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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

April 2, 2021

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
United States Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

We write to urge the Department of Commerce to declare federal economic fishery disasters for salmon fisheries in Washington State under Section 312 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. §1861a) and Section 308 of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act (16 U.S.C. 4101 et seq). Salmon fisheries are essential for the economy, culture, and way of life of many coastal and Tribal communities in Washington state. Tribal subsistence and commercial fishers have observed significant declines in salmon runs, leading to massive income losses. For example, the Muckleshoot Tribe's Green River coho and chum harvest was 82.7% and 89.1% below normal in 2019 while the Tribe's Green River pink harvest was 98.7% below normal. The Lummi Nation fishing community lost approximately \$9.1 million in commercial fishing revenue from sockeye, pink, coho, and chum fisheries. Coastal and Puget Sound non-treaty fisheries have also experienced significant losses at a decrease of 46 percent and 77 percent respectively.

In addition to the economic losses, fishery disasters have devastating impacts on Tribal traditional way of life from a cultural and ceremonial perspective. Tribes have been fishing the coastal waters of Washington State and have relied on sustainable salmon fisheries since time immemorial.

Given the vast impact of these fishery disasters on communities across Washington State, we request an expedited review of the following requests, which are currently before the Department of Commerce:

- 2020 Fraser River Sockeye and Puget Sound Fall Chum Fisheries. Requested on February 24, 2021, by Jeromy Sullivan, Chairman, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe.
- 2020 Washington Non-treaty Ocean Salmon Troll, Ocean Salmon Charter and Puget Sound Commercial Salmon Fisheries. Requested on February 10, 2021 by Governor Jay Inslee.

- 2014 and 2019 Washington Fraser River Sockeye and Puget Sound Chum, and Coho Salmon Fishery. Requested on January 28, 2020, and September 15, 2020, by Jeromy Sullivan, Chairman, Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe.
- 2019 Washington Puget Sound Fall Chum Salmon Fishery. Requested on June 1, 2020, by Arnold Cooper, Chairman, Squaxin Island Tribe.
- 2019 Washington Green River Chinook, Chum, Coho, and Pink Salmon Fishery. Requested on May 14, 2020, by Jaison Elkins, Chairperson, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe.
- 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019 Washington Fraser River Sockeye, Chum, Coho, and Pink Salmon Fishery. Requested on March 5, 2020, and June 9, 2020, by Lawrence Solomon, Chairman, Lummi Nation.
- 2019 Washington Fraser River & Skagit River Salmon Fisheries. Requested on January 23, 2020, and December 31, 2019, by Brian Cladoosby, Chairman, Swinomish Indian Community; Teri Gobin, Chair, Tulalip Tribes; Jennifer Washington, Chair, Upper Skagit Indian Tribe.
- 2019 Washington Chehalis River Spring Chinook Salmon Fishery. Requested on August 2, 2019, by Harry Pickernell, Sr., Chairman, Confederate Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation.
- 2018 Washington Puget Sound Coho Salmon Fishery. Requested on July 1, 2019, by Jeremy Sullivan, Chairman, Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe.

Fisheries are economic drivers throughout the Pacific Northwest. Prompt action by the Department of Commerce is a critical step needed to secure financial relief for these communities. We appreciate your full and fair consideration of these requests.

Thank you for your consideration.

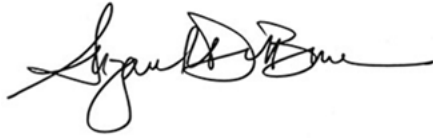
Sincerely,

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Patty Murray
United States Senator

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress