



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Inventories of frozen fish in freezers and cold storage establishments throughout the country are still abnormally high, totaling about 115 million pounds on February 1, or 47 per cent above average holdings for this season, Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, reported today to Acting Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman.

Although stocks of frozen fish are less than holdings a month earlier, they are 36 million pounds larger than on February 1, 1944, Dr. Gabrielson said. Inventories of frozen seafoods normally are reduced sharply between December first and the opening of the spring fishing season, but this year withdrawals are being made at a considerably lower rate than in 1944.

Acting Secretary Chapman was informed that unless withdrawals are accelerated, the fishing industry will begin its new production season this spring with a carry-over of at least 50 or 60 million pounds of frozen fish.

Scattered reports reaching the Fish and Wildlife Service since February 1 indicate that fish are still moving slowly, despite the fact that the large Boston trawlers have been tied up as a result of a labor disagreement since the first of the year.

Fishery products now in freezers and cold storage establishments include 86 million pounds of salt water fish, 11 million pounds of lake and river fish, and 18 million pounds of shellfish. Frozen fillets of cod, haddock, rosefish, flounders, mackerel, and a few other species account for about 22 per cent of the total holdings.