Saving the Cape

Photo by National Park Service--1967
Is the megaport still a threat?

“The report of my death was an exaggeration”… Mark Twain
What’s been happening in Raleigh?

• **2010**: Frank Iler and Pricey Harrison sponsored an amendment to the House budget bill prohibiting spending on the megaport. The prohibition was adopted in the Senate and became law for fiscal year 2011.

• **2011**: The House budget bill included a prohibition on spending on the megaport. Senator Rabon surreptitiously removed the language in the Senate (the deletion was not marked) and the final budget for fiscal 2012 did not have the prohibition. The Maritime Strategy Study shifted to the megaport.

• **2012**: The House budget bill again included a prohibition on spending on the megaport. Senator Rabon again surreptitiously removed the language in the Senate. We exposed the maneuver, the prohibition was restored in conference, and the final budget for fiscal 2013 has the prohibition.

• **2013**: The budget bill will originate in the Senate. Will it have the prohibition on port funding?
The 600-acre question

What will be put on the megaport site?

The entire property is zoned for heavy industry.

Megaport revival? or smokestack industry?
An ominous sign

“We will not rest until that site is developed for industry, creating jobs for Brunswick County citizens.”

Jim Bradshaw, Director, Brunswick County Economic Development Commission—December 2012
AMERICA'S BEST IDEA TODAY
IN NATIONAL PARKS AND IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD
One solution: National Seashore

- Protection: preservation and enhancement of unique natural assets and significant historic sites for posterity
- Status: Identification of the area as regionally and nationally significant brings pride and motivation for stewardship
- Recreation: tourism is a primary economic force in the region
- Economic return: gateway communities typically flourish
- Quality enhancement: a nice place attracts nice people, nice development, and industries bringing high-level opportunities—which in turn promote higher standards of education, land-use planning, and quality of life
- Value recognition: discourages development that would detract from the true value of the area.
- Advocacy: The National Park Service has a strong voice.
Not our idea—the National Park Service’s

1955

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike.

John Muir

1988

National Parks Conservation Foundation
A preliminary plan

Most of the undeveloped parts of the eastern side of the Cape Fear River are protected by State or private reservations.

The western side is a hodgepodge of private preserves, *de facto* reservations (Sunny Point), and places simply not yet developed.

The total area is about 25,000 acres.
Characteristics of a National Seashore

- Preservation of natural values while providing water-oriented recreation
- Less restrictive than national parks
- Fit around existing development
- Can include private property
Economics 101—Economic Impacts

- Visitor spending in gateway communities
- Park payroll
- Local services
- Secondary and indirect effects

Can be measured using accepted methods of economic impact analysis
### Economic Benefits to Local Communities from National Park Visitation and Payroll, 2009

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/SSD/NRR—2011/281

**Table A-1.** Spending and Economic Impacts of National Park Visitors on Local Economies, CY 2009 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Unit</th>
<th>2009 Recreation Visits</th>
<th>2009 Overnight Stays</th>
<th>Visitor Spending 2009</th>
<th>Impacts of Non-Local Visitor Spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Visitors ($000's)</td>
<td>Non-Local Visitors</td>
<td>Jobs</td>
<td>Labor Income ($000's)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>($000's)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cane River Creole NHP</td>
<td>27,411</td>
<td>1,319</td>
<td>1,229</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canyon de Chelly NM</td>
<td>826,425</td>
<td>39,238</td>
<td>36,603</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canyonlands NP</td>
<td>436,241</td>
<td>33,625</td>
<td>33,297</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Cod NS</td>
<td>4,311,949</td>
<td>153,073</td>
<td>122,040</td>
<td>1,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Hatteras NS</td>
<td>2,282,543</td>
<td>108,482</td>
<td>103,105</td>
<td>1,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Krusenstern NM</td>
<td>1,810</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cape Lookout NS</td>
<td>601,954</td>
<td>41,696</td>
<td>39,774</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table A-4.** Impacts of NPS Visitor Spending and Payroll on Local Economies by State, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Recreation Visits</th>
<th>Non-Local Visitor Spending ($000's)</th>
<th>Jobs from Non-Local Visitor Spending</th>
<th>Payroll-related Jobs</th>
<th>Total Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>18,198,530</td>
<td>707,241</td>
<td>10,317</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>10,953</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economics 201—
Ecosystem Valuation

$ Developing concepts of evaluating ecosystems and natural assets

$ May be based on ecological yield—the value of commodities such as wood, water, fish, or game supported by the ecosystem

$ May be based on recreational value assigned by users

$ Raises issues of environmental ethics regarding natural assets difficult to evaluate—such as endangered species

$ Concept proposed by White House Council on Environmental Quality for cost/benefit analysis of Federal projects

Methods are new, but have evolved to an accepted level in the last 10-12 years.
Criteria for a new National Seashore

- unique natural characteristics
- historical significance
- large pristine undeveloped areas

Another factor: recreational potential
Criterion 1: 

*Unique natural characteristics*

“One of the few remaining areas on the Atlantic Coast where man’s effect on the landscape has been relatively limited.”

