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NEWS RELEASE
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U.S. Secretary of Commerce Declares Commercial Fishery Disasters for West Coast Salmon and Sardines

Today, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross announced that commercial fishery failures occurred between 2015 and 2017 for salmon fisheries in Washington, Oregon, and California, in addition to the sardine fishery in California.

“The Department of Commerce and NOAA stand ready to assist fishing towns and cities along the West Coast as they recover,” said Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross. “After years of hardship, the Department looks forward to providing economic relief that will allow the fisheries and the communities they help support to rebound.”

Between July 2016 and March 2018, multiple tribes and governors from Washington, Oregon, and California requested fishery disaster determinations. The Secretary, working with NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), evaluated each request based on the available data, and found that all but one (the California red sea urchin fishery) met the requirements for a fishery disaster determination.

The determinations for West Coast salmon and sardines now make these fisheries eligible for NOAA Fisheries fishery disaster assistance. The 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act provided \$20 million in NOAA Fisheries fishery disaster assistance. The Department of Commerce is determining the appropriate allocations of these funds to eligible fisheries.