

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

REPORT ON PROPOSED NATIONAL BEACH PARK

Between

NEW AND WHITE OAK RIVERS, NORTH CAROLINA

By

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EXISTING CONDITIONS:

- I. Location: This area, designated "New River-Bogue Inlet Area", is bounded on the south east by the Atlantic Ocean from New Rivwe Inlet to Bogue Inlet. Its north east boundary extends from the center of Queen Creek channel opposite Great Neck Landing, down channel of said creek to its mouth and thence along channel of tidal marsh from the mouth of Queen Creek to and through Bogue Inlet to the ocean. On the North West, from Great Neck Landing to $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south west of Duck Creek, this area is bounded by the new "C.W.A." road. From this point on the "C.W.A." road $\frac{1}{4}$ mile souht west of Duck Creek this line runs north west to and along center of Frenchs Creek to New River, thence in a southwestly direction $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles along New River, and thence southeastly to a point $\frac{5}{8}$ mile north west of the mouth of Traps Creek and on the Sneads Ferry-Swansboro road. From this point the line runs south west across Wilkins Bluff to New River, and thence along channel to and through New River Inlet to the ocean.
(See attached U.S. Coast and Geodetic Map and also North Carolina Map of Onslow County - boundary lines shown in red and roads in blue).
- II. Present Means of Access: A fairly good sand road extends the entire length of this area and a branch, near Swansboro, joins a hard surface road to Morehead City, Beaufort, New Bern, and other cities. This road connects by means of a ferry across New River at Sneads Ferry with a hard surface road to Wilmington and the South and to Jacksonville and New Bern and the North and the West. A sand road from Duck Creek to Piney Green, a distance of 9 miles, connects with a well kept dirt road from Swansboro to Jacksonville and would probably be the most important road leading to this area. All roads in the immediate vicinity of this area are State roads, but are not first class roads, although travel over them is not difficult. They are rounded up and in general are well ditched. Many unimportant roads and trails wind through the woodlands from the main roads to the landings along the sound and to the Intracoastal Waterway.
- III. Extent of Area: This area has an ocean frontage of about 15 miles and extents inland about 6 miles at its south west extremity. Its average width is a little over 3 miles. Its total area is about 31,000 acres, of which approximately 20,500 acres are on the mainland, 3,000 acres of beach land, and 7,500 acres of tidal marsh. In the vicinity of Hurst Beach very little marsh, or low land, separates the beach from the mainland for a distance of about 3 miles. All along this ocean front the bathing beach is unusually wide, with a gentle slope, and is ideal for the best of surf swimming. However, only a few miles of sand beach suitable for swimming are on the sound side of the main beach and in general the slope is rather steep.
- IV. Physical Characteristics:
- A. Scenic Values: Except near the water, whether sound, creek, or river, where the land is rolling, studded here and there with wonderful old live oaks and stately pines, and very interesting, the mainland, in general, is rather flat country. Most of the trees suitable for timber have been cut in the past 5 or 10 years, and young pines, long and short leaf, oak, gum, hickory, and dog wood at present constitute the present forest lands. Luxuriant growths of bay pine, 'hurrah' and bay bushes, bull bay, and evergreens of many varities, cover large areas of the low lands, and these dense, low land growths are known as 'bays' and are the home of the deer, the bear, and other game in large quantities.

IV. Physical Characteristics - Cont.

A. Scenic Values - Cont.

In several very pretty fresh ponds dotted over the south west portion of this area are found, in season, bluebills and canvass back ducks, which do not frequent the sound and river sections.

The ocean bathing beach between New River Inlet and Browns Inlet is smooth and wide with a gentle slope. Back of the beach proper is a high, well grassed ocean bank, and back of this bank are innumerable little hillocks and knolls, some well grassed and some bald, and then comes a fringe of live oaks, cedars, youpons, myrtles, and other evergreens, making a beautiful background. Past this is the tidal marsh with its myriads of little islands of all shapes formed by the maze of marsh channels running in every imaginable direction. Brown Beach - between Brown and Bear Inlets - is prettier than the one just described, particularly because of the presence of very fine, large dunes, some of them being 50 to 60 feet in height. This beach is wider also and will average perhaps 500 yards in width. Bear Beach - between Bear and Bogue Inlets - will average perhaps between 600 and 700 yards in width; beautiful dunes, some of them 50 to 60 feet in height, extend from end to end of this beach. This beach has an unusually wide, easy sloping, splendid ocean bathing beach, and it is capped at each end for about a distance of half a mile with a luxuriant growth of all trees and shrubs common to this type of country. Near the sound, in these clusters, are numbers of beautiful pines of considerable height and various species of oak and gum, all protected from the heavy winds of the ocean by the great dunes. Between these caps at the ends of this island is a lovely fringe of youpon, myrtle, cedar, live oak, and other small trees and shrubs.

