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**MaineDOT Locally  
Coordinated Transit Plan  
Region 2**

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**Isle au Haut Boat Services  
IaH Mailboat**

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**FY 2013 - 2017**

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## **ISLE AU HAUT BOAT SERVICES IaHBS**

### **Description**

#### **Transit provider**

Provider: Isle au Haut Boat Services/IaH Mailboat  
Contact person: George Cole, President  
Address: 27 Seabreeze Avenue, P.O. Box 709, Stonington, Maine 04681  
Telephone: 207-367-5193  
Email: [themailboat@isleauhaut.com](mailto:themailboat@isleauhaut.com)  
Website: [www.isleauhaut.com](http://www.isleauhaut.com)

#### **Service**

Service area: Isle au Haut (Knox County) to Stonington (Hancock County)  
Type of service: Ferry

#### **Geographic area**

Isle au Haut Boat Services provides year-round scheduled passenger, freight, and mail service between Stonington and the Isle au Haut Town Landing, and seasonal service to the Acadia National Park Landing at Duck Harbor.

#### **Isle au Haut Boat Services overview**

Isle au Haut Boat Services (IaHBS) is a nonprofit Maine corporation with IRS 501 (c)(3) certification. The Boat Services Board consists of more than three and not more than 15 directors elected for three year terms. As of December 2012 the Board has ten members, five of whom are seasonal residents of Isle au Haut, three of whom are current year-round residents of the island, and two of whom are recent island residents who continue to live nearby and maintain close ties to Isle au Haut.

The Boat Services Board meets four times yearly and decides policy issues; examples would be the process for purchasing a new ferry boat, approval for employment policies such as health insurance and other benefits, approval of applications for loans or grants, and the design of annual private fund-raising activities. The President of Boat Services currently also acts as the General Manager of the operation, and makes most ordinary operational decisions in consultation with the Senior Captain and the Captain in charge of repairs and maintenance.

To remain a viable operation in support of the Town's needs, IaHBS needs to maintain a high level of summer activity and to operate two boats. Owing to the highly seasonal nature of Maine coast life, July and August are the only two profitable months for IaHBS. The cash generated in the summer is essential for the operation to navigate the other ten months of the year.

## **How tickets and passes are sold and documented**

Tickets are sold as one way fares. There is no separate round trip ticket. A book of twenty tickets is also available, which is priced at approximately the cost of 19 one way fares. There is no charge for personal baggage carried aboard by passengers. There is no charge for pets.

Tickets are sold aboard the boats, during the trip, year-round. Payment is by cash, credit card, or Boat Services company charge account. During the summer season, most tickets are sold in a ticket booth on the IaHBS Stonington wharf which operates from mid-June until after Labor Day.

On each trip, a crew member uses a hand written slip to record the number of passengers and payment types. Credit card sales on the boat are recorded on paper forms using a credit card impression machine. Ticket booth sales are entered in a cash register. Credit card sales are immediately processed using an online card swipe reader. Sales of books of tickets are recorded simply as "book of tickets." IaHBS does not separately track the use of tickets from ticket books to pay for fares.

At the end of each day, IaHBS reconciles the cash from the ticket booth, the cash from the boats, and the credit card records with the cash register and boat slip records. The paper credit card records from the boat sales are manually entered using the shoreside online credit card reader.

## **Financial Support**

IaHBS receives an annual payment from the Town of Isle au Haut, voted each year at Town Meeting. For 2011, the sum was \$45,000 (roughly 12% of the annual budget).

IaHBS raises funds through private donations. In FY 2011, IaHBS raised about \$29,300 in response to 170 letters sent to seasonal residents.

IaHBS has a Cooperative Agreement in place with the National Park Service in the form of a grant which provides \$10,000 annually in return for a list of tasks that are negotiated each year.

IaHBS has a contract with the USPS to carry the mail to and from Isle au Haut, six days each week. IaHBS carries the mail on scheduled passenger trips, and books the income as a scheduled service. It amounts to about \$20,000 per year.

IaHBS also operates excursions and cruises during the summer months.

## **IaHBS passengers**

The people most often using the system are year-round residents. Based on the 2010 census count of 73 residents, resident one way trips average out to almost 50 trips per year per resident.

The second most frequent group of riders would probably be construction crews and contractors, most often during the summer. When one or more houses are being built, constructions crews are daily round trip riders.

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Summer residents or renters ride the boat with some frequency, although IaHBS has no count for them.

Campers, day trip hikers and day trip tourists are a group which accounts for one round trip per year per person, but which in July and August probably is the largest group in number.

