



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

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CLERK OF THE BOARD

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January 22, 2025

Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC)
7700 NE Ambassador Pl. #101
Portland, OR 97220

RE: Restoring the California Salmon Season for 2025

Dear Council Members, Salmon Technical Team and Salmon Advisory Subpanel,

The Noyo Harbor District (Fort Bragg, CA), and its facilities stand as the first line of support services to the local commercial and recreational fishing fleets in Mendocino County. As a designated fishing village, the harbor is the hub of fishing activity, support services and area of safe refuge for mariners between Eureka and Bodega Bay.

After the extreme regulatory changes that occurred to the California salmon and nearshore rockfish fisheries in 2023, and a consecutive year of full closure to the ocean salmon season in 2024, the impacts placed on the harbor, the commercial and recreational fishing fleets, and the local economy have become grave in nature.

The City of Fort Bragg and coastal Mendocino County rely on tourism and fishing to sustain the local economy. Two consecutive years with no salmon season presented additional stress to the already fragile local economy and resulted in the loss of hundreds of jobs. The severe, negative impacts to the commercial salmon fleet, as well as to the commercial passenger fishing vessel fleet has seen many operators losing between 70% and 100% of their business.

As a community whose economy relies on tourism and fishing, the continued closure of the commercial and recreational salmon fishery is devastating. The harbor experienced significant declines in revenues from the permanent and seasonal slip occupancy, as well as launch ramp fees. The businesses in adjacent communities, as well as those within the harbor experienced the cancellation of reservations for hotels, vacation rentals, and campsites. Fishing and marine equipment stores experienced reduced sales, as well as area restaurants.

The County acknowledges that establishing fishing seasons is a complex process that involves multiple agencies. Our community, along with many other coastal communities, depends on you and these agencies to set seasons based on the best available scientific knowledge. As you approach the decision-making phase for the 2025 salmon seasons, please consider the following:

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MADELINE CLINE
First District

MAUREEN MULHEREN
Second District

JOHN HASCHAK
Third District

BERNIE NORVELL
Fourth District

TED WILLIAMS
Fifth District

- The California ocean salmon fisheries constitute valuable and renewable natural resources. These fishery resources contribute to the food supply, economy, and health of the Nation and provide recreational opportunities.
- The collection of reliable data is essential to the effective conservation, management, and scientific understanding of the fishery resources of the United States. It is impossible to accurately determine actual ocean abundance. However, reports of incidental salmon encounters by commercial and recreational anglers targeting other species are higher than they have ever been.
- Escapement goals were reached and exceeded in 2023 for SRFC and KRFC and alternatives that would have allowed ocean salmon fishing in 2024 were presented.
- That egg collections for the 2024 SRFC have met their production goals.
- That another year without ocean salmon fishing further erodes the cultural and economic significance of salmon and salmon fishing to California, the West Coast, and its people.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors commits their support of the Noyo Harbor District and their board in their request for a full return to California ocean salmon fishing in 2025 and their request that the Pacific Fishery Management Council, NOAA Fisheries, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife work together to achieve that goal, return their fleets to salmon fishing, and to prevent exacerbating the negative impacts to our coastal communities.

Sincerely,



John Haschak, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: The Honorable Jared Huffman, 2nd Congressional District
The Honorable Mike McGuire, Member of the California State Senate, 2nd District
The Honorable Chris Rodgers, Member of the California State Assembly, 2nd District
Mr. Charlton H. Bonham, Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
California Fish and Game Commission