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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FWS TO CONTINUE ALASKA HIGH SEAS CRAB FISHERY STUDIES

Takashi Miyahara, a Fish and Wildlife Service biologist is en route from Seattle aboard the trawler Deep Sea to study crab fishing and crab populations in the Bering Sea.

These studies on the king crab were first started last year when Miyahara accompanied a Japanese crab fleet to Alaska waters to investigate the biology of the king crab. The decision to continue the studies was made following the first meeting of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission which was held in Washington, D. C., from February 1 to 12.

This Commission is composed of representatives from Japan, Canada, and the United States, and was established to promote proper utilization of crabs, salmon, and other fish which are caught on the high seas and consequently are of interest to the three countries. Service Director John L. Farley is one of the U. S. commissioners.

Miyahara attended the meetings of the new Commission as technical interpreter for the Committee on Biology and Research where his knowledge of Japanese fishery terms was utilized. He is a native of the State of Washington and has a B. S. degree in fisheries from the University of Washington.

The king crab, only known in the cold waters of the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea, is our most important source of crab meat. The most spectacular and commercially important feature about king crabs is their size. Male crabs with an over-all spread of 4 to 5 feet and weighing 15 or more pounds are not uncommon in Alaskan waters south of the Alaska Peninsula.

In 1953 American and Japanese fishing fleets caught more than 1,500,000 king crabs in the Bering Sea adjacent to Bristol Bay. The American part of the catch is picked and quick frozen aboard the fishing vessel and when brought to port is available in supermarkets to add variety and excellent nutritive value to the protein foods available to American housewives.

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