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W4620

August 26, 1975

Ms. Cheryl McCaffrey
c/o Allan Antley
Aprt. 107
3196 Valley Bluff Drive
Doraville, Georgia 30340

Dear Cheryl:

It was good to see you last week and especially appreciate receiving your letter drawing my attention to the marsh problem at Oregon Inlet. I had not visited the marsh area for some time before reading your letter and having just come from there and agree that some corrective action should be taken to see that vehicles do not compromise this fragile area. We will channelize the traffic along designated areas until they reach the beach and tidal zone which should improve the marsh protection.

Again, thank you for bringing this situation to my attention, and I am hoping to see you down here again soon.

Sincerely,

J. L. Dunning
Superintendent

cc:
Norm Messinger
Larry Roush
Noel Pachta

0018881

RECEIVED
Cape Hatteras
National Seashore

AUG 18 1975

% Allan Antley
Apt. 107
3196 Valley Bluff Dr.
Doraville, Georgia 30340
August 14, 1975

Supt. James Dunning
National Park Service Headquarters
Manteo, North Carolina 27954

Dear Jim,

It was so good to be back at Hatteras again: always a very special place. Though I've seen a lot of the East coast barrier islands, Hatteras (really, as they all are) is unique : in its natural history, and in the feeling that rises from its sands. CHNS is home.

I'd like to congratulate your interpretive staff on continually improving staff and programs. I really feel that the three park areas under your administration have a lot to offer and serve the public well. (Andthat,spoken as a visitor looking at your programs.)

I would like to bring to your attention one thing that bothered me: ie. The Oregon Inlet marsh. From the bridge it is obvious that near the south end of the spit, considerable vehicle use has damaged the young salt marsh. Unfortunately, I didn't get a photo, but from the northbound lane you can see many new (this year) criss-crossed, deep tracks which have torn up the marsh.

As you know, the Oregon Inlet marsh is the best we have at Cape Hatteras National Seashore - and this,as precious as the Hatteras Lighthouse , and Sea Oats. (for which great protective efforts are of foremost concern). You also know that salt marshes are among the most productive lands of the world and support part of the life of 80-90 % of our commercial and sports fisheries, not to mention its importance to many other non-economically valued species which are vital to the food chain and for diversity.

I'm sure Paul Godfrey has shared with you some of his observations

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on vehicle impact on marshes - both from his past experience and from results of his current study at Cape Cod National Seashore on the effects of off-road vehicles on marshes, beaches, dunes, etc.

Marshes exhibit very slow recovery to vehicle use or heavy pedestrian traffic. Witness the old tracks still evident on the Oregon Inlet marsh, and those of the bombardier throughout the duck hunting area. Furthermore, it takes few passes of a vehicle to destroy a marsh area. (Paul can give you figures on this).

The Oregon Inlet spit is widely recognized as an important area from many points of view. It is well used for interpretive programs in sharing our understanding of coastal processes, and in developing an environmental consciousness in our visitors. It is of importance to the scientific community as one of the few natural (no barrier dune) barrier island segments in CHNS and therefore valuable geologically, ecologically, and for shore bird nesting. It is also heavily used by sports fishermen and a fine access point to good year-round fishing. This is an important aspect to be considered, for these people value CHNS for just this reason. But I suspect that the tracks in the marsh were made by vehicles of sports fishermen. (Paradoxical: The fishermen would destroy the marsh which raises, and feeds the fish they stalk.)

However, I believe all these uses can co-exist if respect for other aspects is exercised by all. Certainly, educating visitors to these relationships is a goal of our interpretive programs. Yet all visitors don't get the message. I would suggest that the park erect stakes (perhaps too close for vehicle passage) a little higher than the developing marsh edge, and place periodic signs to the effect of: " Protect our Marshes ", or " Marsh driving prohibited " (depending on whether you're a "fern-feeler" or not).

