

For Immediate Release
06-081

December 15, 2006

BC FERRIES ANNOUNCES NAMES OF NEW NORTHERN VESSELS
- Introducing the **Northern Adventure** and **Northern Expedition** -

VICTORIA – BC Ferries is pleased to announce that it has selected a new family of names for its northern vessels that celebrates the beauty and wonder of exploring and travelling in northern British Columbia.

After much consideration, BC Ferries has decided the new vessels earmarked for the Inside Passage and Prince Rupert – Queen Charlotte Islands routes will bear the northern family name in recognition of the uniqueness and pride of the northern communities they serve. The first two vessels in the northern fleet will be named Northern Adventure and Northern Expedition to capture the bold spirit of exploration and discovery that define the region.

“As we begin an exciting new era of ferry travel to the north, we were looking for a family of names that captures the essence of the north coast and reflects our optimism about the future growth of northern B.C.,” said David L. Hahn, President and CEO. “The Northern Adventure and Northern Expedition will bring an exceptional new level of service to local and international customers travelling to the north coast of British Columbia onboard BC Ferries.”

“Our northern routes are unique in that they provide passengers the opportunity to explore a vast area rich with natural beauty and cultural treasures from the deck of a ship,” said Hahn. “Northern Adventure and Northern Expedition capture that uniqueness and our commitment to showcase the tremendous opportunities for tourism and economic development that northern British Columbia has to offer.”

Beginning next spring, the Northern Adventure, formerly known as the Sonia, will be sailing the Inside Passage route from Port Hardy to Prince Rupert, bringing enhanced service and an unparalleled travel experience to our local customers and those travelling to B.C. from throughout the world.

By the spring of 2009, the Northern Expedition, the replacement vessel for the Queen of Prince Rupert, will have joined the BC Ferries fleet on the northern routes, offering customers an exceptional experience onboard a state-of-the-art vessel. When the vessel begins service, it will operate on the Inside Passage route between Port Hardy and Prince Rupert, with the Northern Adventure moving to the Prince Rupert – Queen Charlotte Islands run. At that time, the Queen of Prince Rupert will be retired.

When the Northern Adventure arrives in British Columbia later this week following its four-week journey from Greece, it will undergo a \$9 million upgrade at Victoria Shipyards before entering service in the spring. The two-year-old vessel has 74 cabins and carries up to 600 passengers and 101 vehicles. Modifications to the Northern Adventure will include:

- updating safety and security equipment;
- expanding, upgrading and reconfiguring the gift shop, galley, passenger food amenities and crew areas;
- modifying the stern ramp to be compatible with BC Ferries' berths; and
- upgrading electrical, heating and lighting systems.

“The arrival of the Northern Adventure in Victoria this week will bring us one step closer to restoring full service on our Northern routes,” said Hahn. “Both new vessels will be tremendous additions to our fleet and will provide the best in comfort and service for our customers and crews.”

BC Ferries is currently negotiating with the provincial government on a replacement strategy for the Queen of Chilliwack, which services the mid-coast. This process will take several months and when a new vessel is eventually put in service it will be called Northern Discovery.

BC Ferries is committed to renewing its fleet, terminals and infrastructure. The company's capital improvement program calls for 22 new vessels over the next 15 years at a cost of \$2.5 billion. Seven of these new ships will be in service by 2009.

- 30 -

Media Contact:
BC Ferries, Communications
Victoria: (250) 978-1267

Customer Contact:
Victoria: (250) 386-3431
Toll-free: 1-888-BCFERRY (1-888-223-3779)