**Kootenay Lake Ferry Terminal Issues Overview**

**Summary**

This brief is intended to bring to the attention of the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Minister of Environment, MoTI Marine Branch senior personnel, and local Kootenay Lake east and west shore residents and businesses, serious deficiencies and oversights attendant to the recent MoTI decision to maintain the Kootenay Lake ferry western terminal at its present location in Balfour rather than to relocate it to Queens Bay North. These ignored or inadequately addressed concerns include serious highway and marine safety issues, major unaccounted project costs, environmental and ecological impact, and deficiencies in the public consultation process.

MoTI , in its decision, has ignored or given insufficient weight to the recommendations of Ministry commissioned relocation feasibility studies. Those reports unequivocally and unanimously conclude that the Kootenay Lake ferry should be relocated to Queens Bay North Site 2, an undeveloped Crown shoreline area adjacent to highway 31 approximately three km north of the current terminal.

The Balfour Ferry Terminal Relocation Project Feasibility Study (SNC Lavalin) 2016 study states its unreserved and unequivocal recommendation of a relocation to Queens Bay North Site 2 commenting "The results of the study indicated that the relocation of the Balfour ferry terminal to Queens Bay North was not only technically feasible, it was a superior choice when critically compared under the categories of safety, service, community/stakeholder impact, environmental impact, and financial."

The SNC Lavalin study further states “The Queens Bay North location improves both highway and marine safety. The location would be able to manage future vehicle growth predictions without the need for highway queuing, and would enhance the service levels with one ferry instead of requiring two ferries to achieve peak demand requirements.” It concludes that regarding service, it provides a 40% savings in transit time with hourly service year round, “In addition, the service level will be significantly improved by the shorter water route reducing the current 50 minute transit time to 30 minutes”.

Also unaddressed are the full range of social and economic impacts to both east and west shore residents arising from the present decision. Additionally, an alarming lack of foresight and intent in MoTI planning and consultation has resulted in the absence of foreshore reclamation and enhancement proposals relevant to the now rejected Queens Bay alternative. These would have served to mitigate economic impact on Balfour businesses and would have provided recreational opportunities for local residents and travellers alike.

The Auditor General has previously stressed the need for thorough assessment of total cumulative effects of government initiated public and approved private sector projects. The recent, highly questionable , MoTI Marine Branch process and decision have failed to do so.

It is requested that the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure instruct the Marine Branch to suspend further progress on Balfour terminal improvements, including dredging, until a comprehensive review of the present decision and alternatives to it can be performed.

**Discounted MoTI Feasibility Studies**

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure had commissioned three Feasibility studies regarding the possible relocation of the Balfour terminal; these were Balfour Ferry Terminal Relocation Project Feasibility Study (SNC Lavalin) 2016, Queens’ Bay Ferry Terminal Concept Study (Worley Parsons) June 2012 [120622l], and Kootenay Lake Ferry Study Final Report (Reid Crowther and Partners Ltd) 1990. All three of these studies concurred on the advisability of relocation to the Queens Bay area.

The most recent, most comprehensive study, that of SNC Lavalin in 2016 stated its unreserved and unequivocal recommendation of a relocation to Queens Bay North Site 2 commenting "The results of the study indicated that the relocation of the Balfour ferry terminal to Queens Bay North was not only technically feasible, it was a superior choice when critically compared under the categories of safety, service, community/stakeholder impact, environmental impact, and financial."

SNC Lavalin’s professional and comprehensive appraisal of the alternatives, and unambiguous recommendation of the Queens Bay North relocation, is apparent by reference to the Executive Summary of that study. The conclusions expressed there are exhaustively supported by corroborative detailed sub-studies within.

It would seem incredible that the MoTI Marine Branch could ignore or so discount these studies in its decision process.

**Marine Safety Considerations**

The SNC Lavalin relocation study and Canadian Coast Guard reports have identified threats to maritime safety due to watercraft congestion in the West Arm and due to ferry navigational restrictions caused by the confined Proctor channel.

Observations include the likelihood of collision or upset of both commercial and recreational watercraft due to the narrowness of the Balfour navigation channel. Ferries operating in the channel are constrained by keel clearances and lack of manoeuvrability. These risks of accident are particularly acute at low water conditions and during the period of peak summer recreational activity.

