

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 11, 2025

The Honorable Howard Lutnick  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick:

We write to urge your expeditious approval of Oregon Governor Kotek’s request for a fishery resource disaster declaration under section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act for the Oregon troll salmon fishery. This declaration is critical to provide economic relief to Oregon’s fisheries and coastal communities in addition to protecting the sustainability of wild salmon populations.

In 2024, Oregon’s troll salmon fishery faced significant challenges due to changing ocean currents, environmental degradation, and poor salmon returns. According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the 2024 Chinook salmon population levels were below forecasts, and the forecasted 2025 Chinook salmon populations likely “not high enough to allow for target summer Chinook fisheries[.]”<sup>1</sup> The impacts of decreased salmon populations are not limited to ecological consequences, but also impact Tribes in the Northwest who depend on salmon for sustenance and traditional practices and significantly limit the available catch opportunities for commercial fisheries.

As the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) undergoes the process to finalize its 2025 salmon season management recommendations, economic uncertainty remains for Oregon’s commercial troll salmon fishery. ODFW estimated that Oregon’s commercial fishing industry generates more than \$640 million in economic activity each year, equivalent to 9,200 jobs.<sup>2</sup> Despite best efforts from our local fishermen and state and local partners, the economic consequences of this crisis threaten both salmon fishermen and the broader economy of Oregon’s coastal communities which rely on the fishery.

Salmon play a vital role for the Pacific Northwest’s economy, recreation, and for the cultural heritage of Tribes in the Pacific Northwest. However, the worsening effects of climate change, increased drought, shifting ocean conditions, and other impacts complicate the recovery and longevity of salmon populations along the Pacific Coast. Federal support for this industry is critical while local, state, and federal partners continue work on long-term solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://myodfw.com/learn/tip/ocean-salmon-and-columbia-river-program-february-2025>

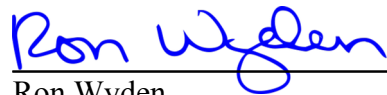
<sup>2</sup> [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/economic\\_impact.asp](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/economic_impact.asp)

We urge you to direct your attention to Governor Kotek's request for a fishery resource disaster declaration. We look forward to your timely response, and our offices stand ready to work with you to recover and sustain Oregon's commercial fisheries.

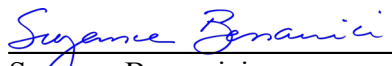
Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



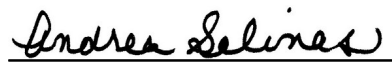
Maxine Dexter  
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



Janelle S. Bynum  
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress