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**Washington State Transportation Commission names new Olympic Class ferries**

TACOMA – The two new Olympic Class, 144-car ferries now under construction are being named Tokitae and Samish. The Washington State Transportation Commission today selected the names from seven proposals submitted in Sept. The other proposed names were Cowlitz, Hoquiam, Muckleshoot, Sammamish and Ivar Haglund.

Each of the seven proposals submitted met the commission guidelines for naming ferry vessels. The commission then solicited input on the seven proposals from Washington State Ferries, the Ferry Advisory Committee Executive Council, and through an online survey sent to members of the Ferry Riders Opinion Group and the Voice of Washington State survey panels. More than 4,000 people responded to the survey.

Of the 23 vessels currently operating in Puget Sound, almost all have names reflecting the state's tribal heritage. The names of the two new Olympic Class vessels, along with the new 64-car ferries, are in keeping with that tradition.

The following is information on the names selected:

**Tokitae:** The first of the 144-car ferries under construction will be named Tokitae. This Coast Salish greeting means, "nice day, pretty colors" and also is the name given to an orca whale captured at Penn Cove, near Keystone, in 1970. Tokitae was brought to a marine park in Miami 40 years ago, where she was put into service as an entertainer, and re-named Lolita. She is the last survivor of the 45 Southern Resident Orcas captured in Washington state during the capture era of the 1960s and 70s. Such captures were banned in Washington state waters in 1976.

**Samish:** The second 144-car ferry will be named Samish. The meaning of the name is the “giving people” in proto-Salish origins. The Samish Indian Nation has held a deep-rooted respect for the traditions of sharing with its neighbors. The tribe’s historic area ranges from the mountain tops of the Cascades westerly along the hills, woodlands, and river deltas, arriving at the far western shores of the San Juan Island. The tribe’s historic lands have been inhabited for thousands of years by the ancestors of the Samish and their Coast Salish neighbors.

The Transportation Commission assesses ferry name proposals using the following guidelines:

- Names for ferries should carry statewide significance and represent our state’s image and culture.
- Specifically, names should represent such things as: state adopted symbols, tribal names, names of bodies of water, geographic locations, cities, counties, or relate to nautical heritage, etc.
- Consideration will be given to the consistency with existing WSF fleet names.
- Names should have broad familiarity, be easy to pronounce, are non-offensive and meet ethical standards.
- Names with commercial overtones or names honoring or commemorating individuals should be avoided, but will be considered upon very careful review. In these cases, the following guidelines will apply:
  - o The individual must be deceased for at least 20 years.
  - o They must have enduring fame and have played a significant historical role in the region and/or state.

Additional information on ferry naming can be found on the commission web site at: [www.wstc.wa.gov/Naming/default.htm](http://www.wstc.wa.gov/Naming/default.htm)

For more information about the commission, visit: [www.wstc.wa.gov](http://www.wstc.wa.gov).

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