

2011/2012 Update to Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan Kake, Alaska / Meeting Summaries

Introduction

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) issued a Scoping Report in August 2011 for public review as part of the update the Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan (SATP). ADOT&PF held an open house at 5:30 pm and a public meeting at 6:30 pm on October 11, 2011, at City Hall in Kake, Alaska to discuss the SATP Scoping Report. Also on October 11, 2011, ADOT&PF met with representatives from the City of Kake at City Hall from 12:00 pm and with the Organized Village of Kake at its office at 10:30 am.

A combined total of 14 people attended one of these meetings (see attached attendance list).

ADOT&PF Presentation at Open House/Public Meeting

The public meeting began with a PowerPoint presentation that reviewed:

- The ADOT&PF statutory obligation to conduct overview of the Southeast Alaska transportation planning
- The last SATP was prepared in 2004, then 1999
- The purpose and need of this SATP update is to ensure there is continued opportunity to travel by maintaining a financially sustainable transportation system. This includes addressing the need to replace three aging ferries within the next 20 years.
- The comment period for this Scoping Report is open until November 4. ADOT&PF will then review comments, conduct a user/benefit analysis, and prepare a Draft SATP that identifies a single Preferred Alternative. The draft SATP will likely be issued in late spring/early summer 2012. There will be another round of public meetings on the draft SATP document. The final SATP will be published in late 2012.
- In 1992, six Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) ferries carried 373,000 passengers and 97,000 vehicles. In 2010, ten ferries (including both AMHS and Inter-Island Ferry Authority [IFA] vessels) carried 304,000 passengers and 92,000 vehicles.
- The SATP Scoping Report identifies six preliminary alternatives:
 - 1 – Baseline: Maintain the Existing System
 - 2 – Ferry Capacity Management
 - 3 – Maximize Use of Existing Roads
 - 4 – Alaska Class Ferries
 - 5 – Highway Route 7
 - 6 – No Action

These six preliminary alternatives were designed to “test” very different transportation scenarios. There is no preferred alternative identified in the Scoping Report. The preferred alternative that will be identified in the Draft SATP will likely combine elements from these preliminary alternatives. Among other factors the six preliminary alternatives consider:

- Seasonality in use of ferry system and related excess capacity during the spring, fall and winter
 - Alaska and Southeast population projections
 - Funding forecasts (federal and state)
 - The fact that 43% of the travel within the region is by ferry, 8% of the travel from the region to the Lower 48 is by ferry, and 2% of the travel from the region to northern parts of the state is by ferry.
 - Replacing mainline ferries with Alaska Class ferries and/or roads and shuttle ferries
- The capital costs (1st column from left), annual operation and maintenance costs (2nd & 3rd column), and annual refurbishment costs (4th and 5th columns), and total annual costs in 2010 dollars (excludes capital costs) were reviewed for each of the preliminary alternatives, as shown in the table below.

Alternative	20 year Capital Costs	Annual M&O	% Change from 2010	Annual Refurbishment	% Change from 2010	Total Annual Cost	% Change from 2010
2010 Actual		131		47		178	
2032 Estimates	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
1 – Baseline: Maintain Existing	796	126	-4%	46	-3%	172	-4%
2 - Ferry Capacity Management	526	111	-16%	44	-7%	155	-13%
3 - Maximize Use of Roads	501	95	-28%	41	-13%	136	-24%
4 – Alaska Class Ferries	737	118	-10%	48	1%	166	-7%
5 – Highway Route 7	1,030	97	-26%	44	-7%	141	-21%
6 – No Action	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

- The presentation concluded with ADOT&PF representatives asking the public to provide written comments by November 4, 2011 on matters such as:
 - Your preferred alternative and why – and/or ideas for *additional* alternatives or options that you recommend ADOT&PF consider;
 - What communities do you make most of your trips each year;
 - What method of transportation do you use most and why – air, road and ferry;
 - What attributes are most important to you when you consider how you travel (such as cost, speed, service frequency, reliability, convenience, comfort, etc).
- This information will help ADOT&PF as it assembles the Draft SATP because it will need to consider trade-offs between these factors.

