



# Guemes Island Ferry

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## Schedule & Fare Policy Analysis Task Force

# 2004



# Fare and Schedule Proposal Package

**Final Task Force Recommendations**

**December 18, 2003**

In March 2003, the Skagit County Board of Commissioners created the Guemes Island Ferry Schedule and Fare Policy Task Force to work collaboratively with Skagit County Public Works on the implementation of the Guemes Island Operations Management Analysis recommendations from October 2002.

Task Force members were convened in an unprecedented opportunity to comprehensively review fare and schedule policy issues with representatives from all affected parties and set an appropriate course for the future of the Guemes Island Ferry.

The Task Force met 10 times between March and October to review analysis and discuss policy options for fares and schedules.

### **GUEMES ISLAND FERRY SCHEDULE & FARE POLICY TASK FORCE**

The Task Force was composed of a variety of on-island and off-island residents, and local government representatives. Interests of commercial customers were incorporated via interviews and invitations to attend a Task Force and other community meetings.

The Task Force was charged with analyzing and discussing Guemes Island Ferry schedule and fare policy issues and options. Working as a group the Task Force achieved general agreement on a balanced set of recommendations, to be presented to the Board of Skagit County Commissioners at a public hearing on December 22, 2003.

### **TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Task Force recommendations cover four major elements aimed at recognizing changes in ferry use and growth in ridership, as well as increasing equity among customers and between customers and taxpayers:

- (1) New schedule – reflecting changing pattern of demand and establishing a separate schedule for Summer and Winter;
- (2) Adjusted revenue target for fares, with a phase 1 target as a substantial step toward the new goal;
- (3) New fares resulting from structural changes designed to improve equity among fare classes; and
- (4) Fare increases to reach the new revenue target.

Recognizing that success will depend on many implementation issues, the Task Force also recommends that a formal process be initiated to allow the Ferry Committee and Public Works to collaboratively address these issues.

On November 15, 2003 the Task Force hosted a public meeting on Guemes Island to present the Draft Recommendations and collect comments. The recommendations were made available a week in advance of the meeting throughout the community and on the internet. In addition, to the comments collected at the meeting, ferry users were encouraged to comment via email, regular mail and fax.

After that public meeting, the Task Force met two more times to discuss the public input, consider possible amendments to the Draft Recommendations and to prepare Final Recommendations to the Skagit County Board of Commissioners.



## Public Input and Amendments to the November 15<sup>th</sup> Proposal

### PUBLIC INPUT

The following is a brief overview of the most frequently expressed comments related to schedule and fare recommendations.

#### **New Schedule:**

- Schedule should remain as is
- Proposal is too complicated with too many new sailings to keep track of
- More service should be added going off the Island in the morning
- Additional sailings and fixed sailing times were a good idea
- Schedule day should be extended past 6:00 PM Monday-Thursday

#### **Fares and Fare Revenue Requirement:**

- Concern about unknown impacts of future costs and how costs have been assigned to customers
- Lack of trust in management to manage in a cost effective way
- Frequent user categories are too complicated; the best price is going to the most frequent users
- Highest increases are going to the resident users
- Commercial and oversize fares should increase more
- Motorcycle users should get access to frequent user discounts

### AMENDMENTS

The Task Force made several amendments to its original recommendations based on public comments and additional discussions. The following key key changes were made:

- Revised the frequent user categories to simplify and address affordability issues
- Minor modifications to the schedule to address crew break requirements
- Shortened the summer peak season (May 1 - Labor Day)
- 20-minute service on Sunday in Summer start at 11:00 AM instead of 3:00 PM
- Changed the oversize fare pricing methodology
- Changed revenue requirement formula to use a five-year average for Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax and State Deficit Reimbursement



### TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The balance of this package presents the Final Recommendations of the Guemes Island Schedule and Fare Task Force. In addition to the specific schedule and fare recommendations, the Task Force recommends that the implementation issues be addressed as part of a newly chartered process called the Operations and Performance Roundtable. This will provide a mechanism whereby ferry customers, as represented by the Ferry Committee, will work with Skagit County Public Works on implementation and management issues.

#### 1. **New Schedule - Design schedule to meet changing needs of ferry**

- A fixed schedule
- Facility improvements and procedural changes to support new schedule
- Staff crew to demand and different needs of Summer, Winter Schedule
- Other schedule policies - the end of the day and holidays

#### 2. **Fare Revenue Requirement - Balance taxpayer and ferry customer responsibility**

- Adjustments to fare revenue target formula
- Phasing to meet goal

#### 3. **Structural Fare Changes - Define equity among customers**

##### *Vehicle Fares*

- Standard fare
- Overlength - vehicles longer than standard
- Overwidth - vehicles wider than standard
- Other - Motorcycle, bicycle and stowage
- Frequent user discounts
- Summer surcharge

##### *Passenger Fares*

- Standard fare
- Youth fare
- Senior and disabled discount
- Frequent user discounts

#### 4. **2004 Fare Proposal - Meet Phase I revenue needs of system**

- Standard car and driver fare
- Standard passenger fare
- Fare table



## Design schedule to meet changing needs of ferry

### SCHEDULE PARAMETERS

As the Task Force considered ferry schedule issues and challenges, the following schedule parameters emerged:

