

FILE # 110379

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

memorandum

DATE: January 23, 1989

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: Don Scott, Park Ranger

SUBJECT: SEA OTTER SIGHTING

TO: Terry Thomas

Dear Terry,

Here's the information that you requested about THE sighting:

On Sunday, January 21, 1989, while most of the residents of this area were watching the super bowl, a sea otter was sighted at Seal Rocks, by visitors to the Cliff House. The first report was from an English lady (whose name I did not get): She asked if it was common to have "Sea otters in the Bay". As I was explained that there were no Sea Otters in the area, another visitor ran in, saying, "There's a Sea Otter between the Cliff House and Seal Rocks!" Again, I insisted that it was not possible, but went to visually check. The second visitor - Lou Silva, 1824 Rose St., Berkeley, 94703, 527-6354 - indicated that he was an artist who had done some Sea Otter sketches, and KNEW that it was one. Upon looking at the animal through a high-powered telescope of another visitor, I verified that it was indeed a Sea Otter. The sighting was also verified by Ranger Terry Kreidler. The time of the first sighting was 2:30 pm.

For the rest of the day, we observed and photographed the Otter. He was diving, feeding, and floating on his back for the next three hours as we observed him. He moved from one rock cluster to the other and back again. Avoiding some predatory gulls took quite a bit of his time. Late in the afternoon, after informing District Ranger Steve Gazzano, I contacted ecological author Harold Gilliam, so that he could witness the event. He came to the Cliff House, observed and verified the presence of the Otter.

The Otter was in the area when I left at 5:15 pm, but has not been sighted since.

