



March 2, 2023

AMHS 2023 Schedule

Dear Community Leaders and Members of the Public Interested in AMHS:

Thank you for your patience regarding the 2023 Alaska Marine Highway summer schedule. We have heard many concerns regarding the delays in implementing the 2023 AMHS Summer Sailing schedule and are working diligently to implement the schedule by Monday, March 6. We apologize for the delays in implementing this important schedule.

The Summer 2023 sailing schedule will be different than in years past. While we have made some progress in hiring entry level staff, our shortages in skilled positions continues to limit our ability to sail all of the AMHS fleet. This summer in particular, we have had to make some hard decisions to balance our crew availability and vessel repair needs with providing a baseline schedule that provides the best service possible for the Alaskan's we serve and, considering the public's comments in response to our February proposal.

Here's what you can expect from our fleet as we implement a schedule considering our crewing challenges:

M/V Columbia: We will be keeping the M/V Columbia continuously running to service Bellingham, Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Juneau, Haines, Skagway, and Sitka. All of these ports will receive weekly service.

M/V LeConte: She will continue to serve our important rural communities of Angoon, Hoonah, Pelican, Tenakee, Kake, and Gustavus out of Juneau.

M/V Hubbard: As the M/V Hubbard comes on-line, we will be running dedicated Juneau – North Lynn Canal runs to Skagway and Haines starting in May.

M/V Tustumena: This vessel will continue to serve the Southwest Communities of Homer, Seldovia, Kodiak, Port Lions and Ouzinkie. We will service Old Harbor when servicing the Aleutian Chain communities once a month, with additional specific trips worked in.

M/V Aurora: This vessel will continue to be dedicated to Prince William Sound, ensuring service between Whittier, Valdez, Cordova, Chenega Bay, and Tatitlek – providing weekly service.

M/V Lituya: There are future plans to run a more robust schedule serving Metlakatla, with increased service to improve quality of life. We will be going over options and plan on making improvements as an update to the posted schedule.

M/V Kennicott & M/V Tazlina: Due to crewing shortages, the M/V Kennicott and M/V Tazlina will be offline and placed in a readiness state. As we work through our recruitment programs and hire additional crew, we will bring the vessels back on-line immediately to supplement the baseline summer schedule.

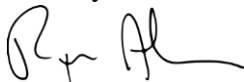
M/V Matanuska: This vessel will continue in layup as we assess and evaluate the repairs required to make operational, and the costs associated with additional work.

We recognize that without having the Kennicott on-line, we are not able to service the cross-gulf community of Yakutat, we reduce service to some Southwest and Prince William Sound Communities and will not have a vessel equipped to service Prince Rupert, due to international service regulations. We will be working over the coming weeks to provide alternative transportation for these areas to our best ability.

Hiring new and experienced crew is the most significant challenge to moving beyond a baseline ferry schedule. Since January, AMHS taken additional steps to hire and recruitment skilled workers. Those changes have included extending the signing bonus for IBU members, increased advertising throughout Alaska and Lower-48, outreach to all Alaska High Schools, and reestablishing a AMHS job fair presence throughout the state and Lower 48. The department is also considering establishing a conditional hire program for qualified candidates waiting credentialing paperwork, an on-board internship program, and a Ketchikan-based training program. We will continue to try new ways to attract and retain crew and keep our ships serving our system.

For additional information regarding AMHS and scheduling, please check our website: <https://dot.alaska.gov/amhs/index.shtml>

Sincerely,



Ryan Anderson, P.E.
Commissioner