

Eshoo Welcomes Declaration of Salmon Fishery Failure

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PALO ALTO, Calif. — Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, hailed the declaration today of a commercial fishery failure for Northern California and Oregon.

“This is the news we’ve been waiting and pushing hard for,” said Eshoo, who received the news in a phone call from U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez. “This gives the green light to Congress to appropriate the money needed to help not just the fishermen but also related businesses down the economic stream which have been devastated by the early closure of the salmon season.”

The declaration will enable Congress to appropriate funds to the affected states for distribution to fishermen and others suffering economic hardships. The declaration covers the area from Point Sur, California, to Cape Falcon, Oregon.

In April of this year, Gutierrez approved a plan that virtually closed commercial salmon fishing off the West Coast until 2007. This action represents the largest commercial salmon fishing closure in the history of the West Coast and the impact it has had on fishermen and coastal communities, particularly in Half Moon Bay and Santa Cruz, has been nothing short of devastating. California and Oregon have estimated the losses of this decision will exceed \$81 million.

Eshoo, a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, has been demanding that the Administration take action to provide relief since the fishing closure was announced.

The commercial fishery failure declaration follows a decision by the Commerce Department on July 6th to declare a fishery resource disaster, which enabled fishermen to apply for low-interest Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loans. So far, nearly \$200,000 in SBA loans has been approved.

Eshoo pledged to continue to work with her colleagues in Congress to ensure that the necessary funds are appropriated in a timely fashion.

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