- The schedule should be **designed to meet the demand** within the currently defined schedule day.
- **Match staffing with demand for service.** Where demand warrants, crew will be added to improve service. It is possible and required to operate a 20-minute schedule with a 4-person crew in high demand periods and a 30-minute schedule with a 3-person crew in lower demand periods (with revised cash handling/proof of purchase procedures).
- The mode of operation should change from a mix of scheduled and on-demand service to one based on **a fixed schedule**. This will improve management's ability to manage the service and staff appropriately, provide predictability for customers and crew, and eliminate a source of tension between crew and customers by eliminating the need for the crew to determine when it is appropriate make "extra trips".
- Most **costs of operating the ferry during the regular schedule day are fixed**. The only additional cost of making an extra trip is the cost of fuel. In 2002, the average cost of fuel for a round trip was \$4.68. This is not enough of a savings to reserve the option of on-demand sailings.
- The **crew's breaks should be explicitly accounted for** in the schedule.
- **Provide the necessary supporting policies, procedures and facility improvements** to enable the crew to meet the 20-minute and 30-minute schedules without compromising safety or cash handling procedures.

### WHY IS THE SCHEDULE BEING CHANGED?

The current schedule is largely built around a demand-responsive approach that provides flexibility by leaving gaps throughout the day where the crew has discretion to add extra trips based on demand.

This approach made sense when traffic levels were much lower, but today:

- In the winter, there are 20% more actual sailings than scheduled sailings, in the summer there are 40% more.
- As volume has grown, so has the number of conflicts between the crew and customers around how the crew's discretion for extra service is being used.
- Flexibility comes at a significant cost in terms of service predictability for customers and additional management challenges.



# 1. NEW SCHEDULE

## Design schedule to meet changing needs of ferry

### A FIXED SCHEDULE

The schedule should be developed to ensure maximum throughput (20-minute schedule) during the known peak travel periods and allow management to match staffing needs (3-person crew and 4-person crew) based on the schedule and demand requirements of the service. A fixed schedule meets the schedule parameters and improves customer service through schedule predictability.

### SCHEDULE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Run on a **fixed schedule** and meet the schedule (at least 90% of trips on time, actual performance standards are to be addressed in the Roundtable process.)
  - **Provide 20-minute service** from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday-Thursday, 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
  - **Provide a sailing at 3:45 PM to coincide with the school bus on weekdays.**
  - **Schedule the fuel truck run on Tuesday mornings** as is the current practice. The 6:30 AM scheduled run from Anacortes will be restricted to fuel and propane trucks only. On the printed schedule, the restricted use of this scheduled trip will be made clear. Fuel vehicles will return to Anacortes on the return of the 11:45 AM scheduled run.
- **A winter schedule offers opportunities to provide reduced service in periods of low demand.** During the winter (off-peak) months, some of the 20-minute service is scaled back to 30-minute service on Saturday and Sunday to reflect lower demands.
- For both schedules, the only discretion for making extra trips during the day will be for a medical emergency.

#### WILL THERE BE A FOURTH PERSON ON THE FERRY CREW?

Under the proposed schedule recommendations (including implementation of the supporting policies and procedures), in periods of high demand, a 4-person crew will operate a 20-minute schedule.

In periods of low demand, a 3-person crew will operate on a 30-minute. Because of audit requirements mandating proof of purchase, the terminal time at Anacortes required in the 3-person crew situation is significantly longer than the terminal time when the ferry is operating with a 4-person crew and the purser remains at the terminal.



## Design schedule to meet changing needs of ferry

### SUPPORTING POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- To facilitate and expedite ticketing and loading, **restripe the dock** to allow for 2 staging lanes.
- To improve safety and reduce loading time, provide a barrier to **separate passengers from vehicles** so they can be loaded separately.
- Provide a **visual cue** (lights/clock) **to inform arriving customers as to the loading status** and likelihood of making the next sailing.
- A **“cut off” time for loading before each sailing** will be established by the Roundtable. Leaving on time is the priority and customers are encouraged to arrive early for their sailing.

### OTHER RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE POLICES

- **End of Schedule Day Policy:**
  - Those in line in time for the last run of the schedule day, or for a special civic or school purpose trip, are guaranteed passage to Guemes Island.
  - Passage to Guemes Island for a vehicle arriving after the last scheduled trip will be space contingent and provided if there is room on the vessel on the trip caused by an overload situation.
- **Holiday Schedules:**
  - When the day before a holiday (New Year’s Day, 4th of July, Thanksgiving or Christmas) falls on a Monday through Thursday, Ferry service will be provided on the Friday schedule - but stopping at 10 PM.
  - When a holiday (see above) falls on a Monday through Thursday, Ferry service will be provided on the Sunday schedule.

#### WHY NOT EXTEND THE DAY?

The Task Force decided to leave the Monday through Thursday last sailing at 6:05 PM. This was done after much discussion and for the following reasons:

1. **Cost.** Extending the day will increase operating costs which in turn would require a greater fare increase.
2. **Lack of Island consensus on this issue.** Guemes Island is split on this issue, with no clear consensus to deviate from the traditional Monday-Friday schedule day.
3. **Consequences of extending weekday service needs to be evaluated in a more comprehensive way** and the impacts discussed as part of a community-wide dialogue. The subarea planning process may represent an opportunity for this dialogue.

#### WHEN WILL WE SEE SOME OF THE CHANGES AT THE DOCK?

The proposed schedule is contingent on making the facility improvements and procedural changes identified by the Task Force. These changes will be in place by May 2004.

