



FEDERAL ACTIONS



Department of the Interior

REPRESENTATIVES TO TRADE AGREEMENTS NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN AT GENEVA:

Harry M. Shooshan, International Activities Assistant, Technical Review Staff, was scheduled to proceed to Geneva early in April to represent the Department of the Interior at the tariff negotiations with Japan and other countries convened there. Shooshan, who is the Department's representative on the Interdepartmental Trade Agreements Committee, was a member of the panel at the public hearings held in preparation for this negotiation.

Assistant Secretary Orme Lewis also planned to attend the conference but at a later date.

Negotiations are under way at Geneva at which the respective country delegations bargain for concessions in each other's tariffs. It was anticipated that by early April the concessions would begin to firm up and consummation of reciprocal agreements could be started.

The Department has participated fully in the preparation for these important trade agreement negotiations and has found most helpful the various letters and briefs filed by the fishery industry. Shooshan has been thoroughly briefed on the Departmental position on fishery matters which may be subject to negotiation at Geneva.

The Interdepartmental Committee issued formal notice of its intention to negotiate on November 13, 1954, and supplemented its notice on February 21, 1955, at which time the other members of the United States delegation were announced. The Committee is an inter-agency group designated by the President to advise him in the making of trade agreements. The items to be considered

in the negotiations will be acted upon by the United States delegation in accordance with recommendations approved by the President. Among the items listed for possible consideration in these negotiations were the following fishery products:

Fresh and frozen tuna; fresh and frozen swordfish fillets and chunks; canned tuna; fresh, frozen, and canned crab meat; canned clams and clam products (except razor clams and clam chowder); canned oysters and oyster juice or combinations with other substances; seed oysters; frozen scallops; fresh or frozen frogs and frog legs; agar-agar; kelp; and miscellaneous shellfish and dried fish. Others proposed to be included are certain prepared or preserved fish (including fish sticks containing oil which has been added); herring, pickled or salted; herring, hard dry-smoked; herring, smoked or kippered; and such fishing gear as cotton fish nets and fish hooks; and flax, hemp, or ramie nets or netting.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

ALASKA COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REGULATIONS AMENDED:

Several significant amendments to the 1955 regulations for the proper utilization and conservation of the commercial fisheries of Alaska were announced April 14 by Secretary of the Interior McKay.

Most important is the one which separates trap sites from areas open to set nets in the Cook Inlet area. In this amendment, the location of every trap in Cook Inlet is pinpointed and the use of any other gear at such sites is prohibited. Exception is made in the northern and north-central districts for the use of king salmon set nets prior to June 25 when traps cannot be used. Traps also are prohibited in areas open to set nets.

The changes in the regulations to describe sites open to traps and areas open to set nets in Cook Inlet were recommended jointly by fishermen, trap operators, and cannery operators, and were unanimously approved by local residents at a series of hearings conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Service at Homer, Kenai, and Anchorage, in January. These changes will prevent the encroachment of either form of gear on the other, and will go far to promote harmony in the salmon fishery of that area. Fishing effort in the area will not be altered by these changes.

With the passage of Public Law 12 (84th Congress) which was approved by the President on March 16, all three types of fishing gear used in Cook Inlet will be left as they were in 1954. The minimum distance between sets in Cook Inlet will remain at 600 feet, the minimum distance between traps at 2,500 feet, and the maximum length of drift nets at 150 fathoms.

A Federal Court decision in Alaska last summer held that set nets are fixed gear. The Fish and Wildlife Service historically has considered them as movable gear. One effect of the court decision was to subject set nets to a statutory requirement which specifies that units of fixed gear must not be less than 1,800 feet apart, laterally. Set nets in the past have been operated from 300 to 600 feet apart.

When the Fish and Wildlife Service reported that an 1,800-foot minimum interval between set nets is not considered essential to conservation requirements, and that imposition of the drastic limitation would impose hardships on small fishermen, the Department ordered action on new set regulations suspended pending action by Congress. Since the new legislation, which the Department supported, was enacted prior to the 1955 fishing season, no immediate change in the set-net regulation is necessary with respect to the distance interval between set nets. Public Law 12, in effect, exempts set, anchored, and staked gill nets from the 1,800-foot minimum distance interval required for all other fixed gear.

