

A.P.E

AGAINST PORT EXPANSION IN THE FRASER ESTUARY BC



APE Newsletter July 2015

EDITORIAL – PORT METRO VANCOUVER'S ROLE

Port Metro Vancouver performs a key role in supporting the Canadian economy. Canada needs this port as it does the Port of Prince Rupert. However what Canada also needs is port operations that are sustainable; that maintain a proper balance between the environment, the economy and socio-community.

Regrettably this is where PMV often falls down, especially when it comes to the environment. Someone once said “We must learn better how to enjoy our environment and ecosystems, without overpowering them”. Too often when it comes to environmental issues, PMV is all too ready to overpower the environment, with its economic interests winning out every time, at the expense of the environment.

Nowhere is this more evident than in PMV's stubborn desire to expand its port operations on Roberts Bank, one of the most important ecosystems in the whole of Canada and recognized internationally as an area of wildlife abundance and diversity that must be protected.

The reality is that Canada's legitimate trading needs can be satisfied without ever building a second container terminal on Roberts Bank. There is more than enough capacity and room for expansion at the four main container terminals on Canada's West Coast to meet Canada's trading needs for many years to come.

It is time Port Metro Vancouver admitted this and lived up to its goal of being sustainable in the true sense of the word.

PORT METRO VANCOUVER'S NEW WEBSITE

Have you noticed – Port Metro Vancouver has just re-launched its website. <http://www.portmetrovancover.com/>

What is ironic is that they are using a banner on their home page – under the headline “maintaining a healthy environment” - showing Southern Resident Killer Whales (Orcas) swimming in Georgia Strait. The very same wildlife species that is listed as endangered under the Species at Risk Act, the reason being that the Orcas are severely impacted by the shipping traffic coming in and out of Port Metro Vancouver! Not only that but the picture even shows a vessel in the background – and it is the vessels noise that obstructs the Orcas ability to communicate.

The impacts on Orcas have already become a significant issue. Whilst PMV with the connivance of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency are trying hard to duck the issue, the reality is that various aboriginal groups have raised it. Their views cannot be easily ignored.

ROBERTS BANK PEEP-IN

Our second annual Peep-In at Roberts Bank (Brunswick Point) was held April 25, to celebrate the return of the Western Sandpipers, one of the bank's smallest visitors. The event went very well and had a good turnout. See the video of the event here <http://not2.ca/second-annual-peep-in/> Once again we sent Port Metro Vancouver a strong message – **NO T2!**

T2 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) is managing the environmental assessment.

The current status is as follows:

1. The final terms of reference for the Panel Review have been issued. <http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/p80054/101301E.pdf>. CEAA did make a few alterations to the draft terms of reference, but chose to ignore many of the concerns that were submitted.
2. CEAA made the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) available to the public for review on April 30 and set a deadline for comment on its completeness at June 15.
3. CEAA required PMV to provide marine shipping data and impacts for T2 out to the Canadian Territorial limit. PMV responded that they will supply this information by end August
4. CEAA is now in the process of reviewing all the comments on the EIS. They will determine what changes and additional information are required. However they have refused to provide responses to those who submitted comments.
5. Next Steps.
 - EIS finalized
 - Minister Appoints Panel
 - Public Consultation on Technical Sufficiency of EIS
 - Public- Panel holds Public Hearings
 - Review Panel Prepares and submits Report to the Minister of Environment
 - Minister makes Environmental Assessment Decision

The Minister has the authority to issue a decision statement indicating that a project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects. Should the Minister determine that a project is likely to cause significant environmental effects the project is referred to Governor in Council to determine whether the effects are justified in the circumstances.

Additionally now that ship traffic impacts are to be considered this will also involve further review by both Transport Canada and Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

LONG LIST OF ISSUES WITH THE T2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



CEAA set the deadline for comments on the T2 EIS at June 15. It seems likely they and Port Metro Vancouver may have been surprised at the large number of issues that were submitted.

