components to the exhibit. The first is the terminal plan, containing major terminal improvements and their scheduled construction periods along a year-by-year timeline that extends to 2030. The second component is the vessel plan, showing changes planned for the vessel fleet, including vessel retirements and the purchase of new vessels for replacement or expansion purposes. The final component of the exhibit is the service plan, showing the Draft Plan as it applies to each route. Today's vessel assignments are listed on the left side and planned 2030 assignments on the right, while vessel and service changes are arrayed in the middle along the timeline. To interpret the vessel symbols, refer to the Vessel Key in the upper left-hand corner.

The terminal component of the exhibit shows that most WSF terminal projects are already underway. When completed, these new and remodeled terminals will help support the vessel and service components of the Draft Plan.

The vessel component of the Draft Plan contains replacement vessels, as well as vessels to expand service throughout the WSF system. As the exhibit shows, there are three distinct vessel procurement periods, each approximately seven years long. Vessel purchases are grouped together in relatively short windows of time so that WSF can benefit from shipyard efficiencies that come from building multiple vessels in succession, which reduces the overall cost. Because of the timing of vessel retirements, the first and third procurements mostly contain replacement vessels. The second procurement handles expansion vessels, so it is designed to be flexible depending on the amount of demand WSF realizes in the years to come.

WSF's service plan is built on the notion of addressing routes whose levels of service fall short of WSTC standards. In chronological order, highlights from the service plan include:



- A third vessel added to Edmonds-Kingston in 2009 in the summer and 2012 year-round. This addition will address vehicle LOS on this route and help siphon traffic from Seattle-Bainbridge.
- The breakup of the South Sound triangle route and the addition of direct downtown Seattle-Southworth service in 2014, to address vehicle LOS in the South Sound and terminal constraints at Fauntleroy. To optimize this service change, a fourth operating slip at Colman Dock would be desirable.
- A third vessel added to Bremerton in 2015, to address vehicle LOS on this route and Seattle-Bainbridge.
- An additional vessel added to the San Juans routes in 2017 (6 boats in summer and 5 boats spring and fall), allowing more direct service between Anacortes and each island.
- A third vessel added to Mukilteo-Clinton in 2018 in the summer and 2022 year-round, to address vehicle LOS on this route.
- A fourth vessel added to Edmonds-Kingston in 2023, to continue to address vehicle LOS across the Kitsap travel shed.

Passenger-Only Ferries, WSF and Recent Legislative Direction

WSF has provided passenger-only ferry (POF) service between Vashon and downtown Seattle since 1990. In recent years the future of POF service in the region has been the subject of extensive policy activity and debate:

- In 2000 the Joint Legislative Task Force on Ferry Funding recommended that WSF not add any new POF routes and that the Legislature remove barriers to privately-operated POF services.
- In 2003, Kitsap Transit entered into agreements with two private ferry operators to provide POF service to Kitsap County, with service beginning in 2004.
- In 2005, WSF responded to The Legislature's request for a 10-year POF strategy, proposing an expanded "triangle" POF service between Seattle, Southworth and Vashon as the best short-term solution for future growth.
- In 2005, the Legislature commissioned a Passenger-Only Ferry Task Force to determine the future of POF. The Task Force's report was inconclusive, and the Legislature re-visited the issue in 2006.

Bills passed by the 2006 Legislature directed WSF to maintain the Seattle-Vashon PO service until either King or Kitsap Counties create a ferry district and assume responsibility for the service. In the event that neither county steps in to take over the service, the Office of Financial Management is responsible for developing a back-up plan for operating Seattle-Vashon PO service that does not include operations by state government. The legislation suggests that the transfer of operating responsibility occur by July 2007.

The Legislature also directed WSF to sell the Snohomish and Chinook passenger-only ferries and deposit the proceeds into a Passenger Ferry Account, which in the future will be used for operating or capital grants to passenger only ferry systems.

Given these recent Legislative actions, the Draft Plan assumes that a county district, or some other entity, will assume operation of the Seattle-Vashon PO route not later than July 2007. If, for any reason, WSF is not able to end its Seattle-Vashon responsibilities by 2009, there will likely be a capital implication as the current vessels (Skagit and Kalama) will be at the end of the useful lives and will need to be replaced.

