

Restore the Delta
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www.restorethedelta.org



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November 12, 2024

Jason Cashman Port of Stockton
Port of Stockton Commissioners
2201 West Washington Street
Stockton, California 95203
Via email to ceqa@stocktonport.com

**Re: Notice of Preparation and Initial Study for the Nevada Cement Company LLC
Stockton Terminal Modernization Project**

Dear Mr. Cashman and honorable Port Commissioners,

Restore The Delta is providing comments in response to the Port of Stockton's public scoping process for preparing a DEIR for the Nevada Cement Company LLC Stockton Terminal Modernization Project.

Restore the Delta is committed to restoring the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta so that communities and ecosystems can thrive together with clean water and air. Our Carbon and Energy Program evaluates and advocates for standards in the emerging climate technology industries in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta region, with a focus on environmental & economic risks, public health implications, and community benefits. We collaborate with carbon removal and energy industries, government agencies, national labs, and community-based organizations to develop research and policy solutions grounded in environmental justice. Our goal is to support Delta community leaders to advocate for themselves for protective standards, transparency, and inclusion in economic development projects.

On initial review, we are cautiously optimistic about the Nevada Cement Company terminal modernization project due to the developer's commitment to early community engagement and proposed efficiency improvements to cement handling operations that offer potential to reduce air quality impacts. That said, we do have several concerns we believe should be rigorously evaluated in the Environmental Impact Report, including air pollution and cumulative impacts of the project in relation to other industrial development planned at the Port.

Eagle Materials, the company that recently purchased the Nevada Cement Terminal, reached out to Restore The Delta in fall of 2024 to share information about the project and offered a tour of the facility. This demonstrated to us a willingness to accept meaningful input in the early stages of project design, prior to CEQA scoping meetings. Company representatives also expressed an interest in co-designing harm mitigation measures. We request that Eagle Materials continue this

practice with us and other community-based organizations and be willing to engage in constructive dialogue with community stakeholders across the board.

We generally appreciate the objectives of the proposed improvements to the terminal to “improve the safe and efficient handling of cementitious material.” Improvements include the following:

- installation of a new, more energy-efficient unloader sized appropriately to the newer class of larger bulk material vessels;
- redevelopment of portions of the terminal to meet current seismic design requirements for larger, modern unloading infrastructure;
- construction of tracks to facilitate delivery of more railcars in fewer trips;
- replacement of an existing terminal storage bunker with a higher capacity storage dome; and
- modifications to truck and rail loading stations to allow direct, enclosed truck loading from storage bunkers with new dust filter systems.

We support the elements of the project designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce vessel traffic congestion in the shipping channel, reduce rail traffic, and lower air emissions of cement unloading operations overall. We are particularly keen on seeing the retirement of the Golden Arrow, a floating silo ship that was repurposed in 2003 for cement unloading operations at Berth 3/4 which currently poses significant air pollution hazards.

Our primary areas of concern, detailed below, are air pollution impacts to the Southwest Stockton community and cumulative environmental and public health impacts of numerous planned industrial developments at the Port of Stockton:

The EIR should detail anticipated emissions of criteria air pollutants and offer recommendations to minimize or mitigate these emissions in full.

a. As demonstrated in Table 2 (shown to the right), this project would entail an enormous expansion to current cement unloading operations. We share concerns raised in the Initial Study that “construction activities and operational increases in trucks, rail, and vessel calls would likely result in increased emissions of criteria air pollutants relative to baseline conditions.”

b. We recognize that temporary construction emissions associated with terminal upgrades may be unavoidable and hope these impacts can be minimized and mitigated by measures determined in consultation with the broader community.

**Table 2
Modal Moves, Baseline and Proposed Project**

Modal Moves	Baseline (2023)	Project Year 15 (Expected Maximum)
Import		
Railcars in ¹	0	1,429
Ship calls ²	10	69
Export		
Trucks ³	10,832	41,154
Railcars out ⁴	520	9,825
Rail trips	52 ⁴	437 ⁵
Barge calls ⁶	0	45

Notes:
 1. Rail calls are expressed in one-way moves assuming 114 tons per railcar for cement and 105 tons for supplementary cementitious materials.
 2. Assumes a ship volume of 35,250 short tons per ship
 3. Truck calls are expressed in one-way moves at 26 tons per truck.
 4. Assumes an average of 10 cars per train for each move
 5. Assumes a future railcar average of 45 cars per train arriving at and leaving the terminal. Assumes all railcars hauling in product for supplementary cementitious materials in pressure differential cars would also be reloaded with cement (1,429 cars) and leave the facility as a full (not an empty) movement, thus reducing the cars required for shipments of cement to be brought to site.
 6. Assumes a barge volume of 5,000 short tons per barge

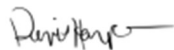
c. We are predominantly concerned with the potential for air quality impacts of *future site operations* on Southwest Stockton community members living approximately 500 feet south of the Nevada Cement terminal in the northeast corner of the Port's East Complex. The Port recognizes in the draft study the selection of this community by the California Air Resources Board for community air monitoring and the development of an air emissions reduction plan, pursuant to [AB 617](#). Any particulate impact on the air from this project would directly impact the residents of this community directly.

d. According to the Initial Study, Nevada Cement Terminal's Permit to Operate (Facility Number N-153), issued by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), allows for up to 2.628 million tons of cementitious materials to be received at the terminal per year via ship or rail, with a combined permitted truck and rail shipping capacity of 6,000 tons of cementitious materials per day. The EIR should investigate and disclose how recently this permit was issued, specific levels of air pollutants, any stipulated operating conditions for compliance (e.g. weather conditions, etc.), and any monitoring, reporting, and verification protocols required under the permit to ensure transparency in emissions reporting.

The EIR should include a cumulative impacts analysis for the project, incorporating projected environmental impacts of [industrial development projects that have been approved recently](#) by the Port of Stockton. Such a comprehensive analysis would allow for the design of appropriate project alternatives / mitigation measures. The expansion of multiple terminals at once warrants a more comprehensive analysis and potential shift in project design to mitigate cumulative impacts of increased ocean-going vessel traffic, increased truck traffic, and increased rail traffic. It is paramount that the cement terminal modernization project demonstrates an ability to contribute a reduction in cumulative air emissions (i.e. nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and greenhouse gases, as specified in the Port's [Clean Air Plan](#)) compared to present (baseline) site emissions. Further, given that the project proposes an annual influx of 69 ocean going vessels by Project Year 15, the EIR should determine whether some amount of channel dredging is likely to be proposed in the future to accommodate increased shipping traffic. The EIR should also incorporate estimates of at-berth NOx and SOx emissions with and without implementation of onshore emissions capture and control systems, which we understand are [in development](#).

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate in scoping of environmental impacts related to this project and to participate in co-design of harm mitigation measures with community-based stakeholders. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,



Davis Harper
Carbon and Energy Program Manager