



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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#### INTERIOR ISSUES NORTH PACIFIC WIND ATLAS

Publication of the Wind Atlas of the North Pacific, an aid in evaluating the operational difficulties which small fishing craft are likely to experience because of wind conditions, was announced today by the Department of the Interior.

The atlas was developed by the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, from wind and wave data collected over many decades by government agencies and from information developed by the Bureau on the effect of winds upon fishing craft efficiency.

The Bureau approach to the problem was based upon the fact that there is an economic limit to the time that a fishing boat can ride the high seas without being able to fish. Regardless of the abundance of fish at a given place at a given time if wind and sea prevent the vessel from getting a pay load the area has a reduced value as a commercial fishery.

On a 25-day exploratory fishing cruise in the North Pacific for albacore, a Bureau research vessel found that on 12 days the wind was too strong to permit fishing; on another cruise 18 of the 41 days were unfit for fishing; and on a third cruise nine of the 25 days were too rough to permit use of fishing gear. The research also showed that gill nets began to tangle and were difficult to retrieve when the wind speed was 20 knots and that long-lines were hard to handle when the wind reached 25 knots.

The charts in the atlas indicate the percentage of each month in which wind speeds are likely to be 20, 25, 30 and 35 knots an hour. Fishermen, with these estimates available, with current weather data at hand and sometimes with specific information on the location and abundance of fish can weigh their chances on whether or not a proposed fishing cruise might be profitable. They may also judge the probability of encountering gales which would be hazardous to small boat operations.

Wind Atlas of the North Pacific is listed as Special Scientific Report-- Fisheries No. 243. It is available at the Office of Information, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

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