



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

Department of Conservation and Cultural Affairs

P. O. BOX 4340

CHARLOTTE AMALIE, ST. THOMAS 00801

November 6, 1980

Mr. Fred Berry, Director
Southeast Fisheries Center
National Marine Fisheries Service
75 Virginia Beach Drive
Miami, Florida 33149

Dear Mr. Berry:

Enclosed please find the Third Quarter Aerial Turtle Census Report, as well as a revised plan for Project IB, which is the statistical testing portion of the contract.

If there are any questions, please call the Bureau of Fish and Wildlife Director, Richard Dewey.

Sincerely,


DARLAN BRIN
Commissioner

Enclosure

304 SN
1980

NMFS Turtle Census, U.S. Virgin Islands, Revised Plan

January 1, 1980 to December 31, 1980

Contract Issued: Department of Conservation & Cultural Affairs
Bureau of Fish & Wildlife

Third Quarter Report - October 24, 1980

Study I: Aerial Sea Turtle Census

Project I A: Marine turtle census of St. Thomas-St. John U.S. Virgin
Islands nearshore waters

Aerial Census: No deviation (see 1st Quarter Report).

Results as of September 1980:

Six census flights were flown this quarter; average number of turtles seen per flight was 25. Turtle tracks were observed on the following beaches: Little Hans Lollik (tracks seen on 2 separate censuses), Coconut Bay beach on big Hans Lollik (tracks seen on 3 separate censuses), and Santa Maria Bay beach.

Below are tabulated the data from census flights to date:

	<u>1st Quarter</u>		<u>2nd Quarter</u>		<u>3rd Quarter</u>	
Greens	68	65%	81	57%	89	60%
Hawksbills	34	33%	54	38%	57	38%
Unidentified	2	2%	6	4%	3	2%
Total seen	104		141		149	

Average size of green turtles seen was 2.2' (range: 1'-4.5');

average size of hawksbills seen was 2.6' (range: 1'-4.5').

All turtle sizes were rounded off to the nearest 0.5'.

Project I-B: Statistical testing of various aerial turtle census techniques

Due to a combination of a lack of technical staff and difficulty in arranging a consistent flight schedule no work has been done on this project this quarter. Arrangements have been made with a local flight center to begin daily flights in late November and continue until the end of December. One test will be run to determine if altitude affects

census efficiency. One census will be flown per day (weather permitting, etc.) at 7:30 a.m. at one of 3 altitudes (200', 400', or 600'); flight altitude for each census is determined by using a random numbers table. Data gathered by the end of December will be analyzed statistically.