

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Limetree Bay Seeking Permit To Expand Marine Terminal To Accommodate Very Large Bulk Fuel Carriers

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ST. CROIX -- Limetree Bay Terminals, a subsidiary of ArcLight Capital Partners, LLC, has submitted an application to the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) that would give the company the ability to receive shipments from very large bulk fuel carriers (VLBFC) at its marine terminal without having to transfer fuel to smaller vessels, according to the application, filed with USACE's Jacksonville arm.

The application for expansion, which comes as part of an agreement between ArcLight Partners and China Petroleum & Chemical Corp., also called Sinopec, represents

another step by Limetree Bay to fulfill its [2015 contract with the Government of the Virgin Islands](#). Part of the landmark deal saw the firm agreeing to \$125 million in capital spending which, among other obligations, includes the buildout of its marine facility to accommodate VLBFCs. The application was filed with USACE during President Donald Trump's visit to China, where one of the president's biggest multi-billion dollar deals was an [energy investment from Sinopec](#) to bring thousands of new jobs to hurricane-ravaged areas in Texas and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

During a recent press briefing, Governor Kenneth Mapp made mention of the deal, which is non-binding, and hailed it as having a major effect on the territory's economy, once it comes to fruition. The Limetree Bay USACE application, filed on November 8, is a sign that ArcLight Partners and Sinopec were ready to take a big step that would add much-needed, high-paying jobs to the U.S. Virgin Islands.

In June of 2016, the governor -- fresh off his trip to China where he met with Sinopec officials -- told residents that the territory [was not ready](#) for the amount of jobs that the Sinopec partnership with Limetree Bay would bring.

"I want to be clear to the people of the Virgin Islands that the significant amount of jobs to our economy, the number of jobs to be created, the revenues to be derived by the local government will be significant," the governor said in June of last year.

And the application has also revived hopes of refining at the Limetree Bay Terminals through the Sinopec agreement, following Mr. Trump's visit to China and the deals with Sinopec that derived from it. The talk of refining was first mentioned by the governor last year.

"It is the company's intention that some level of refining will be necessary at the St. Croix refinery. I do not want to be construed as announcing today that the company has made a decision to turn on the refinery," he said. "But for all intents and from all our discussions, and all of their plans having to do with blending of crude, and the storage of crude — there is a great possibility that the south shore refinery will, in fact, be restarted."

Limetree Bay's application to USACE, seen [here](#), "seeks authorization to install a Single Point Mooring (SPM) and an underwater pipeline system for the offshore transfer of bulk fuel from Very Large Bulk Carriers to the existing facilities at the Limetree Bay Marine Terminal," according to the description.

"The project would include the placement of two concrete coated 30 inches in diameter parallel pipelines from the end of the eastern jetty of the Limetree Bay Terminal to a Pipeline End Manifold (PLEM) to be located offshore at a water depth of approximately 150 feet below mean sea level. The system would then transition into three 24 inches in diameter hoses which would be suspended mid water at a depth of 150 feet to 250 feet to the Buoy Balance Position for the SPM," the description adds.

Though the Nov. 8 application seeks approval to expand the Limetree Bay marine terminal for very large bulk fuel carriers accommodation, Sinopec, Mr. Mapp said, would eventually seek the accommodation of ultra large bulk fuel carriers at the Limetree Bay marine facility capable of holding 2 million barrels of oil.