

## I N B R I E F

### **Proposed Roberts Bank Container Terminal (T2)**

Roberts Bank already accommodates three container berths and a coal terminal, in spite of plans in 1961 to protect twenty seven thousand acres under the Roberts Bank Wildlife Management Area.

The proponent, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (**VFPA**) proposes extensive dredging to build three new container berths on a man-made island and expanded causeway.

VFPA claims:

- T2 is needed to keep pace with expected growth in container traffic.
- Environmental damage can easily be mitigated/compensated.

A group of concerned citizens - Against Port Expansion in the Fraser Estuary (**APE**) - strongly objects to the proposal and claims:

- There will be irreversible environmental consequences - on an international scale - that cannot be mitigated or compensated.
- The project will negatively impact the communities of the Lower Fraser River and the Salish Sea, destroying physical, spiritual and cultural health, as well as peoples' livelihoods.
- There is no business case.
- The Terms of Reference prevent the Review Panel from considering the business case and restricts the review to the T2 footprint thereby preventing an effective review of impacts from shipping and increased truck traffic.

# T H E D E T A I L S

## Environmental Impacts

The proposed container terminal is currently undergoing an environmental assessment under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and the BC Environmental Assessment Act.

The BC government is relying on the Canadian environmental assessment process and is failing to take any meaningful part on behalf of provincial interests.

The dredging and fill (likely contaminated) will destroy Roberts Bank's richest source of nutritious biofilm, which supports over six hundred thousand migrating sandpipers and other shorebirds. Loss of biofilm and other estuarine habitats

threatens to break the chain of the Pacific Flyway, as Roberts Bank is Canada's major stopover for millions of migratory birds travelling between twenty countries covering three continents.

Roberts Bank has international designations because it is vital to the Pacific Flyway; more than two billion juvenile salmon; and the endangered Southern Resident Killer Whale population.

This environmental assessment has failed to address the cumulative impacts of this massive Project on fish and wildlife, and those who depend on a healthy Georgia Basin.

## Social, Heritage and Cultural Impacts

There have been over five hundred submissions to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) expressing major concerns about T2.

Common concerns include:

The environmental assessment ignores the impacts to salmon that benefit recreational fishers and aboriginal fisheries hundreds of kilometres away in Juan de Fuca and Johnson Straits or the Fraser River tributaries.

Failure to address impacts to marine life and seafood harvesting.

Failure to address impacts to the health of the Georgia Basin ecosystems.

Negative impacts on communities of the Lower Fraser River and the Salish Sea.

Failure to address Aboriginal title, treaty rights and interests.

Failure to address impacts on current land use and resources for traditional purposes, as required by law.

Failure to meaningfully address impacts from increased marine traffic and larger vessels.

Specifically:

- Impacts on Southern Resident Killer Whales
- Impacts of ship wakes on shorelines, habitats and communities.
- Credible assessment of risks of spills and deliberate dumping, as well as air, noise, water and light pollution.
- Impacts of planned anchorage sites.
- Safety concerns.
- Impacts of doubling container truck movements throughout Metro Vancouver.

## No Credible Business Case for Terminal 2 at Roberts Bank

Canada's Pacific Gateway is an initiative aimed at simplifying the import and export of goods through Canada's west coast ports. The Port of Prince Rupert (PPR) is a separate entity from VFPA. They are in competition with each other. PPR recently completed expansion of its Fairview Container Terminal, increasing container capacity to 1.35 TEUs annually.

The unit of measurement in the container industry is the **TEU**: Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit.

A 20 foot container is 1 TEU; a 40 foot is 2 TEUs.

PPR plans a third Fairview expansion that would raise annual capacity to 2.5 million TEUs by 2022.