#### HOW WILL THE NEW SCHEDULE CHANGE THE 6PM RUN?

With the new schedule, 66% more service (4 more trips) has been added during the busiest part of the day -- between 3 PM and 6 PM. This should significantly reduce the afternoon backlog, and potentially reduce the demand at 6 PM and the need for extra runs to accommodate overloads at the end of the day.



# 1. NEW SCHEDULE

## Summer Schedule (May 1 through Tuesday after Labor Day)

	Trip	Mon - Thurs	Friday	Saturday	Sun & Holidays	
<b>Morning</b>	1.0	6:30 AM	6:30 AM	6:30 AM		
	2.0	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	
	3.0	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	
	4.0	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	
	5.0	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	
	6.0	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	
	<b>0:15:00 Minute Break</b>					
	7.0	9:45 AM	9:45 AM	9:45 AM	9:45 AM	
	8.0	10:15 AM	10:15 AM	10:15 AM	10:15 AM	
	9.0	10:45 AM	10:45 AM	10:45 AM	10:45 AM	
	10.0	11:05 AM	11:05 AM	11:05 AM	11:05 AM	
	11.0	11:25 AM	11:25 AM	11:25 AM	11:25 AM	
<b>Mid Day</b>	12.0	11:45 AM	11:45 AM	11:45 AM	11:45 AM	
	<b>0:45:00 Lunch Break</b>					
	13.0	1:00 PM	1:00 PM	1:00 PM	1:00 PM	
	14.0	1:20 PM	1:20 PM	1:20 PM	1:20 PM	
	15.0	1:40 PM	1:40 PM	1:40 PM	1:40 PM	
	16.0	2:00 PM	2:00 PM	2:00 PM	2:00 PM	
	<b>0:15:00 Minute Break</b>					
	17.0	2:40 PM	2:40 PM	2:40 PM	2:40 PM	
	18.0	3:00 PM	3:00 PM	3:00 PM	3:00 PM	
	19.0	3:20 PM	3:20 PM	3:20 PM	3:20 PM	
	20.0	3:45 PM	3:45 PM	3:45 PM	3:45 PM	
	<b>Afternoon</b>	21.0	4:05 PM	4:05 PM	4:05 PM	4:05 PM
22.0		4:25 PM	4:25 PM	4:25 PM	4:25 PM	
23.0		4:45 PM	4:45 PM	4:45 PM	4:45 PM	
24.0		5:05 PM	5:05 PM	5:05 PM	5:05 PM	
25.0		5:25 PM	5:25 PM	5:25 PM	5:25 PM	
26.0		5:45 PM	5:45 PM	5:45 PM	5:45 PM	
27.0		6:05 PM	6:05 PM	6:05 PM	6:05 PM	
<b>0:15:00 Minute Break</b>						
28.0			6:40 PM	6:40 PM	6:40 PM	
29.0			7:00 PM	7:00 PM	7:00 PM	
30.0			7:20 PM	7:20 PM	7:20 PM	
<b>0:45:00 Dinner Break</b>						
<b>Evening</b>	31.0		8:30 PM	8:30 PM	8:30 PM	
	32.0		9:00 PM	9:00 PM	9:00 PM	
	33.0		9:30 PM	9:30 PM	9:30 PM	
	34.0		10:00 PM	10:00 PM	10:00 PM	
	35.0		10:30 PM	10:30 PM		
	36.0		11:00 PM	11:00 PM		
	<b>Crew Break &amp; Terminal Clean Up</b>					
	37.0		12:00 AM	12:00 AM		



# 1. NEW SCHEDULE

## Winter Schedule (Wednesday after Labor Day through April 30)

	Trip	Mon - Thurs	Friday	Saturday	Sun & Holidays	
<b>Morning</b>	1.0	6:30 AM	6:30 AM	6:30 AM		
	2.0	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	
	3.0	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM	
	4.0	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	
	5.0	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	
	6.0	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	
	<b>0:15:00 Minute Break</b>					
	7.0	9:45 AM	9:45 AM	9:45 AM	9:45 AM	
	8.0	10:15 AM	10:15 AM	10:15 AM	10:15 AM	
	9.0	10:45 AM	10:45 AM	10:45 AM	10:45 AM	
	10.0	11:05 AM	11:05 AM	11:15 AM	11:15 AM	
	11.0	11:25 AM	11:25 AM			
12.0	11:45 AM	11:45 AM	11:45 AM	11:45 AM		
<b>Mid Day</b>	<b>0:45:00 Lunch Break</b>					
	13.0	1:00 PM	1:00 PM	1:00 PM	1:00 PM	
	14.0	1:20 PM	1:20 PM	1:30 PM	1:30 PM	
	15.0	1:40 PM	1:40 PM			
	16.0	2:00 PM	2:00 PM	2:00 PM	2:00 PM	
	<b>0:15:00 Minute Break</b>					
	17.0	2:40 PM	2:40 PM			
	18.0	3:00 PM	3:00 PM	3:00 PM	3:00 PM	
	19.0	3:20 PM	3:30 PM	3:30 PM	3:30 PM	
	20.0	3:45 PM	3:45 PM			
	21.0	4:05 PM	4:05 PM	4:00 PM	4:00 PM	
	22.0	4:25 PM	4:25 PM	4:30 PM	4:30 PM	
23.0	4:45 PM	4:45 PM				
24.0	5:05 PM	5:05 PM	5:00 PM	5:00 PM		
25.0	5:25 PM	5:25 PM	5:30 PM	5:30 PM		
26.0	5:45 PM	5:45 PM				
27.0	6:05 PM	6:05 PM	6:00 PM	6:00 PM		
<b>0:15:00 Minute Break</b>						
28.0			6:40 PM			
29.0			7:00 PM	7:00 PM	7:00 PM	
30.0			7:20 PM	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	
<b>0:45:00 Dinner Break</b>						
31.0			8:30 PM			
32.0			9:00 PM	9:00 PM	9:00 PM	
33.0			9:30 PM	9:30 PM	9:30 PM	
34.0			10:00 PM	10:00 PM	10:00 PM	
35.0			10:30 PM	10:30 PM		
36.0			11:00 PM	11:00 PM		
<b>Crew Break &amp; Terminal Clean Up</b>						
37.0			12:00 AM	12:00 AM		



