

## Knik Arm Crossing proposal supported by majority of Southcentral legislative candidates

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land shortage in Anchorage. Others were not so enthusiastic.

"The development of the road system within Anchorage is a much higher priority," said Democrat Greg Oczkus of District 12A.

"I am very concerned about the projected high cost of the project," said David Hedderly-Smith, a Democrat running for House Seat 8A.

The most recent estimates of the cost are anywhere from \$547 million to \$744 million, depending on whether the crossing is made down the river or at Elmendorf base.

Many candidates think the price is worth it, since it would ease development pressures within the Anchorage Bowl.

The crossing "will ease the mushrooming effect of overdevelopment in Anchorage, relieve traffic congestion, hopefully reduce air pollution and provide housing at lower costs than what is now available in Anchorage," according to Republican Ed Essa of District 10B.

A theme voiced by several Anchorage candidates was that little developable land still remains within the Anchorage Bowl.

"We are fast building ourselves out of the Anchorage bowl," said District 9A house candidate Shirley Dreas, a Republican. "I personally do not want the mountains or scenery blocked from view by cement and glass."

Eagle River Democrat Sam Cotten agreed. "Our city is too crowded, houses are too close together. The crossing would allow better accommodation for people who want to live near and work around Anchorage without packing them in like sardines."

Given the purpose of the crossing, few candidates saw any reasonable alternatives. "We could try and talk the military into giving up Elmendorf and Fort Richardson," said District 11A candidate Mary McKinnon, "but as a practical matter only crossing the inlet will provide affordable living space."

Only a handful of candidates said outright they were opposed to the project. One who did was incumbent Rep. Don Clocksin of downtown District 12B. "I'm not sure what the purpose is," Clocksin said in response to the questionnaire. "It doesn't save much travel time and may have a devastating impact on District 12 traffic. Rapid transit and improved roads are a better — and cheaper — alternative."

Other candidates in his district had similar reservations. In fact, the downtown district was the only one where a majority of the candidates was cool to the idea of the crossing. One of the proposed routings for the project would direct bridge traffic into downtown Anchorage — something that critics say will increase traffic into the area.

Candidates far removed from the site of the proposed crossing were also less than enthusiastic.

"The benefits would accrue almost entirely to Anchorage residents," said District 5B Libertarian candidate Andre

Marrou of Homer. "The cost-to-benefit ratio for the rest of the state would have to be examined thoroughly."

Other Kenai Peninsula candidates suggested the bridge cross their way instead of into the Mat-Su Borough.

Most of the Mat-Su candidates praised the project as a way of developing their borough, but one — Republican Bob Doyle in House seat 16A — said he'd rather see the money used to improve the Glenn and Parks Highways.

The big unanswered question about the Knik Arm Crossing is its cost and the financing package that will build it.

## SeaWay cites muddy dock; barge turns

by Annette Taylor  
Times Business Writer

As union members gathered near the Anchorage Dredge and Dock Co. terminal this morning, the non-union SeaWay Express barge they were waiting for was headed toward Seward.

The barge had docked at Kenai Sunday and left late Monday afternoon for Anchorage.

Fred Peil, SeaWay's chief executive officer of the Seattle-based freight line, said this morning he turned the barge around at 2:30 a.m. because he was "unsatisfied" with the terminal conditions in Anchorage.

The union protest "was no consideration in this decision," he said.

The Anchorage Independent Longshoremen's Union Local 1 had scheduled 10 longshoremen to picket near the Dredge and Dock terminal to protest SeaWay's use of non-union labor.

Teamsters Local 959 also was going to have 10 union members picketing if SeaWay used non-union truckers to haul the freight from the dock to destinations in Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Solidarity Now Alaska, a grass roots organization of rank-and-file members of various unions, also planned a demonstration.

Police had blocked off a portion of Second Avenue from which the dock can be seen and established no-parking zones on Second from Christensen Drive west.

Steve Seplocha, a Teamsters spokesman who learned of Peil's

decision about 8:30 a.m., said turning the barge around "does nothing but delay the issue" of whether the freight line will hire union labor.

"We're not going to guess that our presence had anything to do with the decision," he said. "If they say it was mud on the dock, I can accept that. It doesn't sound ridiculous. We just hope

SeaWay will be able to

## SeaWay barge reverses course

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they will be more amenable to hiring union help when they do come in."

Peil said he found the Dredge and Dock staging areas Monday afternoon too muddy to bring in the off-loading equipment he had planned. To bring in cranes and other equipment that could go through the mud "was impossible at the late hour," he said.

Peil said he could have operated off the bank or the port stern but that would have been difficult and sloppy.

"But we're not interested in that kind of image," he said. "Our firm is committed to excellence and I wanted the work done very professionally."

The 1,800 tons of freight destined for Anchorage and Fairbanks will be unloaded in Seward

and then transported probably by train, Peil said. SeaWay operates a roll-on, roll-off service in Seward. The trailered freight is driven off the barges onto rail cars.

