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DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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INTERIOR SECRETARY UDALL MAKES FIRST DETERMINATION UNDER NEW FISHERIES ACT

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall has taken action under provisions of a new law to assist the Great Lakes area fishing industry recover from economic losses suffered in 1963.

Section 4 (b) of Public Law 88-309, signed by President Johnson on May 20, provides that the Secretary may make available up to \$400,000 to aid a fishing industry when he determines that a commercial fishery failure due to a resource disaster has occurred.

The determination says the Great Lakes fishing industry, as well as processors and distributors of smoked fish from the Great Lakes area incurred substantial economic injury in October 1963 as a result of temporary loss of market for smoked fish following an outbreak of botulism. About 2 million pounds of frozen fish on hand at the time of the incident are still in storage. Because of the length of storage, the fish, even though frozen, have deteriorated to a point where they cannot be used for human food, or, for the most part, even for pet food. These stocks will be removed from normal trade channels and must be used only for fish meal or be destroyed. The applicable section of the new law provides that funds available in Fiscal Year 1965 be used to alleviate the serious situation in the Great Lakes area.

In subsequent years, such funds will be available to other segments of the industry suffering fishery failures arising from resource disasters.

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