



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Secretary of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

October 30, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

I am writing in response to Lieutenant Governor's Eleni Kounalakis letter requesting a determination of a fishery resource disaster for the 2023 Sacramento River Fall Chinook (SRFC) and Klamath River Fall Chinook (KRFC) ocean and inland salmon fisheries.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service evaluated information from the impacted fishery. Upon further review, I have found that the requests for a fishery resource disaster for the 2023 SRFC and KRFC ocean and inland salmon fisheries meet the requirements under the recently enacted Fishery Resource Disasters Improvement Act, which amended section 312(a) and repealed section 315 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA), as well as repealed section 308 of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act.

In order to have a positive determination, there must be a fishery resource disaster from an allowable cause. Due to several factors such as low predicted stock sizes, prolonged and historic drought, severe wildfires, impacts to spawning and rearing habitat, harmful algal blooms, and ocean forage shifts and associated thiamine deficiency and pre-season forecasts, these fisheries experienced an unexpected decline and loss of access from an allowable cause under the MSA. MSA section 312(a) states that revenue losses greater than 80% may result in a positive determination that a fishery resource disaster has occurred based on the information provided or analyzed. The factors above necessitated a fishery closure, causing these fisheries to experience a 100% revenue loss for 2023 compared to the previous 5-year average with no fishery resource disaster determination. Therefore, these fisheries meet the requirements for a positive fishery disaster determination.

This determination now makes these fisheries eligible for fishery disaster assistance. In the near future, the Department of Commerce will allocate disaster assistance for these fisheries. In addition, with this determination, eligible businesses and other tribal entities may be able to access other loan/funding programs through other Federal relief programs (e.g., Small Business Administration loans). Programs within the Department of Commerce (e.g., Economic Development Administration grants) may also be available.

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Page 2

Should you have any questions, please contact Susie Feliz, Assistant Secretary for
Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663 or SFeliz@doc.gov.

Sincerely,



Gina M. Raimondo