The narrowness of the channel, which is flanked by a depositional sand/gravel bar, also presents a grave risk in the event of ferry engine failure or other mishap. The result of watercraft collision, power loss, or high winds associated with severe thunderstorms which regularly sweep the area, would give little chance to avoid grounding. This presents a threat of injury to passengers, and considerable costs of repair. The resultant down time would disrupt ferry service for a considerable period, that obviously being all the less desirable at peak summer demand period or when the Creston/Salmo portion of Hwy 3A is closed.

Also identified were inadequacies of present navigational aids compounded by shifting channel bottom contours due to anticipated ongoing siltation and deposition. Channel dredging has been proposed by Marine Branch but the 2016 SNC Lavalin report is explicit in its conclusion that such dredging would have to be repeated. Therefore a cycle would be perpetuated requiring reduced ferry loading as channel depth varies. Reduction of service, repeated dredging costs, and increased chance of hull and propeller damage would be the result. This uncertainty as to vessel draft clearances is compounded by the possible future BC Hydro reconsideration of dredging at Grohman Narrows which, by flow constriction, presently controls seasonal water levels in the West Arm.

The Advisian 2017 Improvements to Navigation Study Report notes regarding the Columbia River Treaty presently under renegotiation: “Should the revised treaty terms affect flood control and water level restrictions on the Columbia River, it is possible that this may affect water levels within the West Arm of Kootenay Lake. Any potential changes to water levels should be assessed once the impact of any revised treaty terms is understood.”

**Highway and Ferry Loading Area Safety Considerations**

Commercial, resident, and traveller usage of the Kootenay Lake ferry is expected to steadily increase over the coming years. When the Salmo/Creston Hwy 3A section is closed, as frequently occurs due to accident, road conditions, or avalanche control, travellers and heavy truck traffic must divert to the ferry terminals at Balfour and Kootenay Bay.

Proposals by Marine Branch with respect to improvements to the Balfour ferry parking lot are inadequate and short-sighted, and fail to adequately address dangers within the parking areas, at the access and egress points, and at the highway intersections.

Plans to expand Balfour parking lot capacity by purchasing adjoining private property and by destroying the adjacent shaded public park area are misguided. What will be left is a barren expanse of parking lanes which travellers must negotiate to access the west side local pub/restaurant. Worse, they must cross the ferry loading/unloading lane to reach the several businesses on the east side of the area. The potential for a vehicle-pedestrian collision is significant; all the more so as vehicles, turning in from the highway, will be transiting the length of those parking lanes that travellers must cross.

A park and ride auxiliary lot is proposed to be jammed onto an adjacent lot on Bates Road. Users of this will have to cross Bates Road, walk down Bates Road and highway 3A for over 150 meters, then cross both double incoming and single outgoing highway ingress/egress lanes, and that typically close to the ferry unload/load times when traffic is at its highest. The decision to place it there was necessitated by the limitations of space the present Balfour location presents.

The proposed bus pull out and loading area are situated at the maximum possible distance from the ferry pedestrian loading ramp. This requires pedestrians to make a long hike in summer heat or winter cold across the dangerous parking lot. True, they could struggle along a summer-unshaded and winter-icy peripheral pedestrian path, but that’s not likely. Most especially, East Shore high school students on their way to take the transit bus to and from Nelson are surely going to cut kitty-corner across all traffic lanes.

The bus pullout area is dangerous for another reason. In exiting to the highway, the bus must cross both incoming and outgoing ferry traffic and business traffic lanes. It must turn sharply and will not be able to complete that maneuver if cars are already waiting to enter traffic in the highway access lane. The bus will be stuck broadside to incoming traffic, endangering its passengers and backing up incoming traffic from the highway. Whatever cautions a prudent bus driver employs he/she can not overcome the intrinsically dangerous situation. Highway traffic control lights are absolutely necessitated, but only partially address the dangers.

Furthermore, eastbound traffic from Nelson must contend with a proposed entry lane which is far too short and cannot be substantially improved as a grocery/liquor store is situated on the highway in close proximity. Parking for this business is alongside the highway and customers pulling in and out present a recurrent hazard to users of the ferry access lane. Additionally, the parking lot access road of the pub/restaurant occurs even closer, next to the ferry parking area.

Please see the MoTI Marine Branch’s Balfour Ferry Terminal Concepts Option 3B (Urban Systems) 2018 visual proposal document which illustrates these obvious reservations regarding a ferry terminal embedded in a restricted townsite setting.

The SNC Lavalin study used an assessment/evaluation model which placed a 40% weight on safety considerations. The study states “The Queens Bay North location improves both highway and marine safety. The location would be able to manage future vehicle growth predictions without the need for highway queuing, and would enhance the service levels with one ferry instead of requiring two ferries to achieve peak demand requirements.”

