WSDOT

Washington State Ferries

Washington State Ferries

SEPTEMBER 2017

System facts

- Created June 1, 1951
- Largest ferry system in the United States
- 24.2 million riders in 2016
- Second largest ferry system in the world for number of vehicles carried (10.5 million per year)
- Fleet of 22 auto-passenger ferries
- Operates 20 terminals on 10 routes
- Approximately 1,800 employees
- 16 unions and 13 collective bargaining agreements

Key functions

Transit agency

- Third largest transit system in Washington State (#1 King County Metro, #2 Sound Transit)

Marine highway

- Part of state highway network, serving eight counties and British Columbia, Canada

Link in region's multimodal connections

- Priority loading for freight, bicycles, vanpools and carpools
- Vehicle reservations on three routes

Mover of freight and goods

- WSF vessels are specially constructed to accommodate commercial vehicles

Tourism, economic development

- Major tourist attraction and icon of Washington state
- Critical link between more affordable housing on the westside of Puget Sound and key employment centers on the east side

Safe, secure travel

- WSF works with the Washington State Patrol and U.S. Coast Guard to implement security measures to ensure the safety and security of passengers
- As a port of entry and border crossing, WSF works with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to ensure the security of the U.S. border

Major challenges

Operations and Maintenance

- Aging fleet; all but 13 vessels are over 30 years old
- Boats are in service 20+ hours a day, so it is difficult to find time for adequate maintenance
- Only one relief boat, restricting system capacity when vessels breakdown
- Drydock capacity in Puget Sound is limited and difficult to adjust for emergency repairs

Workforce development

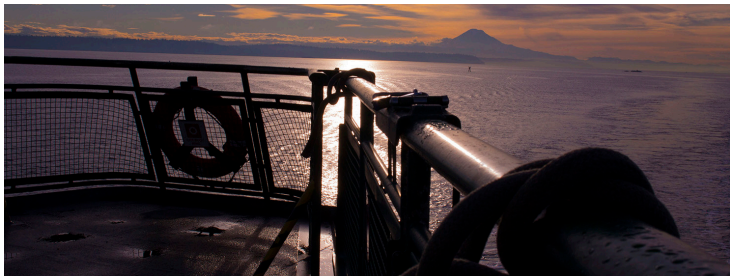
- Succession planning remains a critical priority
- Approximately half of our vessel employees are 55 years old or older and may qualify for retirement in the next 5 to 10 years

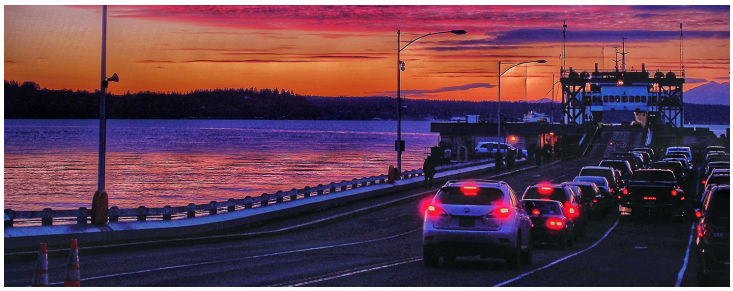
Future planning

- Two new multimodal terminals under construction
- Six new vessels built in the last 7 years
- Fourth Olympic Class vessel will enter service in 2018

2040 Long range plan

- Developing a Long Range Plan to plan for the future of the ferry system through 2040