## 2. REVENUE REQUIREMENT

### Balance taxpayer and ferry customer responsibility

#### HOW ARE FARES DETERMINED NOW?

Ferry expenditures are covered by a combination of ferry fares, a deficit reimbursement from the State and a County contribution from the County's Road Fund (which, in turn comes from the Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax (MVFT) and other Road Fund sources).

The revenue required from ferry fares is based on a formula developed in 1982 and amended in 1989, as included in County Resolution 11939, which states -

Revenue from ferry fares should equal:

- 88% of ferry crew wages and benefits
- plus 100% of fuel and insurance costs
- less (MVFT derived specifically for ferry operations plus 3-year average of State Deficit Reimbursement)

Fares do not cover the maintenance of the vessel and docks or capital costs associated with the Ferry.

When all ferry-related operations and maintenance costs are included, fare revenues recovered 31% in fiscal year (FY) 2002. This recovery rate has dropped from 53% in FY 1992, the year of the last fare increase. Over the last eleven years, costs have increase, fares have remained constant and state funding has fluctuated erratically.

#### REVENUE TARGET OBJECTIVE

As the Task Force discussed the policy basis for setting the fare revenue requirement, the following principles emerged:

- **Equity Considerations.** The fare revenue requirement policy must address the equity of how cost responsibilities are split between the users of the system and the County taxpayers.
- **Bridge Analogy.** From a policy perspective, the Guemes Island Ferry has been considered a county bridge, though one with unique features that requires a toll to equitably distribute the cost of providing this service. The analogy provides a policy basis for supporting both a requirement for fares as well as a basis for the commitment of County Road Fund resources.
- **The Bridge Analogy and the Fare Requirement.** Taxpayers are responsible for 100% of the cost of the capital and maintenance of bridges in the County. Ferry costs that are not typically associated with a bridge should be recoverable through fares. This premise is easy to explain, intuitive and has served as the traditional way of explaining which costs are paid with fare revenue.

Considerations in assessing the current application of the Bridge Analogy:

- **Current Fare Revenue Target Policy.** The current policy is not fully consistent with the Bridge Analogy intent – only 88% of crew wages and benefits are currently eligible for fare recovery.
- **Deductions for Ferry Tax Revenues.** Resolution 11939 deducts State funding for ferries (attributable motor fuel tax) and a three-year average of the deficit reimbursement from eligible ferry costs to determine the fare revenue target. Given that these revenues would not be available to Skagit County without the presence of the ferry, the Task Force is in agreement that it is appropriate to deduct these from fare eligible ferry costs before determining the fare revenue target.



## 2. REVENUE REQUIREMENT

### Balance taxpayer and ferry customer responsibility

## RECOMMENDED CHANGES IN FORMULA

The Task Force endorses the concept of the Bridge Analogy and recommends that the current formula be changed to be consistent with the policy basis.

- Revenue from ferry fares should equal:
  - 100% of ferry crew wages and benefits
  - plus 100% of fuel and insurance costs
  - plus 100% Ferry Manager's time spent at the dock (excludes administrative time)
  - less the sum of a 5-year average of State funding for ferries (MVFT for ferry operations) and 5-year average of State Deficit Reimbursement

**Phasing in the Changes.** The Task Force recognizes that this change, if implemented all at once, would result in significant impacts on fares. As a result, it is recommended that the change in the fare revenue target formula should be phased in over time. At this time, the Task Force will recommend a Phase I fare proposal. Subsequent phasing decisions and appropriate fare changes will be developed through the Operations and Performance Roundtable.

### WHAT IS THE OPERATIONS AND PERFORMANCE ROUNDTABLE?

The Operations and Management Analysis recommended a mechanism for Public Works and the Ferry Committee to resolve ongoing operations issues. The Task Force has added to this concept by recommending that an Operations and Performance Roundtable be established through County Resolution to resolve issues associated with implementation of the Task Force recommendations and ongoing operations and performance issues.