6.2 What is proposed for the South Sound?

WSF’s primary challenge in the South Sound is the bottleneck at Fauntleroy Terminal. That terminal is very nearly at capacity during peak periods today, and it cannot be expanded. Demand for vehicle ridership to Fauntleroy, however, is projected to increase almost 50% by 2030. Most of the growth in the South Sound is expected to come from the South Kitsap area, even with the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge crossing serving the majority of traffic destined for South King County.

6.2.1 Service Concepts Considered

Five options were evaluated to determine the best way to overcome the Fauntleroy challenge. One approach included diverting vehicle traffic elsewhere in the system and the other choices involved changing the route configuration to physically move some or all of the traffic away from Fauntleroy. WSF evaluated the following choices:

Service Concept 1: Add a third vessel on the Bremerton route to draw Fauntleroy traffic away. This choice does not draw away enough traffic, reducing 2030 Fauntleroy vehicle traffic by only a small margin.

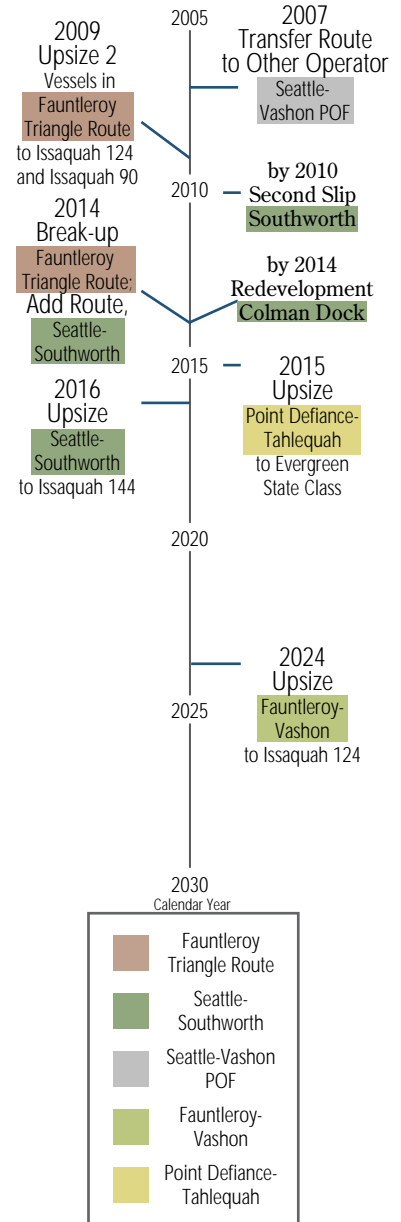
Service Concept 2: Add extensive passenger-only service between Southworth and downtown Seattle. A four-vessel passenger-only service, with a vessel leaving from Southworth to downtown Seattle every 22 minutes, would improve customer convenience for walk-on passengers in the South Sound corridor but would not reduce vehicle demand through Fauntleroy.

Service Concept 3: Close Fauntleroy and re-direct the Southworth and Vashon routes to downtown Seattle. This choice would eliminate pressure at Fauntleroy, but has several disadvantages. It is an expensive way to serve Vashon, and going downtown would result in a longer trip time for most of the Vashon riders. In addition, it has been determined three routes is the maximum that could be operated through Colman Dock. This option would result in four routes using Colman Dock.

Service Concept 4: Re-direct every other sailing from Southworth and/or Vashon to downtown Seattle. This choice only solves the Fauntleroy capacity problem if both routes have alternating sailings. It would result in longer wait times and less customer-friendly service, since the destination would change with every sailing.

Service Concept 5 (Recommended Option): Break up the Triangle route and re-direct the Southworth route to downtown Seattle. WSF would break up service between Southworth, Vashon Island and Fauntleroy, creating a new route from Southworth to Colman Dock in downtown Seattle. This choice has several advantages:

Key Service Milestones in the South Sound



- The capacity problem at Fauntleroy Terminal would be solved by removing the Southworth traffic. In fact, the number of vehicles passing through the Fauntleroy Terminal is projected to be lower in 2030 than it is today.
- The Seattle-Southworth route would be more convenient for the majority of Southworth riders. The average total trip time for Southworth riders would be 21% shorter (30 minutes) and 64% of all Southworth riders would have a shorter total trip.
- Breaking up the Triangle route would increase total South Sound vehicle capacity by 33%, with capacity added where it is most needed – between Vashon-Fauntleroy and Southworth-Seattle.

