



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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A practical plan for the disposal of some 3,000 tons of dilute sulphuric acid waste from the plant of the National Lead Co. at Sayersville, N. J., has been worked out by the Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Titanium Division of the National Lead Company, Albert M. Day, Director of the Service reported to Secretary of the Interior J. A. Krug today.

The National Lead Company, seeking a better means of waste disposal, had planned to discontinue dumping in the Raritan River, and proposed the purchase of a steel barge to carry wastes from its plant for discharge at sea. The proposal immediately brought vigorous protests from fishery interests and as a result the controversy was referred to the Fish and Wildlife Service for technical advice.

The original plan called for the dumping of the dilute waste acid containing appreciable amounts of copperas at a point approximately six miles southeast of Scotland Light.

As a result of its own study, and on the advice of consulting experts, the company now proposes to confine the dumping to an area two miles square and approximately 14 miles south and east of Scotland Light over the old Hudson River channel where the depth of the ocean is in excess of 150 feet. The company also proposes to discharge the waste beneath the surface at a depth of from 50 to 75 feet while the tanker steams within a circular course two miles square.

When the original proposal of the National Lead Co. was brought to the attention of the Fish and Wildlife Service it was believed that the discharge of such

quantities of sulphuric acid might constitute a hazard to the fisheries in an area where both commercial and sport fishing are practiced on a large scale. Subsequent investigations and the assembling of opinions of oceanographers and other technical experts indicate, however, that these hazards are much less than originally suspected. It has been found that the acid which will be widely distributed in the very great volume of sea water will be quickly neutralized, and that other waste products will be rapidly dissipated by ocean currents. The Service believes, therefore, that the hazard to the fisheries will be insignificant.

To assist in assembling all technical information on the subject, Mr. Wayne D. Heydecker, Secretary-Treasurer of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, called together a panel of the organization's consultants. The opinions of such authorities as Dr. Columbus O'D. Iselin and Dr. Alfred C. Redfield, respectively Director and Assistant Director of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Dr. Norris Rakestraw of Brown University, Dr. A. E. Parr, Director of the American Museum of Natural History, Dr. Thurlow C. Nelson of Rutgers University, Dr. G. E. Hutchinson of Yale University, Dr. Ross F. Nigrelli of the New York Zoological Society, and others, including biologists of the New York State Conservation Department and other State agencies, were solicited. Records of oceanic circulation in the area off New York were provided by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, and opinions were expressed by representatives of sportsmen's and commercial fishery organizations.

Under the recommendations of the Fish and Wildlife Service, dumping during the winter, when the area is swept by storms, may be permitted at a more inshore location and disposal at the surface may be allowed because surface conditions would result in rapid mixing and dispersal. During the summer, or in periods of calm, it was recommended that a more offshore location be used along with disposal beneath the surface.

The plan agreed upon meets all practical requirements and should permit uninterrupted service.

The National Lead Co. has offered to provide facilities aboard the tanker which will be used in the disposal process for continued observations by scientists of the Fish and Wildlife Service for the purpose of maintaining periodic check upon conformance to the plan and direct observation of the effects of the disposal on sea water and the life it contains.

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