



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## IFA Northern Route Suspended

Faced with low ridership and no source of alternative operating funds for the Inter-Island Ferry Authority's summer seasonal service between Coffman Cove, Wrangell, and Petersburg's South Mitkof Terminal, the IFA board today decided to cancel plans to operate the northern route, until additional operating funds can be identified. It had been announced earlier that the M/V Prince of Wales would serve this route each Friday, Saturday and Monday from May 1 through September 21, 2009.

Daily year-round IFA service by the M/V Stikine between Hollis and Ketchikan will not be impacted by the shutdown of the northern route.

The IFA inaugurated service on its northern route in May, 2006. Although gains in traffic have been made during the last three seasons, they were short of covering operating costs, said IFA board chair Dennis Watson. Low ridership, declining populations in the region, and current economic conditions, left the board with no options other than discontinuing service between Coffman Cove, Wrangell and Petersburg. Efforts to locate government funding to subsidize the northern route were unsuccessful, according to Watson.

The IFA is exploring other options to restore service between Prince of Wales Island, Wrangell and Petersburg, said IFA general manager Bruce Jones. Negotiations in this regard are ongoing, according to Jones.

The M/V Prince of Wales has been chartered by the Alaska Department of Transportation to provide two round trips daily between Petersburg's S.Mitkof terminal and Wrangell, from March 23 until April 22, 2009. This is to provide alternate transportation for those traveling on Alaska Airlines to or from Petersburg, when that community's airport is shutdown to replace culverts under the runway.