The Draft Plan adopts Service Concept 5, breaking up the Triangle route and running direct service between Fauntleroy-Vashon, Southworth-Vashon and introducing a new route between Southworth and downtown Seattle.

6.2.2 Service Changes in the Draft Plan

Point Defiance-Tahlequah. The Point Defiance-Tahlequah route will continue to be served by the 60-car MV Rhododendron until 2015. At that time, it would be replaced by an Evergreen State class vessel with a capacity of 87 vehicles. The increase in vessel capacity will be more than adequate to accommodate the projected 17% increase in vehicle traffic by 2030.

Fauntleroy-Vashon. With the restructuring of the Fauntleroy-Vashon-Southworth triangle route by the year 2014, the Vashon route will continue to operate out of the Fauntleroy terminal. The Fauntleroy terminal will be adequate, even in its current configuration, to accommodate a two vessel, single destination operation. Key service features will include:

- Service will be every 30 minutes during the times of day when both vessels are in operation.
- Initially the vessel assigned to the route will be a 124-vehicle Expanded Issaquah class and the 90-vehicle MV Sealth.
- By 2024 the Sealth will be replaced on a year-round basis by another 124-car Expanded Issaquah class vessel.

When the triangle route is broken up in 2014, traffic through Fauntleroy will drop to 1977 levels. This will bring traffic more in line with the capacity at the facility and surrounding streets. Even with projected growth in Vashon destined traffic, traffic in 2030 will be slightly less than traffic experienced currently with both Vashon and Southworth routed through Fauntleroy.

Seattle-Vashon POF. The Vashon Island passenger-only route is directed to be transferred to another operator by the end of state fiscal year 2007. The Draft Plan assumes WSF will end POF operations at that time. Until then, WSF will continue to operate the route at current service levels.

Vashon-Southworth. Upon the restructuring of the Fauntleroy-Vashon-Southworth triangle route in 2014, the Vashon to Southworth route would be served by the 40-car MV Hiyu. The Hiyu would operate on a schedule cycle of every 50 to 60 minutes and will enable WSF to meet 2030 demand levels.

Southworth to Fauntleroy, Southworth to Downtown Seattle. When the Fauntleroy/Vashon/Southworth route is restructured in 2014, all direct service from Southworth to the Fauntleroy terminal in West Seattle would stop. Key features of the service to downtown Seattle include:

- Two Expanded Issaquah class vessels would begin, operating on a schedule frequency of 50 minutes and a crossing time of between 35 and 40 minutes.
- Initially the route would be served by two 124-car, 1200-passenger Expanded Issaquah class vessels;
- In 2016 vessels would be replaced by the slightly larger, newer 144-car versions of the Issaquah vessel class.

The service configuration would accommodate the large increase in passenger demand (2,311 foot passengers in a four-hour peak period in 2030) and would be balanced with the Bainbridge and Bremerton routes in terms of overall vehicle wait and crossing time during the peak period.

Seattle-Southworth Services

The Legislature has directed that WSF exit the passenger-only business and further stipulated that any future Seattle-Southworth passenger-only service would be provided by the operator that takes over the Seattle-Vashon route.

The Draft Plan proposes a Seattle-Southworth passenger-vehicle service starting in 2014 to address capacity constraints at Fauntleroy Terminal. Analysis suggests that passenger-only service will not alleviate long-term vehicle capacity challenges at the Fauntleroy Terminal.

Exhibit 13: Current South Sound Route Structure:

Triangle passenger-vehicle service to Fauntleroy and Seattle-Vashon passenger-only service.



