



# FEDERAL ACTIONS



## Treasury Department

### BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

#### GROUND FISH FILLET IMPORT TARIFF-RATE QUOTA FOR 1956:

The reduced-tariff-rate import quota on fresh and frozen groundfish (cod, haddock, hake, pollock, cusk, and ocean perch) fillets for calendar year 1956 is 35,196,575 pounds, the Bureau of Customs announced recently. Divided into quarterly quotas this means that 8,799,144 pounds of groundfish fillets during each quarter may be imported at the  $1\frac{7}{8}$  cents-per-pound rate of duty, and any imports over the quarterly quota will be dutiable at the rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound.

The reduced-rate import quota for 1956 is 0.7 percent lower than the 1955 quota of 35,432,624 pounds, but higher than the 1954 quota of 33,950,386 pounds, the 1953 quota of 33,866,287 pounds, the 1952 quota of 31,472,108 pounds, and the 29,289,808-pound quota of 1951.

Average aggregate apparent annual consumption in the United States of fresh and frozen groundfish fillets and steaks (including the fillet blocks and slabs used in the manufacture of fish sticks) for the three years preceding 1956 (1953-1955) was 234,643,830 pounds, calculated in accordance with the proviso to item 717 (b) of Part I, Schedule XX, of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (T. D. 51802). The proviso states that the import quota for any current calendar year shall be 15,000,000 pounds or 15 percent of the average aggregate apparent consumption in the three years preceding the current year, whichever is greater. The tariff item concerned in summarized form is: "Fish, fresh, or frozen (whether or not packed in ice), filleted, skinned, boned, sliced, or divided into portions, not specially provided for: Cod, haddock, pollock, cusk,

and rosefish (ocean perch)." Fillet blocks and slabs for making fish sticks are also included under this category.

Average aggregate apparent annual consumption in the United States of fresh and frozen groundfish fillets and steaks for the three years 1952-54 was 236,217,495 pounds, slightly more than the consumption for 1953-55.



## White House

### UNITED STATES MEMBERS NAMED FOR GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION:

The appointment of the United States members of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission was announced by the President on February 18, 1955. The Commission is composed of six Commissioners, three from Canada and three from the United States.

The United States members appointed by the President are: John L. Farley, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; Lester P. Voigt, Wisconsin State Conservation Director; and Claude Ver Duin, Mayor of Grand Haven, Mich., and an operator of a commercial fishing business on the Great Lakes.

Note: See Commercial Fisheries Review, October 1955, p. 109.



## Eighty-Fourth Congress (Second Session)

Listed below are public bills and resolutions that directly or indirectly affect the fisheries and allied industries. Public bills and resolutions are shown when introduced; from month to month the more

pertinent reports, hearings, or chamber actions on the bills shown are published; and if passed, they are shown when signed by the President.

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES NATIONAL POLICY: S. 3275 (Magnuson and Kuchel) introduced in the Senate February 22; a bill to establish a sound and comprehensive national policy with respect to the development, conservation for preservation, management and use of fisheries resources, to create and prescribe the functions of the United States Fisheries Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce.

"...Sec. 2. The Congress hereby declares that fish and shellfish resources make a material contribution to the health and well-being of our citizens and constitute an important part of the food-producing segment of the national economy, and that a sound and comprehensive national policy with respect to the development, conservation for preservation, management, and maximum use of such resources, the prevention of excessive exploitation thereof, and the promotion and maintenance of prosperous and productive conditions in both the commercial and the sport and recreational fisheries industries is essential in the public interest. The Congress further declares that the provisions of this Act are necessary in order to accomplish such objectives, and that this Act shall be administered with due regard to the inherent right of every citizen and resident of the United States to engage in fishing for his own pleasure and enjoyment.