Stakes are used by NPS on Cape Cod to mark roads through the Provincelands dunes. Though stakes and signs are another restriction, I think they may be necessary if users of the area haven't the background to understand the consequences of their actions. (Maybe an explanatory interpretive message with the prohibition to give them a reason) . I certainly think such restrictions are justified to protect one of our most valuable resources. This doesn't eliminate vehicle use - fishermen can still get easily to the inlet in their chariots, they're just channeled a bit.

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I have not seen Hatteras Inlet or Ocracoke Inlet in a couple of years. Perhaps rangers on patrol can report the status of any developing marshes there relative to vehicle impact. Perhaps stakes are in order there too.

I know that you are concerned about such things in the park, and that it takes time to get things done with the great load of work already on all divisions, but I hope that this is seen important enough that a day can be spent soon to restrict vehicle use of marsh areas. After they are destroyed, its too late !

As usual, I'm too long winded. Pardon my use of "our" substituted for "NPS". You see, when I was born I had red blood. After I started as a botany major, I got green blood. And now that I've been with NPS, I hopelessly have gray and green in my blood !

My best to all, and I hope to be among you again soon.

With care,


Cheryl McCaffrey

ORM 10-14
Rev. (1/76)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

R 12/3

CASE INCIDENT RECORD

1 ORGANIZATION CODE 1 5190		2 ORGANIZATION (PARK) NAME CAPE HATTERAS NATL SEASHORE			3 LOCATION CODE 0102		4 CASE/INCIDENT NO. 101480	
5 LOCATION OF INCIDENT NORTH POINT OREGON INLET				6 WHEN DID IT OCCUR? MO. DAY YR. 1 2 0 2 7 6		24 HOUR TIME HRS. MIN. 1 6 0 0		7 DAY OF WEEK 5
8 OFFENSE/INCIDENT CODE 2 3 1 4 0 3		9 NATURE OF INCIDENT DRIVING OFF ESTABLISHED ROAD OR AREA			10 HOW REPORTED OBSERVATION			
11 REPORTED BY D.B. STONE			12 ADDRESS BODIE ISLAND SUBDIST			13 PHONE { HOME BUSINESS		
14 RECEIVED BY D.B. STONE			15 WHEN RECEIVED: DATE 12-02-76		16 TIME BROADCAST N/A		17 WHEN INVESTIGATED DATE 12-2-76 TIME 1600	
18 INVESTIGATED BY D.B. STONE			19 OFFICER/RANGER NO. 01112		20 WHEN CLEARED DATE TIME		DISPOSITION 21	

22 INVOLVED PERSONS	23 ADDRESS	24 PHONE	25 SEX	26 RACE	27 AGE	28 DATE OF BIRTH
1						
2						
3						
4						

29 DETAILS OF INCIDENT

Location of Incident: Bodie Island southern portion extending from Oregon Inlet Camp-ground beach and tidal flats and marsh areas to termination of land at the Oregon Inlet channel. This area is referred to as Oregon Inlet North Point (see map).

Over the past two years, I have observed a marked increase in illegal vehicle use in this area; most notable, vehicles driving into grassy marsh areas (see photos) and over sand dunes in the flats leaving deep ruts in the dunes. The primary vehicle traffic use in the flats is the shortest route from ramp #2 to the distal end of the point for fishermen and general "cruising" by other vehicles. The flats are newly formed areas within the past ten years with a newly developing marsh area on the entire western side stopping only due to the compaction of the soil in the central area because of heavy vehicular use. Numerous tern nesting colonies are found in this central area and slightly eastward. By eliminating vehicles from the flats, we could obtain numerous benefits.

1. Allow marsh to continue growth at a natural rate by eliminating compacted soil due to vehicle use.
2. Allow growth or deterioration of the sand dunes (whichever might be their normal cycle) by eliminating vehicles from driving over these new dunes.

