



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

September 2, 2010

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

Thank you for your letter requesting a continuation of a disaster determination under the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act of 1986 (IFA) and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (MSA).

I have continued in 2010 the determination of a fishery resource disaster under Section 308(d) of the IFA and a commercial fishery failure under Section 312(a) of the MSA, due to low returns of Sacramento River fall run Chinook. The disaster was initially declared on April 30, 2008, and again on April 30, 2009.

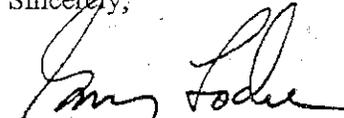
The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) carefully analyzed the West Coast salmon fisheries data and implemented the Pacific Fishery Management Council's recommendations for a very constrained 2010 commercial fishing season off the coast of California. The 2009 adult escapement of Sacramento River fall run Chinook represents the lowest escapement on record, even in the absence of nearly all ocean Chinook fishery activity during both 2008 and 2009, which will have substantial economic impacts for the region. Ex-vessel values for California commercial fisheries are projected to decline 81 percent, compared with the 2003-2005 average.

In March 2009, NMFS released a report on the causes of the collapse of Sacramento River fall run Chinook in 2007 and 2008. The report concluded that unfavorable ocean conditions in 2005 and 2006 led to poor survival of the 2004 and 2005 broods of Sacramento River fall run Chinook. The report also concluded that degradation of freshwater and estuarine habitat, along with subsequent reliance on hatchery production, also were likely contributors to the collapse of the stock. We would like to work with the State of California and our other partners in the region on habitat and hatchery issues that may be contributing to the challenging fishery management problems related to the Sacramento River system.

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I appreciate your concern for the fishing communities in your State and your interest in recovery and restoration of salmon along the West Coast. If you have any additional questions, please contact April Boyd, Assistant Secretary of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,



Gary Locke