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M/V Malaspina Officially Retiring to Ketchikan, Alaska
Former 'Queen of the Fleet' will stay in Alaska, become centerpiece of historic park.

(Ketchikan, Alaska) — The M/V Malaspina will stay in Ward Cove, Ketchikan, Alaska under a sales agreement between M/V Malaspina, LLC and the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF).

M/V Malaspina LLC President John Binkley and the Ward Cove Group plan to use the vessel in a historic restoration effort to showcase Ketchikan's logging and maritime history for the Ketchikan-based visitor's business. Mr. Binkley's vision of keeping the Malaspina as a historic centerpiece allows the beloved ship to stay in Alaska and serve a useful purpose as worker housing and a potential maritime museum, and hopefully a training platform for students working towards a career in the maritime industry.

"This is the fifth ship that AMHS has sold over the last 20 years said General Manager Captain John Falvey. "And we've learned a thing or two about how to dispose of a ship that has sailed its twilight cruise. As the former *Queen of the Fleet*, and first mainline vessel built, we didn't want just any future for the Malaspina, and we certainly did not want her sold for scrap metal. This gives her a retirement we can be proud of."

The M/V Malaspina was moored in 2019 when it became clear she would not sail again for AMHS due to the cost of repairs and the advanced age of the ship. After pursuing several proposals that failed to reach a sale or transfer, AMHS received interest from M/V Malaspina LLC. To perform due diligence, the state requested Letters of Interest from any domestic buyer in February.

"The AMHS has a proud and significant history, we want to preserve and highlight that for both visitors and Alaskans alike," said John Binkley. "The men and women of the AMHS work hard every day to serve our state's transportation system, we hope the Malaspina will be a touchstone for them to know how important what they do is and how much they are appreciated."

Malaspina is being sold as-is for \$128,250.00. Selling an older ship does not often result in significant monetary compensation, as experienced in the state's prior ship disposals and other recent high-profile ship sales such as the USS Kitty Hawk, which sold for \$0.01 in 2021. The state was interested in seeing the Malaspina reach a dignified end to her career on the sea, and this arrangement helps to preserve her legacy.

Alaskans who want to comment on the ship's sale, share memories, stories, or photographs are encouraged to submit those on the department's M/V Malaspina Engagement Hub at <https://publicinput.com/X4240>.

The state saves over \$425,000 annually in mooring fees, security, and repairs by selling the ship.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities oversees 239 airports, 9 ferries serving 35 communities, over 5,600 miles of highway and 776 public facilities throughout the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to **"Keep Alaska Moving** through service and infrastructure."



M/V Malaspina 2018. Photo credit Frank P. Flavin.