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Assistance for Bay Ferries Limited

Tourism, Culture and Heritage October 2, 2007 2:05 PM

The government of Nova Scotia is helping to maintain and promote an important transportation link between Yarmouth and Maine with an investment of \$2.5 million dollars over two years in Bay Ferries Limited.

"The provincial government is making this investment for the economic well-being of southwestern Nova Scotia," said Len Goucher, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. "Supporting the Bay Ferries Cat service will contribute to the regional and provincial tourism industry."

Yarmouth continues to be a strategic entry point for visitors to Nova Scotia, especially for those from the United States. Bay Ferries Limited operates the Cat high-speed ferry between Yarmouth and two ports in Maine -- Bar Harbor and Portland.

"This investment in the Yarmouth to Maine ferry will help our company maintain service through a period of challenging marketing conditions for Canada and U.S. travel," said Mark MacDonald, president and CEO of Bay Ferries.

Over the past 10 years, there has been a 30 per cent decline in U.S. visitation to Canada. Confusion about passport requirements, the strong Canadian dollar and high gas prices are among the conditions causing the trend.

Tourism, Culture and Heritage and the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership also invested \$650,000 earlier this year to continue a long-standing marketing partnership with the company. The funding was used for television, newspaper, magazine and online advertising in New York, Boston and along the Eastern seaboard to help increase visitor traffic.

Mr. Goucher has met with tourism operators and others in Yarmouth to discuss challenges in attracting visitors to the area. The department is designating a new travel region called Yarmouth and Acadian Shore to highlight the area in its marketing materials, such as the Doers and Dreamers Guide.