

44/6/28

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release

In anticipation of a proposed post-war broadening of its activities, the Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Fish Culture will be known as the Division of Game Fish and Hatcheries after July 1, Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Director of the Service, announced today.

The Division of Game Fish and Hatcheries will continue to propagate fish and to take an active part in the development of the farm pond program. After the war, however, it will embark on a more extensive program designed to gear production of fish more closely to actual needs of fishing areas. Other changes will make it the principal service agency for sports fishermen, furnishing advice on the problems of maintaining game fishing.

M. C. James, chief of the present Division of Fish Culture, will remain in charge, although currently Mr. James is on assignment as Coordination Officer of the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries in Washington. In his absence C. L. Meehan is Acting Chief. Head of the Division's distribution section is E. J. Douglass. The headquarters of the Division of Game Fish and Hatcheries will remain in Chicago.

When the old U. S. Fish and Fisheries Commission was established one of its first undertakings was the establishment of fish hatcheries. In 1872 seasonal field stations were established for the hatching of shad, striped bass, alewives, salmon, whitefish, and carp. This work was under the direction of an Assistant Commissioner, J. W. Milner.

The first two permanent hatcheries were established at Craig Brook, Maine, and at Baird, California, both for the propagation of salmon. The Craig Brook hatchery is still in operation but the Baird hatchery was recently closed due to the construction of Shasta dam which flooded the site.

A number of Federal fish hatcheries have been closed since the war started but there are still 113 in operation. These hatcheries are located in every state with the exception of Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Connecticut, and Illinois.

At one time the theory behind the propagation of fishes was that the more hatched and placed in streams, the more fish would be caught by fishermen. Investigations have shown that this is not necessarily true. The Division will adopt a more extended program of management, particularly for streams on Federal lands, determine stocking needs, and gear hatchery production more closely to those needs. Stream improvement work in Federal areas will also be undertaken and rough fish will be cleared out where this action is required, and the Division will generally apply the principles developed by scientific research of the Fish and Wildlife Service and State conservation departments.