



THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

January 15, 2010

The Honorable Sean R. Parnell
Governor of Alaska
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Parnell:

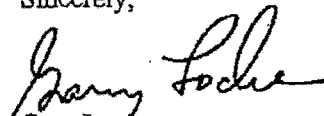
Thank you for your letter requesting a determination of a commercial fishery failure due to a fisheries resource disaster under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and providing Chinook salmon run assessment data and commercial fishery harvest and economic information.

I have determined, pursuant to Section 312(a) of the MSA, that a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster occurred for the Yukon River Chinook salmon fishery in 2008 and 2009. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service has carefully analyzed the data regarding the Yukon River Chinook salmon fishery. This determination is based on the very low Chinook salmon returns in 2008 and 2009, which resulted in a 2008 commercial Chinook salmon harvest that was 89 percent below the recent 5-year average. There was no commercial harvest in 2009. The Yukon River fishing communities are experiencing a substantial loss in revenues as a result of the low commercial harvest levels in 2008 and no commercial harvest in 2009.

As you know, this determination authorizes the Department of Commerce (Department) to support activities to restore the fishery as well as to prevent a similar failure in the future. While appropriations were not provided specifically for this failure, the Department is prepared to expedite the delivery of resources should they become available. Section 312(a)(3) of the MSA requires that the Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out under the authority of this subsection not exceed 75 percent of the cost of that activity. The Department is prepared to work with the State of Alaska and the affected communities on these issues, and will continue its ongoing responsibilities within existing resources.

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

Sincerely,


Gary Locke

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ES-LA-EXSEC

Cc: Myron P. Naneng Sr., President of the Association of Village Council Presidents
Nelson N. Angapak Sr., Vice President of the Alaska Federation of Natives
Martin Andrew, President, Organized Village of Kwethluk
Roy J. Atchak, Tribal Chief, Chevak Native Village
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, United States Senate
The Honorable Mark Begich, United States Senate
The Honorable Don Young, United States Congress
The Honorable Donald Olson, Alaska State Senate
The Honorable Reggie Joule, Alaska State House of Representatives
The Honorable Richard Foster, Alaska State House of Representatives
The Honorable Bob Herron, Alaska State House of Representatives
The Honorable Woodie Salmon, Alaska State House of Representatives