
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

New inland ferry creates jobs in British Columbia

NAKUSP – Construction of a new ferry for the Upper Arrow Lake route will create local employment and ensure that this safe and reliable transportation service continues for West Kootenay families, businesses and visitors.

The government of British Columbia has awarded a \$26.5-million contract to WaterBridge Steel Inc. of Prince George to construct a new ferry for the 30-minute crossing between Shelter Bay and Galena Bay. It will be built in Nakusp, and provide employment opportunities for approximately 65 people for up to two years.

The new vessel will be drive-on, drive-off, open-decked, and capable of transporting 80 cars and 250 passengers. It will have a larger vehicle and weight capacity, and faster loading and unloading times, which eliminates the need for an auxiliary ferry during the peak travel season.

Quotes:

Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Blair Lekstrom –

“This project will provide good jobs for skilled tradespeople in British Columbia. The fact that a British Columbia company was the successful bidder in this competitive process shows that we do have the expertise here to design and build vessels to serve the travelling public.”

Mayor of Nakusp, Karen Hamling –

“It is great news that the new ferry will be constructed in the Village of Nakusp. A project of this size will have a positive effect on our local economy. This will provide our businesses and residents the opportunity to showcase our spectacular scenery and unlimited recreational activities.”

Quick Facts:

- WaterBridge Steel Inc. is owned by John Harding, who has been in the business of designing, building and operating car/truck/passenger ferries for British Columbia lakes since 1976. He was responsible for the construction and operation of the largest freight-carrying ice-breaker in the world when it went in to service on Williston Lake in 1995. The company also constructed the 2004 Francois Forester, which provides ferry service under contract with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on Francois Lake.
- Inland ferries are used on routes where lake or river crossings are a less-costly alternative to building roads or bridges. For example, the Upper Arrow Lake route between Galena Bay and Shelter Bay reduces a car trip from Nelson to Revelstoke from eight hours to four hours.
- In 2011, the existing ferries on Upper Arrow Lake carried 218,658 automobile equivalents and 294,694 passengers.

Learn more:

- For information on Inland Ferries, visit: http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/marine/Inland_Ferries_Maps.pdf
- For more information on the BC Jobs Plan, visit: www.bcjobsplan.ca

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