

Kodiak Could Welcome Tustumena on Monday

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

If all goes according to plan, the state ferry Tustumena could be pulling up to pier I in Kodiak on Monday. An email from the Alaska Department of Transportation's office said the vessel is currently undergoing sea trials, and so far no problems have been identified. Stability tests have been done and the department expects an approval from the U.S. Coast Guard to begin service by the end of the week.

If that approval is given, the ferry will begin service from Seldovia on Sunday, and arrive in Kodiak around 1 p.m. on Monday.

It will have been just shy of a full year since the Tusty tied up in Kodiak. The ship entered the Seward Ship's Dry Dock in November for scheduled maintenance, and was originally set to return to service in April. But poor welds and inferior materials caused several delays, leaving much of Southwest Alaska with limited or no ferry service for the past year.

The email from the DOT said the ferry may receive a temporary stability letter if the Coast Guard is shorthanded due to government shut down. That means the vessel would be allowed to operate, but would most likely reduce the amount of vehicles allowed on board. A final stability letter would be issued at a later date.