



OS EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

October 26, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for your declaration in 2008 of a 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). I appreciate that you extended those declarations for 2009 in Oregon as well. I am now writing to request that the declarations be further continued for 2010 for the area south of Cape Falcon in Oregon.

Following communication with the Oregon Salmon Commission and commercial salmon fishermen, it has become clear to me that this year warrants these declarations as in the past two years. Once again, the low numbers of fall Chinook salmon returning to the Sacramento River and the subsequent reduction in commercial fishery revenues caused economic strife for Oregon's coastal communities.

Your granting of Governor Schwarzenegger's request for an extension for 2010 was very helpful for California's salmon fleet and should be applauded. Though fishermen in Oregon had access to the water this season, the low abundance of salmon in the ocean led to poor landings for most who ventured out. Many fishermen did not fish at all because the costs of gear, boat maintenance and fuel greatly exceeded what they would have made fishing. In 2010, the Oregon fleet landed only 26,300 Chinook salmon totaling 342,300 pounds along our coast south of Cape Falcon through the end of August. The Oregon Salmon Commission pointed out to me that "when comparing the 2010 season with the past 20 years...only three other years landed fewer pounds of salmon than 2010: 1994, 2008 and 2009." And, as you are aware, 2008 and 2009 were years in which all federal waters south of Cape Falcon were closed to salmon fishing.

Specifically there have been four years where a disaster declaration has been made for the Oregon commercial troll salmon fishery: 1994, 2006, 2008, and 2009. These were all years of low Chinook abundance in the area south of Cape Falcon. In 1994 the Oregon commercial troll

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fishery, south of Cape Falcon landed 25,300 Chinook totaling 286,600 pounds; in 2006, 24,480 Chinook totaling 358,800 pounds; in 2008, 520 Chinook totaling 9,100 pounds; and in 2009, 430 Chinook totaling 6,400 pounds. The ex-vessel receipts for all salmon trollers with Chinook landed in the ports south of Cape Falcon for these years totaled \$689,000 in 1994; \$2,025,800 in 2006; \$194,000 in 2008; \$46,900 in 2009; and \$1,907,200 through August in 2010.

Salmon are a vital component of Oregon's natural resources and provide significant aesthetic, recreational, commercial, and economic benefits. Oregon will continue to work with you to recover and restore salmon populations and develop management strategies to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of salmon fisheries on the West Coast.

However, in the meantime, the situation exists whereby I must urge you to declare a commercial fishery failure which, under the MSA, will enable the fishing communities affected by any closure or restrictions to receive vital assistance. Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue and I look forward to a favorable reply.

Sincerely,



THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor of Oregon

TRK:JK:sd
cc: Congressional-Delegation