

Sacred Lands Conservancy
doing business as Sacred Sea
An Indigenous-led 501c3 non-profit
2321 West Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
www.SacredSea.org
360-305-5880



March 15, 2022

Re: the proposal for Roberts Bank Terminal 2

To the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency:

The Sacred Lands Conservancy / Sacred Sea is an Indigenous-led non-profit committed to the protection of Xw'ullemy (the Salish Sea and its rivers and waterways), and the life, sacred sites, and Treaty rights connected to and held within those waters.

Our organization is headed by President Tah-Mahs (Ellie Kinley) and Vice President Squil-le-he-le (Raynell Morris), two enrolled Lummi tribal members. Tah-Mahs is also a fisherman, whose family has always fished. She has personal, first-hand knowledge of what it is like to fish amongst oil tankers and vast container ships.

The Lhaq'temish people have lived on and by the Salish Sea since time immemorial. We are a Salmon People. We hold salmon to be sacred. Salmon forms the basis of our culture, traditional life ways and livelihoods.

Roberts Bank Terminal 2 would disrupt and destroy critical habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon. These salmon runs are already greatly diminished. We hear stories about how, in the time of our ancestors, the salmon were so thick you could walk across their backs. Today, we struggle to find enough fish to feed our families and make a living.

Along with the threat to future salmon runs, the increase in vessel traffic alone will make it almost impossible to fish in our Usual and Accustomed fishing grounds at the Canadian / US border.

This is also true for our qwe'lhol'mechen (Southern Resident Orca) relations, who likewise depend on Chinook salmon runs for survival. Currently, the Southern Resident Orcas are threatened with extinction due to pollution, noise, and prey scarcity. Each of these factors will be worsened by the construction, presence, and increased marine vessel traffic associated with RBT2. Additionally, the threat of a vessel striking and wounding or killing a qwe'lhol'mechen increases.

We hold qwe'lhol'mechen to be our family; they are also culturally and spiritually significant to us. Qwe'lhol'mechen, salmon, and our people are profoundly connected. If one of this circle is affected, all are affected.

While we write to you from south of the Canadian / US border, we acknowledge and insist upon the fact that the waters, salmon, qwe'lhol'mechen, ancient cultural and kinship bonds do not recognize that geo-political border. What Canada does north of the border affects all of us who are connected to the Salish Sea. While we do not stand to benefit in any way from your proposed project, we will certainly be harmed by it. Please hear our voices.

RBT2 poses unacceptable threats to our fishermen, our way of life, and our qwe'lhol'mechen relations.

Sincerely,

Sacred Lands Conservancy

Handwritten signature of Ellie Kinley in cursive script.

Tah-Mahs (Ellie Kinley), President,