Source: Berk & Associates, 2006

Exhibit 14: Draft Plan

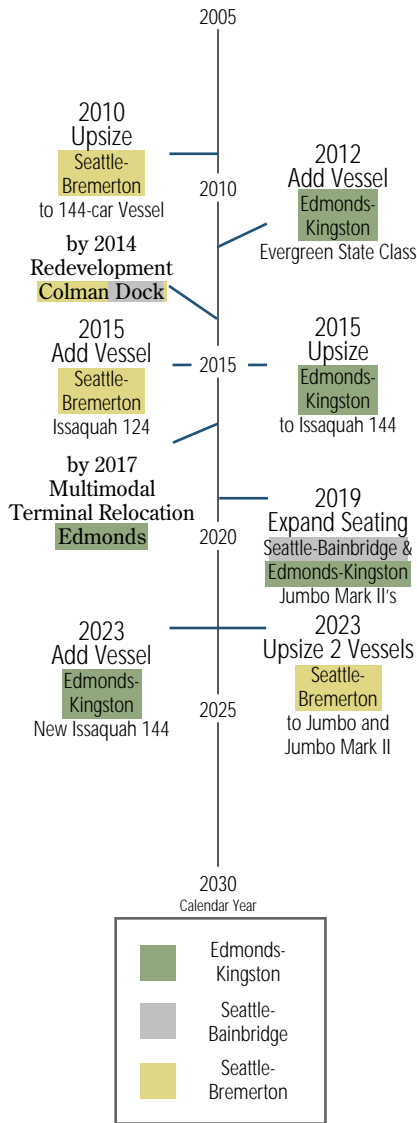
Break up the triangle, provide direct passenger-vehicle service between Southworth-Vashon, Southworth-Seattle, and Vashon-Fauntleroy.



6.3 What is proposed for the Central Sound?

WSF faces two challenges in the Central Sound Corridor: growth in vehicle demand on the Kingston, Bremerton and Bainbridge Island routes; and growth in passenger demand on the Bainbridge Island route.

Key Service Milestones in the Central Sound



6.3.1 Service Concepts Considered

Service Concepts Considered for Vehicle Traffic. To meet the Central Sound vehicle demand challenge, WSF looked at several options that included adding vessels to the existing routes. Adding more boats was projected to solve the vehicle challenge on Edmonds-Kingston and improve vehicle wait times at Seattle-Bremerton.

On the Bainbridge route, adding a vessel was determined to actually increase the vehicle congestion on both the car deck and State Route 305 by drawing more vehicles to Bainbridge from other Kitsap routes. This resulted in no improvement to vehicle wait times on the Bainbridge run.

Service Concepts Considered for Bainbridge Passenger Traffic. The Bainbridge route is one of two where passenger ridership is expected to grow beyond the route’s capacity. Having eliminated a third vessel as a feasible service option, other options were needed to address the passenger challenge.

Service Concept 1: Add a third vessel, but limit it to passengers only. Adding a passenger-only vessel as a third vessel on the route would address the passenger demand challenge, but it was determined that even a passenger-only vessel would create significant operational challenges. The landside impacts would still be severe as total trips are increased because of the attractiveness of the Bainbridge route. There would be vehicle traffic impacts from the additional walk-on passengers as a significant share would seek to park at the Bainbridge terminal adding to traffic on a roadway network and highway (SR-305) that are tightly constrained. As a result, this option was not pursued further.

Service Concept 2 (Recommended Option): Expand the capacity of existing Mark II boats. The current seated capacity on the vessels serving the Bainbridge route is 1,722 passengers; the Coast Guard rated capacity (for allowable passengers, seated or not) is 2,500. The increased passenger volumes will require, at a minimum, an increase in the seated capacity of the vessels on the Seattle-Bainbridge route. Increasing the rated capacity was not seen to be practical at this time.

Service Concept 3: Add a new PO service elsewhere to draw traffic away from Bainbridge Island. Adding a new passenger-only (POF) service between downtown Seattle and Kingston was evaluated. To have a meaningful impact on Bainbridge ridership, this POF service would need to be substantial—headways would need to be 20 minutes—and fares could be set at no more than twice the

WSF Central Sound fare. This would appear to be the most effective approach to dealing with Bainbridge walk-on passenger growth. However the Legislature has directed WSF to end its passenger-only operations so this option would be dependent on another entity providing this service.

6.3.2 Service Changes in Draft Plan

The Draft Plan proposes adding a third vessel on the Seattle-Bremerton route and third and fourth vessels on the Edmonds-Kingston route. The Plan does not propose adding additional boats on the Bainbridge Island route, but that route will benefit from the added capacity on the other Central Sound routes. Average vehicle wait times in 2030 are reduced for all three routes as a result of the new service.

The Draft Plan proposes to meet the Bainbridge passenger demand challenge by expanding the seating capacity on the existing boats on the route. The Draft Plan further assumes that a new passenger-only service between downtown Seattle and Kingston is introduced to divert passenger traffic from Bainbridge. Consistent with Legislative direction, this Plan assumes that some other organization(s) would provide this service. These changes are projected to bring the Bainbridge route within its service standard for passengers.