The Balfour terminal location, even with improvements, will always be inadequate and dangerous.

Further risks to public safety exist at the Kootenay Bay eastern ferry terminal. That terminal is at the bottom of a long hill with extreme grades of 6% to 8% throughout, and 9% approaching the ferry terminal. When the ferry parking lot is full and traffic is backed up the hill along highway 3A, as often happens during summer peak usage, the only truck emergency runaway lane in case of brake failure is blocked. The approach to the ferry is confined at this point by a steep bank opposite the escape lane. Under this condition a truck driver’s options are to plow into the crowded parking lot on one side, crash through the crowded park benches and amenities rest area on the other, or take the center route down the ferry loading ramp. The result if the ferry is docked and unloading is frightening to imagine.

The obvious way to avoid such a tragedy is to avoid blocking the emergency runaway lane. This is most easily done by providing hourly turn around service from Queens Bay which would prevent the parking lot ever completely filling thereby avoiding highway queuing.

**Unconsidered Costs**

The Balfour Ferry Terminal Relocation Project Feasibility Study (SNC Lavalin) 2016 study in its cost estimates places the costs for terminal upgrades, one time dredging, and replacement of the 28 vehicle capacity MV Balfour with an equivalent 28 vehicle capacity vessel at 36 to 40 million dollars, the estimated cost for the ferry alone was 30 million dollars. Present Marine Branch thinking is that a 50 to 60 vehicle capacity would be required. It is difficult to estimate what additional cost such a change in capacity Marine Branch plans would entail, but would probably be in the order of 20 million dollars or more. That would bring overall capital costs of retaining the ferry terminal at Balfour to 56 to 60 million dollars. Compare that to SNC Lavalin’s total cost estimate of the Queens Bay relocation alternative of 25 million dollars.

Confer SNC Lavalin Balfour Ferry Terminal Relocation Project Technical Feasibility Study Final Report - March 2016 as follows: "The project costs of the proposed Queens Bay North terminal have been estimated to be CAD $25 million in 2015 dollars. The project costs are expected to be accurate to +/- 25%." [page 11, Executive Summary; also refer p73, section 11.5, Project Costs +/-25%; also refer Appendix B - Conceptual Capital Cost Assessment] and "The costs for upgrading the existing terminal are estimated in the $36 million to$40 million, inclusive of dredging, terminal upgrades and a replacement for the MV Balfour. As well, dredging would not be just a one-time project. It would have to be ongoing and there would be environmental considerations. With this option, the Ministry would incur significantly higher operating costs." [page 22, section 1.22, Financial]

Elsewhere in this brief the uncertainties of the need for and extent of future dredging of the Balfour navigation channel have been mentioned as required by continuing sedimentation in the West Arm and shifting channels due to flow velocity gradients. The Columbia River Treaty is under renegotiation, and revised treaty terms may result in as yet unapprised impacts on West Arm water levels. Additionally, BC Hydro may apply again for permission to dredge the Grohman Narrows in order to meet future energy demands. These uncertainties may result in dredging efforts in the Balfour navigation channel to have been ill advised as prolonged low water levels would necessitate further ongoing dredging costs and result in reductions in ferry load capacity. Less service, more cost, uncertainty.

MoTI Marine Branch’s decision to not relocate the Balfour terminal will result in dredging costs that are now not clearly known. The nature of the materials to be removed is in debate and the Improvements to Navigation Study Report (Draft) Balfour Ferry Terminal (Advisian) Oct 2017 concludes that far more intensive bottom sampling is required. It identifies as a high risk factor the presence of anthropogenic deposition or waste materials in channel. These, if present, must be disposed of on land in accordance with Ministry of Environment regulations, that is, not redistributed into depressions in the channel. This would entail cost overruns that were not anticipated at the time of the Marine Branch decision and were not included in SNC Lavalin’s estimates of cost. Environmental assessments by Ministry of Environment are still pending. This could also become an environmental issue due to impacts on marine life and habitat, and risks of deterioration of water quality in the Kootenay/Columbia River system which could become an international concern.

Finally, riparian, foreshore, and channel restoration costs due to unforeseen fuel oil spillage resulting from marine grounding in the navigationally challenging West Arm may be incurred. The potential also exists for costs for legal settlements occurring from lawsuits arising from marine accidents with recreational and commercial watercraft utilizing the narrow Proctor channel, particularly acute under low water conditions and under dredging operations which severely restrict the channel and consequent ferry manoeuvrability.

