

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 1, 2005

Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Ave., NW
Room 5516
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Commercial Fishery Failure Investigation for 2005 California and Oregon Salmon Fisheries

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

We write to express our concerns regarding NOAA Fisheries' investigation of a commercial fishery failure for salmon stocks in the Klamath Region of Oregon and California. As a result of depleted salmon runs, and in response to grievances from those involved in the West Coast salmon fishery, NOAA Fisheries initiated an investigation of whether a commercial fishery failure should be declared for the Klamath Management Zone.

Over the past several months, several Congressional offices have directly contacted NOAA Fisheries and the Department of Commerce requesting information regarding the investigation. Should a commercial fishery failure be declared, time will be necessary to confer with House and Senate colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to try to secure federal appropriations for disaster relief. Consequently, any delay in your agency's response will hinder our ability to seek federal assistance for our fishing communities.

In light of these concerns, we ask that you, or your designee, address the progress of the Klamath salmon fishery assessment by NOAA Fisheries in the context of the salmon season in the Pacific Northwest and brief us on your agency's decision, including the assessment of the socioeconomic ramifications of the failed salmon fishing season on our coastal constituencies by Wednesday, July 13, 2005.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this issue and we look forward to a full and detailed report.

Sincerely,


RON WYDEN
U.S. Senate


BARBARA BOXER
U.S. Senate


DIANNE FEINSTEIN
U.S. Senate


MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress

Secretary Gutierrez

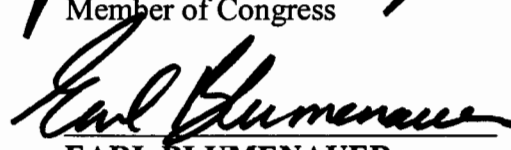
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NANCY PELOSI
Member of Congress


GEORGE MILLER
Member of Congress


PETER DeFAZIO
Member of Congress


EARL BLUMENAUER
Member of Congress

Enclosures