### HOW DOES THE GUEMES ISLAND FERRY COMPARE TO OTHERS?

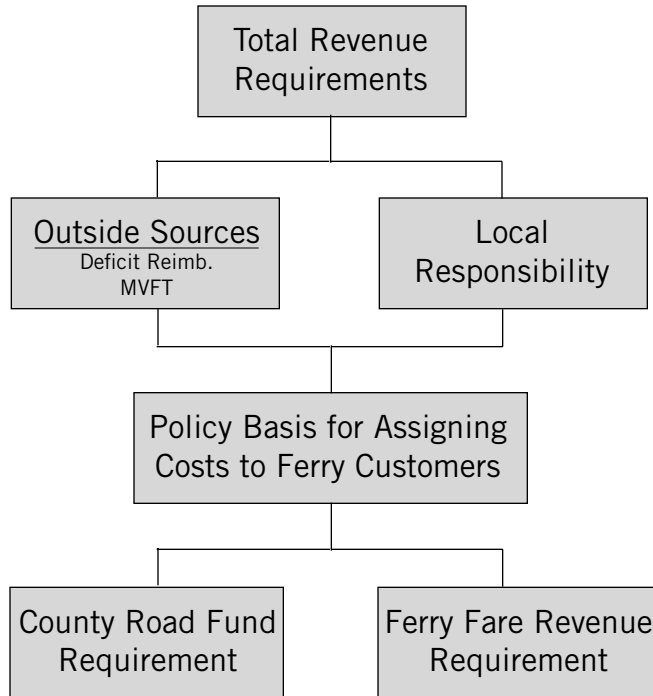
Ferry (Operator)	Crossing Time	Roundtrip Ridership (2002)	Base Car Fare	Base Passenger Fare	Last Fare Change (%)	Total System Recovery (FY 02)
Guemes Island (Skagit County)	5 min.	202,802	\$5.25	\$1.25	1992 (1% cars; 4% passengers)	31%
Lummi Island (Whatcom County)	5 min.	227,524	\$4.00	\$1.00	2002 car fares only (25% base fare)	39%
Anderson Island Ketron Island (Pierce County)	20 min. 10 min.	191,059	\$11.50	\$3.30	2002 (10%)	58%



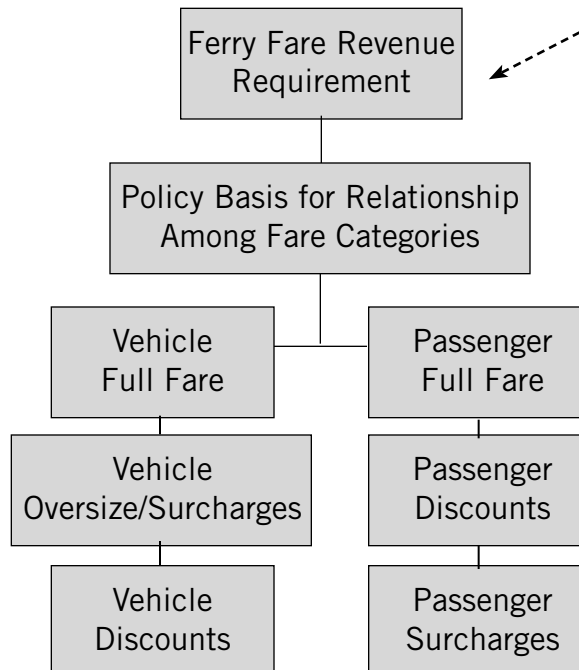
# FARE POLICY FRAMEWORK

## Equity Among Taxpayers & Customers; Among Customers

### EQUITY AMONG TAXPAYERS & FERRY CUSTOMERS



### EQUITY AMONG CLASSES OF FERRY CUSTOMERS



## 3. FARE STRUCTURE CHANGES

### Define Equity Among Customers

#### POLICY ELEMENTS OF A FERRY FARE STRUCTURE

- **Base Fare** establishes the full cash fare for each mode of travel. This should form the basis from which all other fares are derived.
- **Discounts** are provided to customers to promote desirable travel behavior or to certain groups, such as frequent users, youth, seniors or disabled passengers. Depending on the fare media, discounts may have an added efficiency benefit at the point of sale. Pre-paid frequent user passes can reduce cash handling at the ferry dock reducing through put time.
- **Peak/Non Peak.** During high-use times when space is at a premium, the service provider may increase rates. A peak charge for passage corresponds to a seasonal peak in ridership.
- **Size Considerations.** Vehicle fares generally have some relationship to the space that the vehicle will occupy on board the vessel. Larger vehicles are assessed higher fares and smaller vehicles, like motorcycles, are charged less than the base car and driver fare.

#### FARE STRUCTURE PRINCIPLES

As the Task Force discussed the fare structure, members agreed to the following principles:

- To reduce customer confusion, where possible, fare categories should be consistent with WSF and other ferry or transit systems.
- To the maximum extent possible, the fare structure should consider operational impacts, in particular the needs for efficient ticket processing, and impact of oversize vehicles on loading efficiency.
- Fares should be applied and enforced on a consistent basis.
- Vehicles should pay in proportion to the space they consume.

#### HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO OPERATE THE FERRY?

For fiscal year 2003, total costs of operating and maintaining the ferry (including overhead) were \$1,250,158.



## 3. FARE STRUCTURE CHANGES

### Define Equity Among Customers

## VEHICLE FARE STRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The most precious commodity on the ferry is the available deck space. As such, customers should pay in proportion to the amount of deck space that they consume.

