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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PLANTING LARGER SPORT FISH

A policy of distributing larger fish and more of them, particularly trout, is one of the Fish and Wildlife Service's answers to the Nation's increasing pressure for sport fishing, Acting Secretary of the Interior Clarence A. Davis said today. But the problem of keeping up with the requirements for warm water sport fish, especially large-mouth bass and bluegills, is giving the Service considerable concern.

During calendar year 1954 the Service distributed nearly four million sport fish six inches long or longer. Most of these were trout. The Service distributed 138,500,000 fingerlings of which 80,000,000 were salmon and 46,000,000 were warm water fish.

The weight of the fish six inches and longer totalled 769,322 pounds, an increase of 157,000 pounds over the comparable plant of 1953, which in turn was greater than the plant of catchable size fish in 1952.

The total weight of fingerlings and fish exceeding six inches distributed in 1954--trout, salmon and warm water species--amounted to 1,399,304 pounds, approximately 225,000 pounds more than in 1953. The policy of planting larger fish even extended to the fingerling class with less numbers of fish but greater poundage being distributed.

Nearly one-third of the 1954 distribution, by weight, 576,826 pounds was made to State agencies to supplement the production and distribution of the State hatcheries.

The Fish and Wildlife Service operates 91 hatcheries. In the past ten years approximately five and one-half million dollars has been spent in construction of hatcheries and ponds. The weight of fish produced and distributed is two and a half times what it was ten years ago; the number of applications for fish has more than doubled. This increase in efficiency and in production is due in part to the modernization of fish cultural stations and the discontinuance of some stations which could not be expanded or modernized.

Total applications filled by the Service was 61,732 of which 55,443 were for stocking farm ponds. The Service also honored 1,170 applications for fish for lakes, 4,216 applications for streams and rivers and 903 applications for miscellaneous plantings.

Most of the 1954 applications, 43,534, were sponsored by the Soil Conservation Service and by the Agricultural Extension Service, 6,664. Other applications filled were sponsored by various Federal agencies such as the Forest Service, National Park Service, Veterans Administration, Bureau of Indian Affairs and others.

In addition to the 576,826 pounds of fish sent to State agencies the distribution, by weight, included: 413,241 pounds to the salmon management program, and 73,371 pounds to the Forest Service. While the Soil Conservation Service sponsored by far the greater number of applications, the total weight of fish distributed through that source was only 51,708 pounds, because of the practice of stocking farm ponds with the smaller fish.

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