By agreement with the Park Service, IaHBS limits the number of passengers taken to the Park Service landing at Duck Harbor to 50 per day. In a summer with good weather, there are an average of five or six days when IaHBS turns away Park day trippers because of that limit.

### Service by Route

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*The importance of transit services cannot be measured simply by the number of trips. Transit dependent individuals (including those with disabilities) require access to basic services in addition to all of the benefits their communities offer.*

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Isle au Haut Boat Services owns two boats. The winter schedule uses one boat, from mid-October through early June and provides two round trips per day to the Isle au Haut Town Landing, Monday through Saturday, and monthly Sunday or holiday round trips. The summer schedule provides five round trips per day, Monday through Saturday, and two round trips on Sunday. Two of the summer round trips provide service to the Acadia National Park Landing on Isle au Haut at Duck Harbor. (Isle au Haut is a remote area of the Park.) IaHBS is the only commercial operator authorized to land passengers at the Duck Harbor Landing.

### Importance of IaHBS to the Region and its Economy

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*Public transit does more than ensure transit dependent individuals can move around their communities, and provide a safe alternative to using an automobile. The economy benefits on a variety of levels through residents and people visiting the community accessing local supermarkets, shopping centers, healthcare services and local neighborhood businesses.*

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Isle au Haut Boat Services operates the Isle au Haut Mailboat. The IaH Mailboat carries passengers, mail and freight year-round between Stonington, Maine and the island community of Isle au Haut. There is no car ferry to the island, and there is no other year-round scheduled service. Isle au Haut Boat Services is a Maine not-for-profit corporation with IRS 501 (c)(3) certification.

The IaH Mailboat is the only carrier of US mail, and the only scheduled carrier of freight and parcel service (UPS, FedEx, FedEx Ground) shipments between Isle au Haut and the mainland. Island bound freight includes supplies for the Island Store, personal goods, construction materials and raw materials

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for island businesses. One island business, Black Dinah Chocolatiers, receives about two tons of raw materials per year for their island production operation. Off island freight includes outgoing mail, personal goods, parcel shipments, and items for shoreside repair. Black Dinah's outgoing order fulfillment is entirely carried on the IaH Mailboat.

The winter Mailboat schedule allows students in grades 9–12 to commute daily to Stonington/Deer Isle High School. Weekly visits to the island K-8 school by a music teacher and an art teacher also use the Mailboat.

The IaH Mailboat is the primary resource for emergency service from the island. The crew is on call 24/7 for medical emergencies, for which there is no charge. IaHBS also has in place cooperative agreements or memoranda of understanding with the Park Service and Knox and Hancock Counties for cooperative services in case of emergencies.

The 2010 Census lists Isle au Haut as having 73 residents. In FY 2011 the Mailboat carried over 3500 resident one way trips, and 188 school one way fares.

In terms of economic value to Stonington and Deer Isle, Isle au Haut Boat Services contributes almost \$400,000 per year directly to the local economy, including payroll, repairs, maintenance, and fuel. This does not include the indirect value of tourist trade passing through Deer Isle on the way to Acadia National Park or Isle au Haut rentals and day trips.

### Accomplishments

Recent accomplishments include:

#### Operations

- Acquired and installed a new engine for the Mink (Spring, 2010);
- Expanded excursion service, resulting in full use of boat capacity during the summer;
- Changed the boat schedule to Duck Harbor to accommodate hikers (less time on the island as requested by hikers).

#### Improved efficiencies

- Began restroom renovations at the Stonington wharf;
- Replaced the safety railings around the wharf (the new railings are safer and higher);
- Reduced boat speed slightly (by 50 rpm), resulting in a fuel savings of 10%;
- Utilized donations and community support to help meet expenses.

#### Service gaps

- **Geographic coverage.** There are no known gaps in geographic coverage. IaHBS does not envision any change to its geographic coverage.

- **Time of Day/Weekend.** During the winter season IaHBS does not operate on Sundays, except for some scheduled Sunday or holiday trips once per month. While more winter Sunday trips might be useful to the Isle au Haut residents, the passenger count wouldn't justify the expense.

The boat is in Stonington overnight. It would be desirable to station the Mailboat at Isle au Haut overnight in the winter, for emergencies and for an earlier departure to the mainland for students. However, there are no island residents who have a Captain's license and who want to work for the Mailboat. There is no convenient housing on the island for a mainland resident captain who might be willing to spend nights on the island.

