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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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APPROVE NEW AGREEMENT FOR ATLANTIC SALMON RESTORATION

The program to restore the Atlantic salmon to commercial importance in New England will be accelerated through a new agreement recently approved by the agencies engaged in the rehabilitation work, Albert M. Day, director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, announced today.

The cooperative agreement was signed by the Atlantic Sea-Run Salmon Commission of the State of Maine, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Game, the Maine Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries, and the University of Maine, in addition to the Fish and Wildlife Service. It became effective on June 25, 1948, superseding a more restricted agreement which has been in force since October 10, 1941.

The new agreement provides for a pooling of resources to accomplish the single, long-range objective of Atlantic salmon restoration on the Atlantic coast and particularly in the Maine rivers where this species formerly was abundant. Under its terms, more efficient use of Federal and State funds, equipment, and personnel can be expected, according to Mr. Day, because over-lapping functions and duplication of effort will be eliminated.

To put the new operating plan into effect, the Service has transferred Dr. George A. Rounsefell, chief of its Atlantic Salmon Investigations, from Washington, D. C., to Orono, Maine, to direct the joint program of Atlantic salmon research, as provided in the agreement. Headquarters of the research staff will be located at the University of Maine.

Dr. Rounsefell will also represent the Service on a three-man research committee which will serve as a coordinating agency for all sea-run salmon restoration and management. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Game and the Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries will each appoint a biologist to serve on this committee.

The research committee will act in an advisory capacity on the joint research program and will develop and recommend to the Atlantic Sea-Run Salmon Commission a general policy on artificial propagation and stocking of salmon. It will also make plans and specific recommendations covering fishways, dams, stocking, fishing regulations, and pollution abatement.

The Service will continue to propagate sea-run salmon at its Craig Brook, Maine, fish hatchery for stocking in the rivers of Maine.

The Atlantic salmon is an example of a resource which, through negligence, has almost been lost. This salmon was once abundant in nearly every river tributary to the Atlantic north of the Hudson. By the late 1930's the runs in New England had decreased almost to the point of extinction. Today, remnants of Atlantic salmon runs in the United States are found only in a few rivers in eastern Maine.

The principal causes of the decline in the number of salmon were the construction of impassable dams which blocked the adults from the spawning grounds, extensive pollution from industrial developments, and over-fishing.

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