



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NEED FOR MORE SHELLFISH RESEARCH STRESSED IN LETTER TO CONGRESS

Proposals for a greatly expanded shellfish research program were placed before the Congress today by the Department of the Interior.

In a letter to Chairman Herbert C. Bonner of the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, Assistant Secretary Frank P. Briggs urged the passage of H.R. 2894 which would provide for the construction of a shellfish laboratory at Milford, Connecticut. The report declared that present facilities are too small for the new phases of shellfish research which are now possible and necessary.

"Our development of techniques in recent years for artificially spawning and rearing oysters and clams has opened numerous possibilities for more productive research toward solving many important industry problems", Assistant Secretary Briggs explained in his letter. "Such methods of artificially producing seed, selective breeding for desirable characteristics, and chemical control of predators now appear possible. Much of this research has been accomplished with small numbers of shellfish in the laboratory; however, it is important to note that seed production and selective breeding will require the growing of a large number of bivalves under controlled conditions for considerable periods of time. Our present facilities are inadequate to allow suitable development of the techniques that will be of material aid to the industry".

To carry out the work, the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Fish and Wildlife Service, will need such special facilities and equipment as an extensive sea water system consisting of storage and settling tanks, filtering and ultraviolet treatment equipment, a heating system and nontoxic piping and pumps. Special constant-temperature rooms are needed for raising shellfish food and for controlled experiments.

The plans include pilot plant studies of the commercial possibilities of shellfish hatchery procedures as well as training personnel from the industry and from State conservation agencies in the use of these methods.

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