- **Standard Car and Driver Fare.** The standard car and driver fare is applied to vehicles 20 feet and under, and up to 8 feet 6 inches wide.
- **Overlength Fares.** For each five foot increment over the standard length, vehicles will be assessed 25% of the standard fare. Because of potential loading limitations, vehicles longer than 25 feet will be assessed an additional portion of the base fare for each five foot increment beyond the standard length of 20 feet. Overlength fares apply to vehicles carrying lumber, with trailers, hitches, bike racks or other materials that extend the vehicle beyond the standard unit.
- **Overwidth Fares.** Vehicles wider than the standard 8 feet 6 inches will be charged double the applicable vehicle fare.
- **Motorcycle Fares.** The motorcycle fare is equal to half the standard vehicle fare. A motorcycle over 10 feet in length (such as a motorcycle with trailer), is considered overlength and will be charged the standard car and driver fare.
- **Bicycle.** Bicycle surcharge of \$0.75 will be assessed in summer on adult cash fares. Travelers using a frequent user card will be exempt from the bicycle surcharge.
- **Stowage.** A stowage fee equal to the motorcycle fare will be assessed to all kayaks and similarly sized items requiring stowage by a walk-on passenger.
- **Trailer.** The Task Force recommends eliminating the trailer category. Vehicles with trailers would pay based on overall length.
- **Logging Trucks.** The Task Force recommends continuing the current policy of setting the fare for stacked logging trucks equivalent to vehicles 65 feet in length.

## SUMMER SURCHARGE RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a significant level of seasonality in the Guemes Island Ferry ridership, with much higher demand in the summer months than during other parts of the year. This reality has been recognized historically with a summer surcharge that is applied to vehicle cash fares from May 1 to September 30. The surcharge is an additional \$1.00 added to the applicable base cash fare. Travelers using frequent user cards are exempt from the surcharge.

The Task Force concluded that the summer surcharge is a good policy, but the current approach is not consistent with vehicles paying in proportion to the amount of deck space they use. As a result, the Task Force recommends the summer surcharge be changed from a flat \$1.00 to 25% of the applicable base season cash vehicle fare. Citing the significant drop off of vehicular traffic after Labor Day, the Task Force also recommends the summer peak period be changed to end the Tuesday following Labor Day.



## 3. FARE STRUCTURE CHANGES

### Define Equity Among Customers

#### PASSENGER FARE STRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Standard Passenger Fare.** The standard passenger fare is applied to persons 18 to 65 years of age.
- **Youth Fares.** Youth, 6-18 years of age, are afforded a 50% discount from the standard passenger fare. Children under the age of 6 travel free of charge. Students making school-related trips will be given a special school pass, allowing students to make free school-related trips.
- **Senior and Disabled Passenger Discounts.** A 50% discount from the standard passenger fare is proposed for seniors, age 65 and older. In addition, disabled passengers are afforded a 50% discount from the base passenger fare. A senior/disabled vehicle fare (the base vehicle fare less 50% standard passenger fare) would also be available. It is necessary to offer a 50% discount to seniors and disabled passengers to preserve the option of potential future federal transportation capital funding.

#### CHARTER & EXTRA SERVICE OUTSIDE OF SCHEDULED SAILINGS RECOMMENDATIONS

Special runs are offered to accommodate additional service needs and does not include base fares for passage. With the exception of the Charter Rate, emergency medical service (EMS) or fuel runs, any vehicle or passenger wishing to travel (as space allows) may do so after paying the appropriate fare if a special run is provided. The price for special runs and charter fares are based on full cost recovery for these extra services.

- An **Extended Run Rate** of \$100 is available for the first trip beyond the schedule day. This rate assumes a one-hour minimum and that the crew is readily available and does not need to be called in to provide the service. Passengers and vehicles also must pay regular fares for passage.
- After any extended runs or before the first trip in a schedule day, a **Guemes Special Rate** of \$315 is available. This rate assumes a three-hour minimum and that the crew must be called in to provide the service. Passengers and vehicles also must pay regular fares for passage.
- A **Charter Rate** of \$1,000 for the minimum three-hour period and \$325 for each additional hour to those wishing to charter the vessel outside of normal crew hours. This is based on total cost to run the vessel, plus a 50% mark up.
- The following exemptions were also recommended:
  - o School rates remains at the current rate of \$175 plus fare for each passenger/vehicle. If an overload occurs, the District should not be charged for additional trips.
  - o Fire or medical vehicles be allowed free passage.
  - o Sheriff vehicles be assessed the current rate of \$175 plus appropriate base fare.
  - o Puget Sound Energy be assessed the Guemes Special Rate of \$315 plus appropriate base fare.



### 3. FARE STRUCTURE CHANGES

#### Define Equity Among Customers

### RECOMMENDED FREQUENT USER POLICIES

Approximately 85% of all trips are made using a frequent user card. The Task Force affirms the general intent of the current policy, but recommends offering a 50% discount to regular commuters. Customers traveling less frequently would have access to other frequent user options, however the amount of the discount would be adjusted based on the frequency of travel. The following table contains the proposed discount rates:

Discount Option	Number of Trips	Duration	Discount from Base Fare	Pass Price	Effective Rate Per Trip
<b>Car &amp; Driver</b>	20 trip	90 days	50%	\$57.50	\$2.88
	10 trip	90 days	37%	\$36.50	\$3.65
<b>Motorcycle</b>	20 trip	90 days	50%	\$30.00	\$1.50
	10 trip	90 days	37%	\$19.00	\$1.90
<b>Passenger</b>	25 trip	365 days	50%	\$18.75	\$0.75
<b>Annual Disabled Pass</b>	unlimited	One year		\$25.00	

- Passengers traveling on frequent user passes may stow a bicycle without a surcharge.
- Frequent user cards would be non-refundable. Vehicle frequent user cards are non-transferable.

