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NS: No Halifax-Maine ferry for now, says official

By Staff, Metro Canada

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[YARMOUTH, NS] — While ferry service is likely returning to Yarmouth in the spring, it will be at least 2012 before there is a Halifax-Portland, Maine, ferry.

Bruce McNeil, spokesman for Scotia Cruises, announced last week he would not be able to start up a Halifax-Portland ferry in 2011 but is hoping for 2012.

He told the Portland Press Herald a group of investors met a few weeks ago and decided it was too late in the season to get it going for 2011.

“People are creatures of habit. They book their summer vacations the year before,” he said. “You need at least 12 months in advance to market a service. It’s a matter of economics. In our professional opinion, it would be business suicide to try to do this in six months.”

Five operators who want to run a Yarmouth to New England ferry have until October 15 to get their proposals in.

Yarmouth has been without a ferry since the high-speed Cat stopped last year.



The CAT ferry — Yarmouth Vanguard photo

“I’m 99 per cent sure there will be (ferry service in the spring). These are good operators, established and know what they’re doing,” said Dave Whiting, with the Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission.

It won’t be a fast ferry, instead it will be a mini-cruise, he said.

As for McNeil’s plans for a Halifax ferry service, Whiting said he doesn’t expect it to float.

“They won’t be running in 2012. They have no money and no boat.”

Another company, Karlson Shipping Company/American Ferries Inc., also has its eye on possibly starting up a Boston-Halifax overnight ferry in the near future.

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