On the other hand, if the Queens Bay terminal relocation option were chosen, Balfour ferry terminal beachfront could be relatively inexpensively refurbished and enhanced, the present parking area could be drastically reduced and converted to public park/green space. Further water access facilities for boating and public amenities could be provided. This could be a net win situation for local businesses, residents, and travellers alike. Keeping the traffic reduced at Balfour provides short and long term economic and safety benefits.

Ferry terminal relocation to Queens Bay would keep commercial interests at a distance in the Balfour townsite. Shoreline enhancements at Queens Bay, maintaining a degree of beach access, would favourably affect local residents and travellers alike. The uncertainties associated with marine and highway safety and the above unaccounted costs would be avoided.

**Environmental issues**

If the Queens Bay relocation were adopted then transit time would be roughly halved and turn around time for the MV Osprey would be one hour. That provides twice the service with no appreciable change in fuel usage or maintenance costs than are presently incurred using the Balfour terminal on a one hour forty minute schedule. Crew demands in peak usage summer season would be reduced as there would be no need for two ferries running as the MV Osprey would be able to handle even peak demand traffic due to the lessened turn around time. Again, savings in fuel, maintenance, and crew costs would be realized.

With the realization of the threats to our planet due to global warming government cannot in good conscience support the profligate energy wastes and carbon pollution which retaining the Balfour terminal entails. This is not just a short term prospect, the present MoTI plan is meant to persist without significant conceptual change for the next fifty years.

There are several as yet not clearly identified environmental impacts due to dredging of the Balfour navigation channel, both initially as Marine Branch has proposed, and recurrently due to ongoing sediment deposition as identified by SNC Lavalin. The Improvements to Navigation Study Report (Draft) Balfour Ferry Terminal (Advisian) Oct 2017 has clearly stated the need for additional channel sediment testing, analysis of dredging deposit locations based on potential pollution risks, and for Ministry of Environment studies of fish and wildlife negative impact and of water quality degradation. A comprehensive environmental impact assessment is required.

Presently, both MV Osprey and MV Balfour continue to dump sewage wastes, which receive only primary treatment, into Kootenay Lake. The Queens Bay terminal alternative would provide on land wastewater treatment facilities and septic drain field disposal and would be designed to handle ferry pump-out.

**Dredging Impact on Kootenay Lake and West Arm Water Levels**

Lowering the Balfour navigation channel will affect West Arm water levels at all times but most significantly during low water conditions. During low water events present levels are set by flow considerations (choking) at Fraser Narrows and Grohman Narrows. Lowering the channel at the West Arm entrance will increase downstream flow rates leading to higher downstream levels and stream velocities. The localized impacts on riparian wildlife and habitat, as well as on human habitation and structures should be comprehensively assessed.

A net effect may also be to lower Kootenay Lake levels throughout the main lake. Again the impacts on riparian wildlife need to be comprehensively assessed, as must the effect on docking and clearances at the Kootenay Lake ferry eastern terminal at Kootenay Bay. Various shoreline personal property owners and businesses such as marinas may possibly be adversely affected due to inability to use boat launches and docks for an extended time beyond what is now experienced. These may potentially result in lost revenues for business, lost recreational opportunities for residents and tourists, and when severe weather strikes reduces the options to access refuges for boaters thereby becoming a significant safety issue.

The Balfour Ferry Terminal Relocation Project Feasibility Study (SNC Lavalin) 2016 was undertaken with certain prior assumptions as given them by the MoTI. One was that the recent decision undertaken by BC Hydro, the Utilities Commission, Ministry of Environment, and other key stakeholders to not dredge the Grohman Narrows was destined to last for the considered life of the project . The projected life of the decisions by MOTI to dredge the Balfour navigation channel in support of retaining the west side terminal of the Kootenay Lake ferry service at Balfour are intended to last for fifty years or more.

As you are aware the Columbia River Treaty is in the process of re-negotiation. The International Joint Commission, Kootenay Lake Board of Control, Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee and, the Columbia Basin Trust in conjunction with the Columbia River Treaty Local Governments' Committee, have identified key concerns associated with flow impediments resulting from depositional materials in the West Arm and their impact on water level control issues for Kootenay Lake and for downstream power generation. It is highly likely that provisions will be put in place which will allow reopening of the Grohman Narrows dredging decision at a future date. Continental energy demands continue to grow and there will be ongoing consciousness of the need for clean green sources. These trends will place pressure to maximize hydro energy output at all hydro developments throughout the Kootenay River system, including that at the Corra Linn dam site and all downstream developments. To do that requires removing the seasonal impediment to downstream flow volume and reopens the need for dredging at the Grohman Narrows.

