



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SEAL SKINS FROM ALASKAN ISLANDS SHOW INCREASE

A total of 66,378 fur-seal skins was obtained this year in Government-administered sealing operations on Alaska's Pribilof Islands, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay announced today.

The Fish and Wildlife Service conducts the operation during the Pribilof sealing season from June 22 to July 29. The operations are conducted annually.

This year's yield was 2,508 skins greater than last year's take of 63,870. The average annual yield over the past ten years has been 64,264 skins.

Although the fur-seal industry on the Pribilofs is the responsibility of the United States Government, 20 percent of this year's take will be delivered to the Canadian Government under the terms of the Provincial Fur-Seal Agreement of 1942, between the two countries. The remaining skins will be delivered to a private concern in St. Louis for processing and sale at public auction under a special Government contract and account. Net receipts from the sale of 48,582 skins last fiscal year were \$3,265,868.

Approximately 80 percent of the world's fur seals go to the Pribilof Islands each summer to breed. During the winter these seals range southward as far as Southern California.

At one time the Alaskan seal's numbers diminished to such an extent that the herd's commercial value was threatened. The depletion was due principally to pelagic sealing--the indiscriminate killing of seals at sea.

Under the protection of international agreements, the herd has since been restored to its original level of abundance. The annual take is limited to 3-year old males, considered surplus from the standpoint of breeding, the species is assured of survival under present conditions.

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