Questions, Answers

In response to questions raised by the audience, or at one of the meetings, ADOT&PF offered the following information and clarifications:

Road from Kake to Petersburg

- Some funding has been allocated for the EIS for the Kake to Petersburg road and this will get underway in late 2011.
- In Petersburg, city officials are worried that once the road is built, more fish will be landed in Kake, reducing the fish tax revenues for Petersburg.
- Construction costs for the northern and southern road corridors between Kake and Petersburg are about the same.
- ADOT&PF notes that Petersburg residents have mixed opinions about the road; there are drawbacks and benefits for the community.
- There has been some coordination between the Kake to Petersburg road project and the electric intertie, but it is likely that the EIS for the intertie will proceed more quickly.

Kake Ferry Terminal

- Funding has been secured to design a ferry terminal building for Kake but not for construction.

Fast Ferries

- Fast ferries are expensive to run due to high fuel consumption. AMHS is not planning to purchase additional fast ferries.
- ADOT&PF expects another 18-20 years of service from the fast ferries. There are currently two lawsuits against the manufacturers of the engines; one related to the extension of the warranty, the other regarding engine replacement.

Tourist and Local Travel Numbers

- ADOT&PF does not currently track the numbers of tourists and residents using the AMHS, but could extract some information using the zip codes entered into the reservation system.

Alternative 5

- The trip from Kake to both Juneau and Sitka will be by ferry (not road) for at least the next 20 years; the road from Sitka to Warm Springs Bay is slated for design only in this planning period. It will still require a ferry to travel between Kake, Sitka and Juneau.

Key Comments made during Kake Meetings

Comments are grouped by topic.

Comments offered during the **Open House/Public Meeting** are noted by [OH/PM]

Comments offered during the meeting with the **City of Kake** are noted by [CK]

Comments offered during the meeting with **Organized Village of Kake** are noted by [OVK]

Kake Ferry Terminal

- Kake needs a ferry terminal; currently people waiting have only a small shelter. Design should include a covered walkway from the terminal to the vessel. [OVK]

Alaska Class Ferries Design Must Consider Ill and Elderly Travelers

- Alaska Class ferries should have recliner chairs; especially important if there are no state rooms. This is needed for sick or elderly people who must travel between Kake and the hospital in Sitka and who may have trouble boarding small planes. [OVK, OH/PM]

Fast Ferries Not Well Suited to Southeast Alaska

- The fast ferries are not good vessels for Southeast Alaska because they cannot travel in bad weather. When bad weather prohibits flights, residents depend on ferries to be operational. [OVK]

Mixed Opinion on Ferry Service and Schedule

- Ferry schedule should include at least one monthly turn around trip from Kake to Juneau that would allow people to take care of shopping and appointments without staying in Juneau for a whole week. [OVK, OH/PM]
- The summer 2012 ferry schedule with two sailings going north and two going south is acceptable. [OH/PM]

Passenger Numbers Do Not Reflect Demand

- Any increase in ferry service to Kake will lead to increased ridership. [OVK]

Many Kake Residents Favor Road to Petersburg

- Kake to Petersburg Road would be good for economy in Kake. [OVK]
- Kake residents are largely in favor of the Kake to Petersburg road. [OH/PM]
- To be useful, the road from Kake to Petersburg must be well maintained year round. [OVK]
- Southern alignment of the Kake to Petersburg road by Totem Bay provides a direct route to POW would be better than the northern route. This would provide a shorter and more direct route to southbound travelers and would avoid potential conflicts with Petersburg or Kupreanof. [OH/PM]

Gas Increases and Alternative 5

- In the future driving may be prohibitively expensive because of rising costs of fuel; this could have a negative impact on Alternative 5. [OVK]

Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan Scoping Report

Attendance at Kake, Alaska meetings

October 11, 2011

Open House and Public Meeting

1. Joann Jackson
2. Emily Davis
3. Lloyd P. Davis
4. Teresa Gaudette
5. Henrich Kadake
6. John Janik

Organized Village of Kake Meeting

1. Patti Handy
2. Gary E. Williams
3. Casimero Aceveda
4. Nicholas Davis
5. Wally James
6. Dawn Jackson
7. Joel Jackson

City of Kake Meeting

1. Teresa Gaudette
2. Lloyd P. Davis
3. Henrich Kadake Sr
4. John Janik
5. Merilee Morrison

ADOT&PF Team

Andy Hughes, ADOT&PF
Marie Heidemann, ADOT&PF
Zoë Morrison, Sheinberg Associates
Note Taker: Merilee Morrison