30 QUANTITY	31 PROPERTY STOLEN OR DAMAGED	32 ESTIMATED VALUE	RECOVERED	
			33 DATE	34 VALUE
35 PROPERTY CODE OF HIGHEST VALUE		36 TOTAL	37 TOTAL	00

INVESTIGATED BY (Signature and Date) *D.B. Stone, 12-02-76* APPROVED BY (Signature and Date) *Corey A. Peterson, 12-3-76*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

R 12/3

SUPPLEMENTARY CASE/INCIDENT RECORD

ORGANIZATION (PARK) NAME <u>CAPE HATTERAS NATL SEASHORE</u>		CASE/INCIDENT NUMBER 101480
LOCATION OF INCIDENT <u>NORTH POINT OREGON INLET</u>		DATE OF INCIDENT MO DA YR 12 02 76
NATURE OF INCIDENT <u>DRIVING OFF ESTABLISHED ROAD OR ARGA</u>		
COMPLAINANT'S NAME <u>D.B. STONE</u>	COMPLAINANT'S ADDRESS <u>Bodie Island Sub. Dist CHNS</u>	
RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION		

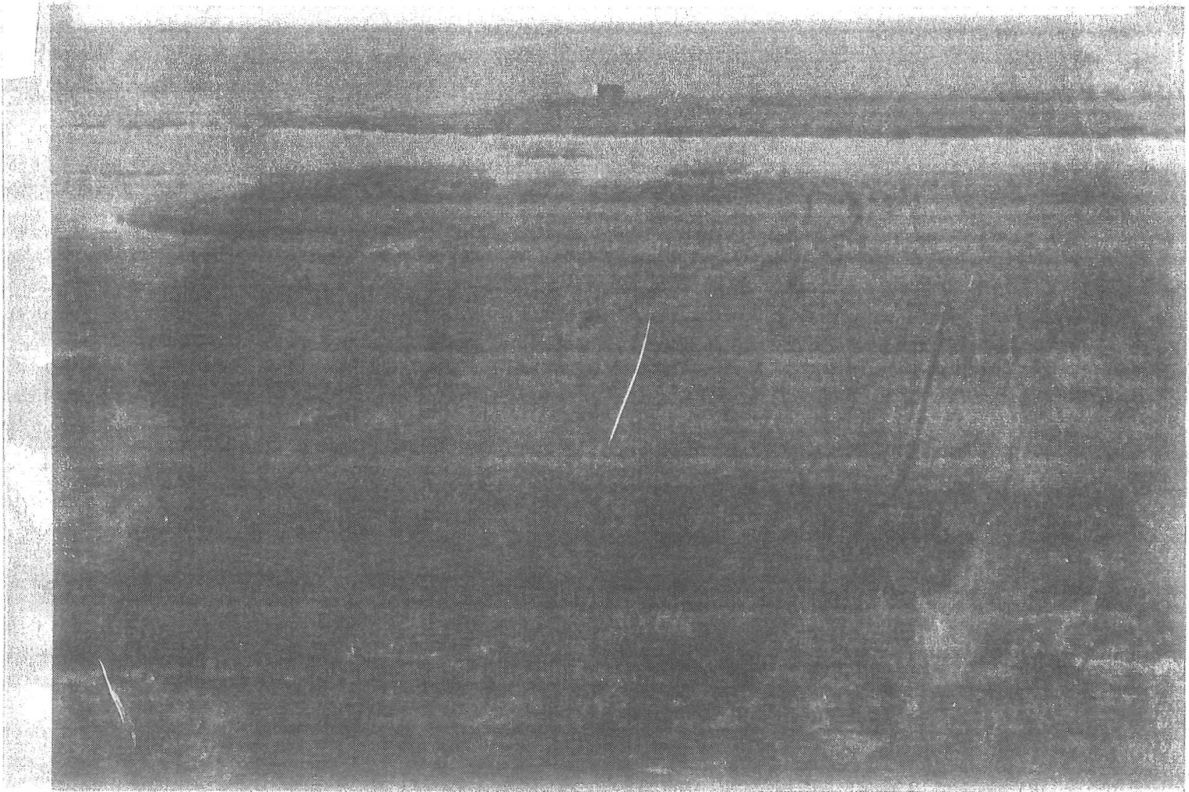
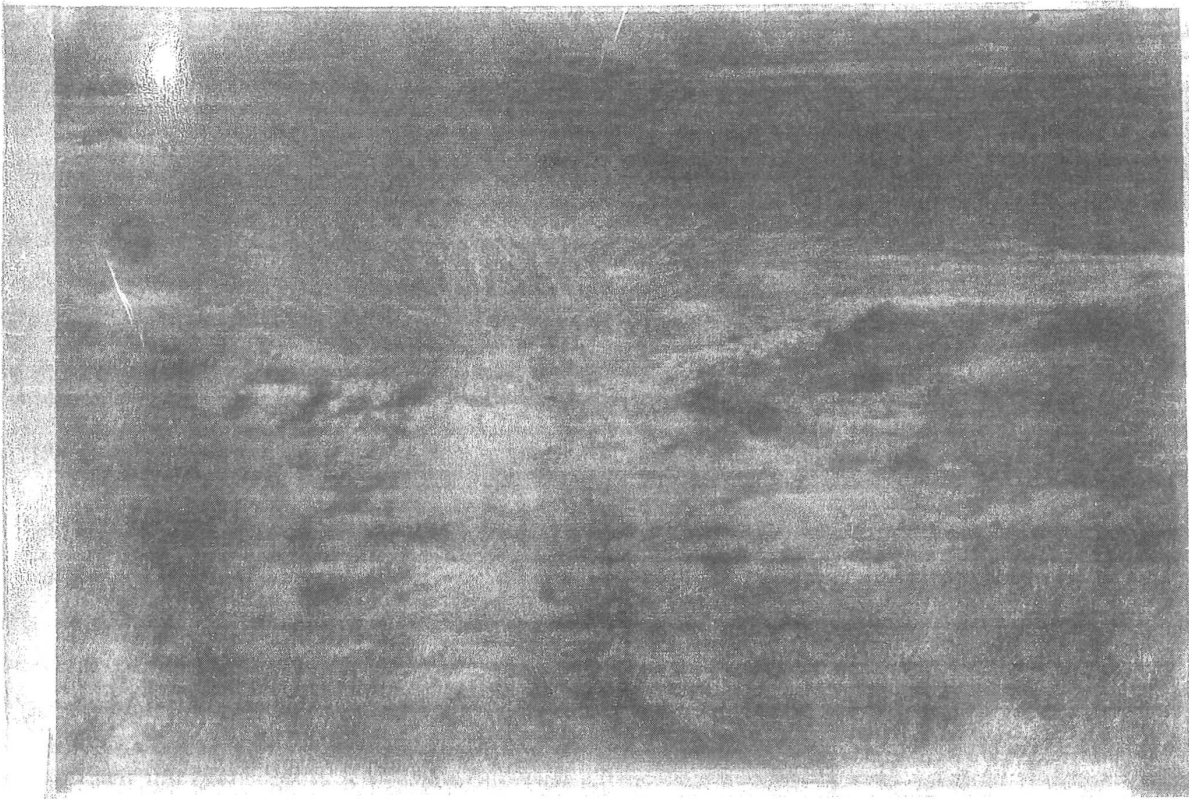
3. Protect our tern nesting areas from vehicle traffic which has been very apparent even though they were posted as "tern nesting areas - closed to vehicle use".

I am not advocating the closing of any portion of the beach to four-wheel drive vehicles, only routing them off of ramp #2 east to the beach and maintaining a corridor of 50-75 yards from the waterline allowing sufficient access for fishermen and sight-seers and leaving the flats to develop in a natural cycle.

The flats present an idea location for interpretation of the development of salt-water marshes and the birdlife that abounds within. I am only suggesting that the beach user drive .5 of a mile further to reach the distal end of the point (1.6 miles across flats and 2.1 miles around via beach), which is an insignificant distance compared to the preservation and interpretation potential of this area.

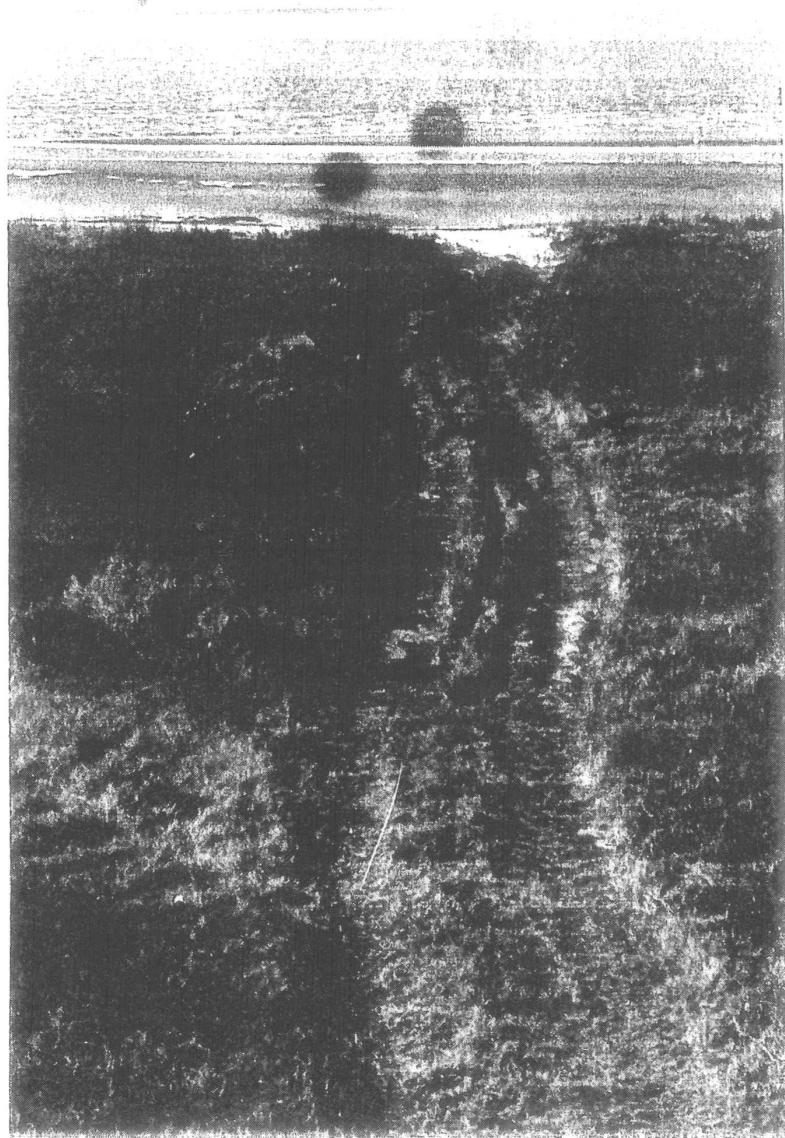
SUBMITTED BY (SIGNATURE AND DATE) <u>[Signature]</u>	APPROVED BY (SIGNATURE AND DATE) <u>[Signature]</u>
