



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

September 24, 2018

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of California
Sacramento, CA 96814

Dear Governor Brown:

Thank you for your letter requesting a determination of a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster and catastrophic regional fishery disaster. Your request relates to the impacts to the 2016 and 2017 ocean troll Klamath River fall Chinook salmon fisheries in California as a result of prolonged drought and poor ocean conditions beyond the control of fishery managers that reduced biomass and access to the fishery in 2016 and 2017.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) evaluated information from the State of California and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to assess whether a commercial fishery failure occurred due to a fisheries resource disaster, as well as whether a catastrophic regional fishery disaster occurred. After reviewing the information, I have found that the request for a catastrophic regional fishery disaster does not meet the requirements under Section 315 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). However, I have found that the request for a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster for the 2016 and 2017 ocean troll Klamath River fall Chinook salmon fisheries meets the requirements under Section 312(a) of the MSA and Sections 308(b) and 308(d) of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act.

This determination now makes these fisheries eligible for NMFS fishery disaster assistance. The 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act, P.L. 115-141, provided \$20 million in NMFS fishery disaster assistance. This determination will also make Small Business Administration loans available to eligible businesses. The Department of Commerce will determine appropriate allocation of funds to eligible fishery disasters and associated requirements for these funds.

If you have any further questions, please contact Michael Platt, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,

Wilbur Ross