



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Secretary of Commerce  
Washington, D.C. 20230

April 8, 2024

The Honorable Mike Dunleavy  
Governor of Alaska  
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Dunleavy:

Thank you for your letter requesting a determination of a fishery resource disaster for the 2022 Nelson Lagoon salmon fishery in Alaska.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) evaluated information submitted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to assess whether a fishery resource disaster occurred. Upon review, I have found that the request for a fishery resource disaster for the 2022 Nelson Lagoon in Alaska does not meet the requirements under the recently enacted Fishery Resource Disasters Improvement Act, which amended section 312(a) the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

In order to have a positive determination, there must be a fishery resource disaster from an allowable cause. The fishery experienced "a sudden, unexpected, large decrease in fish stock biomass that resulted in a significant loss of access to the fishery resource" however, the declines in the fishery are part of recurrent cyclical variations in sockeye salmon abundance. Therefore, the request does not meet one of the criteria for a positive fishery resource disaster determination.

While Alaska's 2022 Nelson Lagoon salmon fishery does not meet the specific requirements for a fishery resource disaster determination, NMFS recognizes there are many dynamic shifts occurring in Alaska, and these shifts present significant challenges to Alaska's fishing communities.

NMFS would welcome the opportunity to discuss these emerging challenges and opportunities further with you. Should you have any questions, please contact Susie Feliz, Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663 or [SFeliz@doc.gov](mailto:SFeliz@doc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gina Raimondo".

Gina M. Raimondo