

Paul Fellows

I am a long-time resident of Washington State and the Puget Sound region. I have spent many hours on the waters of the Sound, exploring many places. I saw my first Orca in 1958 up around Vancouver Island – I was eight. I'm now 71. During my lifetime I have watched as the rich complement of life in the waters has struggled to survive the activities of human-kind. Most of the actions have been associated with making money while putting off until tomorrow conserving the ecosystem of the Sound and the creatures who live in it.

The Cruise Industry is understandably money driven but the equation is broken. Those in the business know it but simply want to avoid the truth. It's a dirty, filthy industry and its main effort is to hide the huge amount of pollution caused by the ships.

The reader doesn't have to guess my position, if I had my way, cruise ships (except for those totally self-contained during stays in Puget Sound waters) would be totally banned from entering the waters past the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Obviously, that will not happen. Eventually, there will be nothing left except the cruise lines plying empty, smelly waters with dead carcasses of animals floating by. But that won't stop the cruise line industry. They will have IMAX theaters all over their ships to play scenes of Orcas breaching and sea otters splashing. The windows that look out onto the decimated forests, the streams running brown with stinky pollution and the cold, grey, dead waters of the Sound – they will be blacked out and the passengers will be entertained with many distractions and fantasies of what the world looked like in the past.

This is the typical direction of all industries that make profits from our natural world but don't want to pay the real price of doing business. Typically, the bean counters in the cruise industry, want to dump the costs of running clean onto others. Who are those others? They are the tax payers of Puget Sound who have spent billions of tax dollars on clean-up after clean-up initiatives – so many I have lost count during my 70 years. But the ones who pay the greatest price don't have bank accounts and lawyers – they are the participants in the nature play that the cruise lines advertise. They are the many living creatures that the industry hopes will cause paying customers to "ooh and awe" and pay large fees. But very soon the actors will be dead.

The rest of us pay and the CEOs and the shareholders make their money. Puget Sound (better called the Salish Sea) is on its last years of life. The Chinook are almost gone and the Orcas are struggling to stay alive as their food dwindles and the incessant noise of commerce increases year after year.

So, what do I have to say about scrubbers? **BAN THEM TOTALLY!**

The Cruise industry could have been using the hiatus during the pandemic to refit their ships for the use of cleaner kinds of fuel but instead they park most of them and do nothing. The bean counters will rule and eventually there will be nothing of beauty left for the passengers to view out their windows. Then the industry will bitch and moan that government didn't do enough for them and created too many regulations. Typical. I have zero concern for the cruise industry. Let it sink to the bottom of the ocean!

I support amendment #2 - Ban scrubbers now!