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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES SITE FOR NEW MARINE GAME FISH RESEARCH LABORATORY ON GULF OF MEXICO

Selection of Panama City, Fla., as the site for a new Federal marine game fish research laboratory was announced today by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall.

Estimated cost of the new facility is approximately $2 million. A construction start depends on future Congressional appropriations.

Secretary Udall said the new laboratory is expected to make a major contribution to sport fishing in the eastern Gulf of Mexico through studies of migratory species of marine game fishes.

The Panama City laboratory will be the latest in a system of coastal research centers authorized by Congress in 1959 to undertake a national research program on salt water game fish. The goal of this program by Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife is to get the answers needed to provide wise conservation and sound management for marine game fish resources.

Marine game fish research laboratories already have been established at Sandy Hook, N. J.; Tiburon, Calif.; and Narragansett, R. I. The fourth and fifth laboratories--the one in Panama City for the eastern Gulf of Mexico and the other in Texas to cover the western Gulf areas--are now in the planning and design stages. Exact location of the Texas laboratory has not been determined.

When completed, the five laboratories will provide for a coordinated, nationwide research program aimed at answering many of the problems affecting the Nation's salt water sport fishing resources, Secretary Udall said.

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