#### HOW DO FREQUENT USER DISCOUNTS COMPARE TO OTHERS?

Ferry (Operator)	CAR & DRIVER				PASSENGER			
	Number of Trips (duration)	Discount from Base Fare	Effective Rate per Trip	Pass Price	Number of Trips (duration)	Discount from Base Fare	Effective Rate per Trip	Pass Price
Guemes Island (current) (Skagit County)	25 trip (365 days)	64.8%	\$1.85	\$46.25	25 trip (365 days)	40.0%	\$0.75	\$18.75
Guemes Island (proposed)	20/10 trip (90 days)	50.0% 37.0%	\$2.88 \$3.65	\$57.50 \$36.50	25 trip (365 days)	50.0%	\$0.75	\$18.75
Lummi Island (Whatcom County)	25 trip (none)	8.0%	\$3.68	\$92.00	25 trip (none)	8.0%	\$0.92	\$92.00
Anderson Island Ketron Island (Pierce County)	5 trip (45 days)	20.0%	\$9.20	\$46.00	5 trip (45 days)	36.4%	\$2.10	\$10.50
San Juan Islands (Washington State Ferries)	5 trip (90 days)	25.0%	varies by route		10 trip (90 days)	35.0%	\$5.72	\$57.20
System-wide (except SJ) (Washington State Ferries)	10 trip (90 days)	20.0%	varies by route		10 trip (90 days)	20.0%	varies by route	

WSF and Whatcom County also offer a frequent user pass for motorcycles at a the vehicle discount rate from base motorcycle fare.



### Meet Revenue Needs of System

#### RECOMMENDED FARE INCREASE

For fiscal year 2003 (July 2002-June 2003), fare revenue was approximately \$400,000. The proposed change in the fare revenue requirement formula would result in a fare revenue requirement of approximately \$640,000, a 62% increase. The Task Force recommends a 2004 Fare Change to be Phase 1 in a multi-year implementation of the proposed fare revenue target policy changes.

The 2004 Fare Proposal is based on meeting a revenue target of \$500,000 (a 25% increase in revenue), which is based on the current formula (Resolution 11939) less the cost of the 4th crewmember. To meet this revenue requirement the following are recommended:

- The standard car & driver fare would be increased from \$5.25 to \$5.75.
- The standard passenger fare would be increased from \$1.25 to \$1.50.
- May 1 through the Tuesday following Labor Day, a summer surcharge will be assessed to all vehicle cash fares, including motorcycles. The peak period surcharge is 25% of the applicable base season vehicle fare.

Subsequent phases would be developed in the Operation and Performance Roundtable process and will take into account the actual impacts of Phase 1 fare implementation and changes to the schedule policies. Continued implementation of the fare revenue policy goal will only be enacted through separate resolutions passed by the Board and will be based on recommendations from the Operations and Performance Roundtable and after successful implementation of the Phase 1 fare and schedule recommendations. An annual ferry operations and performance report will be delivered to the Board by no later than November 1 of each year, indicating whether collected fare revenue has met the policy target. The report will also identify progress and recommended next steps in the implementation of the fare revenue policy goal. The first of these reports is due November 1, 2005.

#### WHEN WILL FARE CHANGES GO INTO EFFECT?

Fare changes will go into effect when the new schedule is implemented. This will occur by May 2004, after supporting facility improvements and procedural changes have been made.



# 4. 2004 FARE PROPOSAL

## Recommended Fares

### VEHICLE FARES

	CURRENT		PROPOSED			
	Base	Peak	Base	Peak		
<b>Cash Fares</b>	Car & Driver	\$5.25	\$6.25	Car & Driver	\$5.75	\$7.25
				Sr./Disabled	\$5.00	\$6.50
	Motorcycle	\$2.00	\$2.00	Motorcycle	\$3.00	\$3.75
			Motorcycle overlength	Equal to motorcycle fare		
<b>Oversize</b>	Truck 20 < 25	\$7.00	\$8.00	Vehicle 20 < 25	\$7.25	\$9.25
	Truck 25 < 30	\$9.00	\$10.00	Vehicle 25 < 30	\$9.50	\$12.00
	Truck 30 < 35	\$10.50	\$11.50	Vehicle 30 < 35	\$12.25	\$15.50
	Truck 35 < 45	\$14.00	\$15.00	Vehicle 35 < 40	\$15.00	\$18.75
				Vehicle 40 < 45	\$18.25	\$23.00
	Truck 45 < 55	\$18.00	\$19.00	Vehicle 45 < 50	\$21.75	\$27.25
				Vehicle 50 < 55	\$25.50	\$32.00
	Truck 55 < 65	\$25.00	\$26.00	Vehicle 55 < 60	\$29.50	\$37.00
				Vehicle 60 < 65	\$33.75	\$42.25
	Each 1 ft. increment over 65 ft.	\$0.50	\$0.50	Each 5 ft. increment over 65 ft.	\$3.00	\$3.75
Trailer < 12	\$3.50	\$3.50	Overwide charge	Equal to 100% length charge		
Trailer 13 < 20	\$5.25	\$5.25	<b>No trailer category - vehicles with trailers pay based on overall length</b>			
Trailer over 20 per ft.	\$0.50	\$0.50				
<b>Frequent Use</b>	25 C & D ticket (120 days)	\$46.25		20 trip C&D pass (90 days)	\$57.50	
	13 C & D ticket (120 days)	\$33.80		10 trip C&D pass (90 days)	\$36.50	
				20 trip Motorcycle (90 days)	\$30.00	
				10 trip Motorcycle (90 days)	\$19.00	
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Charter (after hours)	\$175.00	\$175.00	Charter rate (3 hr. min.)	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
				\$ per hr, each additional hr.	\$325.00	\$325.00
	Special trip	\$50.00	\$50.00	Guemes special	\$315.00	\$315.00
				Extended run (1 run at end of day)	\$100.00	\$100.00
				Bicycle surcharge	\$0.00	\$0.75
			Stowage fee	\$3.00	\$3.75	

