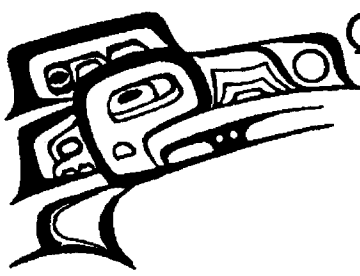
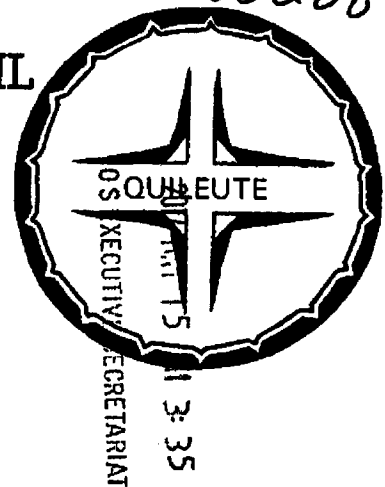


17-055200



QUILEUTE TRIBAL COUNCIL

POST OFFICE BOX 279
LA PUSH, WASHINGTON 98350-0279
TELEPHONE (360) 374-6163
FAX (360) 374-6311



May 4, 2017

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary, U.S Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Ross;

I am writing to you in my capacity as an elected official of the "affected fishing community", the Quileute Tribe, a sovereign treaty tribe located in the village of La Push, in the state of Washington. The Quileute Tribe manages both freshwater and marine fisheries, under the Treaty of Olympia with the United States. Our community is a small, rural community located on the Pacific Coast in Clallam County. Since time immemorial, our ability to conduct commercial, ceremonial and subsistence fisheries has been and continues to be the very fabric that holds our community together, culturally and economically. In 2015 our community faced a natural resource crisis when our returning fall wild Coho was unsuccessful from what we believe to be changing ocean conditions. This letter is our formal request that Department of Commerce declare a fishery resource economic disaster under Section 308 (d) of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986 (U.S.C. § 4107 (d)), and a commercial fishery failure under Section 312(a) of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. §1861 a (a)) for our **2015 fall Coho treaty fishery**.

In the fall 2015 treaty Coho fishery our target escapement was calculated to be 6,481 fish however, only 2,543 fish made it to the spawning grounds according to our surveys. The resource cost of escapement not being achieved will only be known in the future, but represents a significant impact to the wild Coho population.

Unlike state (non-treaty) fishers, Quileute tribal fisherman are limited geographically by their treaty as to where they may fish. Under the treaty our fisherman cannot leave their treaty area to harvest fish on more robust populations. Instead our fishery management structure implements measures necessary to protect the fish populations in our treaty area, such as the reduction of effort described above. As the result of this experience Quileute Tribal Council and our staff is now compiling information around whether this is a cycle of nature, an indication of changing ocean conditions such as ocean acidification, or a new norm. If this is becoming a new norm then we likely need to explore what this means from a natural resource management perspective (need for improved resource management information) and a community perspective such as the development of economic alternatives (job creation and training).

Rural communities such as La Push have few alternative economic opportunities: Government Services remains the primary source of income followed by the Fishing Industry and Tribal Enterprises.

Quileute Tribal Council considers the estimated of impact of \$436,000.00 as significant and we look forward to discussing the particulars with you and your staff further. Your finding that a disaster should be declared for these fisheries will greatly assist our ability to develop a wild Coho population recovery strategy from this event as well as provide for some planning into the future. We are seeking compensation for the development of fishery management strategies to protect the resource and prevent further loss (in as far as possible), in the future. We will appreciate your earliest possible formal action on our request.

Quileute Tribal Fisheries-Quillayute River System 11 year average landings (pounds):

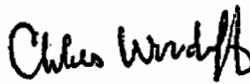
Species	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
coho	778276	143436	106182	213906	392684	344338	240092	108203	120425	299859	49454

Quileute Tribal Fishery-Estimated economic loss using 10 year price average:

2015	10 year	% of ave	Difference	Price	Loss
	274,740	0.180003	225,286	\$1.94	\$436,200.10

If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at (360) 374-6163 or chas.woodruff@quileutetribe.com or have a member of your staff contact our Natural Resources Deputy Director, Frank Geyer, at (360) 374-2027, frank.geyer@quileutetribe.com.

Sincerely,


 Charles Woodruff, Chairman
 Quileute Tribal Council

Cc: The Honorable Patty Murray, US Senator
 The Honorable Maria Cantwell, US Senator
 The Honorable Derek Kilmer, US Congressman