

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 23, 2021

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo,

We write to request expeditious consideration of multiple fishery disaster declaration requests that have been forwarded to you by the State of Alaska, including:

- 2021 Yukon River salmon fisheries;
- 2020 Norton Sound, Yukon River, Kuskokwim River, Chignik, Upper Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound, and Southeast Alaska salmon fisheries;
- 2018 and 2020 Copper River salmon fisheries;
- 2018 Upper Cook Inlet East Side Setnet salmon fishery;
- 2020 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod fishery; and
- 2019/2020 Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery

Over the last few years, Alaska has experienced significant fishery challenges and multiple fisheries and regions were identified as meeting the eligibility criteria required for federal fisheries disaster relief funding consideration. Unfortunately, some of these regions continued to experience disastrous stock declines in 2021, which has exacerbated already struggling fishing permit holders, crew, processors, communities, and subsistence users who rely on these fisheries to sustain them.

In particular, in 2021, both subsistence and commercial king and chum salmon fisheries were closed on the Yukon River, leading to extreme hardship for those that rely on the river for sustenance.

Declaring a fishery disaster will allow Congress to appropriate federal relief funds to alleviate the harm to these fisheries and the fishing industry. Appropriated disaster assistance funds may be used in numerous different ways, all of which could aid in mitigating the impacts of these fishery disasters. We believe that it is imperative for aid to be quickly identified and implemented for maximum impact, particularly for those impacted by poor salmon returns in rural regions of Alaska, such as the Yukon River.

These commercial fishery failures meet the criteria for fishery disaster determinations. We urge you to review these requests quickly, and for you to provide us with an update regarding your determination as soon as possible. Thank you for the opportunity to bring this issue to your attention and thank you for your consideration.

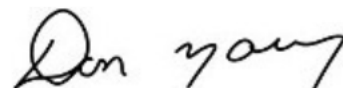
Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Don Young
Congressman for All Alaska