



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### ALASKA SEA LIONS CALLED PREDATORY, KRUG ENDS LEGAL PROTECTION

Secretary of the Interior J. A. Krug today partially removed the legal protection of sea lions in Alaskan waters.

Huge herds of sea lions concentrate on Alaska's important halibut fishing banks and salmon trolling grounds, causing heavy economic losses to the Territory's fishermen, the Fish and Wildlife Service had reported. The enormous marine mammals, which have become unusually abundant in recent years, feed on commercial fishes caught in nets and on baited hooks, according to Service findings.

In accordance with a Congressional Act of June 16, 1934, Secretary Krug retained full legal protection of the sea lions in waters around uninhabited Bogoslof Island in the Bering Sea. The island is also a Federal sanctuary for birds.

The killing of sea lions in Alaskan waters has been prohibited by regulations issued by the Secretary of the Interior, July 1, 1941. The old law did permit killing, however, "by natives for food or clothing, and by miners and explorers when in need of food... by anyone in the necessary protection of property, or while such animals are destroying salmon or other food fish" and by authorized scientists.

The Fish and Wildlife Service will soon begin sea lion control operations in certain areas to curb the predations on commercial fishes. The Service also seeks commercial uses for the animals, although sea lions have practically no economic value now.

The Alaskan sea lions are relatively non-migratory, and are much larger than the California sea lions which are captured for use as "trained seals."

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