



**PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE**  
31912 Little Boston Rd. NE – Kingston, WA 98346

**April 3, 2023**

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo  
Secretary of Commerce  
United States Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

SUBJECT: 2021 Puget Sound Coho and Fall Chum Fishery Disasters for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe

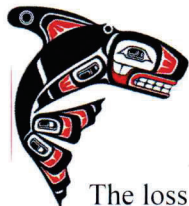
Dear Secretary Raimondo,

I, formally request the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe be included in the economic fishery disaster, pursuant to Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation and Management Act (Act). Inclusion in the disaster relief will provide assistance to Port Gamble S'Klallam tribal fishers who were adversely impacted by the low 2021 Puget Sound Coho and Fall Chum returns. The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe experienced a 36% loss during the 2021 Puget Sound Coho fishery and a 30% loss of income during the 2021 Puget Sound Fall Chum fishery. The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe appreciates your disaster declaration for these fisheries. Prompt efforts by your Department are critical in helping our fishermen get the disaster relief funds and assistance they are entitled to in a timely manner.

The 2021 Puget Sound Coho fishery resulted in a 36% loss of income for the Port Gamble S'Klallam tribal fishing community. It is estimated that the PGST fleet lost just over \$52,000 as a result of the low coho returns. The net income for the 2021 Port Gamble S'Klallam tribal coho fishery was just over \$94,000, while the 5 year average (2016-2020) average is \$149,000. The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's fishing fleet on average harvested around 73,000 pounds of Puget Sound Coho annually, whereas in 2021 only 39,641 pounds were harvested.

The 2021 Puget Sound Chum fishery resulted in a 30% loss of income for the Port Gamble S'Klallam tribal fishing community. It is estimated that the PGST fleet lost just over \$62,000 as a result of the low chum returns. The net income for the 2021 Port Gamble S'Klallam tribal chum fishery was just over \$144,000, while the 5-year average (2016-2020) was \$207,000. The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's fishing fleet on average harvested around 242,000 pounds of Puget Sound Fall Chum annually, whereas in 2021 only 118,513 pounds were harvested. This results in an overall harvest of greater than 50% fewer pounds of chum.

These numbers do not reflect the additional cost for boat operations or gear purchase/maintenance during this period.



**PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**  
31912 Little Boston Rd. NE – Kingston, WA 98346

The loss of these fisheries has had negative impacts to our traditional way of life, cultural, spiritual and traditional ties to the coho and chum salmon. These negative impacts are irreversible. The financial impact our commercial fishermen have endured is equally important and threatens their ability to harvest a reasonable quantity of fish sufficient to ensure a modest living.

The importance of subsistence, ceremonial and commercial fisheries is an integral part of the way of life for Port Gamble S'Klallam tribal members. The 1974 federal court decision in *United States v. Washington* affirmed that the Stevens Treaty Tribes held a treaty right to half of the harvestable salmon and established these tribes as co-managers of Washington state fisheries. As a sovereign nation and federally recognized tribe, the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe has the right to request and receive disaster assistance as administered under your office and Congress may appropriate these funds. With no sockeye salmon to harvest, no sockeye fish for families, limited chum harvest and extremely reduced income for fishing families, the Port Gamble S'Klallam fishing community is in despair and in need of expedited financial assistance and relief.

If you have any questions, please contact: Jeromy Sullivan, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe Chairman 360-297-6342 or [jeromys@pgst.nsn.us](mailto:jeromys@pgst.nsn.us).

Sincerely,

Jeromy Sullivan, Chairman  
Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe

CC: The Honorable Patty Murray, US Senator  
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, US Senator  
The Honorable Suzan DelBene, Congresswoman