



News Release

Tillicum Excursion closes at Blake Island Marine State Park

Long-term contract with concessionaire Argosy Cruises comes to an end

OLYMPIA – Dec. 13, 2021 – The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission announced that Tillicum Excursion at Blake Island Marine State Park will close. Argosy Cruises, the concessionaire that operated Tillicum Excursion (formerly known as Tillicum Village) made the difficult decision to opt out of their long-standing contract with Parks due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

““We are sad to end Tillicum Excursion as we always saw huge opportunity in our operation on Blake Island,” said Molly Schlobohm, Chief Operating Officer for Argosy Cruises. “We were really just scratching the surface on what could be offered out on the island but unfortunately, COVID-19 and the loss of revenue needed to continue operating on the island has forced us to scale back and simply focus on our core business of boat tours, charters and transportation.”

Parks intends to keep the concession closed during 2022 to assess the needs of the buildings and actively plan for the future. Parks staff are interested in seeking input from potential partners or concessionaires as they develop concepts for the future of structures and programming on the island. Interested parties should contact parks development division manager Todd Tatum at todd.tatum@parks.wa.gov for more information.

“Tillicum Excursion offered a unique opportunity for many Washingtonians and visitors to explore the beauty of Blake Island and the rich history of the area,” said Tatum. “We hope to continue to offer programming and enriching experiences and want to do this in a way that respects the past, present and future of the island.”

Blake Island remains open to the public. The 1,127-acre marine camping park includes five miles of saltwater beach shoreline and is currently only accessible by private boat. To learn more about Blake Island, visit the Parks [website](#).

From 1962-2009, Argosy Cruises provided transportation to Tillicum Village on Blake Island. In 2009, Argosy Cruises took over the concession from the former operator making them the sole provider. Over the years, Argosy Cruises invested significant funds to improve the experience including the development of a new programming and the expansion of other experiences on the island, including guided nature walks and a walk-up café that catered to boaters visiting the state park. Parks and Argosy Cruises are working together with a local historian to ensure all art and regalia are preserved in an appropriate space.

News media contacts:

Amanda McCarthy, Interim Communications Director
media@parks.wa.gov

Todd Tatum, Parks Development Division Manager
todd.tatum@parks.wa.gov

About Washington State Parks

The [Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission](#) manages more than 100 state parks and properties totaling approximately 120,000 acres. The Commission provides a variety of recreation opportunities for citizens and provides stewardship protection for a diverse array of natural, cultural and historic resources. State Parks' statewide programs include long-distance trails, boating safety and winter recreation.

About Argosy Cruises

For more than 70 years, Argosy Cruises has been part of the Northwest fabric. Founded as the Spring Street Water Taxi and then through the years operating as Seattle Harbor Tours and now as Argosy Cruises, our family-owned and Seattle-operated company has become the Northwest's premier cruise company.

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