



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

April 8, 2024

The Honorable Mike Dunleavy
Governor of Alaska
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Dunleavy:

Thank you for your letter requesting a determination of a fishery resource disaster for the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet Setnet Sockeye salmon fishery.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) evaluated information from the impacted fishery. Upon review, I have found that the requests for a fishery resource disaster for the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet Setnet Sockeye salmon fishery meets the requirements under the recently enacted Fishery Resource Disasters Improvement Act, which amended section 312(a) the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA).

In order to have a positive determination, there must be a fishery resource disaster from an allowable cause. Due to several factors such as unfavorable ocean conditions and prolonged marine heatwaves, this fishery experienced an unexpected biomass decline and loss of access under the MSA. The factors above caused the 2021 and 2022 fishery to experience a 63-percent and 91-percent revenue loss, respectively, compared to the previous 5-year average with no fishery resource disaster determination. As revenue losses for the year 2021 were less than 80 percent, NMFS analyzed the information on the fishery and given the inability to offset losses from other fisheries, determined the impact was severe. Therefore, this fishery meets the requirements for a positive fishery disaster determination.

This determination now makes this fishery eligible for fishery disaster assistance. In the near future, the Department of Commerce will allocate disaster assistance for these fisheries. In addition, 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 (e.g., Economic Development Administration grants) may also be available.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gina Raimondo".

Gina M. Raimondo