

No Economic Need for Terminal 2 at Roberts Bank with three new container berths – says APE

Delta BC November 1 2012

As Port Metro Vancouver (PMV) opens its public consultation process on its plans to build a second container terminal (T2), with three additional berths on Roberts Bank and adjacent to the existing Deltaport, the agency, in our view, is once again playing games with the numbers and ignoring certain economic realities.

Their recent forecasts are using a study commissioned by them and taking the highest case scenario of growth, which is unrealistic. To date PMV has not even realized the “low case” forecasts. Even the lowest case projections for the Deltaport Third Berth (announced in 2006 by PMV) have not been achieved. PMV forecast 2.8 to 3.5 million TEUs by 2010 and this has still not been reached. These figures do not include Prince Rupert. In 2010 and 2011 PMV handled **2.5 million TEUs**, well below the **lowest cast forecast of 2.8 million TEUs**. In fact, PMV handled 2.5 million TEUs annually from 2007 until 2011 (with a drop to 2.1 in 2009). It appears that there will be some increase in 2012 but still the compound annual growth will only be 2%.

Against Port Expansion (APE) – a Delta BC based Community Group - is firmly opposed to any further container port development on Roberts Bank. Roberts Bank is a major stopover point on the Pacific Flyway and a critical feeding area for millions of shorebirds. Not only that but light pollution from the existing Deltaport is already causing problems – for wildlife as well as for the residents in Delta. Add to that the diesel pollution and noise from the ships, trains and trucks, the threats to wildlife (including the endangered Orca Whales), and it is clear that there should be no further industrial development allowed on Roberts Bank. Why therefore is PMV risking the destruction of one of the most important wetlands on the west coast of North America when even the economics and the business case do not support the need for such expansion?

Canada does not need the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 Container Port – not now or any time in the foreseeable future. “Economically it is cheaper, and environmentally sensible, to carry out earlier plans for expansions at Centerm and perhaps Vanterm in the deep sea Vancouver harbour before dredging internationally significant habitat at Roberts Bank in the Fraser River estuary, ” stated Susan Jones member of the Executive Group for the Against Port Expansion Community Group. “Not only that but PMV is totally ignoring the impacts of the widened Panama Canal, due to open in 2015, which according to industry experts could reduce west coast North America container traffic by as much as 25%” she further commented. In addition Prince Rupert’s container port is also expanding and is a much better routing for Eastern Canada and US destined containers. Taken together therefore all of British Columbia’s container ports have capacity to handle container volumes for many years to come. With even small productivity improvements the BC West Coast could well have container port capacity of 11 million or more TEUs – **WITHOUT EVER BUILDING ROBERTS BANK TERMINAL 2**.

For details of a report on the economics of T2 go to the APE website, www.againstportexpansion.org

About APE: Against Port Expansion in Delta is a group of concerned citizens who recognize that plans for container terminal expansion on Roberts Bank 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. It is a broad based community group from various backgrounds. For more information visit www.againstportexpansion.org or email: apecinfo@dccnet.com