From: MARK MADDEN
To: PDS comments
Subject: Replacement Guemes Ferry Proposal
Date: Thursday, February 15, 2018 3:41:05 PM

While there are many environmental concerns with the Guemes ferry replacement, one of the biggest factors for ferry users is service. A more reliable ferry with more capacity will save users more time than most studies recognize. Not only will ferry users save many hours from maintenance downtime and breakdowns, but also save many hours of waiting during daily ferry operations. I have been left behind many times when a fully loaded ferry did not have the capacity to carry all waiting vehicles. To catch a ferry at a scheduled time people must be in line at least 15 minutes early. Then other people will be left behind to catch the next ferry. This not only costs time for those that wait for the next ferry run, but also all the people that had to show up early to get in line. A 15 minute delay on a highway would be considered Level Of Service (LOS) "F" and would have high priority for solutions.

I favor the higher capacity battery powered ferry because of the increased vehicle carrying capacity and also the increased reliability and lower maintenance downtime. The increased capital costs will not only save operating costs for the life of the ferry, but also save the users time costs for many years. And, it will reduce future questions and studies to answer "Should the ferry be updated for more reliability and lower operating costs?"

I was out of town for the informational meeting on January 25th. However, I heard there were may rude people from the "destroy Guemes Island group (my name)" that have been meeting in private to plan disruption at the meeting and make it sound like they represent the Guemes majority. Not true! These same people attempted to shorten ferry schedules several years ago by spreading false information. They convinced followers that good service is bad for the Guemes Island rural character and will cause seawater intrusion in well water.

I apologize to the dedicated people that arranged the meeting to educate ferry users. I am sure most ferry users on Guemes Island appreciate the good service you Skagit County is trying to provide.

Fortunately, the informational meeting was not a vote or a yelling contest. And, the environmental assessment is more interested in environmental facts not the tone of peoples voices. I hope the rude attendees at the informational meeting did send a message that Guemes Island ferry users do not want good ferry service.