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HOOPA VALLEY TRIBAL COUNCIL
Hoopa Valley Tribe
Post Office Box 1348 Hoopa, California 95546
PH (530) 625-4211 • FX (530) 625-4594
www.hoopa-nsn.gov



Chairman Ryan Jackson

March 13, 2017

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

Re: 2016 and 2017 Salmon Disaster Relief – Northern California

Dear Secretary Ross:

The Hoopa Valley Tribe (Tribe) of Northern California is requesting recognition as an affected fishery in the fishery disaster declared by the Department of Commerce relative to 2016 west coast salmon fisheries. Additionally, we seek the same consideration relative to 2017 salmon fisheries which are anticipated to result in an even greater hardship upon our Tribal membership. Further, the Tribe was deemed an 'affected fishery' in 2006 fishery disaster and a recipient of federal funds to mitigate for the federal disaster declaration.

The Tribe holds a reserved right to the Klamath fishery shared with the Yurok Tribe. Our Tribe is located on its ancestral territory situated along the lower 12 miles of the Trinity River above confluence with Klamath River some 42 miles upstream from the Pacific Ocean. We have been active participants in the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) since its creation under the Magnuson Act in 1976.

As you are aware many tribal and non-tribal fishery sectors have appealed to the Department of Commerce for consideration for disaster relief for the fishery failure in 2016. Notably, the Tribe's harvest of only 720 adult fall Chinook in 2016 is the lowest we've experienced since enactment of the Magnuson Act and is less than 20% of our harvest in 2006. While the 2006 season was a measured disaster within our fishery, it pales in comparison to the realized fishery of 2016 and the anticipated hardship our membership shall face in fall of 2017. In relative terms, the 2016 stock size was 88% of the stock size estimated in 2006 and the predicted 2017 stock size is only 33% of the 2006 stock size. Hence, in 2017, the PFMC is projecting substantial reductions in west coast fisheries over 2016 in response to a record low projection of Klamath River fall Chinook.

The Tribe recognizes that under MSA Sections 312(a) and 315, the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) may provide disaster assistance for assessing the economic and social effects of a commercial fishery failure, for activities to restore the fishery or prevent a similar failure in the

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future, and for assisting fishing communities.

In recent years the Tribe has not chosen to prosecute a commercial fishery on Klamath River fall Chinook on account of a prioritized need to simply meet ceremonial and subsistence needs.

Accordingly, we are making this formal request that the Tribe be recognized in the declaration by the Commerce Department of a fishery failure in the 2016 salmon fisheries and that the same consideration be extended to the Tribe should Commerce declare yet another fishery disaster in the upcoming 2017 west coast salmon directed fisheries.

Sincerely,



Ryan Jackson
Chairman

CC: Congressman Jared Huffman
Steve Freese, NMFS, Sustainable Fisheries Division