

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Rettie - Interior 5634

For Release MARCH 12, 1963

FEDERAL-STATE FISHERY EXPERTS EYE STUDY OF RESTORING SHAD RUN ON SUSQUEHANNA RIVER

Fishery experts from three States and the Federal Government began a series of meetings in Washington, D. C., this week to discuss ways of determining whether the Susquehanna River could once again support a run of shad and other migrant fish species.

The meetings are held by a technical committee whose job it is to outline the studies necessary to determine the advisability of constructing a total of some \$5 million worth of fishways at dams along the Susquehanna, beginning with a \$700,000 installation at Conowingo Dam, to collect migrating shad and pass them over the series of four dams.

At the meeting were representatives of the States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York, and the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service.

Work by the technical committee of fishery experts to study feasibility of the project followed an earlier study financed by the State of Pennsylvania, the results of which indicated it would be possible to design and construct a series of fishery structures at the power dams along the River which could open upstream migration for shad--an excellent sport fish.

Technical representatives at the current meetings are developing a program by which it will be possible to determine whether the River will support the fish population once it is reintroduced and whether the shad would survive up- and down-stream migration in numbers large enough to justify construction of the fishways.

Following design of the study, a Federal-State advisory committee will report its study-proposal to the States and the Federal Government, following which an investigation on the River will attempt to test the highly optimistic possibilities in the report to the Pennsylvania Fish Commission.

The possibility of redeveloping a run of shad on the Susquehanna has sparked considerable interest among many sportsmen and others, who recall the successful reestablishment of shad in the Connecticut River above Holyoke, Mass. State and Federal fishery biologists are hopeful that such a program could also be successful on the Susquehanna River, but evidence is yet insufficient to justify the substantial investment necessary, the Interior Department explained.

Although the earlier studies do demonstrate the engineering feasibility of designing structures at the Susquehanna dams, much more data are needed about the condition of the river, and whether a new shad fishery would survive and prosper in the River.

Serving on the special technical Federal-State Committee are Robert Bielo of Pennsylvania, Dr. Frank Schwartz of Maryland, Donald Pasko of New York, and Dr. Wendell Johnson and Paul Nichols (Chairman) of the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service.

On the advisory committee which will formally consider the study proposals are Albert Day of Pennsylvania, L. Eugene Cronin of Maryland, and Donald Pasko of New York. Department of the Interior representatives are Ralph Silliman and James T. McBroom (Chairman), both of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Meetings of the technical committee will continue throughout the next several weeks, following which the full advisory committee will consider its recommendations, the results of which will be made available in about a month.

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