New River, on the south west, is a beautiful body of water, winding in its course, with high, well wooded bluffs on its shores, and in proportion to its length is the widest river in the world.

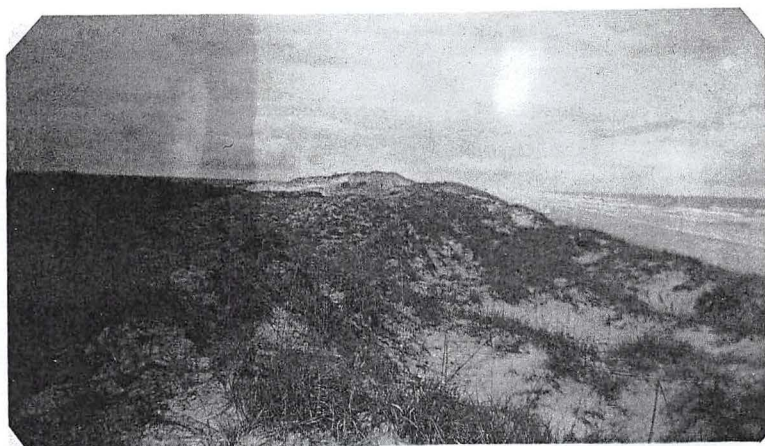
Through the countless little islands and other formations in the tidal marsh section runs the 90-foot Intracoastal Waterway, which averages in depth from about 12 to 16 feet, and along this canal smaller boats of all kinds, canoe, yatch, and freighter, ply the coast line.

In some sections of the mainland the sandy loam top soil is underlaid with a clay sub-soil, and this land produces excellent crops and vegetation in general. Most of the sub-soil of this section, however, is either loose sand near the water or sand 'hard pan' farther inland, and this land is not very productive nor desirable for farm land, but could be utilized to advantage for forestlands and/or as a game preserve.

(See pictures following)



Ocean beach at "Hurst" Beach, looking North East



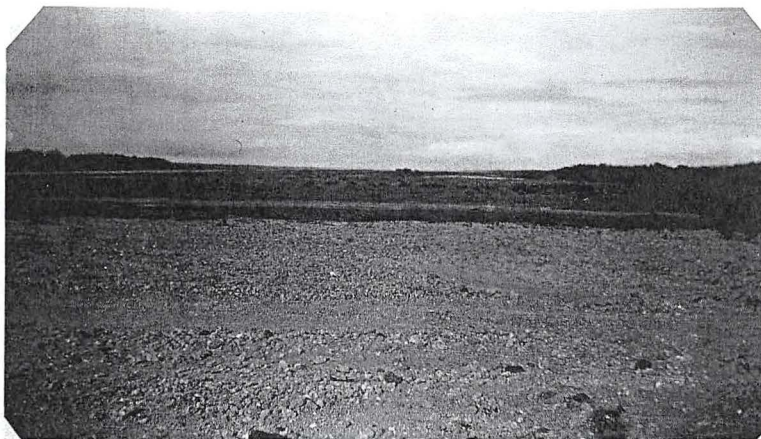
View to the North East from ocean bank at
Hurst Beach



Looking North East from top of dune near sound
at Hurst Beach, showing cedar and live oak
growths and characteristic formation caused
by prevailing winds from the ocean.



Looking North West from ocean bank across beach,
sound, Intracoastal Waterway, to mainland; Hurst Beach.

