

Hamilton Jet Model HJ362
 Application Review

Quad Waterjets Help “Rocket Ship” Fly to Alaskan Glacier



“Little Rocket Ship” is the nickname the new high speed tourist ferry ‘Chilkat Express’ picked up in only a few weeks of operation. Cruising at over 40 knots the catamaran operates as part of a unique and popular tourist excursion in a remote glacial region of Alaska.

Chilkat Express features a foil assisted hull designed in New Zealand and built in the United States. Powered by quadruple Caterpillar 800hp engines and Hamilton HJ362 waterjets the vessel has a top speed of 46 knots and can maintain 36 knots operating on only two engines and jets.

The vessel’s owner/operator, Chilkat Cruises & Tours, is extremely pleased with its performance. Chilkat Express carries tourists on the “Glacier Point Wilderness Safari”, a five and a half hour excursion from Skagway Alaska to a remote glacier where passengers hike and canoe up to the glacier’s

face. The vessel is bow-landed on the beach for dropping off and picking up tourists. In 2001 the Chilkat Guides expect over 12,000 people to take the glacier safari.

The Chilkat Express has replaced six small aircraft that previously did the transport for this trip. The 28 nautical mile voyage takes about 40 minutes and has the added benefit of being able to stop to view some of the marine life in the area, including humpback whales, Orca and sea lions. Generally sea conditions are flat with up to five-foot chop and 30 knot winds. The Chilkat Express slows to 30-35 knots in heavy weather.

▶ Brief Specifications

NAME: Chilkat Express	WATERJETS: Quad Hamilton Model HJ362
SERVICE: Tourist Excursion Ferry	ENGINES: Quad Caterpillar diesels Model 3406E, each 596kW (800hp) @ 2300rpm
LENGTH: 18.90 metres	DESIGNER: Teknicraft Design, Auckland, New Zealand
BEAM: 6.70 metres	BUILDER: All American Marine, Bellingham WA, USA
CONSTRUCTION: Aluminium	OWNER/OPERATOR: Chilkat Cruises & Tours, Haines, Alaska
DISPLACEMENT: 35 tonnes	Hamilton Jet DISTRIBUTOR: HamiltonJet Inc, Seattle WA, USA
PAYLOAD: 63 passengers + 3 crew	
SPEED: 46 knots [max] 40 knots [cruise] 36 knots [on two jets only]	

