

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001
907-465-3500



550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1700
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-269-7450

Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

January 28, 2025

The Honorable Jeremy Pelter
Acting Secretary
United States Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Acting Secretary Pelter:

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 2024 Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon and South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon fisheries.

In 2024, there was an unexpected large decrease in the harvest of sockeye salmon in all but one section of the Alaska Peninsula salmon fishery and in the harvest of pink salmon in the South Alaska Peninsula salmon fishery. Preliminary data estimates the value of the 2024 Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon fishery, excluding the Black Hills/Nelson Lagoon Section, at \$11.97 million which is 66 percent below the recent five even-year average of \$34.73 million. The 2024 Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon harvests were the second lowest in ten years. The preliminary value of the 2024 South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon fishery is estimated at \$1.12 million, which is 62 percent below the recent five even-year average of \$2.94 million. Declines in the 2024 South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon runs were similar to pink salmon declines that occurred in other regions of the Gulf of Alaska. The cause of the 2024 Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon and South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon fishery disaster may be due to natural causes that have been associated with temperature changes in marine ecosystems and competition in the ocean, similar to findings for other recent salmon fishery resource disasters that occurred for pink salmon in the Gulf of Alaska in 2016 and for sockeye salmon in the adjacent Chignik Management Area in 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The decline in pink and sockeye salmon run abundance may also be due to an undetermined cause.

A majority of the 440 permit holders in these sockeye and pink salmon fisheries live in remote Alaska communities and rely on the fisheries for a large portion of their annual income. Salmon fuels the economies of the Alaskan Peninsula communities and the loss of revenue due to the poor 2024 season has been severe for these fishermen. Residents and businesses of Alaska Peninsula communities are heavily reliant on commercial salmon fisheries to provide household

Acting Secretary Jeremy Pelter

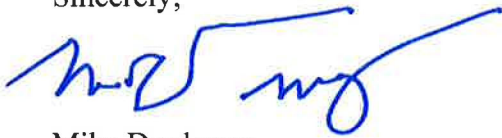
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income as opportunities for other sources of income are extremely limited. This loss of income is particularly devastating given the rising costs of food, fuel, and other essentials that have already strained household budgets. As noted in the fishery disaster request letter from the Aleutians East Borough, fishery taxes are the primary revenue stream for communities with shore-based processors and dramatic declines in salmon harvests result in reduced services, further compounding the financial challenges within these communities.

Based on available information in the attached memo, the 2024 Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon, excluding the Black Hills/Nelson Lagoon Section, and South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon fisheries meet 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

Enclosure

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