As previously discussed Grohman Narrows seasonally controls flow rates from Kootenay Lake to the Corra Linn dam site. The result of the proposed dredging would be immediate, and that would be an overall increased volume flow rate from the West Arm mouth throughout the entirety of the West Arm all the way to the Corra Linn dam site. At seasonal low levels on Kootenay Lake this would result in a decreased depth in the Balfour navigation channel, thereby offsetting advantages to ferry hull clearances previously obtained by proposed dredging there. MOTI would be faced with renewed need for further and more major dredging operations which in turn would again impact water levels in Kootenay Lake and West Arm flow rates.

The Advisian 2017 Improvements to Navigation Study Report notes regarding the Columbia River Treaty presently under renegotiation: “Should the revised treaty terms affect flood control and water level restrictions on the Columbia River, it is possible that this may affect water levels within the West Arm of Kootenay Lake. Any potential changes to water levels should be assessed once the impact of any revised treaty terms is understood.” It also notes “Dredging of the Grohman Narrows would likely reduce low water levels at the Balfour Terminal, potentially hindering navigation of the West Arm. BC Hydro recently announced that they will not be dredging Grohman Narrows at this time, however, should BC Hydro revisit the plan in future, it is unknown whether low water levels at the Balfour Terminal will be reduced, or how much.”

What is needed is a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the presently proposed MOTI dredging operations at the Balfour navigation channel; and that assessment should include possible ramifications of a future reconsidered dredging of the Grohman Narrows.

**Biases in Public Consultation Process**

The decision to not relocate the ferry terminal was made after a flawed public consultation process that gave disproportionate weight to the expressed preferences of residents and businesses in the Balfour/Queens Bay area. This failure in process effectively denied equal opportunity and voice for East Shore business and resident counterparts, the principal year round users of the ferry, to have their social, economic, and public safety concerns heard and taken into account in the Ministry decision.

The Ministry consultation process used to legitimize that decision was unreasonably skewed in favor of the general public in the Balfour/Queens Bay area. Specifically, individual MoTI notifications to invite input were mailed via Canada Post exclusively to all Balfour and vicinity households and businesses and not to East Shore residents; only Balfour key stakeholders were pre-identified and met with privately by MOTI staff, and repeated press announcements were made in Nelson newspapers not on the East Shore. Additionally, pre-public consultation notification was given to the Queens Bay Residents Association allowing for early RDCK grant application to study highly localized socio-economic impact which restrictively ignored East Shore communities. Finally, public town halls with MoTI representatives were arranged only on the western side of Kootenay Lake and no equivalent East Shore meeting was scheduled for the convenience of East Shore residents. The correctness of the above comments is directly supported by reference to the MoTI Public Consultation Summary Report (Feb 2017).

The MoTI apparently relied heavily on a poorly controlled online opinion survey which has no relevance except as a gauge of public opinion over a narrow and local range. The lack of controls as to verification of area of residency and to results distorted by multiple non-independent submissions should relegate such a tool to minimal importance in decision making. Relatedly, unverified petitions, as conducted by private biased interests, suffer from serious questions of credibility.

It is vital that the procedural deficiencies in the MoTI public consultation process as conducted be rectified and that the Ministry reopen a decision which was made without meaningful East Shore consultation or participation.

**East Shore Social and Economic Concerns**

The Kootenay Lake ferry is a vital link for the social, medical, and financial well-being, and in extreme but foreseeable cases to the very safety of East Shore communities. The policies and decisions that the MOTI adopts now will continue to affect, for good or for worse, our lives and that of our children and grandchildren for the next 50 years and beyond. It will affect us individually and it will affect us collectively.

The essence of the problem lies in the availability of ferry services, the frequency of transit, the hours of service, the duration of transit, the delays in loading, and very importantly the safety of the service in the case of maritime emergencies. These concerns apply to residents and tourists alike, and to both regular and occasional commercial traffic. The issues do not stop there, as there are significant , if not compelling, environmental and ecological downsides to maintaining the present western ferry terminal at Balfour and these will compound if that decision is left to stand.

**A) Health and Safety**

Present ferry service is inadequate in emergency conditions that affect health and safety, such as personal medical emergencies, work accidents, and forest fire evacuations.