The barge originally destined for Anchorage carries break-bulk or containerized cargo which is off-loaded with the use of cranes or forklifts. It is the company's first barge to Alaska carrying break-bulk.

In Seward, SeaWay hires union longshoremen through Northern Stevedoring and Handling Co. to handle mooring lines. The arrangement is on a docking-to-docking basis. SeaWay's own non-union employees unload the barges.

Union members in Anchorage are concerned about SeaWay's entry into the port here because if it hires non-union labor, it would be the first barge com-

pany to do so.

Peil said SeaWay's next break-bulk barge is scheduled to leave Seattle Sept. 8. The barge first will go to Kenai and then to Anchorage.

Peil said he would prefer to dock at Anchorage's municipal facilities, which he considered the best at the port.

Anchorage Dredge and Dock terminal is "not a likely possibility in the future" unless the facilities improve, he said. "I was 30 days premature in thinking I could use that terminal. In three weeks time, it might be substantially improved."

Peil said he had not yet figured the added cost of turning the barge around to Seward or transportation costs of getting the freight to Anchorage and Fairbanks. But, he said, the expenses will be paid by SeaWay.

## City police expect no port troubles

by Annette Taylor  
Times Business Writer

Despite arrests at the docking of the non-union SeaWay Express barge in Kenai, police in Anchorage expect no problems here when the barge arrives at the port sometime Tuesday.

Kenai police arrested 14 people Sunday as more than 70 union demonstrators unsuccessfully tried to block the unloading of the SeaWay barge at the port of Kenai.

For the most part, the protest was peaceful. Most of those arrested staged a sit-down on the dock after police ordered them to move. Two of those arrested were charged with using a handgun to force a security guard to open a locked company gate.

If the Seattle-based freight line hires non-union labor to moor and unload the barge in Anchorage, union members here will picket.

The Anchorage Independent Longshoremen's Union Local 1 will have 10 picketers near the docks by the Consolidated Freightways' facilities. Teamsters Union Local 959 will call out 10 picketers if SeaWay uses non-union truckers.

## Port demonstrations planned

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Solidarity Now Alaska, a grass-roots organization of rank-and-file members from various unions, plans a separate demonstration. Bill Bobrick, secretary-treasurer for Solidarity, said the group has set no limits on the number of its picketers. But the protest "will be peaceful and legal," he said.

Capt. Warren Suddock of the Anchorage Police Department said he met with Teamsters representatives last week to designate where the union members could picket, park their cars and seek shelter in the event of rain. The Teamsters Union is the hired bargaining agent for the Anchorage longshoremen's union.

Suddock said he would be the only police officer at the docks.

"The union has assured us there would be no problems and

there is no reason for us to believe otherwise," Suddock said. "The last thing the Teamsters want is trouble. They are a powerful union and I think they have the clout to keep any troublemakers out."

The barge is scheduled to leave Kenai on high tide later this afternoon and will arrive in Anchorage sometime Tuesday. The 340-foot barge is carrying about 1,800 tons of freight for Anchorage.

Fred Peil, SeaWay's chief executive officer, would not disclose the berthing location.

Union officials in Anchorage said the barge probably would dock at York Steel facilities. But a woman, who answered the phone at York Steel, said the company's facilities were "not available to SeaWay at this time." The woman declined to identify herself.

In Kenai, 16 policemen in riot gear kept protestors from inter-

fering with SeaWay workers as they unloaded the barge. Alaska State Troopers forced a fishing boat, moored in the river channel in an apparent attempt to block the barge's path, to move.

When the barge entered the Kenai River, high winds pushed it aground. It took two tugs about 20 minutes to free the vessel. About 20 minutes later the barge carrying lumber, containerized freight and road construction equipment, struck a sandbar in the middle of the river, further delaying its arrival.

The break-bulk cargo shipments to Kenai and Anchorage are the first by SeaWay. The company plans deliveries every three weeks.

SeaWay entered the Alaskan shipping market in April, with deliveries of trailered freight from Seattle to Seward.

C-12 Tuesday, August 28, 1984, The Anchorage Times

## Port of Anchorage tonnage increases

General cargo through the Port of Anchorage increased by nearly 25 percent — from 124,852 tons in June to 155,909 tons in July.

Including petroleum shipments, total freight was 214,191 tons last month compared to 202,768 tons in June, for a 5.6 percent increase.

Outbound domestic freight was up 15.7 percent, from 22,536 tons in June to 26,089 tons in July. Most of the outbound freight — 20,697 tons — was vans, flats and containers. In June, 8,683 tons of vans, flats and containers were shipped through the port.

Transhipped cargo, which is mostly fish, accounted for 4,848 tons compared to 1,138 tons in June. No bulk petroleum went through the port last month. In June, the port handled more than 11,000 tons of bulk petroleum.

Inbound domestic freight increased by 9 percent, from 166,395 tons in June to 182,140 tons in July. More than 106,000 tons were vans, flats and containers.

During the first seven months of this year, the port has handled 855,024 tons of general cargo and 304,805 tons of petroleum. Total tonnage increased by 11 percent compared to the same period last year.