Seattle-Bremerton. The procurement of new vessels in the 2014 to 2017 time period (second procurement) would allow the Seattle/Bremerton route to increase to a three-vessel service by the year 2015. This would reduce the time between sailings from approximately 75 minutes today to 50 minutes. Vessel assignments are planned as follows:

- Initially all of the vessels would be of the 144-car size, either the 1967 Super Class or the new Expanded Issaquah vessels proposed for construction.
- Upon the construction of the third fleet of new vessels in the 2022 to 2027 time period, two of the three 144-car vessels would be replaced by larger Jumbo class ferries from the Edmonds/Kingston route. These vessels carry 188 to 202 vehicles.

The potential impacts of other passenger-only operators serving the Seattle/Bremerton route on overall ridership demand and capacity are not known at this time. The continuation or expansion of passenger-only service parallel to WSF's passenger/vehicle could have an impact of the need and timing of service improvements proposed in this Draft Plan.

Seattle-Bainbridge. Due to the limited landside infrastructure capabilities in the State Route 305 corridor, this route is constrained to the current two vessel service configuration. Thus, vehicle wait times will increase on the route over time, though service improvements at Kingston, Bremerton, and Southworth would partially alleviate vehicle congestion at Bainbridge.

What would Seattle-Kingston passenger-only service look like?

Without Seattle-Kingston passenger-only service, passenger demand on the most congested Seattle-Bainbridge sailing of the day exceeds the capacity of the vessel on that sailing, meaning Seattle-Bainbridge exceeds the 0-boat-wait LOS standard for passengers.

During the 2006 session, the legislature provided clear direction that WSF will not be in the passenger-only business after 2007. As a result, the Seattle-Kingston passenger-only service will most likely be delivered through some form of local public-private partnership.

The Draft Plan is based on the assumption of a successful implementation of Seattle-Kingston passenger-only service by some entity other than WSF. Further, it is assumed that there will be sufficient demand for this service to draw 3,104 westbound, commute-period riders in 2020 and 4,150 in 2030.

Based on the results of WSF ridership analysis, it is likely that Seattle-Kingston passenger-only fares will need to be no more than two times the WSF Central Sound passenger fare to draw the necessary ridership away from the Seattle-Bainbridge route.

The Draft Plan does not include any costs associated this potential passenger-only service. However, as per Legislative direction that states WSF shall collaborate with new and potential passenger-only service providers for terminal operations at its existing terminal facilities, there may be capital implications for some WSF facilities.



This route will also see a very large increase in foot passenger demand. Without a third passenger/vehicle ferry on the route, passenger volumes will exceed the seated capacity on commute-period sailings by 2014 and by the end of the planning period will come close to the Coast Guard rated capacity limit (2,500 passengers, based on the amount of lifesaving equipment). To improve customer comfort the Draft Plan proposes adding more seats to the existing Jumbo Mark II vessels, raising the seated capacity to 2,132. This would be accomplished by enclosing more of the upper deck area into passenger cabin space.

Edmonds/Kingston. The Edmonds/Kingston route is projected to grow 89% by 2030. It is also seen as one of the routes to divert traffic growth from the Bainbridge Island route, especially in serving commercial and recreational traffic bound for the Olympic Peninsula. The route is also unique in that almost any vessel class can (and has) successfully operate on it. The route has adequate terminals with overhead loading on both sides of the route to accommodate the largest Jumbo class ferries in the fleet, and yet is short enough so that slower vessels such as the Evergreen State class can still operate the schedule.

The flexibility in potential vessel assignments allows WSF to begin addressing the growth needs on the route sooner.

- Beginning in 2009, a third vessel is added to the route in the summer—an Expanded Issaquah Class vessel (124 vehicles)—to supplement the two Jumbo class vessels already on the route.
- In 2012, a third vessel is added to the route—an Evergreen Class vessel (87 vehicles)—to supplement the two Jumbo class vessels already on the route.
- With the second fleet purchase in the 2014–2017 time frame, the third vessel is replaced by a new 144-car vessel in 2015.
- Starting in 2017 with the completion of a new and expanded Edmonds ferry terminal, the 124-car third vessel is replaced in the peak summer months with a Jumbo class vessel.
- In 2023 the two Jumbo ferries on the route would be replaced by three 144-car vessels, bringing the route to a four-vessel operation.