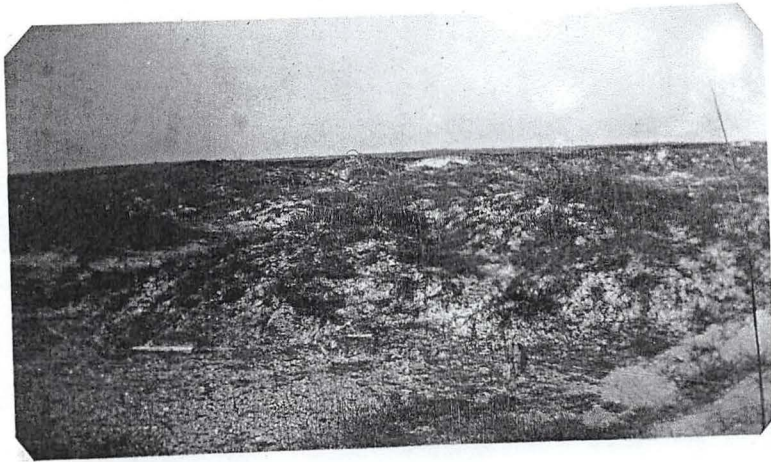


Hurst Beach section, looking N. E., showing short
distance between mainland and the beach



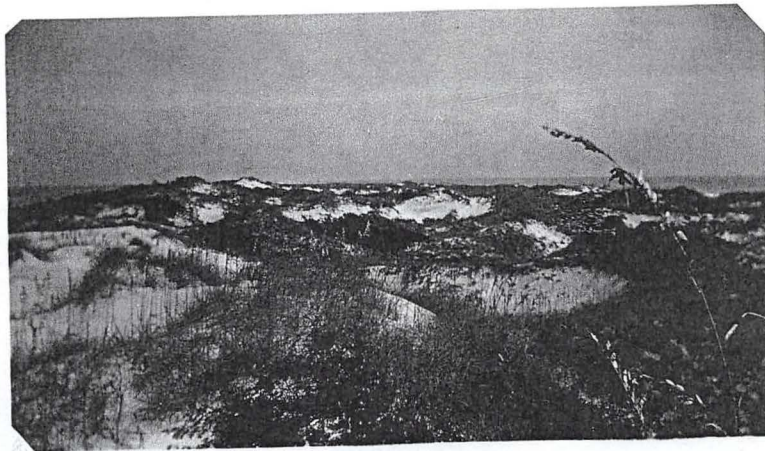
Opposite Hurst Beach, looking N. W. inland from
the mainland shore

Ocean beach and bank, looking N. E. from ocean
bank $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N. E. of New River Inlet

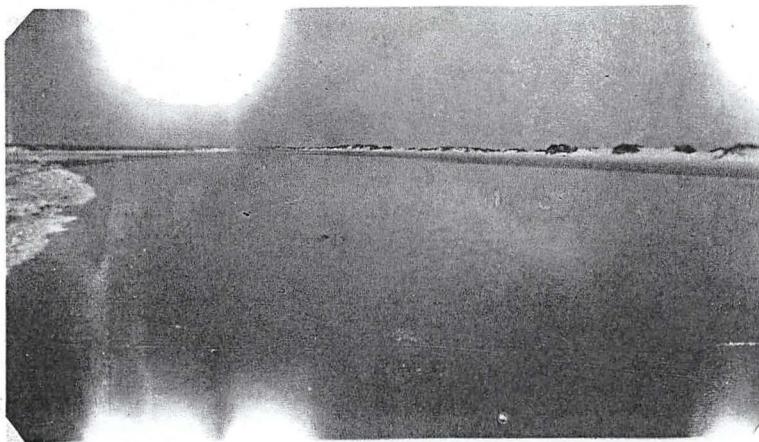


View from ocean bank $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N. E. of New River
Inlet, looking across beach to mainland

Brown Beach ocean beach - 300 ft. wide - looking
N. E. from point $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles S. W. of Bear Inlet



