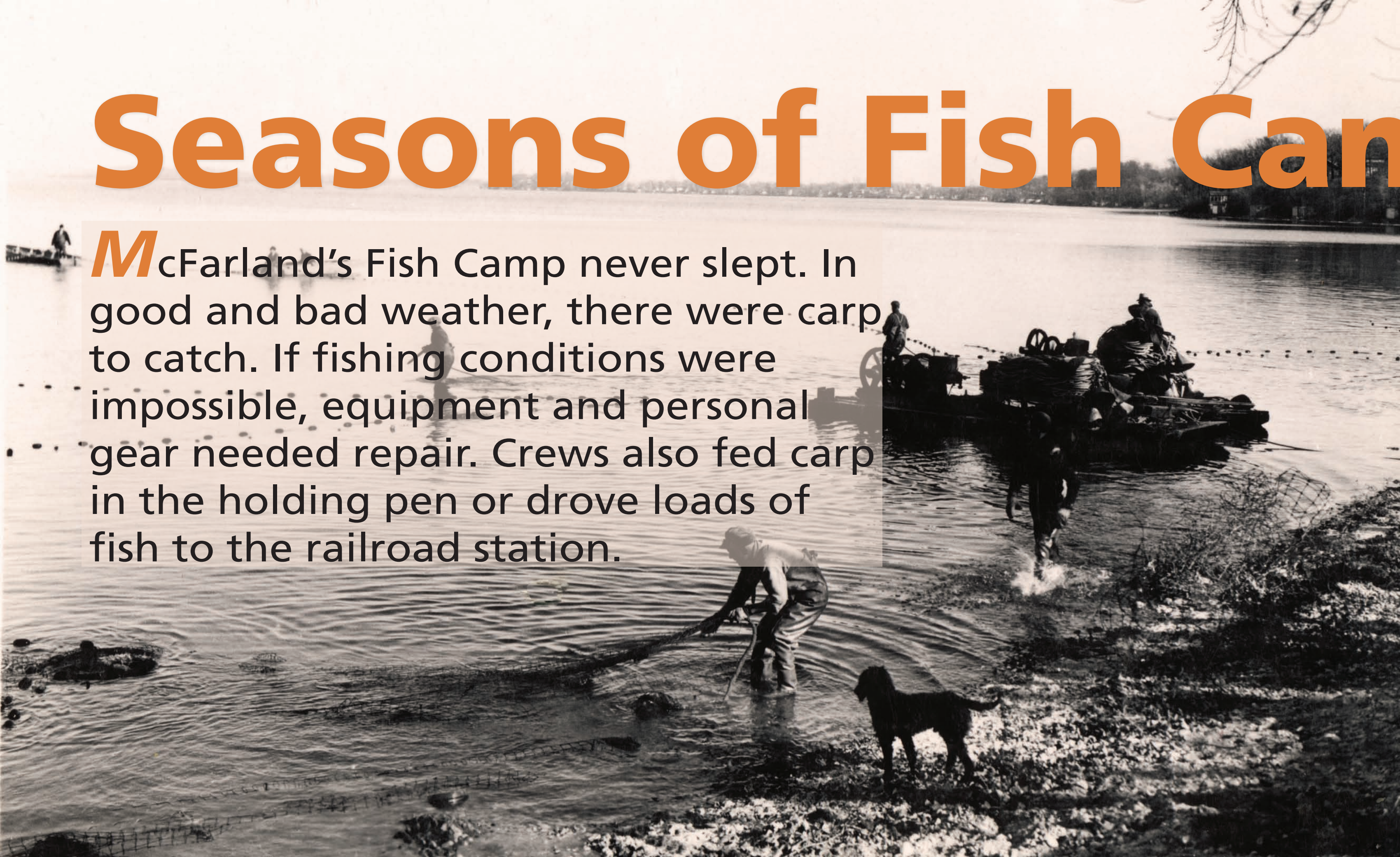


# Seasons of Fish Camp

McFarland's Fish Camp never slept. In good and bad weather, there were carp to catch. If fishing conditions were impossible, equipment and personal gear needed repair. Crews also fed carp in the holding pen or drove loads of fish to the railroad station.



Moving rough fish caught in the seine net (in front) to the crib (background).

Fall was peak seining season, as fish moved into shallows to feed before freeze-up. Single hauls of fish could top 100,000 pounds. When carp schooled together in fall, crews seined them intensively, placing them in holding pens so they could continue fishing.



Cutting a 20-ft. x 30-ft. landing hole for a seine net at Lake Muskego in 1941.

In winter, some Fish Camp crew members left McFarland to catch carp under the ice at lakes such as Winnebago and Koshkonong. Others harvested carp in the Rock, Bark or Crawfish rivers, where fish concentrated in winter. With nets placed upstream and downstream of the school, carp could then be seined.



**SPRING**

Barge and crew leave Fish Camp for a day of seining in 1959.

Soon after lake ice thawed, large numbers of massing carp could be caught in a single haul. But early spring weather was unpredictable. Sometimes the crew returned to camp wet and close to hypothermia.



**SUMMER**

Using an electric fence at Fish Camp's holding pen, August 1938.

Though carp spawned from April to August, summer was not ideal for seining fish. Nets could not be easily pulled through thick plants, and carp were less predictable in warm water. Summer seining caught small, newly hatched fingerlings.

## FISHING CHALLENGE: OPEN WATER vs. ICE

### PROS

- + larger amounts of fish can be harvested
- + in good weather, conditions are ideal

### and CONS

- spring and fall water temperatures are cold
- large lakes are dangerous in wind



All photos courtesy of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

### PROS

- + trucks and winches could be placed on the ice
- + fish easier to catch because schools are less active



### and CONS

- setting and pulling nets under ice is difficult
- takes time to find carp schools through a layer of ice and snow