One of the amendments will allow beach seines to fish in Chinitna Bay in Cook

Inlet. This was proposed by the Fish and Wildlife Service at the hearings last fall but was not included in the revised regulations announced in January. This is a chum salmon area and this species can be harvested there successfully only by beach seines.

These changes became effective immediately upon publication in the Federal Register of April 19, 1955. Free copies of these Amendments (which amend and supplement the printed regulations issued a few months ago) and further amendments which may be adopted from time to time are available from the Service's Branch of Alaska Fisheries offices at Seattle, Juneau, and Anchorage.

The printed regulations (Laws and Regulations for Protection of the Commercial Fisheries of Alaska, 1955) to which these amendments apply and which were issued a few months ago are available from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C., at 25 cents a copy.



Department of State

FISH ITEMS ADDED TO SUPPLEMENTAL LIST FOR CONSIDERATION IN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN AND OTHER COUNTRIES:

The Interdepartmental Committee on Trade Agreements issued formal notice on February 21, 1955, which supplemented its notice of November 13, 1954, concerning tariff negotiations involving Japan, to announce a supplemental list of items for consideration in these negotiations. Included in this listing were three portions of tariff paragraphs pertaining to fishery products. (The original list was published in Commercial Fisheries Review, December 1954, p.78.) The notice also announced the intention of the United States Government to undertake tariff negotiations with Switzerland to compensate that country for the increase in 1954 in the United States duty rates on certain watches and watch movements. It also notified that certain modifications may be made in the Cuban preference in the case

of articles in the list for negotiation with Switzerland.

The need for considering additional items in the negotiations arises primarily out of developments that have taken place since November 1954. In some cases study has indicated serious weaknesses in the bargaining position of the United States in negotiating with some third countries that have planned all along to negotiate with Japan and with which the United States may consequently wish to carry on negotiations to expand benefits to Japan. In others, countries that had previously no firm plans to negotiate have decided to undertake negotiations.

Hearings were scheduled and opportunity provided for submission of briefs to obtain views and information from interested persons on these negotiations, including views for or against concessions

which the United States might offer on particular products. The listing of an item is for the purpose of gathering information on the possibility of a concession; it does not necessarily mean that a concession will be offered on the product. No concession can be made on a product not included in a published list issued by the Committee.

Public hearings before the Committee for Reciprocity Information (The CRI receives the views of interested persons for the Interdepartmental Committee) began on March 28, 1955, at Washington.

The U. S. Tariff Commission also held public hearings starting on March 28, to receive views and information useful in preparing its "peril-point" report to the President. Views and information received by the Tariff Commission were to be made available to the Committee for Reciprocity Information.

These are the fishery items added on the supplemental list:

Tariff Paragraph	1954 Schedule A Class No.	Brief Description	Present Rate of Duty	Duty Can Be Reduced To
718(a)	0066 600	Prepared or preserved fish, other than anchovies, anti-pasto, bonito, yellowtail, sardines, smoked pollock, and tuna, if packed in oil or in oil and other substances, valued not over 9 cents per pound including weight of immediate container.	44% ad val.	22% ad val.
	0066 700	Same as above, except valued over 9 cents per pound including weight of immediate container.	30% ad val.	15% ad val.
719(4)	0070 400	Herring, pickled or salted, in bulk or in containers weighing with their contents more than 15 pounds each and containing each more than 10 pounds of herring, net weight.	$\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per lb.	$\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ per lb.
720(a)(2)	0075 100	Herring, hard dry-smoked, whole or beheaded but not further advanced.	$\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per lb.	$\frac{5}{16}$ ¢ per lb.
720(a)(3)	0075 300	Herring, smoked or kippered, boned.	$1\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ per lb.	$\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ per lb.
	0075 400	Herring, smoked or kippered, filleted, skinned, split or divided.	$1\frac{1}{4}$ ¢ per lb.	1¢ per lb.

Note: Includes breaded fish sticks, cooked or uncooked, containing added oil resulting from the presence of oil in the material in which they were breaded or from the oil in which they were cooked. The Bureau of Customs ruled on June 11, 1954, such products were dutiable under Tariff Paragraph 718 (a) at 30 percent ad valorem when valued over 9 cents per pound including the weight of the immediate container.

Eighty-Fourth Congress (First Session)

MARCH 1955:

Listed below are public bills and resolutions introduced and referred to committees or passed by the Eighty-Fourth Congress (First Session) and signed by the President that directly or indirectly affect the fisheries and allied industries. Public bills and resolutions are shown in this section when introduced and, if passed, when signed by the President; but also shown from month to month are the more pertinent reports, hearings, or chamber actions on some bills.

ALASKA-NET REGULATIONS: The House on March 7 passed without amendment and cleared for the President S. 456, relating to the regulations of fishing nets in Alaska waters. H. R. 249, a similar bill, was tabled.

The President on March 16 signed S. 456, relating to the regulation of fishing nets in Alaskan waters. (Public Law 12.)

AN ACT

Relating to the regulation of nets in Alaska waters.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the last sentence of section 3 of the Act entitled "An Act for the protection and regulation of the fisheries of Alaska," approved June 26, 1906, as amended (48 U. S. C., sec. 233), is hereby amended to read as follows: "It shall be unlawful to lay or set any seine or net of any kind within one hundred yards of any other seine, net, or other fishing appliance which is being or which has been laid or set in any of the waters of Alaska, or to drive or to construct any trap or any other fixed fishing appliance, except a set gill net, stake gill net, or anchored gill net, within six hundred yards laterally or within one hundred yards endwise of any other trap or fixed fishing appliance."

APPROVED MARCH 16, 1955.

CONSERVATION IN MILITARY RESERVATIONS: H. R. 5442 (Sikes), introduced March 31. A bill to promote effectual planning, development, maintenance, and coordination of wildlife, fish, and game conservation and rehabilitation in military reservations; to the Committee on Armed Services.

INTERIOR DEPT. APPROPRIATIONS: H. R. 5085 (Kirwan), introduced March 21. A bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies (including the Fish and Wildlife Service) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1956, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations. Bill

reported out to House March 21 by Committee on Appropriations (H. Rept. 239).

The House on March 24 passed, by a voice vote, H. R. 5085, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1956. As reported from the Committee on Appropriations the bill recommends appropriations of \$298,271,246, which amount is \$15,081,810 under the budget estimates and \$3,203,380 less than the 1955 appropriation.

Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 1956, House Report No. 239 (March 21, 1955, 84th Congress, 1st Session), 17 pp., printed. In reporting an appropriation for the Fish and Wildlife Service Investigations of Resources, which includes the Branches of Commercial Fisheries and Biology, the report states:

"The budget estimate of \$3,977,000 is recommended. This is a reduction of \$150,000 below the amounts available for the current fiscal year, which reduction is more than amply compensated by the permanent appropriation for research activities made in the recent Saltonstall-Kennedy Act. A total of \$10,000 is to be used from the funds available under this heading for blackbird control work in the state of New Jersey."

MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE: H. R. 4908 (Ashley), introduced March 15. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 so as to increase the minimum hourly wage from 75 cents to \$1.25; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

Also H. R. 5302 (Granahan), introduced March 29, similar to H. R. 4908.

TROUT HATCHERY IN ARKANSAS: H. R. 4897 (Trimble), introduced March 14. A bill to provide for the establishment of a trout hatchery immediately below Norfolk Dam on Northfork River, Ark., to the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

Also S. 1520 (Fulbright), introduced March 22, similar to H. R. 4897.

WEATHER STATION IN GULF OF MEXICO: S. 1354 (Eastland), introduced March 8. A bill to provide that one floating ocean station shall be maintained at all times in the Gulf of Mexico to provide storm warnings for States bordering on the Gulf of Mexico; to the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce.

Also H. R. 4809 (Kilgore), introduced March 10, similar to S. 1354.

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL: H. R. 5296 (Blatnik), introduced March 29. A bill to extend and strengthen the Water Pollution Control Act; to the Committee on Public Works.

Also H. R. 5369 (Fulton), introduced March 30, similar to H. R. 5296.

