

4. COMMERCIAL FISHING FLEET

In 1940 and 1941 our Federal Government as well as the governments of Great Britain and of Mexico purchased a considerable number of larger vessels, especially California purse-seiners. At this time many newly built purse-seiners were entering our fisheries so that there was little change noticeable in the number of larger boats in our commercial fishing fleet. The increase in the total number of fishing boats during the 1940–1941 license year was due to the entry of a large number of small boats attracted by the high prices paid for shark livers and the profits to be made from the dip-net method of fishing mackerel.

During the following license year (1941–1942) Government purchases of fishing vessels continued but the large number of vessels requisitioned after December 7, 1941, is not reflected in our 1941–1942 tables because most of the boats taken over by our Navy in 1942 fished during 1941 and are thereby included in Table 18 as active during the license year. However, our records do show that our fishing fleet had 252 fewer boats in the 1941–1942 season than during the preceding year. This decrease was due in part to the requisitioning of boats by military authorities but more to the fact that many of the mackerel dip-net boats were unsuccessful and did not fish after 1940–1941.

Another drop of 237 in the number of fishing boats occurred during the next period (1942–1943) in spite of the fact that many small pleasure boats turned to commercial fishing. The serious loss to the fleet occurred in the large boat class, over 64 feet in length. Nearly one-third of the larger boats were taken out of the fishing fleet in 1942.

TABLE 18
COMMERCIAL FISHING FLEET—1941-1942

Region of home port	Number of boats, grouped by length					Total number of boats for each region
	Up to 24 feet	25 to 39 feet	40 to 64 feet	65 to 84 feet	85 feet and over	
Eureka	15	188	20	-----	-----	223
Sacramento	86	145	2	-----	-----	233
San Francisco	36	407	78	22	2	545
Monterey	94	200	43	59	4	400
Santa Barbara	51	113	30	-----	2	196
Los Angeles	229	569	214	88	28	1,128
San Diego	63	111	73	24	59	330
Alaska, Washington and Oregon ..	1	23	42	70	11	147
Total number of boats	575	1,756	502	263	106	3,202

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COMMERCIAL FISHING FLEET—1941-1942

This record includes the boats actively engaged in commercial fishing during the license year April 1, 1941 to March 31, 1942. It also includes 209 boats which were not engaged in market fishing but which did engage in marine sport fishing for profit and to which party permits were issued.