



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Wilmington District

Wilmington Harbor Improvements, NC (Navigation - Investigations)

- **Sponsor: State of North Carolina**
- **Feasibility-level study being conducted to evaluate safety issues related to navigation**
- **FCSA executed in April 2012 and amended in June 2012**
- **Identification of tentatively selected plan in September 2013**
- **Feasibility study being conducted under Corps transformation initiative**



CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC 7

DATE: 8 April 2013

1. **AUTHORIZATION:** House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure study resolution dated 28 June 2006.
2. **LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND IMPROVEMENTS DESIRED:** The Wilmington Harbor project, located at Wilmington on the southeastern coast of North Carolina, requires improvements to address navigation inefficiencies and safety issues being faced by navigation vessels currently calling on the Port of Wilmington. The existing depth of the navigation channel ranges from 42 to 44 feet. The current alignment of the entrance channel near Bald Head Island has proven susceptible to rapid and persistent shoaling. The Battery Island navigation channel turn is problematic for some container vessels under certain conditions of wind and tide. Finally, the limited width of the existing anchorage basin causes delays for larger vessels currently utilizing the harbor, and prevents any post-Panamax ships from calling on the harbor in the future. A feasibility study to examine alternatives to improve these areas of the Wilmington Harbor project is currently underway. The study was initiated in April 2012 with the execution of a feasibility cost sharing agreement (FCSA) with the state of North Carolina and is scheduled for completion by March 2015, subject to the availability of funds.
3. **COST ESTIMATE:**
\$240,000 100% Federal reconnaissance phase
1,400,000 (Feasibility/Federal)
1,300,000 (Feasibility/Non-Federal)
\$2,940,000 Total

Project Information – Wilmington Harbor Improvements, NC (Navigation - Investigations) –
Continued

4. **FEDERAL FUNDING ALLOCATION THRU FY 2012:** \$792,000.
5. **FY 2013 BUDGET AMOUNT:** \$250,000. Allocation estimated to be reduced to \$50,000 due to carry-in funds from FY 2012. Fiscal Year 2013 and carry-in funds are being used to continue the feasibility study, including collection of additional geotechnical data, development of existing and future without project conditions, determination and analysis of alternatives, and identify a tentatively selected plan.
6. **FY 2014 BUDGET AMOUNT:** \$500,000. Funds would be used to complete the draft feasibility report and Environmental Impact Statement, conduct public, agency, and independent external peer reviews of the study and hold the agency decision meeting.
7. **KEY DATES:**
 - Approved 905(b) analysis – April 2011
 - Completed the reconnaissance phase – April 2012
 - Complete feasibility phase – March 2015 subject to availability of funds
8. **OTHER INFORMATION:** In accordance with the FY 2006 Wilmington Harbor Improvements study resolution, the Corps of Engineers began a 905(b) analysis in FY 2009 focusing on extending the navigation channel to provide vessel access to 600 acres of property owned by the North Carolina State Ports Authority (NCSPA), commonly referred to as the proposed North Carolina International Terminal (NCIT). The NCSPA envisioned a new terminal to be the best means to accommodate larger and more efficient vessels that would be in service once the Panama Canal expansion program was completed in 2014. The state of North Carolina provided a letter of intent to accompany the 905(b) analysis on 7 December 2010 expressing their desire to cease further studies supporting NCIT and fully evaluate navigational safety issues related to the existing channel. The immediate challenges of safe navigation supporting its existing port facilities include: rate of shoaling of the entrance channel within the Baldhead Shoal channel reach, vessel maneuverability of the Battery Island turn, and the current turning basin. These current areas of concern were recommended to be evaluated further in detailed feasibility studies in the approved 905(b) analysis dated April 2011.