



August 10, 2011

Mr. Gordon Macatee
BC Ferry Commissioner
P.O. Box 35119
Victoria, BC V8T 5G2

Re: Extended hours for Spirit of Yalis – Sointula

Dear Mr. Macatee:

In early June, Sandra Waarne, the facilitator for the Mount Waddington Health Network, spoke with you about the transportation problems ferry riders from Sointula, Malcolm Island, are experiencing. Ferry commuters from Sointula are unable to access the Wheels for Wellness transportation service for medical appointments to Campbell River and further south. Wheels is a non-profit society that receives funding from VIHA to provide transportation to those requiring medical appointments further than 75 km from their home. The Health Network has discussed this with Mr. Bruckner, Wheels for Wellness Executive Director, numerous times but has not been able to work out a suitable solution.

The first ferry off Malcolm Island does not allow for connection with the North Island Wheels for Wellness van due to appointments for other riders and their needs. The only alternative is spending the night in Port McNeill which is costly, financially, physically and emotionally for our seniors. For those who are employed, further challenges occur due to employer needs and work scheduling.

We have been negotiating with the ferry corporation for some time about finding a way to utilize the Spirit of Yalis which is housed on Malcolm Island and transports Cormorant Island students to Port McNeill for secondary school.

I understand that you are currently looking at the ferry services and how the service impacts ferry dependent communities. The Mount Waddington Health Network has been involved with this issue for quite a while and I am requesting that you give this issue and a possible solution serious consideration.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to discuss this with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alyson Hagan-Johnson".

Alyson Hagan-Johnson, Co-chair Mount Waddington Health Network
cc: Victoria Power, VIHA Director of Rural Health
Heidi Soltau, Regional Director