



North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Simon Kinneen, Chair | David Witherell, Executive Director
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November 5, 2021

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230
via email: TheSec@doc.gov

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

At the most recent meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), the Council received a tremendous amount of public testimony on the impacts of low salmon runs in recent years (particularly in 2021) to the people living in western Alaska communities, and the critical importance of salmon resources for food security as well as traditional and cultural purposes. This has been a concern for many years and has become even more pressing in 2021.

We are observing dramatic environmental changes affecting ecosystem productivity in the North Pacific, in particular the northern and eastern Bering Sea. Salmon species are being broadly impacted in multiple regions by these changes.

Given their importance to western Alaska communities' subsistence needs, and the critical need to increase our understanding of the climate-related drivers that are reducing productivity of salmon across many salmon species and areas, the Council respectfully reiterates and supports recent requests for increased and dedicated funding for salmon research, observation, and monitoring in the North Pacific. This includes continued research on the lifecycle of salmon species in the freshwater, nearshore, and marine environments, and the effects that environmental changes are having on salmon throughout their lifecycle.

Additional research by state and federal agencies, and Alaska tribes and organizations, would contribute to the best scientific information available to inform management decisions in Federal fisheries. Our request is that this funding be in addition to the existing NOAA Fisheries budget, and not a reprioritization of NOAA Fisheries funding to support this work.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to expand this critical research.

Sincerely,

Simon Kinneen
Chair, North Pacific Fishery Management Council

cc: Dr. Bob Foy, Director, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, NOAA Fisheries
Ms. Janet Coit, Assistant Administrator, NOAA Fisheries