



COUNTY OF DARE

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February 11, 2010

Superintendent Mike Murray
National Park Service
1401 National Park Dr.
Manteo, NC 27954

Dear Mike,

We have received the 2009 reports for protected species in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area and have questions for you about the photographs selected for the covers of three reports.

We are concerned that the photographs on the covers of the Piping Plover and American Oystercatcher reports are inflammatory and inappropriate for a National Park Service annual report. In each of these instances, birds are shown sitting in tire tracks.

In view of the heated debate that has ensued since the consent decree, we believe the decision to use these photos in your reports creates the appearance of bias on the part of the National Park Service.

Here are the specific questions we have about the photographs used for the covers of the Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, and Colonial Waterbird reports.

- Were the photos taken by Park Service Staff, or furnished by non-NPS personnel?
- Who was the photographer of each image?
- If done by non-NPS personnel, what are the qualifications for photo submission?
- When were the original photos taken?
- Were the photos taken in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area?
- If yes to above, where were they taken?
- Was the photo for the Colonial Waterbird report showing a bird in a beach hat spontaneously found that way or was it staged?
- If any of these pictures were submitted by persons not on your staff and not under your control, do you have a system, method and means to assure the public that these pictures were not altered or enhanced with software such as Photoshop?

Mike, we would appreciate your prompt answer to our inquiry.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren C. Judge, III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "W" and "J".

Warren C. Judge, III, Chairman
Dare County Board of Commissioners