



Cape Fear Firebird

The Voice of Save the Cape

October 10, 2010

The Quest

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the *Cape Fear Firebird*, the voice of Save the Cape.

In folklore, one feather of this magical bird can light a room and fill men's hearts with hope and inspiration. Because of that power, the firebird is symbolic of a difficult quest, to find the firebird, capture its light and inspire others to join the quest.

That is the pursuit of Save the Cape, Inc., a new non-profit organization: to create light where none exists on projects and problems at the Cape Fear, to give the region the benefit of the cleansing power of that light. To illuminate the importance of the unique ecology of the region. To preserve it for generations to come. And to inspire the special human resources of our area to apply their talents to a most satisfying and necessary task.

Our immediate focus is on a permanent end of the North Carolina International Terminal, the deepwater port where the water is not deep. The State Ports Authority has put the project "on hold," but it is still on the line. The State Ports Authority leaders, in various public statements, have confirmed their determination to advance the project. This time, with greater resources. The effort will be formidable. So the opposition must be more formidable.

This is beyond a simple, grass roots response. NoPort Southport had to start from scratch, and it took two years of dedication to build the case against the port and present it to the public and to public officials. Gratifying as that was, the mission was narrow; this organization, established by former members of NoPort Southport, will go beyond those confines and take on a broad mission to protect and preserve the Cape Fear region. Save the Cape will be a permanent organization.

We draw inspiration from Save the Bay, an organization created at the Narragansett Bay from an coalition of grass roots organizations organized to oppose a nuclear plant and a liquified natural gas facility in 1970. It grew, obtained regular funding, hired permanent staff, and has been a strong voice for the bay for the past four decades. In the mid-1990's, Save the Bay was ready when a very large container terminal was proposed for the former Navy facility at Quonset Point. Save the Bay had earned, and was accorded, a place at the table in any consideration of such projects. Save the Bay had the standing, the strength to stop the container terminal, as they have stopped other reckless projects. www.savebay.org

There are similar organizations in other estuaries: San Francisco Bay, Chesapeake Bay. The Cape Fear, too, needs a voice, a strong, persistent, permanent voice. That is why we are organizing Save the Cape, Inc. And we have some other ideas—look at the Web site.

Help us. Join us. Soar with us. Contact editor@savethecape.org