



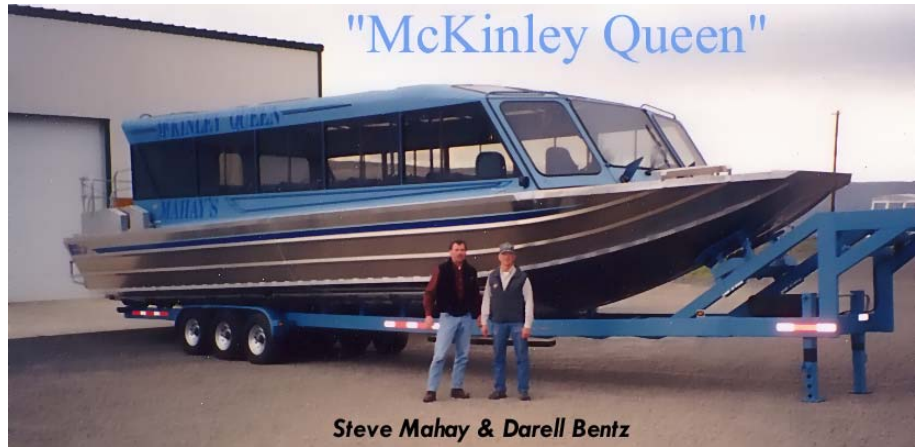
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# UP THE RIVER WITH BENTZ BOATS



## Big Boats for Small Rivers



Steve Mahay & Darell Bentz

### Refreshed web site

If you haven't logged on to [www.bentzboats.com](http://www.bentzboats.com) since February, check out the new video clips. We also added comparison data on diesel versus gas engines and recreational versus commercial boat construction.

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Building a forty-four foot, triple engine, aluminum jet boat that the U.S. Coast Guard will certify to carry 55 passengers in shallow river water requires considerable experience and talent.

Jaws drop when newcomers enter the Bentz Boat manufacturing facility and see a forty four foot boat in the construction stage. "How can something that big navigate river water as shallow as 12 inches? And with up to 55 passengers on board? And with three engines and pumps?"

These big boats evolved as river tour operators demanded more passenger capacity to meet the needs of an expanding tourism industry. Snake River Adventures ordered a triple engine boat to service the cruise lines coming up the Co-

lumbia and Snake Rivers to Lewiston. Low water flows plague the upper Snake in late summer and fall, so the big boats must have the responsive handling and shallow water navigation capability of the small boats. Big boats let the passengers feel safe and comfortable and the owners get more revenue per trip.

Hells Canyon Adventures offers whitewater trips from Hells Canyon Dam through two of the nastiest rapids in North America. They provide "jet back" service to private rafters and rafting companies who need to get their passengers and equipment back to the launch point at the dam. Bentz built a forty foot, triple engine that was both responsive and strong enough to meet the challenge.

Other big boats followed like the River Quest Excursions "Canyon Quest", the Mahay Riverboat Service "Talkeetna Queen" and "McKinley Queen", and Dolphin Adventure Tours' "Big Blue". Bentz solved the upsizing while continuing to build a boat that was low maintenance, well balanced, and architecturally sound. As a result, Bentz's big boats are not only running rivers thought navigable only to rafters, they are running them in water conditions competitors can't match.

Bentz knows how to build big boats for small rivers and best of all, the boats are so unique that they become part of the experience.

# North to Alaska

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### Bentz Boats in Transition

**Darrell's son Bryan** joined the company in May 2000. Bryan splits his time between the shop, doing the rigging and learning construction, and the office, working on the marketing.

**Bill Ronzo** replaced Jeremy Van Lith who followed his new bride to Oregon. As the CAD Engineer, Bill's talents and background have brought a new degree of expertise to this area.

**Roger Ruddle** closed his long time upholstery business and brought his talents to establish an in-house upholstery department. With Roger doing the work exclusively and a few design changes, the upholstery work has never looked better.

Alaska tourism continues to grow and that is good for Bentz Boats. Since the beginning of 2001, Bentz Boats has built and delivered five new boats into Alaska. One for private use (**John Clifton** - see related story) and four for business use.

**Jim and Connie Moore** - Their new twin engine, 28 foot Salmon River Tour boat with Ford 351's and Hamilton 212's has bus style seating and a unique bow rail. The boat will be working for Gordon Mahar at Denali Wilderness Safaris, making it the fourth Bentz Boat in Gordon's fleet. [www.denaliparkadventures.com](http://www.denaliparkadventures.com)

**Bruce and Pam King** - This 28 foot Salmon River Tour boat was set up similar to Jim and Connie Moore's. With twin Chevy 350's and Hamilton 212's, the boat features a 4 foot removable extension to the standard top and bus style seating, the 18 passenger boat will comfortably accommodate clients as they view the

Alaska scenery but in the fall, when Bruce returns to Hells Canyon and the Salmon River in Idaho, the extension can be removed and seats moved to a bench style for guided steelhead trips.

**Steve Mahay** - The fifty-five passenger McKinley Queen joins the fifty-one passenger Talkeetna Queen to give Mahay's Riverboat Service of Talkeetna, Alaska, two of the most technologically advanced river tour jet boats in Alaska. The McKinley Queen's triple Cummins 315 horse diesels drive three Hamilton 274 pumps that easily kept the boat on plane at 2400 RPM with its inaugural trip load of 47 passengers on a 180 mile round trip into Hells Canyon on the Snake River, Bentz's test river in northern Idaho.

