



December 19, 2025

Honorable Howard Lutnick, Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Rm 5516
Washington, D.C. 20230

Mr. Eugenio Piñeiro-Soler
Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Secretary Lutnick and Assistant Administrator Piñeiro-Soler:

On behalf of the eight U.S. Regional Fishery Management Councils, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) writes to underscore the importance of timely review and action by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Department of Commerce on fishery management measures adopted by the Regional Fishery Management Councils (Councils).

The Councils invest substantial time, expertise, and public resources in the development of fishery management actions that are consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, informed by the best available science, and shaped through extensive stakeholder engagement. Extended review timelines and delays in Secretarial approval can undermine these efforts and have significant consequences for fisheries, fishing communities, and marine ecosystems.

Timely review is particularly important for Council actions intended to address urgent management needs, such as providing regulatory stability and economic and social predictability for fishing communities, rebuilding overfished stocks, and responding to changing environmental conditions. Prolonged review timelines can create uncertainty, disrupt business planning, delay conservation benefits, and erode stakeholder confidence in the federal fisheries management process.

We recognize the complexity of NOAA's review responsibilities and appreciate the agency's commitment to ensuring legal sufficiency and policy consistency. At the same time, predictable and efficient review timelines are central to the effectiveness of the collaborative management framework established under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Accordingly, the CCC encourages NOAA to prioritize timely review of Council actions and, when delays are unavoidable, to communicate clearly with affected Councils regarding anticipated timelines, outstanding issues, and pathways to resolution. Improved coordination and transparency will help ensure that Council-recommended measures can be implemented as intended and without unnecessary delay.

Thank you for your continued partnership and for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to continued collaboration to support sustainable fisheries and thriving fishing communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Council Chairs and Executive Directors:

New England
Chair: Daniel Salerno
Executive Director:
Dr. Cate O’Keefe

Mid Atlantic
Chair: Joe Cimino
Executive Director:
Dr. Christopher Moore

South Atlantic
Chair: Trish Murphey
Executive Director:
John Carmichael

Gulf
Chair: Jonathan Dugas
Executive Director:
Dr. Carrie Simmons

Caribbean
Chair: Carlos Farchette
Executive Director:
Miguel Rolón

Western Pacific
Chair: William Sword
Executive Director:
Kitty Simonds

Pacific
Chair: Pete Hassemer
Executive Director:
Merrick Burden

North Pacific
Chair: Angel Drobnica
Executive Director:
Diana Evans

CC: Ms. Laura Grimm, NOAA