



## Municipality of Skagway

GATEWAY TO THE KLONDIKE  
P.O. BOX 415 SKAGWAY, ALASKA 99840  
p: 907.983.2297 f: 907.983.2151  
[www.skagway.org](http://www.skagway.org)

## Haines Borough

P.O. BOX 1209 HAINES, ALASKA 99827  
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[www.hainesalaska.gov](http://www.hainesalaska.gov)



December 22, 2021

SENT VIA EMAIL ONLY

Captain John F Falvey, Jr.  
General Manager AMHS, DOT&PF  
7559 North Tongass Highway  
Ketchikan, AK 99901-9101  
[john.falvey@alaska.gov](mailto:john.falvey@alaska.gov)

RE: **Lynn Canal Ferry Service Cancellations**

Dear Captain Falvey,

We, the undersigned, respectfully request that the Alaska Marine Highway System provide basic, essential ferry service in North Lynn Canal until such time that the Matanuska is able to resume service. We have attached previous correspondence regarding availability of the Tazlina and the LeConte. We further note that the Kennicott was made available for a single sailing to Haines to accommodate the needs of legislators traveling to Juneau for the start of the legislative session.

Regardless of the vessel used (or contracted for), we request supplemental service for the duration of the Matanuska's lay-up. Contract service should be provided in consultation with our communities, with specific sea-state conditions included. And as we are all painfully aware, ship repairs can often take much longer than originally estimated. The North Lynn Canal route connects Southeast Alaska and Alaska's capital city to the remainder of the state. Shutting down this route causes untold economic harm, not only to the region but to the entire state.

Sincerely,

Andrew Cremata, Mayor  
Municipality of Skagway

907-973-2998  
[mayor@skagway.org](mailto:mayor@skagway.org)

Douglas Olerud, Mayor  
Haines Borough

907-766-6405  
[dolerud@haines.ak.us](mailto:dolerud@haines.ak.us)

Robert Venables, Executive Director  
Southeast Conference

[Robert@seconference.org](mailto:Robert@seconference.org)

Enclosure: Letter Dated December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

cc: Randy Ruaro, Chief of Staff & Special Council to the Governor  
Senator Jesse Kiehl  
Representative Sara Hannan  
Ryan Anderson, DOT&PF Commissioner  
Dana Herndon, Delegation Representative



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December 9, 2021

Captain John F Falvey, Jr.  
General Manager AMHS, DOT&PF  
7559 North Tongass Highway  
Ketchikan, AK 99901-9101  
[john.falvey@alaska.gov](mailto:john.falvey@alaska.gov)

RE: **Lynn Canal Ferry Service Cancellations**

Dear Captain Falvey,

Your recent announcement of ferry service cancellations in Lynn Canal has caused great consternation in our communities. Because the system operates with older vessels, mechanical difficulties and extended service time are not unexpected. However, we are both baffled as to the apparent lack of a backup plan that would allow service to continue.

As the mayors of Skagway and Haines, we feel that additional explanation is owed to the residents of our communities who have made medical appointments and travel plans based on the ferry schedule, and must now make alternate plans at great personal expense. In particular, we request your response to the following questions:

- We understand that the LeConte's certificate is valid until April. Why can't the LeConte's lay-up be postponed to allow her to provide service until the repairs on the Matanuska are completed and she is able to resume the published schedule?
- Why is the new vessel Alaska Class Ferry (ACF) Tazlina tied up in Auke Bay and not able to sail to fill the gaps in service? We understand that crew is being paid to attend the vessel while it sits in port, and that additional crew from the Matanuska could be moved to the Tazlina to allow it to sail.
- If it is a permitting issue that prevents the Tazlina from sailing, why has the vessel's Certificate of Operation (COI) not been maintained?

The following quote is from a letter written by Mayor Cremata in February of 2021 requesting that an ACF be made available as a backup:

*Finally, we note that there are no plans to operate the new Alaska Class Ferries (ACF). Our concern is that the LeConte is an older ship. In the event it has mechanical difficulty, we would*

*hope one of the ACFs could be made available to sail in Lynn Canal. A couple of winters ago, the Tazlina successfully operated in Lynn Canal within the 12-hour rule on an "Open Jaw" itinerary, or circular route. On this schedule, the Tazlina departed Auke Bay at 7:00 a.m. and sailed to Haines, then to Skagway, and directly back to Auke Bay, arriving at 7:00 p.m. This "Open Jaw" itinerary was possible during the winter given lower seasonal loads.*

The AMHS provides an essential service to Skagway and Haines. The system has an obligation to make the best use of its assets, vessels, and crew, in order to serve the communities who depend upon it. Make no mistake, families are moving away from our communities because of unreliable ferry service during the winter months over the past few years.

We look forward to your reply.



Andrew Cremata, Mayor  
Municipality of Skagway

907-973-2998  
[mayor@skagway.org](mailto:mayor@skagway.org)



Douglas Olerud, Mayor  
Haines Borough

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