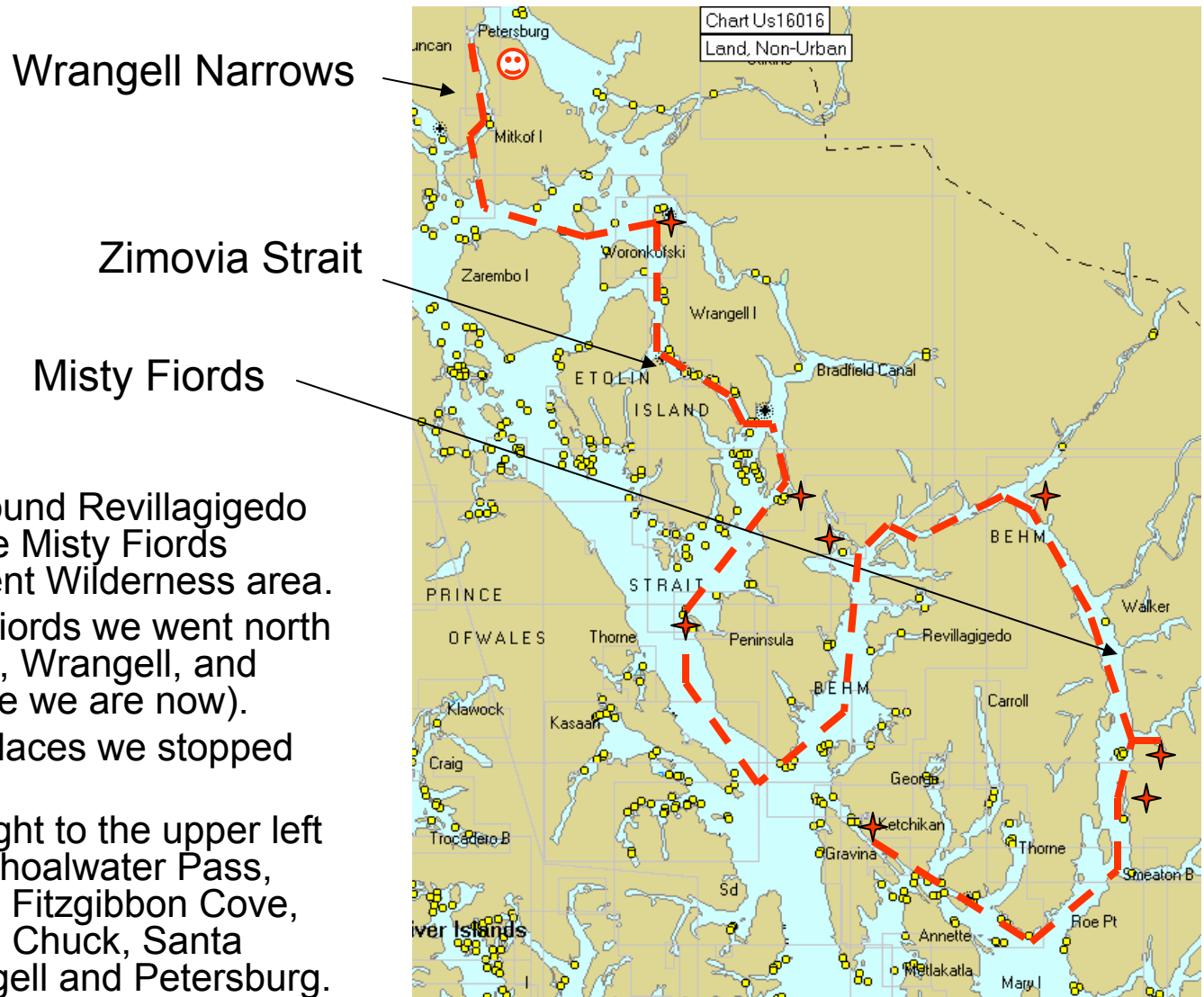


After Ketchikan



- We did a loop around Revillagigedo Island through the Misty Fiords National Monument Wilderness area.
- Following Misty Fiords we went north to Meyer's Chuck, Wrangell, and Petersburg (where we are now).
- The Stars mark places we stopped along the way.
- From the lower right to the upper left we stopped at: Shoalwater Pass, Punchbowl Cove, Fitzgibbon Cove, Yes Bay, Meyer's Chuck, Santa Anna Inlet, Wrangell and Petersburg.

