



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

HIGH TIDES AND POUNDING SURF caused minor damage along the Brunswick County coast last week. This photo taken at Holden Beach shows where the ocean gnawed away at the berm and undermined a section of sand fence erected last fall after Hurricane Hugo.

High Tides Erode Coast

BY DOUG RUTTER

Abnormally high tides and pounding surf fueled by a high pressure weather system and two tropical storms caused minor beach erosion along the Brunswick County coast last week.

The erosion that started last Wednesday and continued into the weekend was caused by the interaction of a high pressure system and tropical storms Klaus and Marco, according to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady.

Both storms tracked inland where they dumped inches of rain and caused flooding, but they still had an impact along the coast. "We were on the very fringe areas of these systems so we got very fringe effects," Canady said.

The most severe erosion damage in the South Brunswick Islands occurred at Holden Beach, where the high tides chewed away sand and came within 10 feet of undermining a house at the east end of the island.

Town Manager Blake Proctor said the new berm built following Hurricane Hugo last fall eroded between two feet and six feet in most areas. Erosion claimed up to 15 feet of beach in the 700 block of Ocean Boulevard West.

"Some of the berms look like white cliffs," he said. "They're just chopped off."

Proctor said the pounding surf damaged between 10 and 15 percent of the walkways that lead to the

beach. Several walkways in the high-erosion area were destroyed.

The far end of Ocean Boulevard East was closed last Wednesday when the afternoon high tide threatened to undermine a section of the pavement.

Proctor said the state Department of Transportation dumped dirt beside the road to protect it and the road didn't sustain any damage. The barricade was removed Tuesday.

High tides also caused some erosion near the west end of Sunset Beach, but most of the sand washed back up on the strand over the weekend, according to Town Administrator Linda Fluegel.

The pontoon bridge between the mainland and island at Sunset Beach was closed to vehicular traffic for about 30 minutes last Wednesday. The bridge was tied to its pilings to keep the tide from pushing the bridge too far upward and damaging it.

Ocean Isle Beach Building Inspector Druied Roberson said the high tides last week didn't cause any erosion, but southeast winds the week before caused enough erosion that he had to post one house as unsafe.

The beach eroded near the house at 510 East Third Street, Roberson said, and the water meter broke. The meter was taken out and the house was posted as unsafe Oct. 5. The building inspector said the damage is repairable, and the house can be occupied after a new water meter is installed.

Beaches Kept Eye Out For Hurricane Lili

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larger storm," Logan said. "A category 1 storm is just frustrating to work with."

Holden Beach officials did more getting ready for the hurricane than leaders at any of the other local beach towns.

Town commissioners met Thursday afternoon and twice on Friday to keep track of the storm and prepare for a possible evacuation of the island.

Mayor John Tandy said the first town meeting was prompted by a telephone conversation with Logan, who said the barrier islands might have to start evacuating early Friday morning.

Evacuation teams and other volunteers were on standby Thursday and Friday. The town filled its vehicles with gasoline and made arrangements for a command post on the mainland.

"I think it went extremely well," Town Manager Blake Proctor said of the preparations. "We were ready to do what needed to be done."

Mayor Tandy had packed his suitcase and filled his vehicle with canned goods and other supplies before the storm turned away from the North Carolina coast. "We were a little bit ahead of ourselves, but I'd rather have it that way than the other," he said.

Tandy said he was especially concerned about the storm because

"We were a little bit ahead of ourselves, but I'd rather have it that way than the other."

—Holden Beach Mayor John Tandy

of the condition of Holden Beach's dunes, which still haven't recovered from the beating they took last September during Hurricane Hugo.

"That worried me a great deal," Tandy said. "Those dunes can't take another hurricane right now."

Although forecasters predicted the hurricane would turn away from the Carolina coast, Tandy said town officials kept track of it until they were convinced it was gone.

Holden Beach Public Works Director Henry Thompson said, "I'd rather be accused of protecting somebody than of killing them."

At Ocean Isle Beach, Mayor Pro Tem Bill Benton and Police Chief Curt Pritchard followed the town's emergency preparedness plan in getting ready for Lili. Mayor Betty Williamson was vacationing in Mexico last week, but said she was in constant contact with the town.

The mayor said the police department was put on call, identification badges were prepared for town employees and fire and rescue personnel and a video camera was used to record the condition of the strand.

Also, the town made arrangements to set up an emergency headquarters at a mainland business and a local radio station was called to get information out to the public. Trash cans also were removed from the strand.