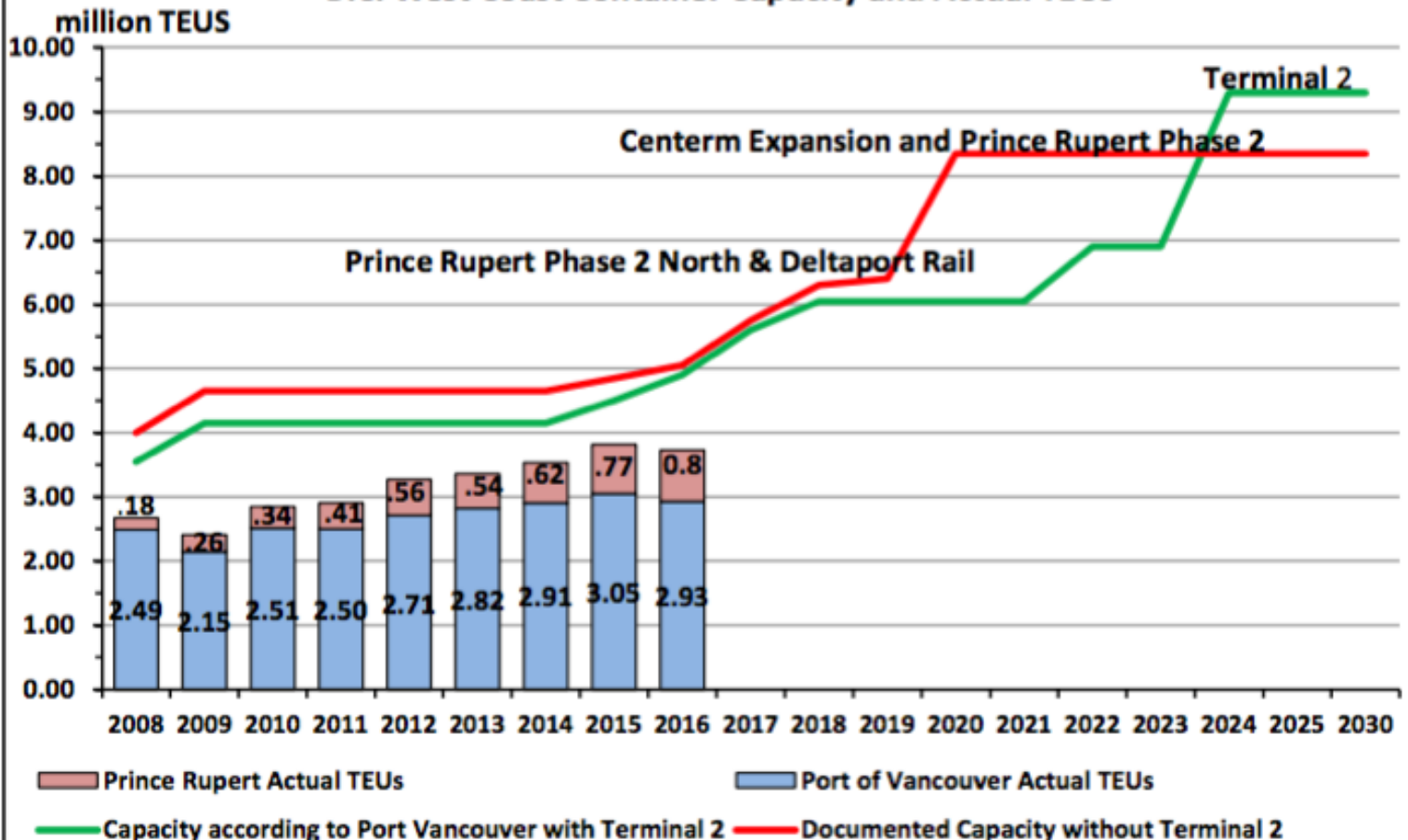
PPR has several advantages over VFPA (closer to Asian customers; better rail connections to the East; no bottlenecks etc.) and its rapid expansion

has taken the pressure off VFPA to expand. Thus, not all containers coming into Canada have to enter through Metro Vancouver ports. Given that the majority of containers are destined for the US midwest and Eastern Canada, Prince Rupert's rail connection makes it an ideal entry point.

In short, PPR is thriving and is providing much-needed extra capacity for the Pacific Gateway, helping to eliminate the need for T2.

The illustration below - in a nutshell - debunks VFPA's Business Case for T2. The Port's own figures have been used to show that, over the next decade and a half, planned improvements at Deltaport, Centerm (in downtown Vancouver) and Prince Rupert will be more than enough to meet demand.

**B.C. West Coast Container Capacity and Actual TEUs**



Over the past decade, the Port has sought to “manufacture a crisis”, insisting that container traffic is growing at such a rate that the only answer is an expansion in Delta: T2. They have consistently overstated future container volumes and overestimated growth forecasts.

The truth is that the Port has **not** met its own growth forecasts since 2003. The port fails to acknowledge that the container business levelled off in 2007 and since then the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for the nine years up to end of 2016 is less than 2.5%. This growth rate is not a poor figure given the market conditions in that period, which are not expected to change. With upgrades and efficiencies, VFPA could double its

current business without ever building T2.

There is no justification for Terminal 2, as the marketplace for container shipping has changed since plans for T2 began.

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For inexplicable reasons, VFPA brushes off the advantages of using BC’s inland intermodal terminal at Ashcroft: a practical option for transloading containers. It is the only place in BC where CN and CP meet. There is ample industrial land and several track lines. This sensible option would move containers out of the congested Metro Vancouver area and prevent pressure from VFPA to use high-value farmland. Ashcroft is open for business and eager to expand its volumes.

### **The Politics Of It All.**

The Delta Federal MP - Liberal **Carla Qualtrough** - expressed doubts about the need for T2 during the 2015 election campaign. Since then she has held several meetings with community groups concerned about T2. Is she deaf to concerns - far from it.

At one such meeting in early 2018 she again expressed concerns about the environmental impacts, the lack of a business case for T2 and the manner in which the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority operates. Has she raised community and environmental concerns in Ottawa? Yes; she continues to work with cabinet colleagues to ensure T2 concerns are properly addressed.

Another local politician to have tackled VFPA is **Joe Peschisolido**, Liberal MP for Steveston/Richmond. In a newspaper article he described the Port’s mandate as a “crock” and said that it is in need of an overhaul. His contention is that Ottawa is not providing proper oversight and direction and that VFPA is not operating as it should.

MP Peschisolido suggested the Prince Rupert Container port is the better place to expand Canada's container capacity, stating "If you allowed things to evolve naturally ... economically it makes sense to go through Prince Rupert".

For further information please visit [www.againstportexpansion.org](http://www.againstportexpansion.org), or [www.noterminal2.ca](http://www.noterminal2.ca).