Yes Bay



Fitzgibbon Cove

Punchbowl Cove

Shoalwater Pass

⊗ - Orcas
⊗ - Bears

MISTY FJORDS WILDERNESS AREA (East section of Behm canal)

Misty Fiords

- 2.2 Million acres of wilderness allow some breathing room for wildlife without any clear cuts or resorts.
- At each anchorage we saw a large variety of animals looking for snacks or just looking at us. There were even some unexpected surprises like hummingbirds who would buzz us like stunt pilots while we quietly sailed along.
- The depths of the water are over 1,000 feet almost right up to the shore where they rise several thousand more feet to the sky.
- This picture is the approach to the entrance of Punchbowl Cove, one of the stops along the route.



Shoalwater Pass

- We anchored here for our first leg out of Ketchikan. We got a late start after running around town looking for some last minute parts, but we're glad we stopped at this anchorage because of the resident we saw.



Orcas

- We saw our first Orca pod when we left Shoalwater Pass. There were about 3 adults and one teen-age Orca feeding in the currents around Eddystone Rock.
- I tried to get some photos of them, but they were pretty elusive and off in the distance, so they didn't show up very well in the still photos.



Eddystone Rock is surrounded by 600+ feet deep waters. It's like a giant rock spire rising from the bottom. The Orcas were feeding in the currents in the surrounding area.

Punchbowl Cove

- Although the entrance is narrow, it is deep enough for cruise ships to enter, and to our dismay we saw a large cruise ship creeping its way into the cove. There were also a lot of excursion boats (which support the cruise ships that only stop in Ketchikan) and a constant stream of float planes on “flightseeing” tours.
- Despite the activity, there were very few other people here and once the cruise ship crowds departed we were left to enjoy the wilderness.
- Punchbowl Cove as the name implies is surrounded by steep cliff walls. It is difficult to capture the raw enormous cliffs in photographs. Imagine this is your view all around you.



Punchbowl Pictures



Punchbowl Lake

- There's also a lake that you can hike to and borrow the USFS canoe to explore. We had the whole place to ourselves. And the lake is surrounded by more spectacular cliffs.



Punchbowl Lake Hike

- The hike itself was steep and filled with surprises—you have to watch your step; the bears leave presents behind.



Cliffs

- In every direction we looked, there were granite cliffs. (Hey John & Karen, how'd you like to climb *these!*).
- The water was so still it was hard to tell where the cliffs ended and the water began.



Fitzgibbon Cove

- We kept heading north and had a fantastic downwind sail all the way to Fitzgibbon Cove.
- After anchoring and making dinner we looked out and spotted 3 bears looking for snacks along the shore!
- It was tough to get a picture with all three together and after about 30 minutes two of them bolted for the trees.
- These two appear to be a mother bear with a juvenile.



Meyer's Chuck

- After leaving the wilderness area we sailed around the top of Revillagigedo Island in light breezes and rain to Yes Bay.
- It's actually Yas Bay (a native name for mussel) but its meaning was lost on the "whities" so they renamed it.
- From there we went to Meyer's Chuck, a funky little community with a small public dock. It was pretty crowded so we just anchored in the bay.
- There's no cars, stores or malls here (transportation is entirely by boat or floatplane). In fact, as if the little village wasn't remote enough, there's a few people who decided to move away to the small island on the other side of "town".



Meyer's Chuck Orcas

- We also saw 3 Orcas swimming right outside the bay. Two of them were juvenile Orcas, and one was tiny.
- They are hard to photograph from a distance....

One
Orca
Fin
going
down



Zimovia Strait

- We left Meyer's Chuck for Santa Anna Inlet, where we watched a seal play in the bay doing summersaults and flips in the water.
- Bound for Wrangell, we left Santa Anna Inlet to pass through Zimovia Strait. It was a scenic passage with snow capped mountains in the background.
- Wrangell used to be an old Russian Outpost called Redoubt Saint Dionysius. The British took it over in 1839 (leased it) from the Russians and renamed it Fort Stikine, but when the Americans purchased Alaska, they renamed it Fort Wrangell. Many of the surrounding areas still bare Russian names, like Zimovia Strait.



Zimovia Strait

- Some of the twists and turns through the channel were pretty sharp.
- Hmm, is that island supposed to be in the channel?