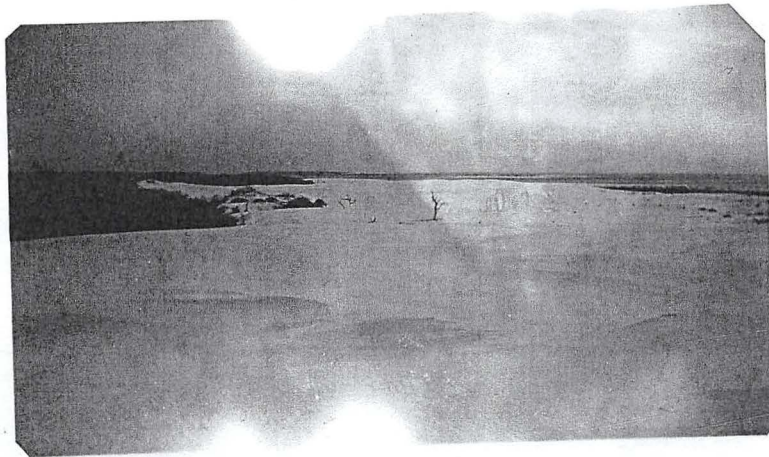
View from top of high dune $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles S. W. of Bear Inlet, looking N. E. to Bear Inlet



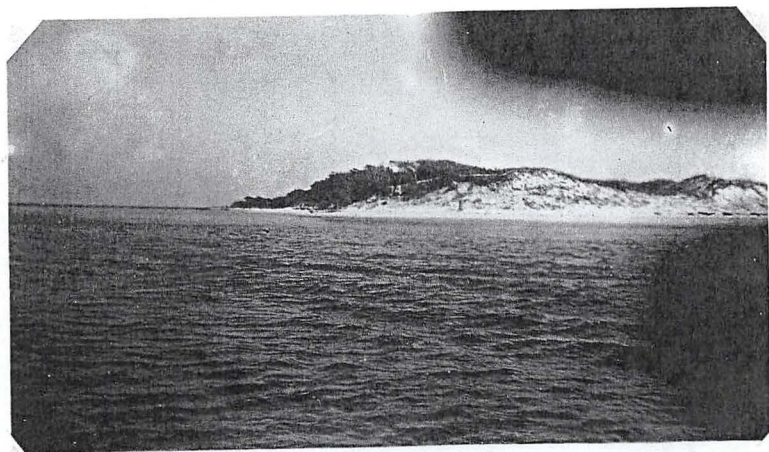
Bear Beach ocean beach - very wide - looking S. W. at point $\frac{3}{4}$ mile South West of Bogue Inlet



View from top of high dune on Bear Beach $\frac{3}{4}$ mile S.W. of Bogue Inlet, looking across sound toward Swansboro.



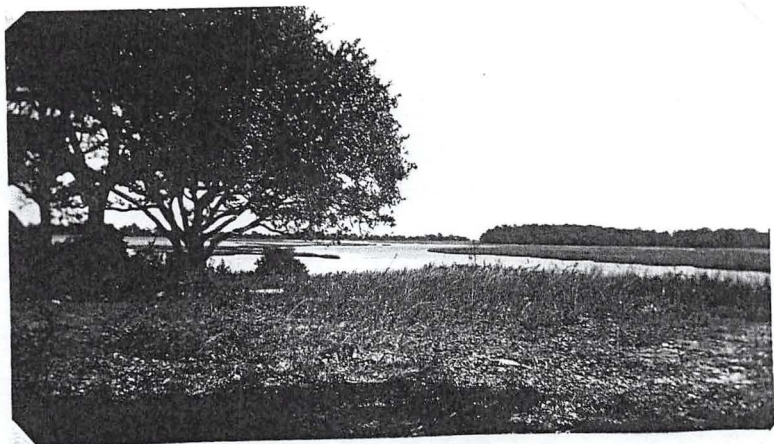
Bear Beach - View from top of high dune $\frac{3}{4}$ mile
S. W. of Bogue Inlet, showing dunes moving in on
wooded area.



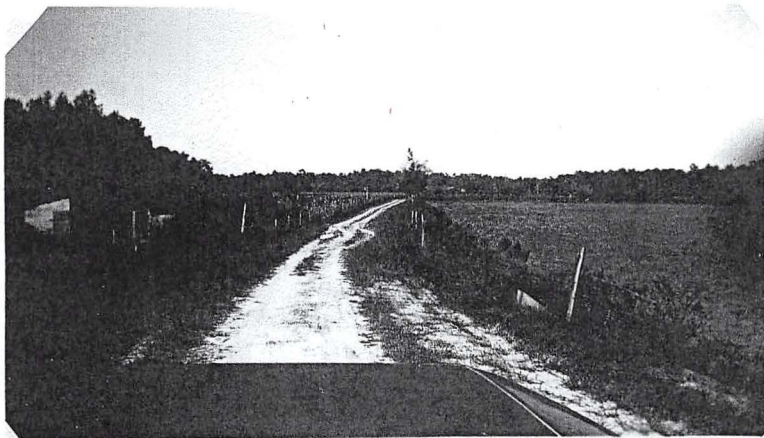
View from Bear Inlet to the North East, showing
high bluff at South West end of Bear Beach