"Sec. 3. (a) There is hereby created an independent agency of the Government to be known as the United States Fisheries Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission") which shall be composed of five members to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice of the Senate. One of such members shall be designated by the President as Chairman of the Commission at the time of nomination. Each such member shall hold office for a term of six years; except that the terms of office of the members first appointed shall expire, as designated by the President at the time of nomination, as follows: One on January 1, 1958, one on January 1, 1959, one on January 1, 1960, one on January 1, 1961, and one on January 1, 1962. A vacancy in the membership of the Commission shall not affect the power of the remaining members to exercise the functions of the Commission, and shall be filled in the same manner as is the case of the original appointment. Not more than three members of the Commission shall be members of the same political party. The Chairman of the Commission shall receive compensation at the rate of \$20,000 per annum, and each of the other members of the Commission shall receive compensation at the rate of \$18,000 per annum.

"(b) Not less than three members of the Commission shall have general knowledge of commercial and sport fishing conditions and of the problems confronting the domestic and international fisheries.

"(c) In addition to exercising the functions transferred to it by this Act and otherwise provided by law, it shall be the duty of the Commission (1) to assist and advise the appropriate agencies of the several States which have the primary responsibility of managing fisheries, and any international agencies having similar official responsibilities, (2) to promote, conserve, and manage any fisheries in the Territories and possessions of the United States that remain the sole responsibility of the Federal Government, and (3) to construct, maintain and operate fish cultural stations relating to fish and shellfish, either independently or in cooperation with

State, Territorial, and private agencies, to the extent authorized by the Congress and by law.

"(d) It shall also be the duty of the Commission to prepare and submit to the Congress such programs, policies, and directives relating to the advancement, management, regulation, and protection of fisheries as the Commission deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act or as may be required by law.

"(e) The Commission shall conduct continuing studies, shall prepare and disseminate information, and shall make periodical reports and recommendations to the public, to the President and to the Congress, with respect to the following matters:

"(1) The production and flow to market of fish and fishery products domestically produced;

"(2) The production and flow to market of fish and fishery products produced by foreign producers which affect domestic commercial fisheries;

"(3) The trends in production of the various kinds of fish and shellfish;

"(4) The measures which are appropriate to assure the maximum sustainable production of fish and fishery products and to prevent unnecessary and excessive fluctuations in such production;

"(5) The measures that are necessary to prevent the excessive and harmful exploitation of the fisheries resources;

"(6) The methods and practices used in catching and taking fish and shellfish that are wasteful and that have the effect of diminishing the fisheries resources in the waters of the Continental Shelf and the high seas;

"(7) The competitive economic position of the various fish and fishery products with respect to each other and to competitive fish and fishery products produced by foreign producers;

"(8) The market conditions, amount of production, and general economic position of fish and fishery products in the countries in which such products constitute an important part of the food supply; and

"(9) Any other matters which in the judgment of the Commission are of public interest in connection with any phases of fisheries operations.

"(f) The Commission shall cooperate to the fullest practicable extent with the Secretary of State in providing representation at all meetings and conferences relating to fisheries in which representatives of the United States and foreign countries participate. The Secretary of State shall, wherever possible, designate at least one member of the Commission to the negotiating team in all matters relating to international fisheries.

"(g) The Secretary of State and all other officials having responsibilities in the fields of technical and economic aid to foreign nations shall consult with the Commission in all cases in which the interests of domestic commercial and sport fisheries are involved with a view to assuring that such interests are adequately represented at all times.

"(h) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Commission shall be represented in all international negotiations con-

ducted by the United States pursuant to section 350 of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended, in any case in which domestic commercial and sport fisheries are directly affected by such negotiations.

"(l) The Commission shall make such studies and investigations relating to fishing operations on the high seas as it deems necessary for the welfare and protection of domestic fisheries, and shall make reports and recommendations to the Congress and to the Secretary of State with respect to any practices, operations, or conditions or any other matters that it deems to be detrimental to, or vital to the security and welfare of, such fisheries. . . .

