

Herring eggs can't get away from disaster

Herring and other small forage fish feed our ocean food web. Herring lay their eggs on eelgrass and seaweed in shallow coastal water.^[1] Once laid, the eggs can't leave – if habitat is damaged or oil reaches shore,^[2] they have no way to escape. Two projects could harm herring in the Fraser River Estuary. Roberts Bank Terminal 2 (RBT2) would reshape shallow water habitat.^[3] The West Coast Oil Pipeline (WCOP)^[4] would add the risk of oil-spills and disturbance.

86–100%

of sampled herring eggs died or failed to hatch normally at three oiled shorelines after the 2007 Cosco Busan spill^[5]

Fraser Estuary eelgrass is vital habitat for young herring

- ✓ Eelgrass is where herring life begins.^[6]
- ✓ Fraser estuary eelgrass is nursery habitat for young herring.^[7]
- ✓ 'Habitat offsets' cannot replace what is lost.^[8]

Construction disturbs herring and reduces forage fish productivity^[9]

- ✓ To herring, boat noise can sound like danger.^[10]
- ✓ The federal panel reviewing RBT2 predicted it would affect forage fish.^[11]
- ✓ Uncertainty is not proof of safety.



An oil spill can devastate a herring spawn

- ✓ A herring egg cannot get away from an oil spill.
- ✓ One spill can devastate an exposed spawn.^[12]
- ✓ Persistent contaminants can accumulate through herring predators like salmon, and build up in killer whales.^[13]

Herring support the coastal food web^[14]

- ✓ Herring feed the coast.
- ✓ Herring – whether as eggs, juveniles or adults – are a vital food source for fish, birds and marine mammals.
- ✓ A spawn feeds much more than the next generation of herring.