The long-term vessel assignment for Edmonds/Kingston operates four 144-car vessels in the fall, winter, and spring by 2023. During the summer months one of the four 144-car vessels would be replaced by a 188-car Jumbo class ferry to help accommodate peak summer demand.

6.4 What is proposed for the North Sound?

WSF’s challenge in the North Sound will be to meet the projected vehicle demand on the Mukilteo-Clinton and Port Townsend-Keystone routes. The latter route’s challenge is more acute in the summer months due to tourist traffic. The proposed service plan for Port Townsend-Keystone is a tentative plan that will be revisited when the Keystone Harbor Study is completed. At that time, the recommendations of that study will be incorporated into the Long Range Plan.

6.4.1 Service Concepts Considered

The North Sound challenge lends itself to a single service concept, which is to increase vehicle-carrying capacity. On the Mukilteo-Clinton route, WSF’s best choice is to add a third vessel. Pending the outcome of the Keystone Harbor Study, an additional vessel is also the likely best choice for the Port Townsend-Keystone route. Existing plans call for WSF to replace the two small vessels currently serving this route with a single, larger boat, and a second vessel will be required during the summer months before the end of the planning period.

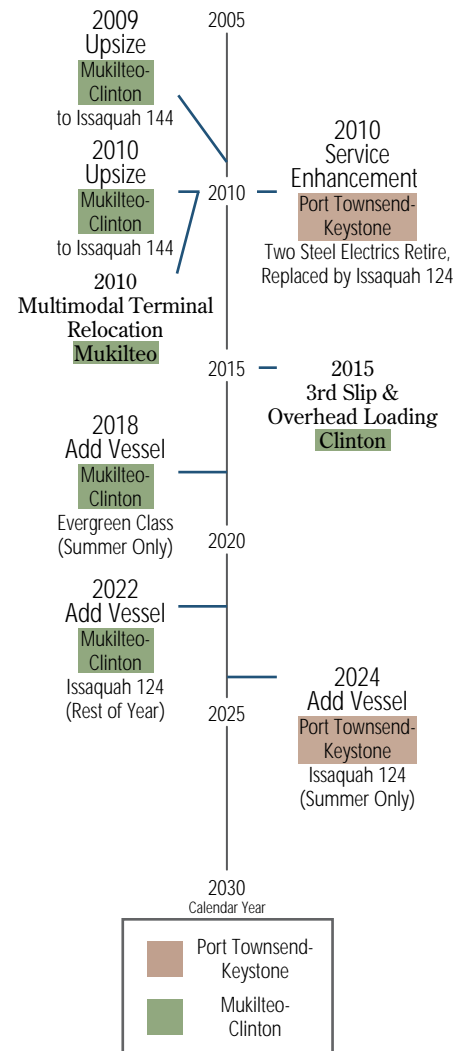
WSF is in the process of studying service options that were identified in the 2004 Keystone Harbor Study. The options for dealing with projected growth, will be dependent on the outcome of the Keystone planning effort that is currently underway.

6.4.2 Service Changes in Draft Plan

Mukilteo/Clinton. The initial new vessel program will allow WSF to replace the current two 124-car Expanded Issaquah class vessels on the route with two slightly larger versions, capable of carrying 144 vehicles. This will allow WSF to accommodate peak weekday vehicle demand within the 60-minute wait standard until the year 2022. At that time, the third fleet vessel purchase will allow WSF to assign a third vessel (a 124-car Expanded Issaquah) to the route on a year-round basis.

The addition of a second slip to the Mukilteo terminal will allow a third vessel to be added to the route in the summer at an earlier date. Starting in 2018, an Evergreen Class vessel, capacity of 87 vehicles, will be added as a third vessel in order to accommodate peak summer travel demand.

Key Service Milestones in the North Sound



What's Next for Keystone Harbor?

Scoping is beginning in late March 2006, with initial advertising beginning in mid-March.

Formal comments as part of the scoping period are due by April 28, 2006.

A Draft EIS slated for early 2007.

Port Townsend/Keystone. This route will have a 124-car vessel operating solo until 2024, when it will be supplemented in the May – October time period by a new 144-car vessel.

WSF is currently beginning an environmental review of alternatives for improving the Keystone-Port Townsend route. The goal of this project is to determine the best solution for the route in order to maintain existing service and accommodate future growth. WSF has identified four preliminary alternatives for Keystone Harbor to study in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in addition to a No Action alternative.