As the storm approached, Mrs. Williamson said several Ocean Isle Beach property owners went to the town hall to purchase vehicle stickers that are needed to get back on the island following an evacuation.

Sunset Beach Town Administrator Linda Fluegel said she met last Thursday with the police and fire chiefs, public works director and county emergency management director to discuss the evacuation procedure. Mayor Mason Barber also sat in on the meeting.

"We were all set," Mrs. Fluegel said. "We had everyone on standby until late Friday until we knew it wasn't coming in here."

Local officials weren't the only ones preparing for the storm. An advance disaster team of the American Red Cross arrived in Whiteville last Friday to set up a national disaster center if case it might be needed.

Other Grand Jury Indictments

(Continued From Page 1-A)

been taken regarding his employment status as of Tuesday, she added.

The grand jury also handed down the following indictments Monday:

•Roger Dale Lowry, 28, of Crab Street, Holden Beach, with attempt to obtain a controlled substance by fraud. According to the warrant filed, Lowry allegedly attempted to obtain Dilaudid (Hydromorphone) from Revco Drugs in Shallotte on Dec. 4, 1989, by altering a prescription given to him for the drug Flexeril, by changing the date and adding 60 dosage units of Dilaudid.

•Aaron Thomas "Petey" Swain, 21, of North Lord Street, Southport, with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury and one count of robbery with a dangerous weapon. According to documents filed at the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office, Swain allegedly assaulted David Christopher Coats of Morehead City with a knife, cutting him about the head and leaving him unconscious on June 21. He is also alleged to have taken a 1987 Nissan truck belonging to Gilliam Ray Coats of Morehead City in that incident.

•Larry Oneal Register, 33, of Route 6, Whiteville, with possession with intent to sell and deliver cocaine and one count of maintaining a vehicle to keep and to sell a

controlled substance. According to warrants filed by Rodney Gause, auxiliary deputy with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department, Register allegedly attempted to sell 13.5 grams of cocaine on July 8 in Shallotte. His 1983 Nissan was confiscated.

•Thomas McArthur Sullivan, 26, of Route 2, Leland, with felonious hit and run stemming from a June 10 accident in Boiling Spring Lakes. Three people were injured in the accident, Charles Simmons, Jeremy Robbins and Josh Robbins, on Greenville Road in Boiling Spring Lakes, according to documents filed.

•David Christopher Beacham, 21, of Charlotte, with possession of a schedule I substance, or lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), on March 10 in Shallotte, according to a warrant filed by Officer G.J. Semek of the Shallotte Police Department. Beacham is a student at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, the warrant indicated.

•Anthony Dean Duckworth, 30, of Route 2, Supply, with two counts of felonious breaking and entering and larceny, one count of felonious possession of stolen goods and one count of larceny of a firearm. According to warrants filed by Lt. Donnell Marlowe of the Sheriff's Department, Duckworth is alleged to have broken into a home on U.S. 17 in Shallotte on June 27 and to have taken \$1,142 in jewelry, mon-

ey and a .38-caliber revolver from the residence. He was also indicted for the August 24 break-in of Shallotte Electric on Main Street in which \$4,740 worth of drills, sanders and saws were taken along with \$1,740 in cash and checks, according to the warrants.

•Gus Jones Jr., 46, of Route 1, Navassa, with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. Jones is accused of shooting a handgun at Christopher Alston three times and hitting him once in the leg on September 23.

•Barry Dale Almond, 21, of Gastonia, with possession of stolen goods. Almond is charged with having in his possession a 1988 Harley Davidson motorcycle that was stolen from a Myrtle Beach, S.C., man on June 9.

•Terry Fowler of Robeson County, with being a habitual felon for indictments handed down Sept. 17 for felonious breaking and entering and larceny and possession of stolen goods for the Sept. 3 break-ins of three homes on East 1st Street, Ocean Isle Beach. According to the indictment handed down Monday, Fowler has previously been convicted of or pled guilty to felony offenses on three separate occasions since July 6, 1967, including the larceny of an automobile in 1977 and three counts of breaking and entering and larceny in 1986 in Robeson County and breaking and entering and larceny in 1979 in Bladen County.

Forecast Calls For Pleasant Weather

Moderate weather is in the forecast for the next few days, according to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady, with above average temperatures and average rainfall.

"It looks very nice," he said Tuesday.

Temperatures are expected to average from the lower 60s at night into the lower 80s during the daytime, with about a half-inch of rainfall.

For the week of Oct. 9-15, Canady recorded a maximum high of 88 degrees on the 13th and a minimum

low of 64 degrees on the 15th.

