



# Cape Fear Firebird

*The Light of Save the Cape*

July 4, 2012

*All of the ... studies had a strong political "hidden agenda" that tended to cloud real issues and most definitely, the final results.*

–Statewide Logistics Plan

## ***A Declaration of Indignation***

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for a group to discard the conclusions of political forces which are forcing upon us a megaport, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. The June 26 final report of NCDOT's Maritime Strategy Study.

The report is a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing inevitably the same Object, more study. Disregard, nay, dismissal of previous work of competent consultants and the Corps of Engineers. Benefit/cost figures from invisible methods, badly bent to achieve the desired result.

All to keep the megaport alive. More nourishing of projects to feed bureaucratic appetites and favored consultants. More waste. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world:

- The report uses an estimate of \$352 million for dredging to 51 feet for the megaport at Southport. We have called to the attention of the consultants the estimate of the Corps of Engineers of \$1.2 billion for dredging to 50-foot depth. which has been confirmed by TEC, Inc./PF Richardson. But using that figure would not get NCDOT the result they want.
- The report identifies a compound annual growth rate of 3.3% as appropriate for forecasting container moves. But their forecast is 1.25 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) in 2040, an implied rate of about 5.2% 3.3% would result in a forecast of only 745,000 TEU, which could be accommodated at Wilmington with some improvements. Not grand enough.
- The benefit/cost analysis includes benefits and costs of planned highway improvements across the State that would be used by port traffic. The magnitude of those overwhelms the benefits and costs of the port improvements themselves, and grossly distorts the results.
- The report now has a section addressing environmental issues. However, the most common word in this section is "however," as each is dismissed. Or recommended for further study.
- The alternative chosen to handle container traffic is dredging the Cape Fear River channel nine feet deeper and 240 feet wider all the way to Wilmington. Needless to say, that is preposterous on its face, an alternative to be studied until it fails and Southport is resurrected.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.