



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release: November 10, 1943

As an aid to developing the native food resources of Puerto Rico, a fishing colony has been established on Mona Island, 60 miles off the Puerto Rican coast, to tap supplies of fish in this deep offshore area, according to an announcement today by Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes.

Fish are traditionally one of the most important protein foods in the Puerto Rican diet, but the war has sharply curtailed imports of the staple salt cod and the native fisheries have heretofore been little developed.

Under the project sponsored by the Insular Government and carried out with the cooperation of the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service and Division of Territories and Island Possessions, some fifty fishermen are being established on Mona Island to conduct fishing operations in nearby waters.

Exploratory fishing recently completed by the Fish and Wildlife Service showed that the waters around Mona provide somewhat better fishing than the area close to the coast of Puerto Rico. Also, boats based on Mona will have easier access to the important offshore grounds for red snapper, one of the principal species of the area.

The fishing colony will occupy a camp formerly used by the National Youth Administration and will also have the use of the N.Y.A. launch ESPERANZA. The Insular Government's exploratory fishing vessel W. B. LEWIS will transport the fish from Mona to Mayaguez, P.I. The necessary fishing materials and food will be supplied to the fishermen at cost by the Insular Government.

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