“The live oak forest is one of the best examples of this type of sand strand forest in existence and one of the very few remnants of coastal forest which can be recognized as part of the primitive native forest.”

(National Park Service, 1967)

“This region is one of the wildest and most primitive areas on the Atlantic coast, with the natural communities of Smith Island being intact and thereby highly significant ... . “

(National Parks Conservation Association, 1988)
Cape Fear River Facts

- Largest river basin in NC, 9100 sq. miles
- Basin is entirely within the state
- Only major river to empty in Atlantic
- Over 6100 miles of tributaries
- Flows through 27 NC counties
- Basin holds nearly 1/3 of NC population
- Six main tributaries
  Deep, Haw, Black, South, NE Cape Fear, Cape Fear

Slide courtesy Cape Fear River Watch
The Cape Fear has the greatest diversity of plant and animal species of any area on the East Coast north of Florida.
Criterion 1: Unique natural characteristics

The Cape Fear region has

- 50 different natural communities
- 300 species of animals and plants
- 19 Federally threatened or endangered species
- 63 State threatened or endangered species
- 22 species of plants that grow nowhere else
- 19 species of animals that live nowhere else
- 100% of the world’s native Venus flytraps
- The oldest trees east of the Rocky Mountains
Criterion 2: Historical sites

- Brunswick Town, a Colonial era settlement (1725)
- Colonial era plantations (Orton’s manor house was built in 1735 and is on the National Register of Historic Places)
- Nine Civil War fortifications, including the site of the largest amphibious landing in the war
- Southport’s historic district and two buildings on the National Register of Historic Places
- Lighthouses: Old Baldy, Oak Island, and Price’s Creek
- Extensive underwater archeological sites
Criterion 2: Historical sites

Some Underwater Archeological Sites

- Civil War Shipwreck District
- CSS Raleigh and CSS North Carolina, ironclads built in Wilmington
Historic lighthouses?

We’ve got lighthouses.

Price's Creek
Criterion 3: Pristine undeveloped areas
Criterion 3: Pristine undeveloped areas

Brunswick County’s Natural Heritage Areas
Other park structures

- **National Monument**: does not require an act of Congress—often used as a stepping stone
- **National Recreation Area**: less emphasis on conservation and research
- **Partnership Park**: enjoys national status while ownership and management are shared with local entities
- **Conservation Partnership**: sponsored by the US Fish & Wildlife Service for voluntary strategic habitat conservation

There are many other structures available at the Federal and State level and involving private organizations. Some can be used as way-stations to higher level structures.

Kevin Giannini photo
Our View: Cape Fear national park? Tall order.

Creating a national seashore in a developed area is only slightly easier than creating world peace.

We don't know if they'll succeed in that task. But at the very least, they'll put a public spotlight on the natural beauty of that region that needs to be preserved.

Rice and Bronstein's campaign will remind us that our state's great beauty is one of the things that draws economic development here. We have to protect our natural treasures with at least as much effort as we put into creating new jobs. Doing anything less is poisoning the well.
The Plan

- Define area of interest and objectives
- Obtain funding
- Define requirements of National Park Service
- Inventory of natural and historic assets
- Investigate characteristics of other parks
- Inventory of specific tracts with ownership
- Prepare preliminary plan in detail
- Preliminary economic impact study
- Obtain support from officials and owners
- Develop public support

● Then take the show on the road
Climbing the bureaucratic ladder

- Act of Congress
- Congressional delegation
- Raleigh
- National Park Service study
- National Park Service management
- National Park Service staff
- National Parks Conservation Foundation

Then we rest
The Budget

- Mapping and graphics
- Printing
- Economic studies
- Travel
- Office expense
- Meeting expense
- National Park Service feasibility study
“UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

- Dr. Seuss, The Lorax