



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

February 10, 2021

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

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

Under the provisions of Section 312 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and Section 308 of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act, I respectfully request that you declare commercial fishery failures for 2020 in Washington State. This request is based upon failure of Chinook, coho, sockeye, and chum salmon returns to waters of Washington State in 2020 due to natural causes.

Non-tribal ocean catch quotas for Chinook and coho salmon were the second lowest of the last 10 years due to low expected returns in 2020, while COVID-related port closures and restrictions put in place to protect coastal and tribal communities resulted in additional challenges for commercial and charter fisheries. The ocean salmon troll fishery and the coastal charter fleet were heavily impacted by these conditions, resulting in revenue losses of 50 percent based on preliminary data.

- For the ocean salmon troll fishery, the total ex-vessel value was \$1,118,000, which is 46 percent of the average from the previous five years.
- For the ocean charter fleet, total angler trips were just 51 percent of the average from the recent five years.
- The two species that support most of the non-tribal commercial salmon fishery in Puget Sound, chum and sockeye salmon, returned in low numbers in 2020. There was no commercial fishery for Fraser River sockeye, or for South Puget Sound chum salmon. Other chum fisheries were limited in duration and in catch.
- Preliminary fish ticket data show that the ex-vessel value of salmon catch in the non-tribal Puget Sound commercial salmon fishery was around 1,168,000, down 77 percent from most recent 5-year average of \$5,036,000.

The Honorable Gina Raimando

February 10, 2021

Page 2

I am requesting that you declare commercial fishery failures for 2020 due to a fishery resource disaster under section 308(b) of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986 and section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act for the non-treaty ocean salmon troll, ocean salmon charter, and Puget Sound commercial salmon fisheries. Declaring a fishery resource disaster will enable the businesses throughout the region affected by poor salmon returns and reduced fishing opportunity to receive vital economic assistance.

For more information or questions on Washington's 2020 fisheries, please contact Ron Warren with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife at (360) 902-2799 or JT Austin with the Governor's Office at (360) 628-7440.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of this request.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "I".

Jay Inslee
Governor