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NORTH CAROLINA PORTS ATTRACTS ADDITIONAL TRANSPACIFIC CONTAINER SERVICE

Wilmington, N.C. – North Carolina Ports is pleased to announce a new partnership with THE Alliance with the addition of the EC2 all-water Asia-U.S. East Coast container service. This weekly service will begin calling on the Port of Wilmington in May and touts some of the largest vessels that will consistently come to and leave from the Carolinas.

“Our comprehensive port coverage continues to improve at North Carolina Ports,” said Executive Director, Paul J. Cozza. “This new partnership with THE Alliance, a recent announcement with the 2M Alliance, plus our existing services, provide regional importers and exporters with a plethora of options through our Port of Wilmington.”

THE Alliance includes container carriers NYK Group, “K” Line, MOL, Yang Ming and Hapag-Lloyd. Their transpacific service rotation includes direct access to the markets of Qingdao, Ningbo, Shanghai and Busan. The North Asia service will traverse the expanded Panama Canal on its way to U.S. East Coast Ports, promoting fast transit times as well as the deployment of modern and efficient ships, 8,500 TEUs in capacity.

“Today’s announcement will help further establish the Port of Wilmington as a major gateway for the Carolinas,” said Chief Commercial Officer, Greg Fennell. “We are excited to welcome these new carriers and for the return of Yang Ming and “K” Line.”

Both Yang Ming and “K” Line have a long history at the Port of Wilmington. Yang Ming, in particular, called the port for over 35 years. Both carriers eagerly await their return to North Carolina this spring after the collapse of then partner and container carrier Hanjin this past fall.



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“We are truly the port of competitive advantage,” said Chairman of the North Carolina State Ports Authority Board of Directors, Tom Adams. “The capital investments being made in our infrastructure continue to drive the decisions of these container carriers and we are expecting even more good news in the near future.”

As part of its ongoing infrastructure investment plan, North Carolina Ports recently announced the order of two New Panamax ship-to-shore cranes with an option to purchase two more from designer Shanghai Zhenjua Heavy Industry Co., Ltd. (ZPMC). Between the new cranes, turning basin expansion project, various berth improvements, and the expansion of the container yard, North Carolina Ports will pump over \$120 million into its infrastructure over the next few years. These investments, along with the operational efficiencies associated with North Carolina Ports, have led, in part, to recent service additions at the Port of Wilmington.

The EC2 container service could also attract more agricultural exports through the Port of Wilmington Cold Storage (PWCS) facility. The demand for pork and poultry is particularly high and it is anticipated that the new EC2 container service, dovetailed with the capabilities of the PWCS facility, will give North Carolina farmers the opportunity to significantly grow their export business to Asia through North Carolina Ports.

North Carolina’s ports in Wilmington and Morehead City, plus inland terminals in Charlotte and in Greensboro, link the state's consumers, businesses and industry to world markets, and serve as magnets to attract new business and industry to the State of North Carolina. Port activities contribute statewide to 76,000 jobs and \$700 million each year in state and local tax revenues.