Brown Beach - View from top of high dune $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles
S. W. of Bear Inlet, looking S. W. toward Brown Inlet



View from top of bluff at Willis' Landing, looking
down Bear Creek toward its mouth and the sound



View on road leading from "C.W.A." road to
Willis' Landing



Looking across New River from the West bank
at point a short distance North of Sneads Ferry



View of "C. W. A." road and woodland.



Typical 'bay' in hunting section.



Typical woodland scene, showing young pine trees

IV. Physical Characteristics - Cont.

B. Character of Beaches:

1. Width: About 175 feet.
2. Color and Texture of Sand: Fine, rounded yellow to white sand. Some sharp, fine to coarse sand and some gravel and sea shells are also found.
3. Slope: About $5\frac{1}{2}\%$, running rather uniform throughout the length of the beach.
4. Undertow: Undertow is noticeable, but not strong nor dangerous.
5. Protection: Although its presence is not indicated on maps available, a sand bar, or reef, a short distance from shore usually exists and this acts as a protecting barrier, diminishing considerably the momentum and size of the largest waves and decreasing the undertow.

C. Present Development: On the New River are one or two hunting clubs. The writer visited the Onslow Rod and Gun Club. This club owns a very nice, though not expensive, club house and about 250 acres of land, and they lease a considerable acreage adjoining. On the north east tip of "Bear" Beach, facing Bogue Inlet, is a very pretty summer cottage. Except for these, there are no other buildings nor developments of any size in this area. There are, of course, many modest and inexpensive farm homes and fishermen's shacks scattered over this area. In some sections are located some very nice farms. Several fisheries operate on the sound beaches and they lease certain 'rights' from the owners of the property at these points. The road development and the Intracoastal Waterway have already been mentioned.

D. Possibility of Boating: In the south west section New River, Mile Hammock Bay, and Salliers Bay are excellent harbors for small craft, and on the New River and at New River Inlet boating and fishing are very good. To the north west are Queen and Bear Creeks, serving as fine harbors. These are very attractive bodies of water, wide, winding, and on these banks are several landings, each having a fairly good road leading to it and each set usually in a background of grand old live oaks and other trees. The banks of these waters are high and well wooded. At Browns, Bear, and Bogue Inlets, fishing is exceptionally good, particularly at latter two inlets. Here often prize winning Channel Bass are caught either by surf casting from the beaches or from small boats anchored in the Inlets. Amberjack, Kingfish (King Mackerel or Cero), and Spanish Mackerel, as well as some Dolphins, constitute the big-game fish of this area. Great catches of 'bottom fish' can be made at any time; these are Sea Bass, Porgies, Grunts, Trigger Fish, Weakfish, and a host of other species. In the fall catches of 300 and 400 Weakfish is common if one hits the fish right. These less important fish are so abundant and so easily caught that they divert the sportsman from the catching of the more valuable and worthwhile fish named above. Oysters of a very high class are caught in New River, and along the many channels in the tidal march section excellent clams abound.

E. Forest Values: Some good pine and hardwood timber still stands on a few tracts of land in this area, but, in general, most of the woodland has been cut over in the past several years, and small pines, long and short leaf, and other trees, particularly various species of oak, are fast replenishing the forest lands. In a comparatively few years, if properly protected from fires, etc., much valuable timber will again cover the mainland of this region.

IV. Physical Characteristics: Cont.

F. Wildlife Value: In the south west section of this area from the the Intercostal Waterway on the south east to the New River and Frenchs Creek on the north west deer and bears (black) are perhaps more plentiful than in any other section of this State at a similar distance from the ocean. This is one of the favorite sections of this part of the State for the hunting of big game. Coons, minks, opossums, and squirrels, as well as wild turkeys and quails, are abundant, and in the many fine fresh ponds in this section Bluebills and Canvass Back Ducks are found, they never resting nor feeding in rivers nor sounds. Some brants and swans also frequent this region, and, in season, Mallards, Black Ducks, and Geese are plentiful. Some alligators are found along the edges of the marshes and streams.

