

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

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Department of
Fish and Game

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

May 5, 2022

NOAA Fisheries Announces Federal Fishery Disaster Allocations

(Juneau, AK) – The Secretary of Commerce announced allocation of \$144 million appropriated by Congress for fishery disasters, of which \$131.8 million is for Alaska. Allocations to specific fishery disasters are below.

1. 2019 Norton Sound Red king crab fishery: \$1,433,137
2. 2020 Norton Sound, Yukon River, Kuskokwim River, Chignik, and Southeast Alaska salmon fisheries, and 2021 Yukon River salmon fishery: \$55,928,849
3. 2018 Upper Cook Inlet East Side Set Net and 2020 Upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries: \$9,404,672
4. 2018 and 2020 Copper River and Prince William Sound salmon fisheries: \$34,326,265
5. 2019/2020 Eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery: \$12,935,199
6. 2020 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod fishery: \$17,772,540

Alaska had submitted these requests for disaster relief after concluding that they qualified as disasters. Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang said “Alaska is pleased that Secretary concurred with these disaster applications and that awards have been made. These awards will offset some of the economic impacts fishermen and communities suffered as well as help ensure that future disasters are prevented.”

The State supports an open and transparent process for distributing disaster relief funds and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) will work with affected stakeholders and NOAA Fisheries to identify funding priorities and develop spend plans for each fishery disaster. Given the number of affected fisheries, ADF&G plans to host a listening session to receive initial input on funding priorities from affected fishery participants.

Disaster funds are intended to offset the harm incurred from a fishery failure. Disaster funds may be used to assess the economic and social effects of the fishery failure and for activities that restore the fishery or prevent a similar failure in the future. Disaster funds can be used to assist fishing communities affected by the fishery failure by helping commercial fishermen, subsistence users, and shore-side businesses and infrastructure. See the NOAA Fisheries web site for additional information on fishery disaster assistance: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-and-financial-services/fishery-disaster-assistance>.

Previous Alaska fishery disaster spend plans have provided funds for two general categories: research and direct payments to affected fishery participants such as harvesters, processors, communities, and households. To assist in development of the spend plans for the six recent fishery disasters, the State is requesting comments on:

- categories of affected fishery participants to receive direct payments,
- eligibility criteria for direct payments,
- how to allocate funds among the categories of fishery participants,
- how to allocate funds among fisheries if several areas or years are included in the fishery disaster; and
- recommendations for research priorities.

ADF&G will draft initial spend plans for the six recently funded fishery disasters based on input received during the listening session and through comments emailed to: dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov Additional opportunities to comment on the draft plans will be provided before the final plans are submitted to the Secretary of Commerce for approval.

ADF&G will hold a public listening session on Wednesday, May 11. If you are unable to attend the listening session, please email your comments to: dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov

Fishery Disaster Spend Plans Listening Session

May 11, 2022. 09:00 AM – 4:00 PM Alaska Daylight Time

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87639321697?pwd=WHY3V0NmduRtQlhCZmpEZVRVWHBJdz09>

Dial by your location: 888 475 4499 US Toll-free, or 833 548 0276 US Toll-free, or 833 548 0282 US Toll-free, or 877 853 5257 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 876 3932 1697

Passcode: 051122

Participants will have up to 3 minutes to provide comments. The listening session will be organized by regions and fisheries as outlined in the schedule below. If you are unable to attend the designated time for your fishery, please submit written comments or wait on the call until comments from stakeholders in the designated fishery area have been heard. We will attempt to remain flexible and appreciate your patience.

9:00 am: Yukon River and Kuskokwim River salmon

10:00 am: Norton Sound red king crab and salmon

11:00 am: Southeast Alaska salmon

1:00 pm: Upper Cook Inlet, Copper River, and Prince William Sound salmon

2:00 pm: Chignik salmon and GOA Pacific cod

3:00 pm: Bering Sea Tanner crab

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