An average daily high of 85 degrees combined with a nightly average low of 68 degrees for a daily average temperature of 76 degrees, which Canady said was 11 degrees above average.

Parties To Bridge Suit Await Judge's Decision

Parties to a suit aimed at blocking construction of a high-rise bridge at Sunset Beach have until Oct. 24 to file final, written arguments and proposed judgments in the case.

After that, U.S. District Judge W. Earl Britt will rule in the case. He heard the last of 2 1/2 days of testimony in the case Oct. 12. The hearings spanned three days and were held in Fayetteville and Raleigh.

"We feel like we had our day in court no matter how it turns out," said attorney Jim Maxwell, who represents the Sunset Beach Taxpayers Association and other individual plaintiffs in the suit.

State Transportation Secretary

Tommy Harrelson is prepared to award a contract to begin construction of the span should the judge rule in the state's favor. Bids submitted for the project were good for 60 days unless contractors agree to an extension. That 60 days ends around Nov. 17, a factor Britt made note of during the hearing.

The low bid of \$8.37 million was submitted by Traylor Brothers Inc. of Evansville, Ill., bringing the total projected cost of the project to more than \$11 million.

The taxpayers' group, several individual island property owners or residents and a local fisherman have filed suit, arguing that the 2,300-

foot long bridge would encourage development, damage the environment and destroy the quiet, family-oriented atmosphere of the two-mile-long island.

They claim the state erred in not requiring a full environmental impact assessment of the project, and that the project should be set aside until such a study is made.

Proponents of the bridge argue that the bridge is overdue, and is needed to insure safe access to and from the island.

The state began planning a new bridge to the island more than 10 years ago.

Other arguments offered in support of the bridge include the need to better accommodate vehicular and boating traffic. The state has also argued that the high-rise would be less expensive than continuing to staff and maintain the swinging pontoon bridge, which is the last of its kind in the state. Since it was first proposed the estimated cost of the project has more than doubled.

Sparks Set Swamp Ablaze

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ing the three major fires had spread to between 650 and 700 acres, with the largest about 470 acres in size, said Pate.

The burned area included acreage owned by the N.C. Nature Conservancy and Federal Paper Board Co.

Conservancy Concerned
Bob Peet, a member of the Conservancy's stewardship committee, said the agency was concerned about the damage firefighting efforts might cause to the threatened and endangered plants and animals protected in the 13,000-acre preserve. "The fires are less of a threat than the fire plows," he said.

The Conservancy control-burned the interior of its property last year, but sees the need for larger burns that include shrub-size undergrowth, he said. "Otherwise, it increases the potential for major fires like this."

Tuesday morning Pate said the forest service was working closely with the Nature Conservancy to minimize damage from the plows. "But," he continued, "they understand we have to put this fire out." Three "snow" tankers dropped fire retardant Tuesday afternoon on small areas where the fire was building within containment lines. Mop-up efforts were to continue Wednesday.

The fires were reported to the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department at 3:38 p.m. Monday.

By the time Logan arrived at the fire scene, "it was just gone," he said, pointing east in the direction of the fire's line of travel.

While the North Carolina Forest Service began cutting fire lines around the three largest fires, more than 100 volunteer firefighters from 12 departments arrived with 18

trucks and tankers. Their task was to douse the smallest of the fires and wet down the shoulder of the roadway to help contain the blazes. They stayed on the job until nightfall.

Pate, speaking Tuesday from a fire camp set up at the Forest Service's Bear Pen airstrip, said six state and four paper company tractor-pull units cut lines around the two smaller fires and four-fifths of the largest fires Monday, a task finished Tuesday.

Deer Hunters Warned
A yellow spotter plane skimmed the treetops late afternoon Monday while Logan drove his four-wheel-drive vehicle through the woods in search of hunters. Over loudspeakers they warned hunters to get out in advance of the approaching fire.

Danny Bramlett and Mark Page had come from Shelby for two days of camping and deer hunting in the

Green Swamp, but fled from the woods into a clearing near an almost-dry borrow pit along the highway. From there, they watched fire fighting efforts.

"You hear that? When I heard it popping and crackling and ash started falling, I decided it was time to get out," said Bramlett, as the fire grew larger on the opposite side of the borrow pit. "I was up a tree stand and I smelled smoke."

But he thought it was a controlled burn because last year when they hunting at the same site, a burn was underway on paper company land across the highway.

"The man in the plane hollered at us for 30 minutes before we realized what he was saying," said Bramlett. "He said it was a major fire."

Page, who was positioned deeper in the woods, didn't take time to dismantle his tree stand.

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