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WASHINGTON

August 29, 2008

James Balsiger, Ph.D.
Acting Assistant Administrator of Fisheries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1315 East West Highway, SSMC3
Suite 14636
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Dr. Balsiger,

We write in support of the grant proposal submitted to your office by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) titled "Sacramento River Commercial and Recreational Salmon Fisheries Disaster Program." As you know, the West Coast saw unprecedented reductions in ocean salmon fishing this summer as a result of historically low numbers of Sacramento River fall Chinook and near-record-low levels of Coho. These closures have had a catastrophic effect on both commercial and recreational fishermen and women and the people, businesses and communities they support.

We were pleased that Congress recognized the importance of this disaster and appropriated \$170 million in the Farm Bill to address the "fishery failure" declared by Commerce Secretary Gutierrez on May 1, 2008. The plan presented to you by PSMFC, which was developed in consultation with our offices, will effectively provide these federal funds to the people most directly impacted by this historic closure. Our three state fisheries agencies were intimately involved in shaping the criteria for the distribution of the disaster aid, and we approve of the manner in which the dollars will be divided.

These funds are desperately needed, and timing is critical. We urge you to approve the PSMFC grant proposal so our fishing families and communities will be able to move toward recovery.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California

Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor of Oregon

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor of Washington

cc: Members of the California Congressional Delegation
Members of the Oregon Congressional Delegation
Members of the Washington Congressional Delegation
Bob Lohn, NOAA Fisheries