



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Three mobile research laboratories, equipped to make field studies of problems in the production and handling of fishery products, will be placed in operation by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service this week, Albert M. Day, Director of the Service, announced today.

The mobile laboratories will supplement the work of the three permanent laboratories now maintained by the Service in continental United States for technological research in fishery problems - at Seattle, Boston, and College Park, Md. The portable laboratories are housed in standard trailers towed by trucks and will move from place to place as critical problems demanding immediate, on-the-spot attention may arise, Mr. Day said.

One of the laboratory trailers has been assigned to the Pacific Coast, one to the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts from Chesapeake Bay southward, and the third to the Atlantic Coast from Chesapeake Bay north. This last unit will also be assigned when necessary to problems of the lake and river fisheries.

During the early months of their operation, the mobile laboratories will be used chiefly in studying problems of sanitation related to the handling of such perishable seafoods as crabs, oysters, and many kinds of fish. They will be used later in a variety of other studies, ranging from the preservation of fishing gear to the development of improved processing methods.

"The mobile laboratories will make it possible for us to do a much more effective job of solving those producing, processing, and distributing problems of the

commercial fishing industry which require immediate attention in the field," Mr. Day said. "With only three continental laboratories serving all the coastal and interior fishing areas, it has often been impossible in the past to investigate localized problems because of the distance to the affected area. With the new trailer laboratories, we are now in position to attach these problems at their source with the proper equipment and can give attention to technical problems in even the most isolated fishing district."

Among typical local problems on which the portable laboratories are expected to prove useful, Mr. Day cited the losses sustained by fishermen in certain Oregon waters during the fall months through the rapid and excessive deterioration of fish netting, the fact that processing methods need to be developed for anchovies, an abundant and almost untapped resource off the Pacific coast, and the need of better methods for handling and processing fish and crabs in many Pacific coast localities.

In the South Atlantic and Gulf areas better freezing and other handling methods are needed to make the southern fishery resources available to a wider market, Mr. Day said. In addition to such studies, the trailer laboratories will probably be used in investigating the possibilities of producing fish meal from materials now wasted.

In the North and Middle Atlantic areas, it is expected that the mobile units will be used as centers for demonstrating better handling and processing methods to workers in the fishing industry, for studies of gear preservation, and for developing more complete utilization of waste materials.

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