

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 7, 2026

The Honorable Russell Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Timothy R. Petty, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
Deputy NOAA Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 5128
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Director Vought and Assistant Secretary Petty,

We write to express concern that the following fishery disasters in Alaska and Oregon have not yet been federally approved:

1. 2022 Kuskokwim Management Area Chinook, Chum, and Coho Salmon Fisheries- allocated \$331,920
2. 2022 Yukon River Salmon Fisheries- allocated \$1,594,841
3. 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet East Side Set Net Salmon Fisheries- allocated \$11,484,675
4. 2018-2020 State of Oregon ocean commercial salmon fisheries disasters- allocated \$7,050,722

The combined allocated funds across these four disasters amount to a staggering \$20,462,158. Spend plans have been submitted for each of these disasters in 2024, yet both Oregon and Alaska are still awaiting federal grant approval. Without this approval, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) cannot proceed with opening applications and disbursing funds. Considering that these disasters occurred at least four years ago, we urge you to address this by approving all four grants.

Commercial fisheries are imperative to Oregon and Alaska's coastal economy, a critical ecological resource, and especially important to indigenous tribes. According to the National Marine Fisheries Service's Fisheries Economics of the United States 2023 report, Alaska's commercial fishing and seafood industry formed 41,292 full- and part-time jobs and generated approximately \$4 billion in sales impacts. The same report found that Oregon's commercial fishing and seafood industry formed 14,004 full- and part-time jobs and generated approximately

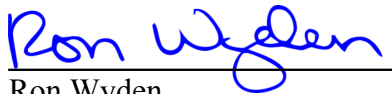
\$1.5 billion in sales impacts. However, both Alaska and Oregon's fisheries have endured repeated disasters over the past years. These disasters have occurred due to a multitude of reasons not limited to drought, prolonged marine heatwaves, and environmental destruction impacting crucial salmon habitat.

We appreciate the recent disaster funding allocation to Alaska, Oregon, California, and the Squaxin Island Tribe. This allocation represents a significant step in addressing Oregon's 2023 commercial salmon fishery disaster, especially considering that the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife described 2023 as the "second worst harvest year ever observed for Chinook salmon by the Oregon troll fishery." This allocation also benefits Alaska as its numerous disasters have contributed, in part, to a 50% decrease in profitability for the Alaska fishing industry between 2021 and 2023, as found by a NOAA Fisheries report. The allocations are an important step towards addressing Oregon and Alaska's major disasters.

Delays in fund disbursement do not only impact the viability of fisheries as an economic resource but also the communities and individual constituents we serve. Federal approval would not only support fishery recovery but also improve their resilience to future disasters.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator