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GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

June 8, 2010

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary,

State and federal scientists have met over the past several months to assess West Coast salmon populations and finalize the salmon fishing seasons for 2010 using the most up-to-date biological and fishery data available. For Sacramento River Fall Chinook salmon (SRFC); the number of returning adult spawners did not meet the conservation objective under the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan for 2007, 2008 and 2009. Being the third consecutive year, it will automatically trigger an "overfishing alert" and the Pacific Fishery Management Council has taken actions as required to protect and rebuild the stock.

Based on this information, the Council recommended at its April meeting a continuation of the closure for much of the commercial Chinook salmon fisheries from the Oregon/California border to the United States/Mexico border off California within its jurisdiction that impact SRFC. The 2010 federal and state Fish and Game Commission (FGC) regulations resulted in ocean commercial fishery at 11 percent of normal, ocean recreational fishery at 66 percent of normal and Central Valley river recreational fishery at 17 percent of normal in California when compared to average 2003-07 seasons.

I issued emergency declarations in 2008 and 2009 concerning Chinook salmon. Following each declaration, the Secretary of Commerce granted federal disaster declarations, which allowed access to federal disaster funds. As a result of the restricted seasons, we hereby request that you declare a continuation of the fishery resource disaster under Section 308(d) of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986, and a commercial fishery failure under section 312a of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (MSA), as declared in 2008 and 2009.

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As you know, declaring a continued commercial fishery failure under the MSA will enable the fishing communities affected by any closure or restrictions to receive vital economic assistance. The communities supporting these fisheries continue to see the severe economic hardship they have suffered since 2006 in response to the low abundance of Klamath River Fall Chinook salmon, and in 2008 and 2009 in response to critically low abundance of SRFC. Clearly, economic assistance will again be critical for the well-being of our fishing communities and states.

Salmon is a vital component of California's natural resources and provide significant aesthetic, recreational, commercial and economic benefits to our states. Salmon is also highly valued for cultural, subsistence and economic reasons by Native American tribes. While economic assistance will be essential to address the short-term impacts associated with closures or restrictions on our salmon fisheries, we will also continue our efforts to recover and restore salmon populations and develop management strategies to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of our salmon fisheries.

We greatly appreciate your anticipated support and leadership on this critical issue and look forward to a favorable reply.

Sincerely,



Arnold Schwarzenegger

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