

## Part of Alaska's Unique Heritage

The M/V *Chugach* is the U.S. Forest Service's last remaining ranger boat. Designed by Seattle naval architect L.H. Coolidge and built in 1925 by the Lake Union Dry Dock and Machine Works, the M/V *Chugach* was part of a fleet that once included 11 ranger boats. From 1925 to 1950, the M/V *Chugach* operated out of Cordova, Alaska, along the 12,000 miles of coastlines in the Chugach and Tongass national forests.

Throughout her history, the M/V *Chugach* played an integral role in Alaska. Considered the best handling as well as the most seaworthy oceangoing vessel in the entire ranger boat fleet, the M/V *Chugach* served as an important transportation and communication link among the communities of Prince William Sound and Southeast Alaska and was involved in many dramatic search and rescue operations.

Cover: Image of Yakutat Bay, Alaska, May 2002. Photo/Robert Tuller III.  
Overlaid with M/V *Chugach* photo/Forest Service, 2007.

*Friday, Dec. 7*

*U.S. Commissioner Harwood and Lieut. Colwell of the Naval Radio Station called up and reported the Dineen boat two days overdue from Hinchinbrook Light, heavy weather prevailing.*

*Super McDonald arranged to have the Chugach begin a search, leaving at daylight tomorrow morning, provided Dineen fails to arrive this afternoon.*

*The Fidelity, Capt. Crooker will also participate in the search.*

*About 4 pm the Dineen boat put in an appearance being towed. So all's well.*

Excerpt from the ship's log, recorded by LC Pratt in port in Cordova, 1928.

## M/V *Chugach* Ranger Boat *the last of its kind*



Photo: Rachel Myron

“In case of any trouble or disaster in Southeastern Alaska, shipwrecks, sickness, or sorrow, the public appeals to the nearest ranger boat... the appeal is never in vain.”



## Built to Last

Currently docked in Petersburg, Alaska—her home port since 1953—the M/V *Chugach* is a 62-foot, wooden-hulled crew vessel featuring:

- Round-bottomed displacement hull with a sharp, slightly forward-raked bow
- Rounded fantail stern
- Sheer line rising gently toward the bow along a raised forward deck.
- Ribs and original stem fashioned from white oak
- Douglas fir deck and hull planking (iron bark shields some of the hull to protect against logs and sea ice)
- Douglas fir deadwood, keelson, and keel
- Seven bunks plus accommodations for one crew member in the wheel house and a full galley outfitted with an oil stove, a refrigerator, and other appliances.

The M/V *Chugach* is scheduled for repairs in Wrangell, Alaska beginning in May 2016 with completion scheduled August 2016.

## Help Us Preserve the M/V *Chugach*

Forest Service field-going personnel need economically feasible modes of transportation for their day-to-day work activities, and must consider the costs of maintaining and operating the M/V *Chugach*. For this reason, the Forest Service is seeking proposals from the public to lease, adaptively re-use, and preserve the vessel.

## Submit an Idea

Send us a brief proposal letter or email with information:

- Your name or the name of your organization
- Your alternative use idea or feasibility plan
- All lease proposals will be considered
- Particular consideration will be given to proposals that best preserve the boat's historic integrity.



M/V *Chugach*, Saginaw Bay, May 17, 2008. Photo: Forest Service/Jane Smith

### Contact Us

Keri Hicks, Heritage Program Leader  
Forest Service Alaska Region  
P. O. Box 21628  
Juneau, AK 99802  
907-586-7859  
Email: [rangerboat@fs.fed.us](mailto:rangerboat@fs.fed.us)

More information and specifications at:  
[www.fs.usda.gov/goto/MVChugach](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/MVChugach)