



State ferries to remain on winter sailing schedules through April 25 due to lower demand

Monday, March 23, 2020 - 12:37

Ian Sterling, communications, 206-714-1556
WSF media hotline, 206-402-8070

Increased service in spring was originally set to begin March 29

SEATTLE – As part of the state’s response to COVID-19, all state ferries will remain operating on their winter sailing schedules through at least April 25. Washington State Ferries’ spring season, which includes increased service on some routes, was originally scheduled to begin March 29.

The following service additions that were set to begin with the start of the spring sailing schedule will not occur:

- **Fauntleroy/Vashon/Southworth:** Third vessel added on weekend schedule
- **Anacortes/San Juan Islands:** Interisland weekend service and addition of couple of afternoon sailings
- **Anacortes/Friday Harbor/Sidney, British Columbia:** Start of one round trip to Canada daily (suspended until at least April 26)

Previously made vehicle reservations for the Anacortes/San Juan Islands route from March 29 through April 25 will be canceled. No new spring schedule reservations will be allowed after April 25. Customers will be notified through ferry alerts when reservations will be made available on sailings during the winter schedule extension. No-show fees for vehicle reservations are waived until further notice.

The extension of the winter sailing schedules prepares WSF for effects of COVID-19 that could disrupt service, including:

- A significant decrease in ridership due to public health recommendations
- Availability of sufficient crew personnel to meet federal requirements

“We know schedule changes affect many people and we don’t make these decisions lightly,” said Amy Scarton, head of WSF. “But following discussions with health authorities and state officials we had to make this difficult decision in order to help slow the spread of the virus while still preserving some service options.”

While this is generally a slow time of year for WSF, and there are many factors that contribute to day-to-day fluctuations in ridership like weather and special events, system wide ridership has been consistently down an average of 40% over the past week. This equates to about 15,000 to 30,000 fewer riders compared with the same days in late February 2020 and dates in 2019.

Customers can sign up for email rider alerts, check WSF COVID-19 travel updates and follow WSF on social media for notification of resumption of regular service and other rider information.

Emergency medical services have been notified of the schedule changes and will continue to have priority boarding as the situation allows.

Passengers can help halt the spread of the virus with good hygiene practices – washing their hands, covering coughs and sneezes, maintaining a 6-foot social distance, staying in their vehicles on the ferry if they choose – and by following the recommendations of the CDC, the state Department of Health, and local public health agencies.

Washington State Ferries, a division of the Washington State Department of Transportation, is the largest ferry system in the U.S. and safely and efficiently carries nearly 24 million people a year through some of the most majestic scenery in the world. For breaking news and the latest information, follow WSF on Twitter and Facebook.

Traveler Information

- Mountain Passes
- Local Construction
- Travel Alerts
- Weather

Stay Connected

Blogger Flickr RSS Twitter
YouTube Facebook

Get Our Mobile App

- Our Android and iPhone apps include statewide traffic cameras, travel alerts, mountain pass reports, ferry schedules and alerts, northbound Canadian border wait times and more.