Alternative A: Relocate the jetty 300 feet to the east to accommodate a larger vessel. The vessel would have a capacity of between 124-144 vehicles.

Alternative B: Extend the jetty 600 feet into the water and widen the harbor to the west to accommodate a larger vessel. The larger vessel would have a capacity of between 124-144 vehicles.

Alternative C: Use the existing harbor and acquire a new, unique vessel with a special propulsion system that would allow it to operate in the existing Keystone Harbor.

Alternative D: Use the existing harbor and terminal and acquire new vessels that are similar in size to the existing Steel Electrics.

Keystone is a complicated issue—legislative, public, Tribal, and resource agency input has been and continues to be critical. No vessel decision has been made. WSF will consider environmental issues that arise from the EIS, as well as system-wide needs and available funding when choosing a preferred alternative for Keystone Terminal.

The Draft Plan proposes a course of action that assumes a major harbor reconstruction and widening to allow for the use of the larger Issaquah Class vessels (124-144 vehicle capacity). If a different alternative is chosen then the Long-Range Strategic Plan would be revised at that time.

6.5 What is proposed for the San Juan Islands Corridor?

The key challenge in the San Juan Islands Corridor is to meet the growth in vehicle demand in the three sectors of San Juan ferry service: domestic, inter-island and international.

6.5.1 What Service Concepts Considered

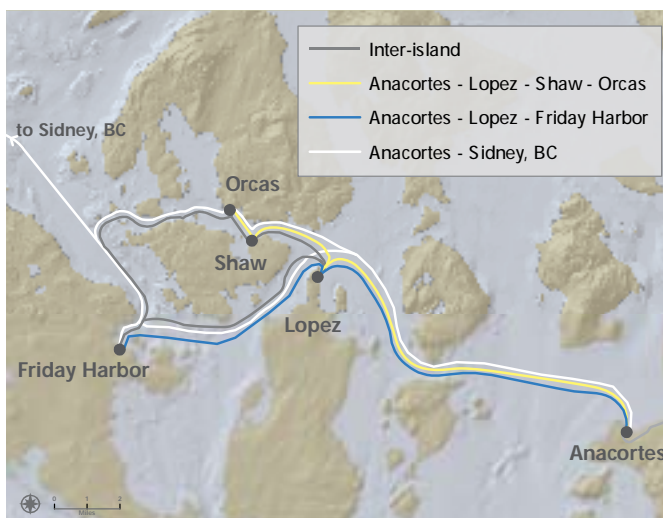
The only significant service concept available in the San Juans is to expand the operation by adding an additional vessel (a sixth vessel in summer and fifth vessel in the fall and spring seasons) to the Anacortes-based routes. This is the maximum possible service in the San Juans, which is severely constrained by single-slip terminals and land-side limitations at each island.

6.5.2 Service Changes in the Draft Plan

Anacortes to San Juan Islands: Fall and Spring. The plan incorporates a substantial addition to service in 2017, made possible by the second fleet purchase. In the spring and fall seasons, a fifth vessel is added which brings the service level up close to current summer levels. An evaluation would need to be made at that time as to whether or not a second daily round trip to Sidney, B.C. is achievable.

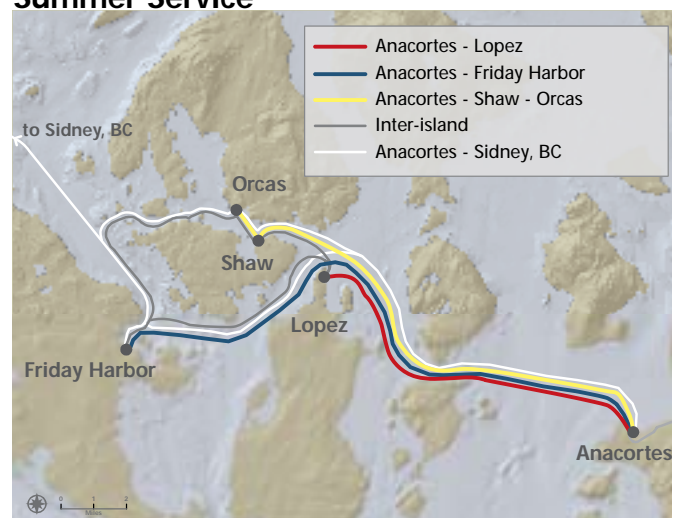
Traffic estimates indicate that sufficient capacity would exist to accommodate Anacortes to San Juan Islands demand even if there were a second round trip to Sidney, however if higher than expected domestic travel is experienced, keeping Sidney, B.C. to one round trip per day (as current) would allow two additional round trips to the San Juan Islands.

