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Governor Mike Dunleavy
 STATE OF ALASKA

May 23, 2024

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
 Secretary
 United States Department of Commerce
 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20230

OS EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
 2024 JUN -5 AM 10:15

Dear Secretary Raimondo,

In accordance with Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), I am writing to request a fishery resource disaster determination for the 2023 North Alaska Peninsula drift gillnet salmon fishery.

In 2023, the North Alaska Peninsula salmon fisheries harvested 1.15 million sockeye salmon, which was below both the projected harvest of 2.4 million fish and the 10-year average of 2.6 million fish. Sockeye salmon harvests were particularly low for the drift gillnet fishery in areas where sockeye salmon from the Bristol Bay management area are typically encountered and comprise a large portion of the total catch. Preliminary data estimates the value of the 2023 drift gillnet fishery at \$7.8 million, 62 percent below the recent five-year average of \$20.3 million. In 2023, there was an unexpected large decrease in the harvest of sockeye salmon in the North Alaska Peninsula drift gillnet fishery. Further analysis indicated this decrease occurred even though fishing effort and the number of sockeye salmon returning to most river systems in the area were within the range of management targets and allowed for a normal schedule of commercial fishing opportunities. Therefore, the large decrease in fishery harvest was due to natural or undetermined causes.

Over half of the 136 drift gillnet participants in recent years have a registered address in Alaska and twenty participants have addresses in a community within the Alaska Peninsula region including Nelson Lagoon, King Cove, Sand Point, and Unalaska. Residents of these Alaska Peninsula communities have limited employment opportunities compared to urban locations both within and outside Alaska. Drift gillnet permit holders with addresses in an Alaska Peninsula community harvested approximately 262,500 sockeye salmon in 2023, which is 80 percent below the recent five-year average harvest of 1.3 million fish. For these participants, 2023 fishery losses were severe and resulted in adverse impacts.

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Based on available information in the attached memo, the 2023 North Alaska Peninsula drift gillnet salmon fishery meets the criteria for a fishery disaster determination. I appreciate your consideration of this request and have asked the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to provide the National Marine Fisheries Service and your office with any additional information needed to make fishery disaster determinations.

Sincerely,



Mike Dunleavy

Governor

cc: The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, United States Senate
The Honorable Dan Sullivan, United States Senate
The Honorable Mary Peltola, United States House of Representatives
The Honorable Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game