



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

ADMINISTRATION

100 Lincoln Street | Sitka, Alaska 99835

www.cityofsitka.com

administrator@cityofsitka.org

907-747-1812

January 25, 2023

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Captain John Falvey, Jr., General Manager
State of Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Alaska Marine Highway System
dot.amhs.comments@alaska.gov

Re: City and Borough of Sitka comments for the proposed AMHS 2023 summer schedule

Dear Captain Falvey:

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Alaska Marine Highway System's (AMHS) proposed operating schedule and vessel deployment for summer 2023.

As proposed, there is one southbound vessel every week. While we appreciate the increase in ferry service from prior recent years, this still is not satisfactory service for our community that ranks 10th in population for Alaska and third most populated without road access, next to Juneau and combining City of Ketchikan and Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

Also proposed is a once-a-month northbound ferry service. This level of service is devastating for our community. We propose a change/addition in the LeConte service to include Sitka at least once a week.

The results are highly impactful causing significant economic hardship to our community. Visitors, people seeking health care, and many others have an unacceptable level of ferry service and access for the summer months.

Please see the attached CBS FY2024 Legislative Priorities which state *support for a right-sized and sustainable Alaska Marine Highway service requesting AMHS to provide adequate and consistent service to our residents and visitors. AMHS acts as Sitka's highway, providing core service critical to our economy. The drastic reduction of State ferry service to Sitka has caused massive economic and personal dislocations across the Southeast Alaska region.*

Sitka has and will continue to request a baseline service level of at least two (2) northbound and two (2) southbound vessels per week. It is imperative that this request and need be recognized and addressed by the State.

We ask that you include the Sitka event of the Mudball Classic on your calendar of Southeast Community events. Dates are September 1 through 4, 2023.

Thank you for your consideration and response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Leach', written in a cursive style.

John M. Leach
Municipal Administrator

Enclosure: City and Borough of Sitka FY2024 Legislative Priorities

Cc: Melissa Henshaw, Public and Government Relations Director, via email only