Cost of Fishing Ban On Hudson Is Called Much Exaggerated

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ALBANY, March 2—John S. Dyson, the state's combative Commissioner of Commerce, renewed his running battle today with Ogden R. Reid, the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation, charging that Mr. Reid had overstated the financial loss of the closing last week of the Hudson River to commercial fishing.

In ordering the fishing ban last week because of contamination by the industrial toxin PCB's, Mr. Reid's department had said that the financial losses would run into many millions of dollars.

However, Mr. Dyson said today that according to United States Commerce Department figures, the total 1974 catch from the affected portion of the Hudson was 300,000 pounds of fish worth "not more than $100,000." In addition, Mr. Dyson said at a news conference in his office here, there were no full-time commercial fishermen on the Hudson, but rather 276 part-time fishermen who in 1974 worked the equivalent of only "six man-years of commercial fishing employment."

"To suggest that there is a major economic impact from the closing of the Hudson is simply to misrepresent the facts," Mr. Dyson said.

The context for this particular dispute is the fact that a hearing conducted under Mr. Reid's auspices will soon consider whether the General Electric Company, whose two capacitor plants near Albany are the major source of the PCB contamination, should be forced to indemnify the commercial fisherman for their loss of income under the fishing ban. Alternatively, state officials are also considering whether to seek Federal indemnification on the ground that the G.E. plants operated for years under a Federal permit to discharge the contaminated waste into the river.

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