Many seniors, young families, and persons of all ages with chronic medical conditions need to be able to attend medical appointments and hospital procedures; these may be scheduled or suddenly arise. The present 100 minute ferry schedule is an obstacle as it is too infrequent and does not conveniently give access to Nelson services. The result of a mistimed ferry or a delay in loading results in missed appointments and treatments; it is unreasonable to expect seniors or youngsters to sit in their vehicles for long periods in the winter cold or in mid-summer heat. Such a prospect is a discouragement to proper medical care. Prolonged waits occur because of high peak summer demand, due to major diversion of heavy commercial traffic when the Creston/Salmo highway 3A is closed, and when weight restrictions are in place during times of low water in the Balfour navigation channel.

East Shore communities have a history of logging, mining, and other high risk employment. In the case of accident all that has been said above applies but with added emphasis on quick treatment. Heart attack, stroke, and hemorrhage are but a few of the emergencies that can befall old and young alike and require immediate care. Creston does not offer full medical services in the case of serious injury or illness; the pathway for our injured workers is to Nelson, Trail, the Okanagan, and Vancouver. In addition, the highway to Creston is winding and can be hazardous in winter, many ambulance attendants have complained of nausea affecting their capabilities.

In recent years we have all heard of the devastating effects of wildfire on communities throughout BC, western Canada, and in states to the south. Quick response and timely evacuation made the difference to the preservation of life and property, or to tragic loss when such a response was not possible. In the case of such an emergency it is essential to be able to bring in fire crews and equipment and to evacuate the vulnerable in our communities quickly.

Various ideas have been forwarded in regard to the health and safety issues raised above. It has been suggested that, minimally, the ferry should be docked at Kootenay Bay and that, ideally, all crew and ferries should be so reassigned. This would provide both better service in the case of medical or other emergencies, and would extend the hours of service by providing one extra run from the East Shore both early and late. Priority boarding for medical reasons has also been proposed as have ideas for improvement of amenities such as heated washrooms and waiting areas. The change of service to hourly rather than one hour forty minutes also seems obvious; that would entail relocating the western ferry terminal from Balfour to Queens Bay North.

**B) Economic Considerations**

The limitations of the present ferry service affect East Shore communities economically in two principal ways, they act as a deterrent to tourists and visitors, and they act as an expensive bottleneck for those businesses that use the ferry for commercial delivery.

Tourists realize there are often long delays at Kootenay Bay or Balfour, they are unsure of the travel time up the East Shore highway 3A, and can't easily figure out the bizarre ferry schedule which is compounded by our unusual time zone. Afraid to miss the ferry or to be caught in lineups, they consider whether to forgo altogether the opportunity of experiencing our communities.

Similarly, those who make the decision to drive up the lake, because of their uncertainties, hurry to the ferry to get a place in line. They have no time to shop in local craft stores or to stop to dine. If the schedule were hourly without delays they would have the option to leisurely dally.

Some, who might have wished to centre their activities on the East Shore and to make use of our campgrounds, B&B's, and motels while enjoying our many attractions are hesitant to make that choice because they'd also like to visit Nelson, Balfour, Ainsworth, Kaslo. Again the ferry is a barrier and so the choice with many may be to centre out of Nelson or the opposite shore. Removal of the ferry bottleneck would allow tourists to plan to travel the entire Selkirk loop and would benefit not just the East Shore but many other Kootenay communities.

Regarding commercial traffic, the advantages to local commerce of an hourly extended schedule are obvious. Those businesses that truck their deliveries cross lake, service industries serving our area, and logging and similar interests, are wasting valuable time and man hours idling in ferry lineups or adopting a schedule which doesn't allow for a reasonable turn around time.

**C) Enhancing Community Viability**

Declining elementary school attendance, decreasing property values, fewer whole community shared events, an aging demographic, loss of young adults and families to larger urban centers, reduced access to entertainment and social opportunities, few jobs, loss of motivation and civic involvement ... these are the problems faced by East Shore residents.

Many local residents have expressed their frustration with the present hours of ferry service as they find that they are effectively prevented from attending arts and cultural events or even a late dinner party in Nelson. Nelson is the major social centre of the area and more flexibility in ferry hours would accommodate greater entertainment and social interchange in both directions.

Seasonal residents and visitors bring valued contributions to community diversity, but increases to their number cannot substitute for year round resident families. Lack of access to jobs forces some to leave, and others to not even consider the East Shore as a place to call home. The current bottleneck and lack of adequate ferry service limits the livelihoods and opportunities of present and prospective East Shore residents. Schools cannot be retained unless young families can be attracted and retained. A reinvigorated dynamic local economy is needed and improved ferry service is key to that.

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