One of the more important submissions came from Environment Canada who took issue with PMV's impact analysis on biofilm (a critical component of migratory and shorebird diet unique to Roberts Bank that is likely to be severely impacted by T2), basically saying that PMV had not covered the topic properly nor used the latest science. In addition EC identified a range of other issues with the EIS.

There is a very long list of issues raised by other parties. The main points of contention with the EIS, in addition to biofilm, are as follows:

- Impacts on Orcas not properly addressed
- Cumulative impacts not sufficiently covered, especially in combination with other known projects
- Truck traffic – congestion and air quality issues not dealt with
- Analysis of alternatives to building T2 woefully incomplete
- Impacts on herring and crab stocks not properly assessed
- Listing of species impacted woefully incomplete
- Migratory birds and the Migratory Bird Act not dealt with properly
- Lack of accountability for key issues: previous EIA Reviews, even those with Independent Panels, the precautionary principle, cumulative impact assessment and sustainability of the ecosystem. Statements are made but little or no credible assessment is done based on available and published, scientific research
- Negative impacts on US Ports from whom PMV is stealing business, not dealt with at all.
- Canada's wetland conservation program ignored
- Roberts Bank slope instability not covered

APE (www.againstportexpansion.org) is a group of concerned citizens that believes port expansion will see the degradation of the quality of life for thousands of Lower Mainland residents; the industrialization of prime agricultural land; and the loss of globally-significant habitat for salmon, migrating birds and orca whales.

WHERE WILL T2 CONTAINER VOLUMES COME FROM?

This is a question that PMV tries hard to ignore. The reality is that over the last seven years container traffic expansion of Canadian origin or destination has been minimal. PMV claims container volumes will double over the next few years and nearly triple by 2030, reflecting an expected annual growth of 5% to 7% annually. However, from 2007 to 2014, container growth averaged only **2.2 percent** per year. At this rate, it will take 32 years to double the current business and published information shows that PMV already has this capacity.

Whilst the large majority of containers moving through PMV are Canadian origin or destination, the important factor to note is where the recent growth is coming from. Most of this modest growth is due to USA containers being funnelled through the port with little economic value to Canada. There has been a miniscule **0.7 percent** annual growth in Canadian import/export containers through PMV since 2007, certainly nothing to justify the huge, intrusive Terminal 2 project in an incredibly important and sensitive environment.

Not only that but recent reports suggest that the Canadian economy is slowing even further. This fact, coupled with the significant downturn in Asian economies, especially China, clearly demonstrates that there is no need for a second container terminal on Roberts Bank.

And finally there is the question of shipping US containers through Port Metro Vancouver. Recent estimates suggest that west coast Canadian ports will handle over a million US containers in 2015, with the majority going through PMV. Furthermore PMV's own forecasts suggest that they will be trying to grab even more of that traffic further hurting US West Coast Ports.

Current news reports suggest that movement of US containers through PMV has really ramped up recently. Ports on the US West Coast, especially Seattle and

Tacoma are the losers, having plenty of spare capacity, and would love to handle this traffic.



With a mandate to facilitate Canadian trade objectives why would PMV be considering capturing even more US container traffic than it already does? The answer appears to be that without handling US container traffic PMV's business case for building T2 is even weaker.

So again we have to ask the question – why propose to build a second container terminal on Roberts Bank with irreparable damage to the most important ecosystem in Canada?

APE WEBSITE

We continue to keep our website updated with news items and information. We provide regular updates on port issues as well as links to related news items... Please do visit the website on a regular basis www.againstportexpansion.org

We regularly monitor activity on the website. In June 2015:

- 60 percent site visitors are new
- 136 sessions from Canada and the USA

Maintaining our website and having it operational is our largest expense. We really do need regular contributions to keep the website operating. One hundred percent of funds donated go to APE operations, the major one being the upkeep and maintenance of the website. The only other significant expense in 2015 has been the printing of two new posters and flyers to hand out at events. So please consider donating by mailing a cheque to:

Against Port Expansion

P.O. Box 18060
1215-C 56th Street
Delta BC V4L 2M4

No matter the size of your donation, it will help keep our community group and its website operating.

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