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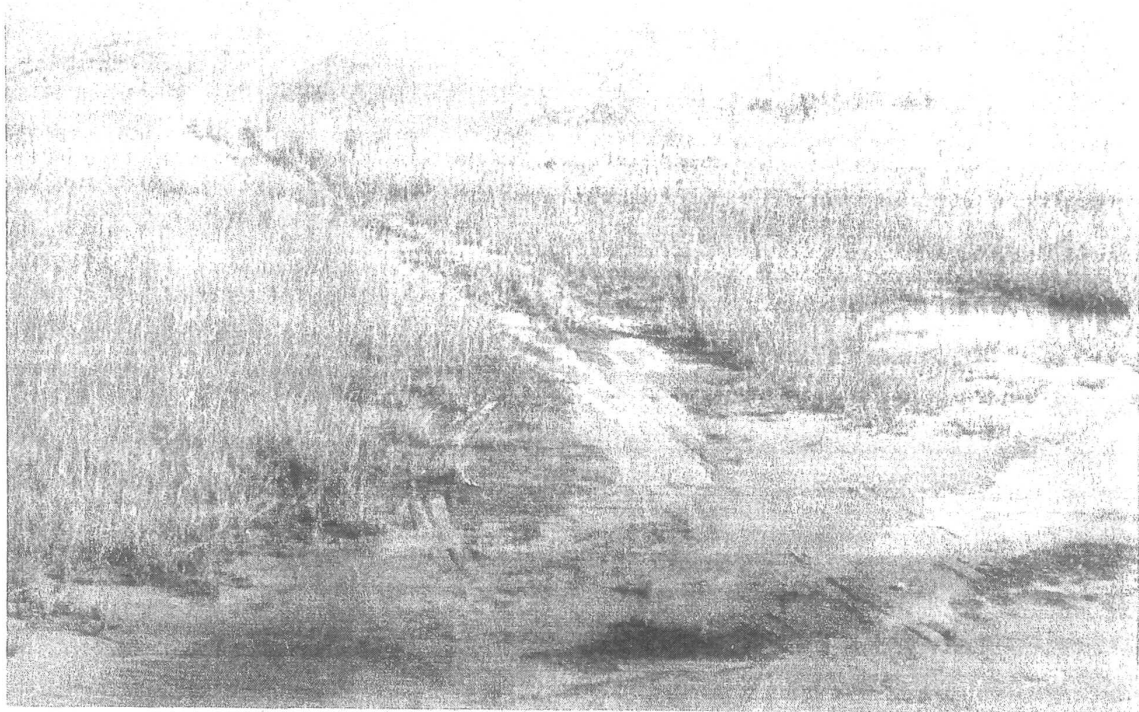
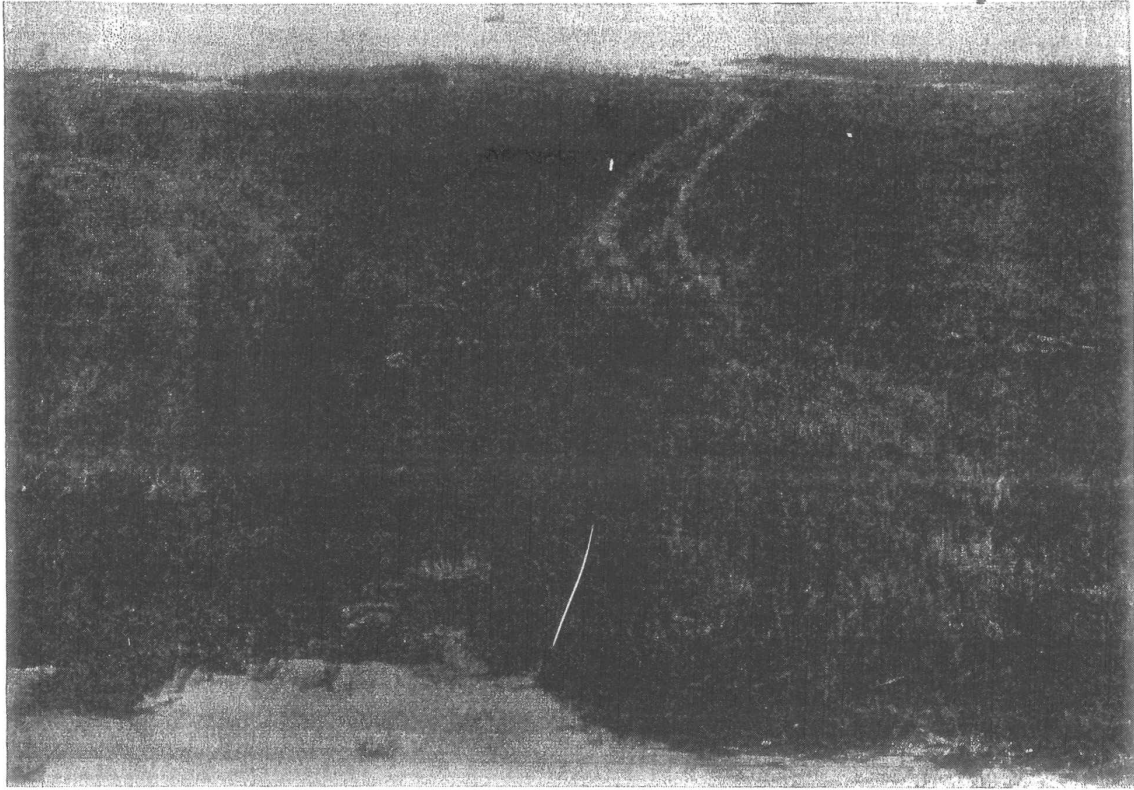
CASE # 101480

