



# NoPort News

A newsletter of the North Carolina International Terminal

*All the news that prints to fit.*

March 19, 2010

## ***The Good***

NoPort Southport has been awarded a grant by the Corps Reform Network, a coalition sponsored by the National Wildlife Foundation to support groups seeking to ensure that Army Corps of Engineers projects are economically and environmentally sound. We shall use the grant for a study of the economic impacts of the proposed North Carolina International Terminal. Dr. Curt Stiles of the University of North Carolina Wilmington will do the study.

We are a member of the Corps Reform Network. [www.corpsreform.org](http://www.corpsreform.org). At the last meeting, the room was full of representatives of national and local environmental and taxpayer watchdog organizations. There is much to reform.

## ***The Bad***

The Corps of Engineers Wilmington District has completed the first portion of its secret reconnaissance study and has determined that there is a "Federal interest" in the dredging of the Cape Fear River for the container terminal. The report has gone to the South Atlantic Division for approval, which is expected next month. The report is still secret.

## ***The Ugly***

The next step, the feasibility study, will require a "non-Federal sponsor" to pay half of the cost. That means an agency of the State of North Carolina. We note that a similar study for the Savannah harbor deepening project has cost \$40 million and is not complete. The issues in the Cape Fear River are quite similar.

After that comes the project itself. The non-Federal sponsor (North Carolina taxpayers) would pay 60% of the project cost, which would be somewhere on the far side of \$700 million.

We have looked at the cost-sharing agreement the State entered into in 1999 for the recent (and still ongoing) project to deepen the channel to Wilmington. The agreement binds the State to pay approximately 35% of \$407 million. That would be about \$142 million. So far, the State has paid \$88 million. (Projects for depths less than 45 feet require only 35% State sharing.)

The agreement includes an open-ended indemnity, whereby the State takes on liability for all unfortunate events except those due to the fault or negligence of the Corps of Engineers.

And the money spent for the dredging to Wilmington will not be refunded when the deep channel up the river is made unnecessary by a new channel for a terminal at Southport.

## ***Notice of Meeting***

We are postponing our next public meeting until May 6, in the hope that the report of the Corps of Engineers secret study will emerge from the darkness and we can review it with you.

**NO PORT Southport NC, Inc.**

**Post Office Box 10062**  
[www.noportsouthport.org](http://www.noportsouthport.org).

**Southport, NC 28461**