[www.mahaysriverboat.com](http://www.mahaysriverboat.com).

**Eric and Roxanne Yancey** - Yancey's Breakaway Adventures of Wrangell, Alaska put two 300 hp Yanmar diesels driving 241 Hamilton jets in the "Stikine Dream", a 28 foot they bought to cover the 320 mile round trip tour they offer to Telegraph Creek on the Stikine River. With a top speed clocked at 59 mph, a cruising speed of 38 mph, and bus style seating, this boat will make the trip more enjoyable for the passengers and more profitable for the Yancey's.

[www.breakawayadventures.com](http://www.breakawayadventures.com)

## Not Your Neighbor's Boat

Just as some drivers want to own a Humvee or a Range Rover, some boaters want to own a Bentz. Bentz, Humvee, and Range Rover have some commonalities. They are all tough. They each have a distinctive look. And maybe most importantly, not very many are in the hands of private owners.

Since last fall, four discriminating river runners purchased specially designed and outfitted Bentz boats.

**John Clifton** - With Alaska's shortage of roads, John decided his RV would be waterborne instead of road bound. He decided upon a 27 foot, single Cummins 315 hp engine with a Hamilton 274 pump, Salmon River model. Since he wanted his boat to perform well in coastal waters as well as rivers, Bentz changed the nose and increased the deadrise from 11 degrees to 14 degrees. He chose a hard top to ward off the heavy Alaskan rains, eliminated the standard bench seats to open up space and added additional windshield latches for a better seal against heavy seas.

**Charlie Rake** - This local resident liked being involved in the manufacturing process almost as much as he likes his boat. A frequent visitor to the plant, Charlie filled a photo album that chronicles the construction of his 28 foot twin. Like most custom boat owners, he wanted some special design features. The center helm spring ride seat is flanked by two more spring

rides and instead of the standard bench seats, two raised bus style seats give the passengers in the second row great visibility with a forward facing position. Two high performance, balanced, fuel injected Marine Power 383 Chevy engines with Hamilton 212's take him back to his "muscle car" youth!

**Roger Brown** - Roger selected a 26 foot, twin engine with Hamilton 212's, Salmon River model and added a specially designed folding bow ladder to make it easier for him and his wife to get on and off their boat. For horsepower, Roger had Valley Crankshaft in Boise, Idaho build 2 high performance Chevy 405c.i. engines. The upholstery business Roger owns in Boise sewed up a set of seats that would make any designer proud and had Bentz design the seat boxes with special brackets to turn them into a bed.

**Bryan Hanson** - This 25' single engine with a 1031 Hamilton pump and Chevy 8.1 L was Bryan's second Bentz. Being his second, he outfitted his boat with many personalized fishing features he didn't have with boat #1.

No, these boats are not their neighbors' boat and it's by design, not by accident.

# UP THE RIVER WITH BENTZ BOATS



**Mahay's Riverboat Service** uses the 44' , triple engine, McKinley Queen to offer 2-4 hour trips on the Susitna and Talkeetna Rivers in Alaska. The hard top has clear Lexan overhead viewing panels and the sliding side windows of the same material lets Mahay's passengers remain comfortable in whatever weather they face and still let them view the marvelous Alaskan scenery. A head, high quality PA system, forced air heat, and side tray storage for cameras and extra clothing add to the passenger comfort. Since river tours into wilderness sites do not come with docks, exiting the boat is accomplished through swing out windshields and aluminum bow ladders with handrails.

"With a load of 12 passengers, 6 canoes, and gear for a week, in the saltwater at 3400 rpm I cruised at 38 mph!" says **Eric Yancey** of his new 28', Yanmar diesel powered Stikine Dream. Pictured here among the icebergs at the LeConte Glacier, this boat passed the exposed water stability test, with canoes on top, required by the U.S. Coast Guard for certification in Alaska. For additional safety, Eric had Bentz install rear cushions on the seat backs and add seat belts.

In Eric's own words, "I am real satisfied and a happy camper!"



**Jim & Connie Moore** decided that retirement wasn't going to keep Jim busy enough and decided to have a new 28 foot twin built and put it to work in Alaska. He made the trip to Denali Wilderness Safaris in Cantwell, Alaska along with two other Bentz Boats that work for Gordon Mahar this May. With a 4 foot extension to the standard top, Jim's passengers will be able to stay dry and comfortable on their scenic tour on the Nenana River and he'll be able to remove the extension for fishing season when the tour season concludes. While boarding through the front windshields, passengers will have the additional security of the bow hand rail.



**Bruce and Pam King** just like being on a river, anywhere. Bruce sold his older Bentz and ordered this new Salmon River model with plans to work it in Alaska in the summer and in the lower 48 in the winter. The 28' twin with Chevy 350's and Hamilton 212's offers a unique top and seating design to accommodate Bruce's changes from a touring season to a fishing season. The 4 foot extension is removable and the bus style seating converts to bench style when Bruce returns to Hell's Canyon and the Salmon River in the fall to steelhead fish.

