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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NEW FISHERY PROGRAM IN HAWAII TO GET UNDER WAY SOON

Five technical experts of the Fish and Wildlife Service have been appointed to key staff positions to implement the new Pacific Oceanic Fishery Program for which the 80th Congress appropriated $1,000,000, Milton C. James, Acting Director of the Service, announced today.

Authorized under the terms of the Farrington Act, approved August 4, 1947, the program calls for "investigation, exploration, and development of the high seas fisheries of the Territories and Island Possessions and intervening areas in the tropical and subtropical Pacific Ocean." Tremendous areas will be covered by the investigation, extending from Hawaiian waters through the mandated islands.

The valuable tunas and the other fishery resources in these waters are the least understood, scientifically, of all important food fishes, according to Mr. James. So far their magnitude is unknown.

Through research and experimentation, Service investigators will develop and coordinate the basic information upon which a productive American fishing industry can be carried on in the Pacific. The yield of tuna, alone, from potential fisheries in the Central and Southwest Pacific, has been estimated to be worth from $80,000,000 to $100,000,000 a year.

The first step in the program will be the reconversion of three ocean-going vessels and establishment of the Pacific Oceanic Fishery Laboratory in Honolulu, on the campus of the University of Hawaii.

Oscar E. Sette has been selected to head this laboratory as director, with Fred F. Johnson as assistant director. Mr. Sette has been chief of the South Pacific Fishery Investigations at Stanford University since 1937, directing the Service's studies on the pilchard fishery and on the biology of Pacific tunas. He has been in Federal fisheries work since 1924. Until 1929 he was chief of the division now known as the Branch of Commercial Fisheries. From 1929 to 1937 he conducted marine fisheries investigations on the Atlantic coast. During the war he was detailed as Area Coordinator of Fisheries for California.

Mr. Johnson, who was transferred to the Portland, Oreg., Regional Office last spring as assistant regional director, spent 13 years as assistant chief of the Branch of Commercial Fisheries in Washington, D. C. He has an extensive knowledge of the fishery industry and fishery economics. During the war he served in the Navy with the rank of commander.

The scientific investigations of the biology of the tunas and other fishes of the Central Pacific will be under the supervision of Milnor B. Schaefer. He has oeen conducting studies on tunas and pilchards under Mr. Sette at the Stanford University laboratory since 1946. He recently spent several months in the Central Pacific on tuna studies.

Carl B. Carlson, of the Service's Fishery Technological Laboratory in Seattle, Wash., will be in charge of exploratory fishing operations. He has been concerned recently with the operations of the Pacific Exploration Company's vessels off Central America and in the Bering Sea. Mr. Carlson served as fishery engineer during the extensive King crab investigations conducted by the Service in Alaskan waters in 1940 and 1941.

Charles Butler, a chemist at the Seattle laboratory, will be in charge of technological research in the new Hawaiian program. For the past six years he has been engaged in fish processing research for the Service.

Reconversion of three ocean-going vessels into research ships, construction of the laboratory, and development of a docking and warehouse site at Pearl Harbor will be the first problems to be tackled by the new laboratory staff. Mr. Sette advises, however, that a preliminary reconnaissance of certain areas to be studied and a survey of the data gathered by Japanese fishermen and scientists will be made meanwhile as a basis for planning operations when the vessels are ready to go to sea.

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