



## COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: June 13, 2017

Date: June 2, 2017

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Mike Wilson

Subject: Letter of support for Request for Declaration of Disaster for California and Oregon Fisheries

RECOMMENDATION(S): That the Board of Supervisors authorize the Chair to sign a letter supporting the State of California's request that the United States Secretary of Commerce declare a federal fishery resource disaster and fishery failure for 2017.

SOURCE OF FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION: California's historic drought, poor ocean conditions, and federal water management policies have all contributed to the high mortality and low survival of juvenile salmon, resulting in low adult numbers and devastating closures for the 2017 salmon season. The ensuing closures will be economically catastrophic for local businesses, tribes and families. If the Secretary of Commerce makes a determination of disaster and fishery failure, Congress may appropriate funds for fishery disaster relief. From there, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration would work with affected entities to distribute funds consistent with the statutory requirements and conditions of appropriations.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Board discretion

ATTACHMENTS: Support letter

Prepared by Sean Quincey

Signature 

## REVIEW:

Auditor \_\_\_\_\_ County Counsel \_\_\_\_\_ Human Resources \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## TYPE OF ITEM:

☒ Consent  
☐ Departmental  
☐ Public Hearing  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No. \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting of: \_\_\_\_\_

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Upon motion of Supervisor Wilson Seconded by Supervisor Sundberg

Ayes Sundberg, Fennell, Bass, Bohm, Wilson

Nays \_\_\_\_\_

Abstain \_\_\_\_\_

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated: June 13, 2017

By: Kathy Hayes  
 Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**  
825 5TH STREET, ROOM 111  
EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501    PHONE: (707) 445-7266

June 13, 2017

The Honorable Wilbur Ross  
Secretary of Commerce  
United States Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

**Re: Request for Declaration of Disaster for California and Oregon Salmon Fisheries**

Dear Secretary Ross:

On behalf of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to inform you of the Board's support for the State of California's request that the Department of Commerce declare a federal fishery resource disaster and fishery failure for our state for 2016 and 2017.

Families across California's North Coast are dependent on salmon for their livelihood. Due to recent circumstances beyond their control, however, they now find themselves in crisis. The historic drought in California, poor ocean conditions, and federal water management policies have all contributed to the high mortality and low survival of juvenile salmon, resulting in low adult numbers and devastating closures for the 2017 salmon season. The ensuing closures will be economically catastrophic for local businesses, tribes and families.

The 2017 salmon season is anticipated to be one of the worst on record, which follows the near-record-low spawning seasons of 2014 and 2015. In Humboldt County, the vast majority of ocean fisheries will be closed to salmon fishing, and all in-river salmon fishing – including catch and release – will be prohibited for the entire season. Local tribes are closing their commercial fisheries and subsistence and ceremonial fishing will be severely curtailed, providing less than one fish per 10 tribal members, potentially triggering a health crisis.

The Board agrees that due to the extent of closures, limited seasons, and predictions of extremely low ocean abundance, there will be irreparable harm to thousands who depend on a healthy

salmon harvest for their living. For these reasons, we urge you to expedite the requested fishery disaster declarations pursuant to the authorities granted under existing federal resource laws.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Virginia Bass, Chair  
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

cc:	Governor Jerry Brown	Congressman Jared Huffman
	Assemblymember Jim Wood	Senator Mike McGuire
	Waterman & Associates	Shaw/Yoder/Antwih, Inc.
	California State Association of Counties	Rural County Representatives of California
	Tom Mattson, Humboldt County Director of Public Works	