"(k) The Commission may request and secure the advice or assistance of any department or agency of the Government, and any such department or agency which furnishes advice or assistance to the Commission may expend its own funds for such purposes, with or without reimbursement from the Commission as may be agreed upon between the Commission and the department or agency.

"(l) The Commission shall consult periodically with the various governmental, private nonprofit and other agencies which have to do with any phase of noncommercial fishing with respect to any problems that may arise in connection with such fishing.

"(m) The Commission may make such rules and regulations as it deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, and all such rules and regulations shall be published in the Federal Register as in the case of those of any other agency. . . .

"Sec. 4. (a) There are hereby transferred to the Commission all the functions of the Department of the Interior (including the functions of the Secretary thereof and of the Fish and Wildlife Service) relating in any manner to fisheries, and the development, advancement, management conservation, and protection thereof.

"(b) In addition, the functions of the Secretary of the Interior (1) relating to the protection of fur seals, and to the supervision of the Pribilof Islands and the care of the natives thereof; and (2) relating to the Whaling Convention Act of 1949 (Public Law 676, Eighty-first Congress) and any other functions of the Secretary relating to hair-seals, sea-lions, whales, and other mammals, are hereby transferred to, and shall hereafter be exercised by, the Commission.

"(c) There are hereby transferred to the Commission all functions of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce and the head of any other department or agency, which are now exercised by them or provided for under any Act of Congress and which relate in any manner to fisheries; but nothing in this subsection shall be construed to interfere with or modify the authority of the Department of State or the Secretary thereof to negotiate or enter into any international agreements or conventions with respect to the development, management or protection of any fisheries resources.

"(d) There are hereby transferred to the Commission so much of the personnel, property, facilities, records, and unexpended balances of appropriations, allocations and other funds (available or to be made available) as the Director of the Bureau of the Budget determines to be necessary in connection with the exercise of the functions transferred to the Commission by subsection (a), (b) and (c) of this section.

"Sec. 5. Close cooperation shall be established and maintained between the United States and Canada, and between the United States and Mexico, through fisheries agreements, in the interest of conserving and utilizing to the fullest practicable extent the stocks of food fish and shellfish which inhabit the waters of the Continental Shelf. Such cooperation shall also be established and maintained between the United States and other nations through fisheries agreements relating to the conservation and use of the stocks of food fish which inhabit the waters of the high seas.

"Sec. 6. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to interfere in any manner with the rights of any State under the Submerged Lands Act (Public Law 31, Eighty-third Congress) or otherwise provided by law.

"Sec. 7. (a) It shall be unlawful for any citizen of the United States---

"(1) to catch or take any salmon, trout, or other fishes on the high seas (except as authorized by the Commission for experimental or sport fishing purposes) with any form of net, gear, or other appliance which the Commission finds would prevent or interfere with the conservation of such fishes; and

"(2) to fish for or catch any species of shellfish in the waters of either the Atlantic Ocean or the Pacific Ocean by means of tangle nets or any other device or gear which the Commission finds would have the unavoidable result of taking immature and female shellfish at the same time that marketable male shellfish are taken.

"(b) The Commission is authorized to make such rules and regulations as may be necessary to enforce the provisions of this section. . . .

IMPORT QUOTAS: H. R. 9425 (Davis) introduced in the House February 20; a bill to regulate the foreign commerce of the United States by establishing import quotas under specified conditions and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT APPROPRIATIONS: H. R. 9390 (Kirwan) introduced in the House February 17; 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, 1957, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations. H. R. 9390 was reported to the House by the Committee on Appropriations on February 17 (H. Rept. 1772).

The House on February 21 passed H. R. 9390, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for fiscal year 1957, without amendment. The bill recommends appropriations for 1957 of \$415,963,200, which is \$10,785,000 under the budget estimates and \$78,067,573 more than the 1956 appropriations. The Fish and Wildlife Service was voted the full amount of the budget estimate.