### PASSENGER FARES

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
	Base		Base	
<b>Cash Fares</b>	Cash fare	\$1.25	Cash fare	\$1.50
			Sr./disabled	\$0.75
	Child (6-high school)	\$0.50	Youth (6-18 years)	\$0.75
	Under age 6	No charge	Under age 6	No charge
<b>Frequent Use</b>	Adult (25 trips/365 days)	\$18.75	25 trip passenger pass (365 days)	\$18.75
	Child (25 trips/365 days)	\$6.25	Student Commuter	School pass - no charge
	Disabled Annual Pass	\$25.00	Disabled Passenger Pass	\$25.00



**Operations and Performance Roundtable****DRAFT PROPOSED 2004 WORKPLAN**

The Operations and Management Analysis recommended an ongoing forum for Public Works and the Ferry Committee to discuss and resolve operations and performance issues. The Task Force has added to this concept by recommending that an Operations and Performance Roundtable be established through County Resolution to address issues associated with implementation of the Task Force recommendations and on-going operations and performance issues. The current list of issues for the Roundtable include:

- Develop and adopt Roundtable working guidelines
- Implementation of the Task Force recommendations
  - o Dock changes to facilitate loading (restriping; separating passengers & vehicles)
  - o Development of frequent user media
  - o Signage, information and communication improvements at the dock
  - o Final operating procedures for 3 and 4 person crews to ensure compliance with Auditor requirements
  - o Procedures for enforcing policy for last run on Monday through Thursday
- Development of a regular performance reporting mechanism to track progress in implementing recommendations of the Operations Management Analysis and the Task Force
- Development of a passenger enhancement program with measurable goals to encourage more walk-on and passenger use of the ferry
- Monitoring impacts of schedule and fare changes
- Issues related to the biennial ferry haul out
- Transportation demand management issues
- Passenger and bicycle passage procedures and policies
- Parking lot and passenger enhancement issues
- On-going issues of customer service
- Development of standards and criteria for implementation of additional fare increases toward the target goal of 100% of crew wages and benefits
- Other items to be determined on an on-going basis



# ENCOURAGING PASSENGER TRAFFIC

## POLICIES FOR ENCOURAGING PASSENGER TRAFFIC

The Task Force is committed to encouraging passenger traffic. There are three major elements to the fare policy structure that could serve to provide an incentive to passenger over vehicle traffic:

- Dollar amount on passenger cash fare,
- Discount for passenger frequent users, and
- Relationship between car and passenger fare.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PASSENGER SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

### Facilities

- Provide adequate parking at the Guemes and Anacortes docks. Consider possible purchase, or lease, of potential parking areas near ferry dock. Also consider improving or adding angled on road parking east of ferry dock on County right of way.
- Permit longer-term parking on public streets in the vicinity of the Anacortes terminal.
- Provide passenger protection from wind and rain and wave-splash on docks on both sides.
- Provide adequate sidewalk lighting on 6<sup>th</sup> St. between new parking area and terminal.
- Provide load and unload area at terminal with one-way loop for user access.
- Provide dock carts and provide last space loading, if used.
- Provide electric baggage cart and last space loading, if used.
- Provide Ferry Manager with personal office at terminal site.
- Provide covered and secured storage for bicycles on both sides.
- Provide on board bicycle storage separated from passenger area.
- Turn ferry around and re-arrange docks so walkways are on the west side of both ramps.
- Remodel ferry to have passenger cabin above one car lane with incline ramp up and down for passenger and ADA accessibility.

## **Ticketing**

- Use of auto frequent user card for free passenger fare.
- Further develop the idea of a 12-month photo pass. If possible, the Roundtable is also urged to investigate the possibility of linking the pass to SKAT transportation, as well.

## **Public Transportation**

- Interface with SKAT schedule in Anacortes with Guemes ferry schedule.
- Provide an “Around Guemes” shuttle bus that travels to Anacortes and back to Guemes twice in the morning and twice in the afternoon each day. The bus would have priority loading. This could be possible with an experimental grant between Federal/State/County and SKAT.
- Investigate all costs and implications of an additional passenger-only ferry.

## **Operations**

- Promote carpooling (or vanpooling). Consider offering preferential parking or loading to carpools.
- Facilitate passenger egress/ingress to decrease clustering effect of passengers at top of ramp.
- Consider scheduling crew to cover later hours of schedule to prevent overtime costs, if demand warrants continued overload situations.