

April 28, 2020

Dear Port of Seattle Commissioners,

Today you are considering a draft plan for Early Action Recovery for re-opening the Port operations (agenda item 7b). As you continue to emphasize equity and sustainability as core motivators, you again vastly overlook the action for these two principles to guide you in how you treat the larger community, affected by your operations.

“The Port’s mission is to promote economic opportunity and quality of life in the region by advancing trade, travel, commerce and job creation in an equitable, accountable and environmentally responsible manner.”

The economic opportunity for some comes at great expense for others’ economic viability. When you list the “benefits” as \$22 billion in business revenue, where is the offset of costs for those whose jobs and livelihoods are compromised or lost by the increasing port operations and the cost of the health that is compromised or lost by the pollution caused? While individuals within the most impacted communities matter, so does the natural habitat and species we as humans rely on and in the not so distant future, our inability to cope with our carbon-full air and water? How is it possible to go back to business as usual and call so doing, “environmentally responsible”? And it certainly is not equitable or fully accountable.

As our economy re-boots, we should take this opportunity to encourage non-carbon producing modes of service for all businesses. One example would be to set up an electronic communications centers at the air and maritime terminals to support national and international businesses to interact in a highly virtual manner without the need for long distance travel. Even conferences could have minimal fly-ins with most participants able to interact electronically. Certainly, there has been much more experience and expertise advanced in this area, since the beginning of pandemic societal procedures.

The above suggestion is just one illustration of how we don’t need to go back to full status quo and can take this break in operations as an opportunity to re-set the Port’s support for shared bad habits of carbon pollution, increasingly on its course to all of our self-destruction.

(“Chasing Corral” is now free on Netflix through their Youtube platform. The elimination of 25% of the ocean species is now well on its way, due to the intense warming caused by its absorption of humanity’s carbon emissions. It is well worth your time to watch this documentary.)

Please be inspired to be creative with renewed intention to help stop our carbon emissions and act as you can within your capacity as leaders of our Port services.

The timeframe is not later; it is now.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Anne Kroeker and Richard Leeds

Co-presidents Wildlife Forever Fund