In this area both hunting and fishing are of the very highest order - unexcelled perhaps by any other section of the Atlantic coast.

G. Possible Cost of Land: The 20,500 acres of the mainland could be bought for around \$10.00 per acre, or a total cost of \$205,000.00, including buildings. The 3,000 acres of beach land could be purchased for about \$5.00 per acre, or a total of \$15,000.00, except for a summer home development at the N. E. tip of "Bear" beach which would cost perhaps an additional \$10,000.00. The 7,500 acres of tidal marsh the writer has been informed belongs to the State or to the National Government and could be acquired at practically no cost. Total cost of all land and buildings in this area would be probably in the neighborhood of \$230,000.00.

H. Special Matters of Interest: At present cattle, hogs, goats, and sheep have 'free range' on the beach. Mosquitoes and dog and sand flies are plentiful, but perhaps no worse than in most other beach sections. Some snakes are found, but not in such numbers as to be a serious handicap or danger.

The waters here are clear, unspoiled and unpolluted, and thousands would come annually to this beautiful beach to bask in the sun and swim in the surf, while scores upon scores of sportsmen would get some of the best hunting and fishing at various seasons of the year that this section of the East affords.

As in other sections along this portion of the Atlantic coast, the climate is ideal. In winter the proximity of the Gulf Stream rarely ever permits the formation of ice, while the salt laden ocean breezes temper and keep cool and pleasant the summer months.

DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS:

I. New Roads and Boat Approaches: It would be necessary to build a hard surface road from the present highway to the sound, a distance of approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, which would cost perhaps, using a hot asphalt mix, \$11,000.00. A wooden bridge, with a draw across the Waterway, with approaches, and a causeway on the beach side with a hard surface roadway, leading from the mainland to the beach could be built at, say, the present Hurst Beach location for perhaps \$40,000.00. A 18-foot hard surface road should be built from New River Inlet to Browns Inlet, a distance of about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles, which could be constructed of cold asphalt mix using local sand at a cost of about \$6,000.00 per mile, or a total cost of \$45,000.00. Probably as many as five small wharves should be built at various points, costing probably \$1,000.00 each, or a total of \$5,000.00.

This would make a total cost of roads, bridge, causeway, and wharves about \$101,000.00.

DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS: Cont.

II. Desirable Accomodations: A large bath house with comfort stations, showers, and clothes lockers, and a pavilion for picnics and to serve as a shelter should be built near the ocean beach. Automobile parking spaces and small shelters should be constructed at intervals along the beach. A small shelter should be built near each end of both "Browns" and "Bear" beaches also.

III. Development Costs:

Roads, bridge, causeway, and wharves - - - - -	\$101,000.00
Bath house, with comfort stations, showers and lockers -	8,000.00
Picnic pavilion	3,000.00
11 small shelters at \$300. each	3,300.00
Electric plant, wiring, etc.	3,000.00
Water supply, shallow well, tank and piping	2,500.00
Septic tank and piping	1,500.00
TOTAL - - - - -	\$122,300.00

The nearest telephone, telegraph, or electric power line, is at Swansboro, a distance of about 12 miles from the entrance to this beach.

IV. Circulation: Roads, in general, have already been discussed. However, the net work of existing woods roads and trails could be utilized as bridal paths, as well as in many cases for reaching the splendid landings and harbors along the waterfront.

NOTE: It would not be necessary to build bridges at the present time to Browns Beach, nor to Bear Beach, although each has a beautiful waterfront and wide, easy sloping unusually fine swimming beach on the ocean side. On the sound side of these two islands are some stretches of very good sand beaches for swimming in the smooth, warmer water of the sound. A wharf should be built on the sound side of each of these beaches for boats bringing those who prefer to swim or fish there. The writer prefers these two stretches of beach to any he has visited between Wrightsville Beach and Beaufort. They are wide, and fine dunes and plenty of growth all kinds of evergreens are there - everything that would be attractive for a beach development is there, but the distance from the mainland is rather objectionable. Probably at no point along the coast is fishing any better than at the inlets at the ends of these two beaches and for surf casting from the beaches themselves.

This area unquestionably includes as fine hunting lands for both big and small game as any other section near the coast in Eastern Carolina.
