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NCSPA Plans NC International Port

Brunswick County container terminal to handle 2 million containers a year, help create thousands of jobs

At its meeting in Wilmington Dec. 29, the Board of Directors of the N.C. State Ports Authority authorized the CEO to negotiate the purchase of 600 acres of riverfront property in Brunswick County. If the purchase is completed, the Authority plans to build a new port terminal, the North Carolina International Port, to handle 2 million containers (20-foot equivalent units, or TEUs) a year.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity," said Board Chairman Carl J. Stewart Jr. "No other property available in the South Atlantic compares to this property, with good access and compatible zoning already in place."

Development of this facility would coincide with the projected doubling of the North American container market between now and 2015.

"It's a unique opportunity to catapult North Carolina into the ranks of major U.S. ports," said Tom Eagar, Ports Authority CEO. "We are responding to the needs of world trade on a large scale, to the benefit of the entire state."

The new terminal would multiply the number of jobs already generated by the Ports, both local and statewide – currently estimated at more than 48,000 jobs statewide, as well as creating new local and state tax revenues – now almost \$30 million annually.

The project will also provide a gigantic boost to economic development. Major manufacturing and assembly plant site-selection criteria require proximity to deepwater port facilities with global service coverage – such as the DaimlerChrysler plant announced recently in North Charleston, S.C.

This location also affords the opportunity to develop an industrial park for distribution centers or related operations – adding additional jobs to the local economy.

Building a new terminal on the Brunswick County property also provides a better alternative, environmentally and economically, than dredging the Cape Fear River to 48 feet to the Port of Wilmington and enlarging the Port's footprint. Forecast growth in container traffic worldwide would require a deeper channel for Wilmington to remain competitive. The new property is nine miles from the ocean, while Wilmington is 26.

The location, next to the Military Ocean Terminal at Sunny Point, also supports Department of Defense strategic initiatives.

Besides economic development, the region would also benefit from infrastructure improvements, particularly access to and improvements of Highway 87.

The property, currently owned by Pfizer Inc., is 600 acres, 9.5 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, zoned heavy industrial. It includes 4,000 linear feet of frontage on the Cape Fear River for berths, with highway and nearby rail access.

Port of Wilmington Container Terminal Expansion Program

The \$130 million enhancement program under way to double capacity at the Port of Wilmington continues as planned. This expansion will meet the demand of increasing container traffic and increase business and revenues at the Port over the 10 years before the new terminal goes into operation. The project includes:

- * Four new 100-ft gauge container cranes
- * New container handling equipment
- * New terminal operating system
- * Berth, dock and paving improvements
- * Phase 1 complete by April 2007. Entire project complete in five years.
- * Will continue to serve general cargo business after new terminal is complete.

Port of Morehead City and Radio Island Expansion Program

The Port of Morehead City and Radio Island are ideally situated to handle the bulk/breakbulk market growth and cargo displacement by other ports. Work continues to expand facilities at the Port and a new terminal on Radio Island. At the Dec. 29 meeting, the Board also:

- * moved forward on a lease agreement for a new 177,000 square foot warehouse at the Port of Morehead City
- * awarded a \$962,260 design contract initial engineering and environmental design for the development of the port terminal on Radio Island.

ABOUT THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE PORTS AUTHORITY:

North Carolina's Ports in Wilmington and Morehead City, plus inland terminals in Charlotte and the Piedmont Triad in Greensboro, link the State's consumers, businesses and industry to world markets, and serve as magnets to attract new business and industry. Port activities contribute statewide to 85,000 jobs and \$299 million each year in state and local tax revenues. The proposed NC International Port in Brunswick County and Port expansion projects in Morehead City and Wilmington will make North Carolina a key player in international trade, and multiply related jobs and economic impact in the state.

Top trading partners are China, Venezuela, Colombia, India, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Korea, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and Turkey.

Primary exports include fertilizer, woodpulp, forest products, general merchandise, food, chemicals and metal products.

Top imports include forest products, chemicals, natural rubber, cement, scrap metal, steel, coal and general merchandise.

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