- **Clients.** IaHBS officials have often discussed adding a barge service to its capabilities, which would provide better service to builders and to residents needing to move cars or trucks between the island and Stonington. It has not been possible to make a business case for a barge service.
- **Service Quality.** Not applicable. The Town of Isle au Haut recently developed a comprehensive plan. Most responders rated the Mailboat service as good.

## Future Priorities and Projects

The future priorities and projects shown below reflect future investments that were first identified by Isle au Haut Boat Services and subsequently modified and prioritized by the public at a MaineDOT-sponsored Regional Transit Summit that was held at the Ellsworth City Hall auditorium in Ellsworth on December 13, 2013. Attendees were provided the opportunity to add a potential project or identify an issue for consideration at any time during the meeting.

In order to ensure maximum participation, MaineDOT sent an invitational letter, an agenda, and a list of potential priorities and projects to riders, social service agencies, healthcare facilities, chambers of commerce, private businesses, other transit operators in the region, members of the general public who had previously expressed an interest in transportation issues, and area legislators. Invitees unable to attend were afforded the opportunity to e-mail MaineDOT and make comments and recommendations both prior to, and following the meeting—these comments were included when compiling the ratings for each identified project.

A representative of MaineDOT provided an outline of the purpose and need for public input in this planning process to attendees and encouraged their full participation. A representative from each transit agency in attendance provided a brief history of their services and fielded questions from attendees. A facilitator presented the provider-identified future projects to the group and invited discussion which gave them with an opportunity to add to the list of potential projects. Attendees were provided with scoring sheets and rated each project. This process was repeated for each FTA/MaineDOT funded transit agency in the region.

The results of the Regional Transit Summit are reflected in two tables on the following pages. The first table shows the number of people who identified each of the priorities/projects as very important, somewhat important, not important, and no opinion. The second table shows the percentage ranking of the various priorities and projects in priority order.

**NUMERICAL RATING OF PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS**  
**Isle au Haut Boat Services/IaH Mailboat**

<b>Future Priorities and Potential Projects</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Little Importance</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
A. Isle au Haut Boat Services is seeking public and private funds for a new vessel to replace the aging wooden boat, the <i>Miss Lizzie</i> .	16	1	1	3

**PERCENTAGE RATING OF PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS**  
**Isle au Haut Boat Services/IaH Mailboat**

<b>Future Priorities and Potential Projects</b>	<b>Very Important to Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Little Importance to No Opinion</b>
A. Isle au Haut Boat Services is seeking public and private funds for a new vessel to replace the aging wooden boat, the <i>Miss Lizzie</i> .	81%	19%



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<b>ISLE AU HAUT BOAT SERVICES</b>		
<b>Annual Report – Past Two Years</b>		
	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>
<b>Volunteer Resources</b>		
Volunteer Drivers	0	0
<b>Vehicles</b>		
Number of Active Vehicles in Fleet	2	2
Number of Inactive Vehicles in Fleet	0	0
Number of Spare Vehicles in Fleet	0	0
Number of Vehicles Disposed	0	0
Number of Vehicles Sold	0	0
Number of ADA Accessible Vehicles	1	1
<b>Annual Operating Expenses</b>		
Annual Transit Operating Expenses	\$486,235	\$493,935
Annual Social Services Operating Expenses	0	0
<b>Annual Administrative Expenses</b>		
Annual Transit Administrative Expenses	\$13,819	\$14,038
Annual Social Services Administrative Expenses	0	0
<b>Annual Operating Revenues</b>		
Fare Revenues*	\$375,567	\$363,339
Transit Contract Revenues	0	0
Social Service Contract Revenues	0	0
FTA-Federal Operating Assistance	\$58,000	\$58,000
MaineDOT – State Operating Assistance	0	0
Local Operating Funds	\$95,235	\$85,111
Nat'l Park Service Cooperative Agreement	\$10,000	\$10,000
Total Annual Operating Revenues	\$538,802	\$516,450
<b>FTA-Sources of Capital Funds</b>		
FTA-Federal Capital Assistance	0	0
MaineDOT-State Capital Assistance	\$37,021	0
Local Capital Funds	0	0
Total Capital Funds	\$37,021	0
<b>Annual Miles</b>		
Annual Transit Miles (vehicle miles)	14,854	13,594
Annual Social Service Miles (passenger miles)	0	0

\*Fare Revenues include US Postal Service Contract, \$24,085 and \$25,059 in 2011 and 2012

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	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>
<b>Annual Vehicle Hours</b>	2,129	1,948
<b>Annual Passenger Trips</b>		
Annual Transit Passenger Trips	1,978	1,822
Annual Social Services Passenger Trips	0	0
<b>Safety</b>		
Fatalities	0	0
Major Incidents	0	0
Major Injuries	0	0

