

EI-21077



FW: Enviro Matters - Doc No. 35852

Mary Hillberg

to:

NaveckyD

09/09/2015 05:57 PM

Cc:

David.Navecky

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2 Attachments



Too many Florida container ports.docx BoCC Resolution Port Rail Extension 2015.doc

Hi Dave,

You probably don't remember me, but we have talked a couple of times on the phone and you have always been kind and helpful. Now I am beginning to be concerned about the direction of the EIS and what information is helpful for an environmental statement.

I have also been reading a bit about shipping statistics and requirements. More and more, it is becoming evident the goals/purposes the applicant has proposed for this rail are not realistic or even possible.

Attached is the most current article I can find in a reputable shipping periodical that states what the public here have suspected all along; there is no need for this freight train at Port Canaveral at all. This is apparently a boondoggle pushed by the central Florida counties. There is no pressing need for any such thing.

On September 3, 2015, the Brevard County Commission unanimously voted to oppose the freight train through Merritt Island routes and requested it be put through the Air Force area where the citizens and environment maybe protected. Attached is that Resolution.

It has also been suggested we are mistaken about the role of the EIS of the STB in that it "facilitates" rail placement when the applicant want it in an environmentally inappropriate place, rather than evaluates the appropriateness of the routes or rail placement. Is this true?

Might you comment on the article, as well as the question about the purpose of the EIS by the STB? As an elected representative of the NMI community, I need to know. If you would rather talk on the phone than via email, I understand and my home number is 321-453-0220 and my cell is 321-427-2363.

Sincerely,

Mary Hillberg

Merritt Island, Florida



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

www.avast.com

Too many Florida container ports?

BY BEN MEYER | SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2015



Container Analytics

with Ben Meyer

Port Canaveral, located about halfway down the Atlantic Coast of Florida, this month opened its brand new container terminal. In doing so, however, it became the fourth container-handling port facility on the East Coast of an already crowded state and an even more crowded Southeast U.S. container port market. The ports of Charleston, S.C. and Savannah, Ga. both have a firm foothold in the southeastern U.S. container market and have put up record volumes in recent months.

Then there's the pesky problem of finding an ocean carrier to call at the new facility.

Gulftainer USA, the U.S. division of the United Arab Emirates-based terminal operator, won a 35-year exclusive concession to operate the new terminal last fall, making it the first Middle Eastern company to operate a marine terminal in the United States. Yet it has yet to attract its first liner carrier customer.

Gulftainer's Group Managing Director Peter Richards told *American Shipper* in a recent interview that the Port Canaveral terminal would initially target imports destined for Central Florida that currently enter the market through Savannah and Charleston. Industry sources estimate drayage costs from the Savannah and Charleston ports to Central Florida are between \$500 and \$700 more per container than from Port Canaveral.

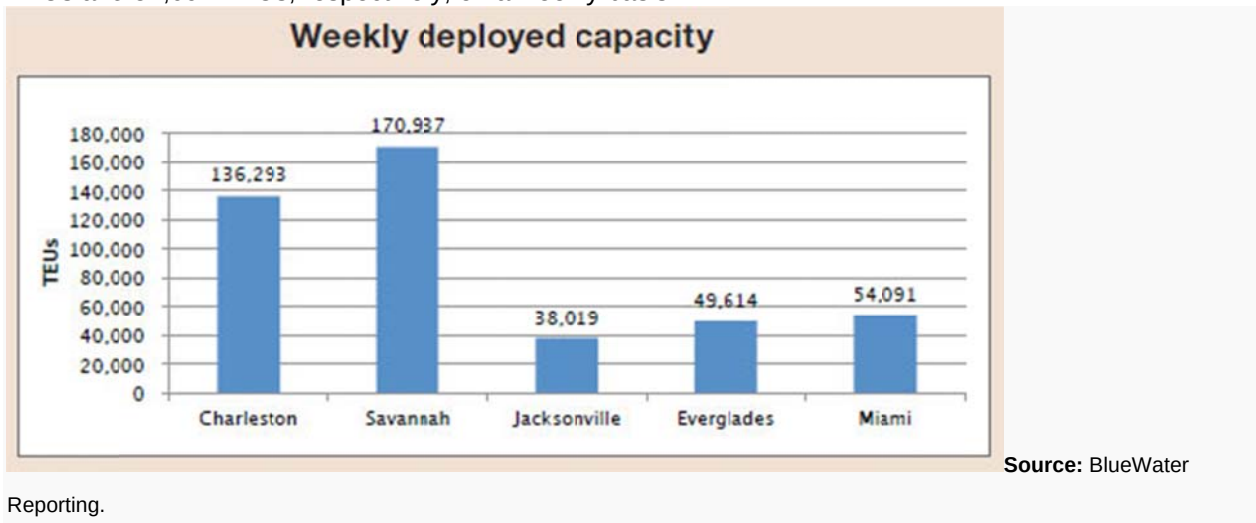
Florida Gov. Rick Scott has made trade and logistics a centerpiece of his economic plan, convincing the state legislature to commit an estimated \$850 million to fund port infrastructure upgrades, including \$24.4 million allocated to the Canaveral Port Authority to widen its turning basin and deepen its navigation channel to accommodate larger vessels. This begs the question, however, of whether those funds—not to mention Gulftainer's investments of time, money and manpower—might have been better spent improving facilities at one of the three existing container ports along Florida's East Coast.

