

Kootenay Lake Ferry Service Improvements Project

Project Update - June 2025



Ministry of
Transportation
and Transit

The Kootenay Lake Ferry Service Improvements Project is delivering a safer and more reliable ferry service for users. This includes improvements to the Balfour and Kootenay Bay terminals, which were completed in summer 2022, and construction of a new electric-ready ferry to replace the aging MV Balfour, which is ongoing.

Update

Construction of the new Kootenay Lake Ferry is progressing, and key milestones have been achieved this year.

Despite challenges related to the unique nature of the project, the new vessel is currently scheduled for delivery to the Ministry by December 2026. Once delivered, sea trials and crew training will commence before the ferry enters service, which is expected for summer 2027.

The Ministry and Design-Build Contractor remain committed to delivering a high-quality vessel that will meet the needs of the local community for many years to come.

Ferry service on Kootenay Lake will continue without interruption.



External painting of the new vessel's superstructure is under way.

Construction

Hull construction and superstructure assembly is nearing completion. Work is now focused on outfitting vessel systems, which are estimated to be more than 50% complete since this work commenced in fall 2024.

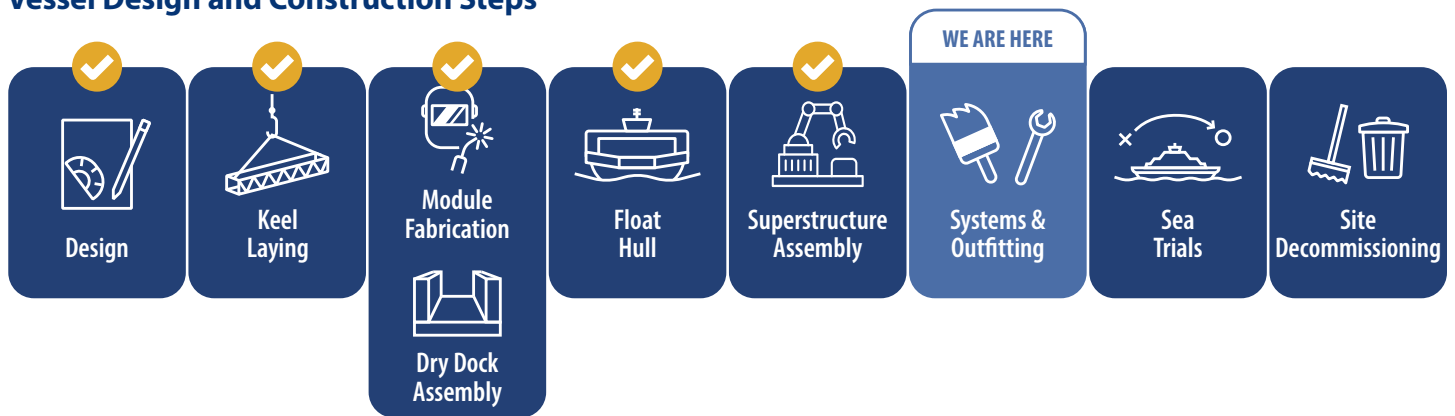
Outfitting work includes installation of mechanical, electrical and control systems and interior components, installation of auxiliary systems bilge and fire pumps and piping, as well as engine cooling, exhaust, and mooring systems. Crews are also working on the vehicle deck and interior spaces.

During a period of lower water levels on Kootenay Lake in March and April, the vessel was temporarily repositioned into deeper waters to allow work to continue. Once lake water levels rose, the vessel was returned closer to shore.

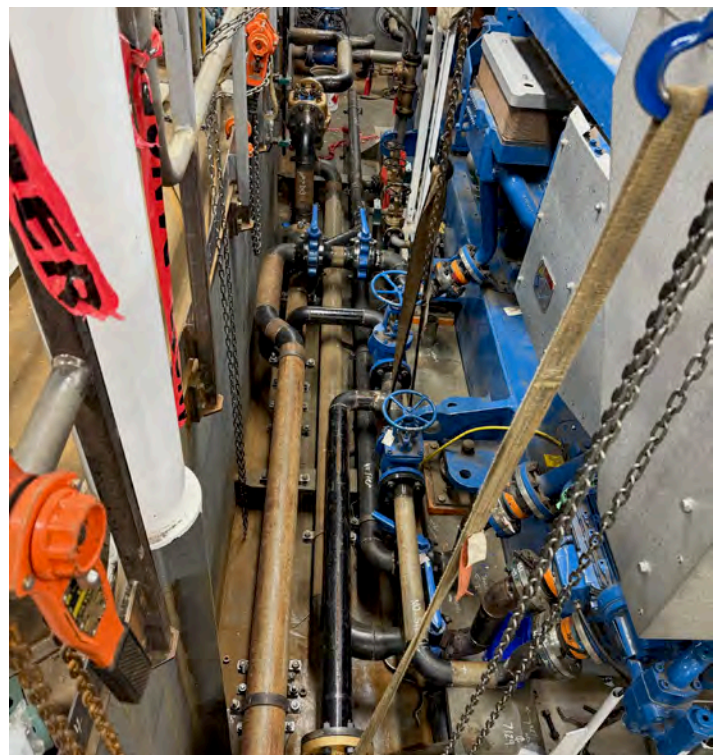


The switchboard room cabling being installed.

Vessel Design and Construction Steps



The rescue boat davit has been installed.



Installation of the engine cooling system pipework is well under way.

Did you know?

In line with the Province's aim to electrify 100% of its inland ferry fleet, the new vessel will be built electric-ready and include the systems and components for electric propulsion alongside diesel engines. Once shore power is in place and the technology has been tested for reliable daily use, a full conversion will be made from diesel to electric propulsion in the future.

Kootenay Lake Ferry Service

The ferry service continues to operate as usual during the project. Please visit gov.bc.ca/kootenaylakeferry to view the schedule and and consult [DriveBC](#) for up to date information about current conditions at the terminals.



Background

In 2018, the Province consulted with ferry users, area residents, and businesses about proposed improvements to the service, safety, and infrastructure of the Kootenay Lake Ferry.

The Province made key changes to the final project plan after considering the input received, along with technical, environmental, and financial considerations. Some of these considerations were documented in the [2018 Consideration Memo](#).

In April 2019, the Province, with funding support from the Government of Canada, announced safety and efficiency improvements to the Kootenay Lake Ferry Service.

The project involves the procurement and delivery of a new electric-ready vessel, and the completed safety and amenity improvements to both the Balfour and Kootenay Bay terminals and minor dredging in the west arm of Kootenay Lake.

Collectively, these improvements will provide ferry users with a safer and more reliable ferry service as well as contribute to the Province's goal of employing electric propulsion on all inland ferries.