Philip M. Roedel
1913–1985

Philip M. Roedel died on March 30, 1985, ending a distinguished fisheries career of almost 50 years. Roedel played a significant role in Marine Research Committee (MRC) and CalCOFI affairs, from the organizations’ inception until 1970. He was particularly active and influential in MRC and CalCOFI programs during the late 1950s and the 1960s.

Roedel began his career with California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) at the California State Fisheries Laboratory, Terminal Island, in 1936, after graduating from Stanford University. He received a Master of Science degree from the same institution in 1952. From 1936 to 1954, with time out for Army service during World War II, he was a marine biologist at the Terminal Island Laboratory, where he did significant research on Pacific mackerel and served as editor of California Fish and Game, among other duties.

From 1954 to 1957, Roedel was regional manager of an inland region of CDFG, but returned to Terminal Island in 1957 as regional manager in charge of marine fisheries research and management programs. Roedel served in this capacity for 12½ years and led his unit through a period of great growth and change, earning everyone’s respect for his outstanding work as a scientist and administrator. From 1963 through 1969, Roedel also served as MRC secretary, and for a short period in the mid-1960s was acting CalCOFI Coordinator. Roedel’s detailed minutes of MRC meetings represent a comprehensive history of MRC and CalCOFI affairs during that important period. He was most active in fiscal, policy, and management activities affecting CalCOFI. In July 1969, CDFG appointed him Chief, Marine Resources Branch, with headquarters in Sacramento.

Roedel retired from CDFG in December 1969 to accept appointment as director of the U.S. Bureau of Commercial Fisheries (now National Marine Fisheries Service). In 1973, he was named Coordinator, Marine Recreation Programs, of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and later served as senior fisheries advisor to the U.S. Agency for International Development, a position that took him all around the world. He retired from that position in 1980, but continued to work as a consultant on international fisheries until his death.

John Baxter