Port Canaveral operates the second largest cruise port in the United States, but until now has been a relatively minor player in the cargo arena, focusing mostly on bulk commodities such as petroleum, salt and industrial equipment.

Is there really enough cargo volume to support yet another container port on the U.S. South Atlantic coast?

The adjacent chart, built with data from BlueWater Reporting's North America Port/Terminal Analysis Application, compares total weekly deployed capacity for all direct region-to-region liner services calling at Charleston, Savannah, Jacksonville, Port Everglades or Miami. Port Canaveral, of course, does not

appear on the chart because no liner services call there, yet. Container services calling Charleston have a weekly deployed capacity of 136,293 TEUs, while those calling Savannah have a weekly capacity of 170,937 TEUs, and services calling Jacksonville, Everglades and Miami deploy 38,019 TEUs, 49,614 TEUs and 54,091 TEUs, respectively, on a weekly basis.



For the purposes of this discussion, ports along the Florida Gulf Coast and farther north on the East Coast were not included because they serve different geographical markets and receive different services than those examined.

It should also be noted that there is some overlap when discussing weekly deployed capacity to these ports. Of the 84 total various container, roll-on/roll-off and multi-purpose services with assigned container capacity that call at one of Canaveral's main competitors, 32 of them call at least two of the ports. Four of those loops call three of the competing ports and two services call at Charleston, Savannah, Jacksonville and Miami.

Only time will tell if Canaveral can become a successful container port in an already highly competitive market. But one thing is for sure: until it does, industry analysts will continue to question whether those highly sought after transportation infrastructure dollars would have been better invested elsewhere.

Meyer is web editor of *American Shipper* and a research analyst with BlueWater Reporting. [He can be reached by email.](#)

This article was published in the August 2015 issue of American Shipper.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The **Canaveral Port Authority** Cargo Rail Expansion Project is intended to provide railroad access to the north side of Port Canaveral for the purpose of transporting cargo containers and materials to existing rail services; and

WHEREAS, the extension is proposed to run from the north side of Port Canaveral across the northern section of the Banana River with a causeway/bridge to Merritt Island, south of Hall Road on **North Merritt Island, and continue northward through the Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge** to link up with existing NASA rail; and

WHEREAS, while the Port is touting this project as an economic boom for the local economy, there is significant opposition from fishermen, environmentalists, community activists and homeowners, believing this project will negatively impact north Merritt Island residents and will cause major impacts to the **Indian River Lagoon, wetlands** and the quality of life in North Merritt Island neighborhoods along the proposed route; and

WHEREAS, Canaveral Port Authority Public Meetings have been standing room only with many citizens loudly opposing **new train tracks on Merritt Island and their impacts to the Lagoon**; and

WHEREAS, the Canaveral Port Authority has provided extremely optimistic estimates for the Port's expansion, job creation, reduction of shipping costs for Central Florida Businesses and the economic growth to the area without full consideration of the cost and impact to the North Merritt Island Community and the **entire northern end of the Banana River Lagoon**.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, does hereby **oppose the planned Merritt Island routes for the Canaveral Port Authority Cargo Rail Expansion Project** and strongly urges the Canaveral Port Authority Commissioners to listen to their constituents and explore the alternative routes, especially the use of existing railroad tracks through Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

DONE, ORDERED AND ADOPTED, in regular session, this 3rd day of September, A.D., 2015

ROBIN FISHER, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTEST

SCOTT ELLIS, CLERK