Red and
Green
Channel
Markers

Wrangell Narrows

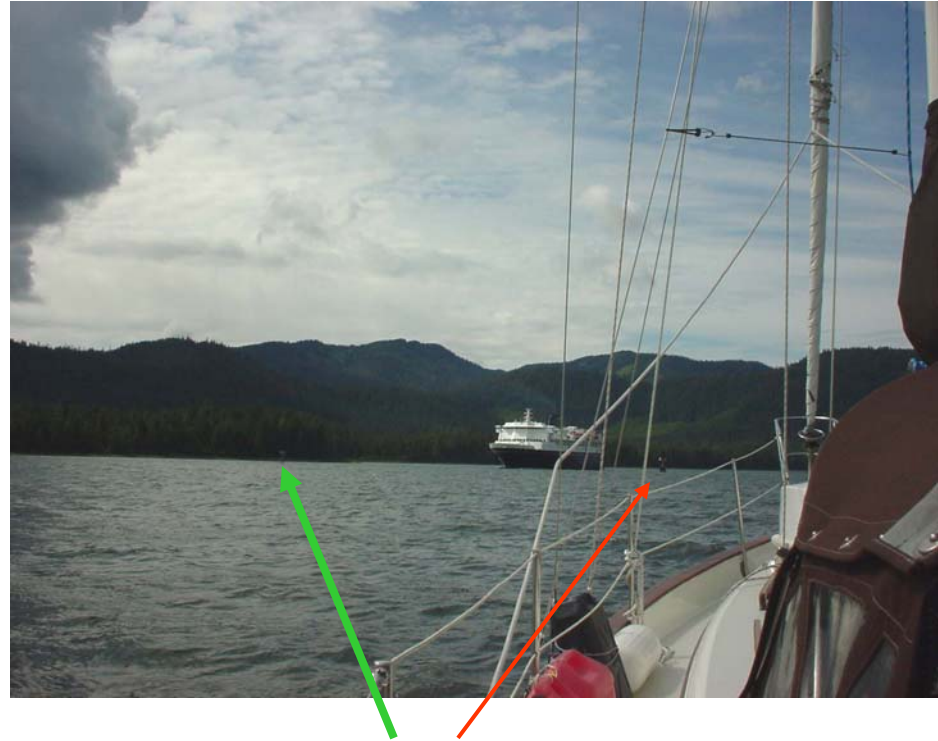
- After restocking on ice and food in Wrangell we kept going north towards Petersburg.
- To get there you have to pass through a long & narrow channel (20 miles long, & only 300 feet wide in many places). Since it is the best route between Petersburg and Wrangell, any boat that fits through takes it.
- This was another case of us squeezing to the outside edge of the channel for barges and ferryboats. Fortunately the big cruise ships can't navigate this passage.
- Yes, that's a Grey Line bus you see on the barge, among other things. We did a short U-Turn to move to the edge of the channel for this monster. Fortunately, we decided to wait in one of the wider spots for him to pass. When the barge got to the narrower sections there was barely twenty feet on either side of him and the channel.
- The tug had to shorten his tow cable so much that it is just barely off the right edge of the photograph. It's probably 100 feet in front of the barge.



Wrangell Narrows



The Barge after it passed us.



Here's an Alaskan Ferry coming down. Notice how much of the channel he takes up (less than the barge). We are waiting in one of the few wider areas for him to pass. The width of the waterway is deceptive because it is a very high tide (the depth is only a few feet outside of the channel markers).

Petersburg

- We arrived in Petersburg to find the current flowing about 2-3 knots through the marina. We've never tried docking in those kinds of conditions before. Since our boat doesn't maneuver very well at slow speeds, we came in fast and used our aft dock line as a break. It was a real crowd pleaser.
- Petersburg is a Norwegian community which is one of the few active seafood processing areas left.
- In the background you can see the origin of one of the nearby glaciers.



Next Stop?

- Our route will take us on a tour of Tracy Arm where icebergs and glaciers can be viewed from the boat.
- Then we are going to continue north to Juneau. Most likely Juneau will be where we start to turn around (by traveling around the West-side of Admiralty Island). We decided that we really don't want to take our "home" into the ice fields of Glacier Bay. Although many boats tour the bay every year with no problems, we decided the safest route is not to go (especially with our slow boat). We might take an excursion boat from Juneau if we feel we really want to see it.
- We'll probably travel south down Chatham Strait and then work our way south through some of the islands. The only goal we really have set is to be back across Dixon Entrance by beginning of August, and across Cape Caution by first week of September. This timing will help ensure we avoid the stormy weather and keep us moving so things stay on track.

