



## ***The Facts:***

### ***Why the North Carolina International Terminal Won't Work***

The North Carolina State Ports Authority has purchased 600 acres of pristine woodland, meadow and marsh on the Cape Fear River in Southport below the Port of Wilmington for development of one of the largest marine container terminals on the East Coast. It would be called the North Carolina International Terminal (NCIT).

Here's why the NCIT project fails both as a business venture and a public investment.

#### **Not Acceptable Economically**

The current container terminal at the Port of Wilmington (less than 20 miles away from the proposed NCIT site) has sufficient capacity to handle projected shipping growth for the next 20 years and beyond.

NCIT would not create new jobs. Since it would compete with the Port of Wilmington, a job at NCIT would at best simply replace a job lost at Wilmington. Moreover, automated container handling systems planned for NCIT will result in minimal personnel needs.

Existing adjacent ports at Savannah (GA), Charleston (SC), and Hampton Roads (VA) are already expanding to handle the largest ("post-Panamax") container vessels. These expanded ports are projected to meet post-Panamax needs for the next 20 years and beyond.

The Cape Fear River is not a deepwater harbor. Depths sufficient for the post-Panamax container vessels to be accommodated by NCIT are 17 miles offshore, 22 miles away. A new channel must be dredged, involving the removal of 68 million cubic yards of material and costing \$1.35 billion.

The nearest interstate highway, existing or planned, is over 20 miles from the NCIT site. A new four-lane highway costing \$261 million would be necessary.

The nearest trunk-line railroad is 23 miles from the NCIT site. The connecting spur is a single-track, crossing the property of a nuclear reactor (Progress Energy) and the largest ammunition depot in the Western Hemisphere (Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point; MOTSU), and passing through the center of a residential community. Necessary improvements would cost \$73 million.

The proposed private partner for NCIT terminated the agreement; no replacement has been found. The State Ports Authority's model for NCIT is the new APM terminal in Virginia. Recently, the private company running the terminal asked the Virginia Ports Authority to take over, as the terminal has been consistently unprofitable.

***Estimated NCIT construction cost: nearly \$4 billion***

***Estimated operating cost: over \$190 million per year***

***Estimated operating profit/loss: a loss of nearly \$25 million per year***

## **Not Acceptable Environmentally**

Building NCIT would require destroying 100 acres of coastal wetlands. These wetlands, currently protected by federal and state environmental laws, provide essential nursery grounds and habitat for commercial and recreational fish populations, as well as many species of native and migrating birds. Wetlands are highly sensitive to pollution.

Dredging the NCIT shipping channel to the depth required for post-Panamax vessels will endanger the aquifer supplying drinking water to much of Brunswick County.

Independent studies have shown that unemployment, poverty, and environmental hazards are substantially higher in port areas. Most U.S. ports are now among the largest sources of air pollution in their cities.

Most container ships use bunker fuel, the dirtiest grade of diesel fuel, containing up to 45,000 ppm of sulfur. Ships using bunker fuel emit more sulfur dioxide than the entirety of the world's cars, trucks and buses combined and up to 21 percent of the greenhouse gases from all transportation sources.

An estimated 414 trucks per hour and 10-14 trains per day would move containers in and out of NCIT. Diesel fumes from this huge amount of traffic, in addition to that generated by the container ships, would dramatically increase local and regional air pollution.

The Environmental Protection Agency says exposure to even low levels of diesel exhaust is likely to pose a risk of lung cancer and other respiratory diseases.

A recent scientific study published in the medical journal *Pediatrics* demonstrated a positive correlation between exposure to air pollution and a lower IQ in children. There appeared to be no minimum threshold of air pollution for the damaging effects.

The NC Ports Authority admits that its ports routinely handle shipments of highly dangerous materials, including PETN (the explosive favored by terrorists). In January 2010, the entire Morehead City NC area was evacuated due to an accident involving a large shipment of PETN at the port.

NCIT will be located right next to the above-ground, spent nuclear fuel storage area of the Progress Energy plant and the huge ammunition storage sites of MOTSU. An accidental or terrorist explosion at NCIT could render a large swath of the U.S. Eastern Seaboard uninhabitable for decades.

Southport, where NCIT will be located, was founded in 1792 and is listed on the U.S. National *Register of Historic Places*. It is the home of the official North Carolina Fourth of July Festival and attracts thousands of visitors each year. The area is densely populated.

***NCIT will destroy irreplaceable coastal wetlands***

***NCIT will dramatically increase local and regional air pollution***

***NCIT's location presents unacceptable risks to the Southeastern U.S.***

Each of these facts is supported by detailed studies from many sources. Please see [www.noportsouthport.org](http://www.noportsouthport.org) for this information.