Exhibit 15: Current San Juan Routes

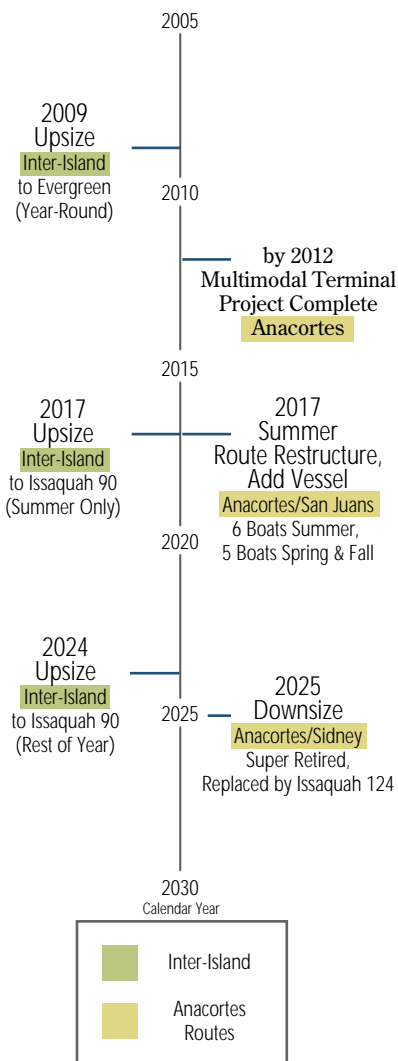


Source: Berk & Associates, 2006

Exhibit 16: Potential 6-vessel San Juan Summer Service



Key Service Milestones in the San Juan Islands



Anacortes to San Juan Islands: Summer. Summer service also sees substantial additions during the second fleet purchase. In 2017, a sixth vessel is added for summer months. This will allow for a split route configuration with more direct service between the San Juan Islands and Anacortes. Three separate routes would replace the current multi-stop services: Anacortes-Friday Harbor, Anacortes-Orcas/Shaw, and Anacortes-Lopez.

Anacortes to San Juan Islands: Winter. The winter schedule would operate with the same number of vessels as today (four), however they would be larger and operate longer hours (16 hours of service per day per vessel, seven days per week).

San Juan Interisland. By 2009, the interisland route between the San Juan Islands will be served by an 87-car Evergreen State class vessel instead of the current 64-car Steel Electric class. This service configuration will start to change by 2017 when the sixth vessel is added to the summer schedule.

The 90-car Sealth will replace the Evergreen Class as the interisland vessel during the summer schedule. The Sealth's additional speed will allow a sixth interisland round trip to operate each day, which offsets the loss of interisland frequency that occurs with the six-vessel schedule, since most mainland bound vessels will be making single island trips and will not contribute to interisland frequency in the same manner as they do today.

By 2024, with the third new vessel procurement, the Sealth will also replace the Evergreen State class vessel in the fall, winter, and spring months.

Anacortes to Sidney, B.C. The Anacortes to Sidney, B.C. route will continue to operate its current spring, summer and fall season service until the 2017 route restructuring. At that time, with the addition of a fifth vessel to the Anacortes route system in the spring and fall, a second daily round trip may be possible, if traffic volumes warrant and there is no competing need in the San Juan domestic route. Summer service would continue at the current two round trips per day.

There is more variation in the vessel assignments, however. By approximately 2024, the 144-car Elwha, one of two vessels in WSF's fleet SOLAS (Safety Of Life At Sea) certified for international travel, is slated for retirement. This would leave one SOLAS equipped vessel in the fleet, the 124-car Chelan, as the Sidney, B.C. vessel at that time unless one of the new replacement vessels is also built for international travel.

Between now and the San Juan service upgrades in 2017, it is possible that demands for Anacortes to San Juan travel will warrant the exchange of the larger Elwha, currently the Sidney vessel, for the smaller Chelan in domestic service in order to provide more San Juan capacity.