

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Eastsound Suites <info@eastsoundsuites.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2021 2:19 PM  
**To:** Council Public Comment  
**Cc:** David Brazeau  
**Subject:** Vacation rentals: I support limiting the number and type of short-term vacation rentals in the SJ Islands

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing to voice my support for limiting the number and type of short-term vacation rentals in the San Juan Islands.

Proliferation of vacation rentals has had dire consequences:

1. **Landrush.** A building boom of new homes, as well as purchase of existing homes, specifically to be used as vacation rentals. As rentals are owned off-island and even out of state, these non-owner occupied residences erode community in neighborhoods. The demand for vacation rental housing makes it difficult for people who live and work on the island to buy a home.
2. **Drastically reduced inventory of long-term rental homes** for people working on the island who need lodgings.
3. **OverTourism.** Our unique and delicate island ecosystems and rural communities are what draw visitors to the San Juan Islands. There can be such a thing as too much tourism, when the attributes of what draws visitors is changed/destroyed by **OverTourism**. Examples:
  - o **Machu Picchu, Peru** The number of tourists visiting Machu Picchu, has jumped from less than 400,000 tourists a year to over 1.4 million visitors in just 20 years, and this ancient Incan site isn't built to handle it. After years of littering, eroding pathways and visitors climbing all over the ancient ruins, UNESCO threatened to put Machu Picchu on its "List of World Heritage in Danger" in 2016.
  - o **Santorini, Greece.** Greece's tourist numbers have more than doubled in less than a decade, jumping from 15 million in 2010, to 33 million in 2018. The little island of Santorini is one of the most popular destinations, but it also suffers from overtourism, with millions of visitors flocking to its shores each year. Cruise ships can drop off up to 18,000 passengers a day in peak season. That's an alarming number considering there are only around 15,000 residents on the island.
  - o **Barcelona, Spain.** Barcelona is one of the most well-known destinations suffering from overtourism. An estimated 32 million tourists visit Barcelona each year, yet the city has a population of just 1.6 million. The city is overwhelmed with visitors, largely due to the fact that Barcelona has the largest port in the Mediterranean. **It's also one of the most polluted in Europe.**

I support regulating short-term rentals on the San Juan Islands to only **owner-occupied residences**:

- renting out a bedroom in an existing residence
- renting a guest cottage on the same parcel as owner-occupied home

Existing inns, b&bs and hotels can provide further guest accommodations.

This solution will provide for increased availability of long-term rental housing and keep the negative impacts of overtourism in check.

Thank you for your consideration of my perspective.

Leslie Brazeau  
(360) 317-4240

Eastsound Suites, Orcas Island  
[eastsoundsuites.com](http://eastsoundsuites.com)  
360.376.2887