



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Secretary of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

January 18, 2017

Ms. Fawn R. Sharp
President
Quinalt Indian Nation
P.O. Box 189
Taholah, WA 98587

Dear Ms. Sharp:

Thank you for your letter requesting a determination of a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster. Your request relates to the impacts to the 2015 Grays Harbor and Queets River coho salmon fishery as a result of a combination of ocean and climatic conditions, including the continued drought in the State of Washington and the abnormally high water temperatures off of the west coast.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) evaluated whether a commercial fishery failure occurred due to a fisheries resource disaster. After reviewing the information provided by the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and the Quinalt Indian Nation and the NMFS evaluation, I have found that the request for a determination of a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster for the 2015 Grays Harbor and Queets River coho salmon fishery meets the requirements for such a finding under Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

This determination provides a basis for Congress to appropriate disaster relief funding under the MSA, Section 312(a), and then for the NMFS to provide assistance to the State of Washington and the affected communities. If Congress appropriates disaster relief funding, NMFS West Coast Region looks forward to working with the Quinalt Indian Nation, the other affected tribes, and the State of Washington to develop a spend plan that will create a more resilient fishery that can better withstand similar environmental disasters in the future. Section 312(a)(3) requires that the Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out under the authority of this subsection shall not exceed 75% of the cost of that activity.

If you have any further questions, please contact Jim Schufreider at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny Pritzker".

Penny Pritzker