

Bureau of Commercial Fisheries

Whale Research to Be Kept Going

Whales are not the world's best house pets, and they have long since lost the economic importance they once enjoyed in the United States as a major source of candles and corset stays.

Nevertheless, the whale still has a lot of box office appeal. Enough to start the cards and letters coming in to the Department of Interior in response to rumors that Federal whale research would be curtailed.

Dr. Leslie L. Glasgow, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, pointed out that the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, which is responsible for the whale research program, has at no time announced either a reduction in funding or termination of the program.

"In order to make better use

of available funds, we are planning to relocate certain research activities, and to consolidate the scientific staff working with whales and other cetaceans," Dr. Glasgow said.

(Cetaceans are hairless, fish-like water mammals which include porpoises and dolphins, among other species.)

Research on the gray whale population, which includes a yearly count of the whales as they migrate northward along the California Coast, will continue Dr. Glasgow said.

The program relocation would simply move the scientists closer to the whales they are studying, he added.