**Isle au Haut Boat Services  
Capital Plan**

<b>Capital Item</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Replace Miss Lizzie	2013 - 2017	\$700,000
New inflatable life raft for the Mink	2013	\$5,000
New radar/chart plotter for the Mink	2014	\$10,000
New VHF radios for the Mink and Miss Lizzie	2012 & 2013	\$6,000

**Isle au Haut Boat Services  
Trips, Vehicle Miles  
Past Two Fiscal Years**

<b>ROUTE</b>	<b>One-Way Trips</b>		<b>Vehicle Miles</b>	
	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>
Stonington / Isle au Haut Town Landing	14,603	13,963	10,318	9,814
Stonington / Isle au Haut Town & Duck Harbor	2,391	3,211	4,536	3,780
<b>Total</b>	16,994	17,174	14,854	13,594

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<b>Isle au Haut Boat Services Revenues by Passenger Fare Category Past Two Fiscal Years</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>FY 2011*</b>	<b>FY 2012*</b>
Full Fare adult	\$224,582.00	\$207,607.75
Full Fare child	\$ 7,105.00	\$ 6,580.00
Resident adult	\$ 25,702.50	\$ 33,307.50
Resident child	\$ 489.25	\$ 434.50
Student	\$ 474.00	\$ 633.00
Passes	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$258,352.75</b>	<b>\$248,562.25</b>

\*Does not include US Postal Service contract, parking, freight or shoreside services.

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<b>ISLE AU HAUT BOAT SERVICES</b>		
<b>Revenues And Expenses – Past Two Years</b>		
	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>		
MaineCare	-	-
State (non-capital, administered by MaineDOT)	-	-
Other State (e.g. Maine Department of Labor)	-	-
FTA:		
5307 (small urban area systems)	-	-
5309 (capital assistance)	-	-
5310 (elderly, disabled)	-	-
5311 (rural area systems)	\$58,000	\$58,000
5316 (job access, reverse commute)	-	-
5317 (new freedom)	-	-
Passes	-	-
Fares	\$351,482	\$338,280
Advertising	-	-
Contract Revenue - USPS	\$24,085	\$25,059
Community Support	\$95,235	\$85,111
Other		
Park Service Cooperative Agreement	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$538,802</b>	<b>\$516,450</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Payroll, Benefits, Testing & Training	\$246,272	\$247,803
Facilities, Lease & Maintenance	\$52,881	\$54,377
Ferryboat Repairs & Maintenance	\$42,236	\$46,229
Ferryboat Fuel	\$22,280	\$35,116
Insurance	\$64,399	\$57,660
G&A	\$18,803	\$20,563
Bank Charges	\$8,570	\$8,150
Depreciation	\$37,214	\$38,076
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$500,054</b>	<b>\$507,973</b>

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<b>ISLE AU HAUT BOAT SERVICES</b>		
<b>Budget For FY 2013 and 2014</b>		
	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>
<b>Operating Income</b>		
Scheduled passenger and freight services	\$351,811	\$362,365
US Postal Service contract	25,059	25,059
National Park Service cooperative agreement	10,000	10,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$386,870</b>	<b>\$397,424</b>
<b>Operating Expenses, Scheduled Services</b>		
Payroll	\$225,292	\$232,051
Employee benefits	25,728	25,952
Testing, training, mileage, travel	1,556	1,556
<b>Total employment expenses</b>	<b>252,577</b>	<b>259,560</b>
Facilities, lease and maintenance	54,377	54,377
Ferryboat repairs and maintenance	46,229	46,229
Ferryboat fuel	36,521	37,616
Insurance	60,543	62,359
G & A	20,563	20,563
Bank charges	8,150	8,150
Depreciation	38,076	38,076
<b>Total Scheduled Service Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$517,035</b>	<b>\$526,930</b>
<b>Net Scheduled Operating Income</b>	<b>(130,165)</b>	<b>(129,506)</b>
<b>Other Income</b>		
Private donations and in-kind	\$41,314	\$42,554
Town of Isle au Haut	45,000	45,000
FTA 5311	58,000	58,000
<b>Other Income Total</b>	<b>\$144,314</b>	<b>\$145,554</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$14,149</b>	<b>\$16,048</b>

## **Appendix**

### **Surveys and Studies**

There have been no passenger studies in recent years, but an analysis of the IaHBS contained in the Isle au Haut comprehensive plan concluded that the scope and nature of the IaHBS is generally suitable for the Town's needs.