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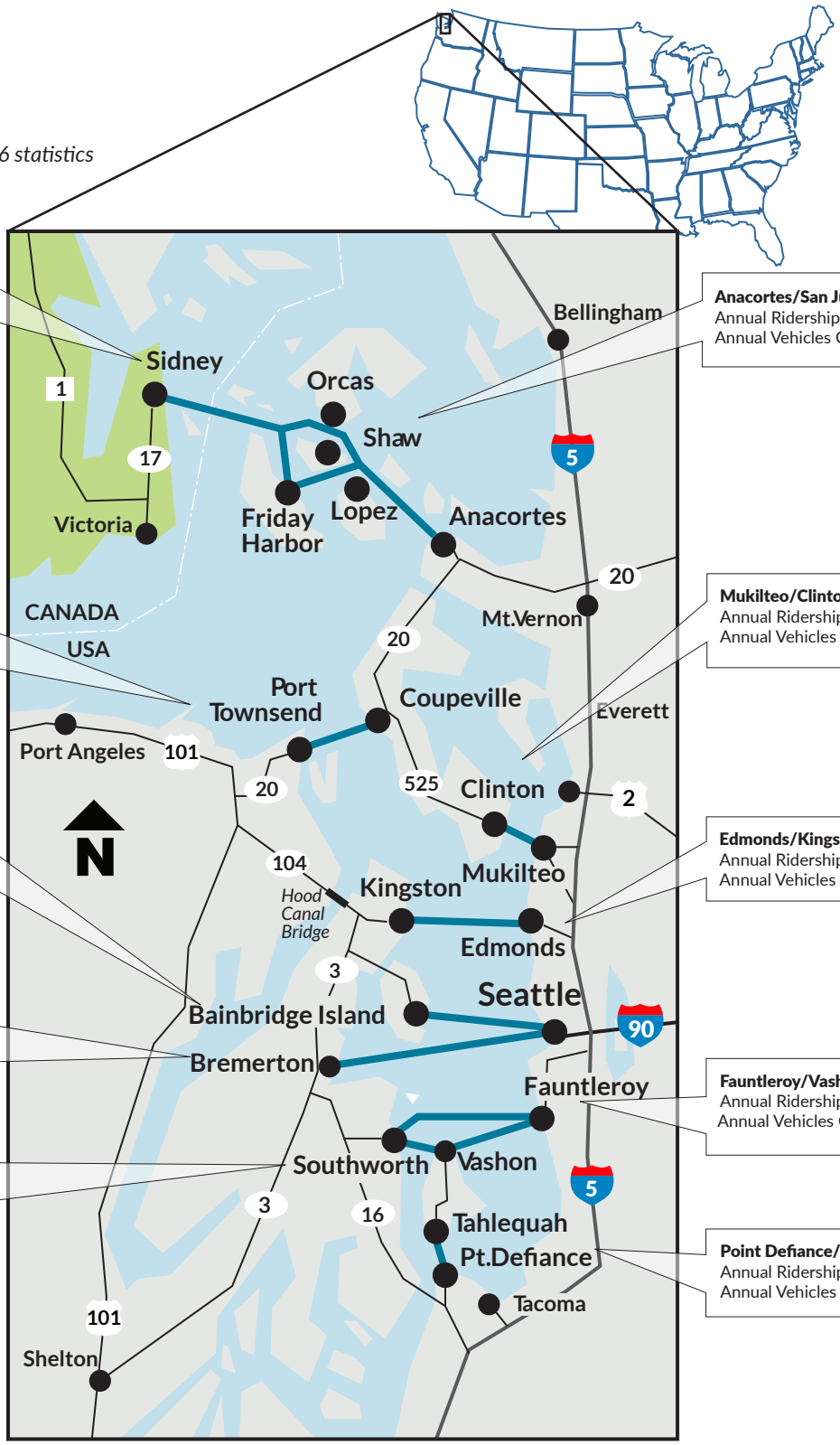
WSDOT Ferries Division – Nation's Largest Ferry System

Ridership statistics

Ridership numbers are based on 2016 statistics



Anacortes/Sidney B.C.
Annual Ridership: 123,001 Annual Vehicles Carried: 42,589

Anacortes/San Juans
Annual Ridership: 2,009,438
Annual Vehicles Carried: 947,064

Port Townsend/Coupeville
Annual Ridership: 819,285
Annual Vehicles Carried: 372,130

Mukilteo/Clinton
Annual Ridership: 4,073,761
Annual Vehicles Carried: 2,234,650

Seattle/Bainbridge Island
Annual Ridership: 6,429,853
Annual Vehicles Carried: 1,929,617

Edmonds/Kingston
Annual Ridership: 4,114,181
Annual Vehicles Carried: 2,127,315

Seattle/Bremerton
Annual Ridership: 2,739,926
Annual Vehicles Carried: 673,815

Fauntleroy/Vashon/ Southworth
Annual Ridership: 3,059,587
Annual Vehicles Carried: 1,738,721

Southworth/Vashon
Annual Ridership: 200,672
Annual Vehicles Carried: 109,548

Point Defiance/Tahlequah
Annual Ridership: 812,786
Annual Vehicles Carried: 473,924

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