



Denman Island Community Education Society

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To David Hahn,
CEO and President,
BC Ferries Inc.

Re: BC Ferries Cable Ferry proposal for Denman Island

Dear Mr Hahn,

As Chair of the Denman Island Community Education Society Council (DICES) I have been asked to specifically add our voice to the choir of concern about the proposed Cable Ferry.

A bit of clarification: Denman's elementary school is designated a community school. This designation allows the school to be used for a degree of recreational, cultural and educational programming for the entire community. Thru our DICES programming and other interactions with a host of residents, including, I might add, the community food bank which we operate, we think we have a fairly good sense of the community.

There are of course many organizations on Denman which gauge the pulse of the Denman Island community. We are but one of them.

By now you may have received a number of communications about the disquiet Denman Islanders have about the Ferry Cable initiative. The Globe and Mail recently had a story about it. Apprehension about the proposed Cable Ferry is pervasive on our Island. As a member of the Hornby Denman FAC, this seems quite evident to me. You may also know, I trust, that this alarm is not in the least frivolous, that in fact, it has been generated in a community significantly concerned about safety on the water, about our economic vulnerability and pending job loss, about something as simple, to our way of thinking, as why the Ferry should be docked overnight on our side of Baynes Sound.

While our Island, our Transition Island, is heavily supportive of efforts to improve the environment, we are equally intent on maintaining our ferry; the Quinitsa currently holds that post, and is viewed by Islanders as OUR ferry. I should also add that we know and

we trust the Quinitza and its crew. We also believe that the current staffing arrangement aboard that vessel affords a measure of safety, for example, for the tens of our youth who daily commute to schools off Island, a level of safety we are convinced is not evident in the Cable Ferry scheme.

We are also, as referenced earlier, in this time of broader economic turmoil, equally desirous of maintaining the well-paying jobs which the Ferry service currently provides. It is sometimes hard to measure the economic and social stability of a community such as ours. This is a quite visible thing, this relationship with travellers and ferry workers. You probably have noticed this on your travels. The ferry is so significant to our sense of well-being, our sense of order, that the ferry workers are seen as close friends, are often close friends. Even Islanders who may not know particular ferry workers share a sea-going camaraderie with them.

As well, this Island, like some others, has a history of ferry travel which predates BC Ferries involvement. These are strong historical and emotional ties to local transportation and economic enterprise.

So, I have attempted to capture, in this brief missive, a sense of what the ferry means to Islanders and DICES. As much as I appreciate how important your planning and cost-saving measures are, I think we on Denman have to be extra-vigilant about our safety and the economic impact on our Island of decisions made by BC Ferries, of decisions, really, of any kind made by any entity which may affect our sense of security, our community well-being, our collective future.

Yours,

Bill Engleson

Chair, DICES