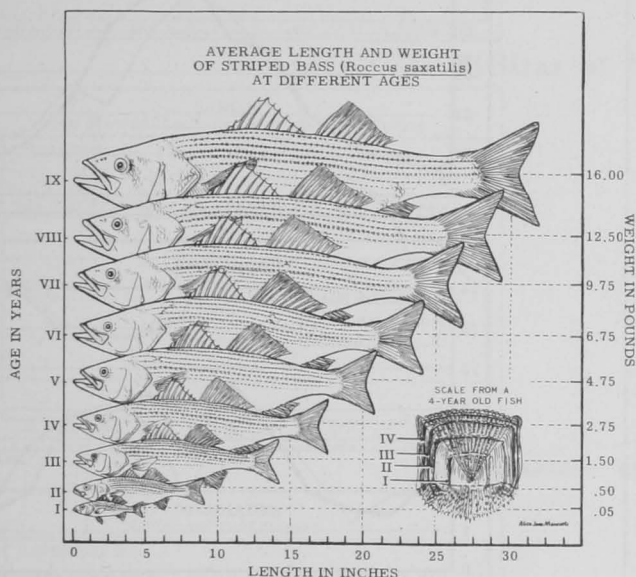
TRADE COOPERATION ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP: H. R. 9413 (Springer) introduced in the House February 20; a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 with respect to the administration of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade; to the Committee on Ways and Means. This bill will authorize the President to accept membership for the United States in the Organization for Trade Cooperation provided for in the Agreement on the Organization for Trade Cooperation drawn up by the Contracting Parties to GATT at their ninth session.

### HOW OLD IS YOUR STRIPED BASS?

One of the most essential facts needed in effective striped-bass management is the age composition of the population. Just as life insurance companies fix their rates according to the age distribution of humans, so the fish biologist must have such knowledge at hand in solving the many problems connected with the natural history and management of a fish species. Such problems as longevity, rates of growth, and age at maturity or spawning time may be wholly or partly solved by knowing the ages of various-sized fish that comprise a population. There are several indirect ways of doing this, but the simplest method is based on counting the annual rings deposited on the scales of fish, much like aging a tree by counting the exposed rings of the cross-section after it is cut.

The growth rate of fish varies far more than does that of a warm-blooded animal. This rate is directly and significantly affected by temperature, and by other physical and biological conditions. Thus it is possible for different age classes or broods to be roughly the same size, or to have wide differences in average size. In fact, among legal-sized older fish, it is not unusual to find very young individuals that have attained the same size more quickly.

Based on studies of the age, length, and weight of striped bass carried out on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, a graphic representation of average figures for ages I to IX is given on the accompanying illustration. From this you can hazard a guess of a fish's age, provided you know either the weight or the length.



Biologists have collected a vast assemblage of statistics about striped bass. Weights and lengths galore have been collected for many years, since these two measurements can be determined with great accuracy. Weights of fishes are a function of the length; that is, the longer the fish grows, the heavier it becomes. Aging, on the other hand, is far from accurate after the eighth or ninth year. Even the experts differ among themselves in the interpretation of a particular fish's age. Larger "rock," of course, are even older. Those that are 40 inches long (averaging about 25 pounds) are about 11 or 12 years old; while 50 inches (about 50 pounds) are about 20 to 25 years old. One authority aged a striped bass that was 54 inches long, weighing 65 pounds, as either 29, 30, or 31 years old. One definite longevity record exists: a striped bass lived in the New York Aquarium for 23 years.

Among striped bass, a "dominant year-class" (i.e., a specific brood that occurs in a high numerical abundance within a fish population all out of proportion to "normal" occurrence) is determined from scale analysis and high density only after extensive scientific random samples are taken throughout the fishery. The biologist, in a sense, can predict from this sort of information whether "rock" will be available to fishermen in large, average, or small numbers. Notwithstanding extensive research into this phenomenon, the science of prediction based on dominant year-classes is at best in its infancy. Thus, although many unanswered questions plague the biologist, the aging process, at least, has helped to illuminate some of them.