

CONCLUSION

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This plan for the *Inside Passage* segment of Alaska's Marine Highway provides a short-term guide for those working on the byway. It establishes the priorities that the Marine Highway and port communities should pursue. It is also designed to support and align with the full byway's Corridor Partnership Plan.

The *Inside Passage* segment offers a wide array of options and choices in a relatively small area when compared to the other two segments. This should be appealing to both visitors and residents alike. The addition of the fast ferry *M/V Fairweather* makes travel more convenient and desirable for Juneau, Haines, Skagway and Sitka. The large number of port communities in this region served by the Marine Highway, close proximity of neighboring communities, and diverse nature of the communities provide endless combinations for travel itineraries. Travelers must be made aware of these options and the travel experience could be greatly enhanced if the Marine Highway provided a variety of tested itineraries for travelers. These could include thematic sailings and be easily marketed to get passengers to experience much more of the *Inside Passage* than the typical Bellingham to Skagway or Juneau sailings. This would be a chance to promote the many intrinsic qualities that already exist along this segment and further promote the port

communities, activities and great opportunities along this route. This segment is already well poised to provide an outstanding travel experience with the on-board Forest Service interpreter and many communities already providing visitor services and attractions to the cruiseship industry.

The *Inside Passage* is being successfully marketed and the area's close proximity to major populations in Washington state and British Columbia make it an appealing voyage. With only modest improvements the *Inside Passage* segment of the Marine Highway will likely see an increase in ridership.

