

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 17, 2023

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: State of Oregon Federal Fishery Disaster Request

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

We write to urge you to quickly approve Governor Kotek's request for expedited declaration of a fishery resource disaster under section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, for the State of Oregon's 2023 ocean commercial salmon fisheries.

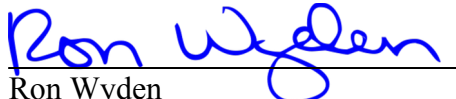
The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) has recommended fisheries affecting Klamath and Sacramento stocks be severely constrained or closed in 2023 to maximize adult salmon returns. Consequently, the National Marine Fisheries Service is expected to close all commercial ocean fisheries for Chinook Salmon from Cape Falcon (on the north Oregon coast) to the California border through August of 2023.

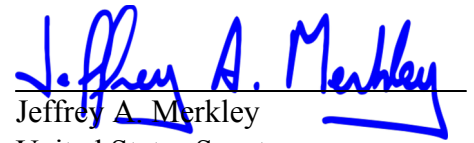
There continue to be devastating declines in economic activity for Pacific commercial salmon fisheries. The five-year average south of Cape Falcon Oregon commercial ex-vessel value (nominal, not adjusted for inflation) of Chinook and coho salmon during 2018-2022 was \$2.3 million. Based on the total closure through August 2023 and the limited fall openings, Oregon's Department of Fish and Wildlife currently projects the ex-vessel value for 2023 will be about \$420,000. This is an 82% reduction in value from the recent five-year average. A commercial fishery failure declaration is vital to deliver Federal aid that is urgently needed to mitigate these ongoing negative impacts and provide support to economically distressed communities.

The value of salmon to Oregon cannot be overstated. In addition to the economic activity generated by this industry, salmon are an important part of the cultural heritage of Pacific Northwest tribes and are a treasured natural resource across the state. However, the challenging impacts of climate change, increased drought, changing ocean conditions, and critical habitat loss complicate the recovery of salmon populations along the Pacific Coast. Federal support for this industry is critical while local, state, and federal partners continue work on long-term solutions.

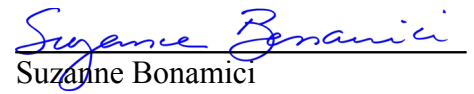
Thank you for your prompt attention to Governor Kotek's request for a fishery disaster declaration. We look forward to your response and our offices stand ready to assist in any way.

Sincerely,

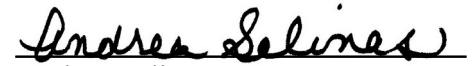

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

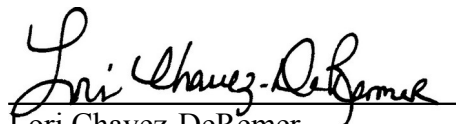

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator


Earl Blumenauer
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Lori Chavez-DeRemer
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