

# A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO SHIP POLLUTION: REQUIRE LOW-SULFUR FUELS!



## SUPPORT HB 1652/ SB 5519

Bill Sponsors:  
Representative Lekanoff  
and Senator Lovelett

## THE ISSUE

Ships calling on Washington state ports must use fuel with a sulfur content no greater than 0.10% to remain emissions-compliant.<sup>1</sup> However, ships can bypass this regulation and continue to use polluting heavy fuel oil by employing exhaust gas cleaning systems, better known as scrubbers, to "scrub" oil's sulfur oxides and other toxic contaminants out of the exhaust using seawater. More than 80% of scrubbers dump the polluted seawater back into the ocean and inland waters, like the Salish Sea. Scrubber discharges contain heavy metals and other toxic contaminants that threaten water quality, public health, and marine economies.

<sup>1</sup> US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (2010). Designation of North American Emission Control Area to Reduce Emissions from Ships (EPA-420-F-10-015).

## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

### PEOPLE. ORCAS. SALMON. ECONOMY.

- **Community impact:** Clean water is vital for public health, fishing, cultural practices, recreation, and sustenance.
- **Toxic accumulation:** Acidic sulfur oxides, heavy metals, and other contaminants threaten aquatic life and endanger human health as the toxins multiply and persist up the food chain.
- **Food web disruption:** Animals near the bottom of the food chain, which Southern Resident killer whales and Chinook salmon depend on, are highly susceptible to scrubber contaminants and pollution.
- **Air pollution:** Ships burning heavy fuel oil with scrubbers release more black carbon than those using low-sulfur fuels, worsening health issues like asthma, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

### Large ocean-going ships with scrubbers are polluting Washington's waters—and we have a chance to stop it.

HB 1652/SB 5519 would require ships to use low-sulfur fuels—a requirement in other countries and states, like California. This is the simple, effective solution we need to keep Washington's waters, wildlife, and communities safe. Ships can switch to low-sulfur fuels without needing new or modified engines, eliminating polluting scrubber discharges and reducing air emissions.

**CONTACT:** Eric Gonzalez Alfaro, Earthjustice, [egonzalez@earthjustice.org](mailto:egonzalez@earthjustice.org)  
Lovel Pratt, Friends of the San Juans, [lovel@sanjuans.org](mailto:lovel@sanjuans.org)



Without this legislation, toxic contaminants will continue to pollute the Southern Residents' critical habitat in Washington's Salish Sea and along the outer coast—further threatening their survival.



Just 0.001% of the discharges from scrubbers can kill plankton, like copepods, that serve as the base of the food web in the Salish Sea.



Up to 98% of the priority contaminants for Chinook salmon, like heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), are from scrubber discharges.

*Coalition Partners: Friends of the San Juans, Earthjustice, Washington Conservation Action, Stand.Earth, Center for Biological Diversity, Seattle Cruise Control, Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility, Western Environmental Law Center, and Puget Soundkeeper.  
Paid for by: Friends of the San Juans, P.O. Box 1344, Friday Harbor, WA 98250*