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**Commerce Secretary Determines Sockeye Salmon Disaster
Affecting Puget Sound Fishermen**

U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez today determined that there has been a commercial fishery failure due to a continued fisheries resource disaster in the sockeye salmon fisheries in Puget Sound and the northern Pacific coast of Washington.

“Several Northwest Indian tribes and non-tribal fishermen in the state of Washington have been hurt by drastic declines in sockeye salmon runs and harvests that are so important to these communities,” said Secretary Gutierrez. “Our fisheries scientists continue to study the possible causes of this decline in an effort to find solutions.”

This is the second time that the Department of Commerce has found a fishery resource disaster in the Fraser River sockeye salmon fishery. A similar determination was made in 2002. This commercial fishery failure is separate from the Klamath and West Coast salmon disaster determinations made in 2006 and 2008 for ocean salmon fisheries.

“NOAA’s Fisheries Service will continue to work with the tribes and the state of Washington to assess economic damage to the fishing communities and look for long-term solutions,” said Jim Balsiger, acting NOAA assistant administrator for NOAA’s Fisheries Service.

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