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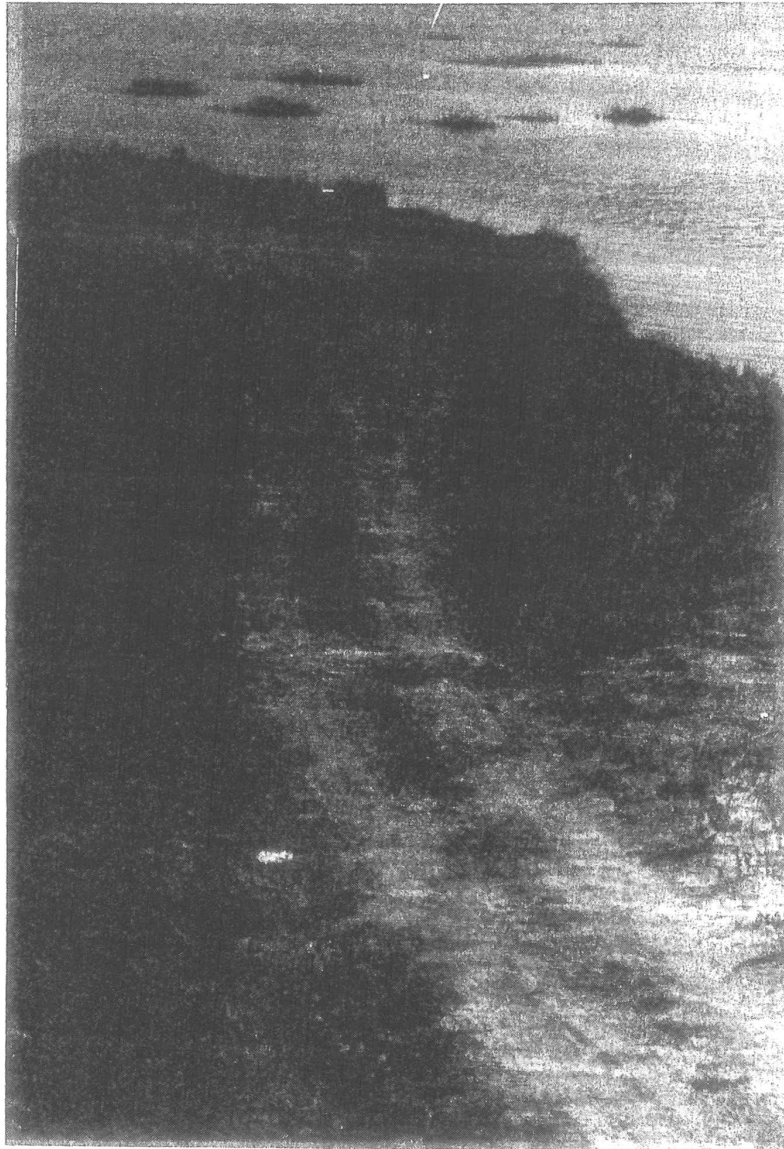
CASE # 101480

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CASE # 101480

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CASE # 101480