

WHATCOM COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #11

Lummi Island Volunteer Fire Department

3809 Legoe Bay Road * P.O. Box 130 * Lummi Island, WA 98262
Phone: (360) 758-2411 Fax: (360) 758-2041 www.lummiislandfire.com

Emergency Response for Whatcom County Fire District 11 (WCFD11) Current vs. Gooseberry Point Dock Shut Down

WCFD11 does not know what Lummi Nation and Whatcom County will arrive at or when. This is a brief report on the potential impact to WCFD11 operations in the event the Gooseberry Point dock is shut down. This report is not an indication what is going to happen with the Gooseberry Point dock.

Fire and Non Medical

Current:

WCFD11 receives mutual aid from neighboring districts. The response time for neighboring districts is about 20 – 30 min. which allows WCFD11 to commit significant resources on an aggressive initial attack knowing additional resources are not long to arrive.

Gooseberry Point Dock Shut Down:

WCFD11 will have to conserve resources and place more emphasis on protecting lives and exposures than on initial attack.

Medical

Current:

There are three main categories of Medical Calls which are based on patient condition. Minor Medical (MM) usually does not require additional medical attention, and are left at home, or they go in by private vehicle. Basic Life Support (BLS) patients are transported to Gooseberry Point where a BLS ambulance takes them to St. Joseph's Hospital (SJH). This requires our ambulance and a few volunteers to be out of service for a short period of time, which due to low call volume and short trip time is a minimal risk. Advanced Life Support (ALS) transports in 2 ways, ALS ground ambulance or air ambulance. This is determined by patient condition, and availability of resources.

Gooseberry Point Dock Shut Down:

Transporting BLS patients with a longer trip time increases the risk that out of service resources will be needed and will require volunteers to give more time away from their own lives. The Coastguard and Sheriff have boats that can transport patients if the weather permits. With no docking facilities on the island, getting patients from land to vessel will be challenging at best. ALS patients and BLS patients that have the potential of worsening over time will most likely require air transportation. In the event air transport is unavailable, boat transportation will be the only option. If both air and boat transportation are unavailable, WCFD11 will be required to provide the highest level of care possible until they become available.

WCFD11 is working with Dispatch, and the Whatcom County Medical Program Director to develop a contingency plan that provides the best patient care possible in the event the Gooseberry Point dock is shut down. Weather will be a much stronger factor in how patients are transported off the island.