Dr. Donald McIssac  
Executive Director  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200  
Portland, OR  97220-1384

Dear Dr. McIssac:

The hatchery chinook production from Mitchell Act funded facilities on the Columbia River is vital to the well being of the economies of communities along the Washington coast and the Columbia River basin. The fish produced from these hatcheries are an important contributor to maintaining healthy commercial and recreational fisheries and they provide a cornerstone to the business community that depends on commercial and recreational fishing activity. The harvest of these fish has provided jobs in both rural and metropolitan areas that border their migration path. I am writing to the Council at this time to express my deep concern relative to the future funding base for Mitchell Act hatcheries. I would be very interested in your thoughts and opinions about the production levels from these facilities in recent years and the relative importance these fish have on future fishing opportunities under your jurisdiction.

As you know, funding for these facilities has been stagnant for nearly ten years. I am concerned about the cuts in production that have occurred and the corresponding effects on important commercial and recreational fisheries. I would like your assistance in quantifying the decreases in production and your views about what the future effects on fisheries will be if level funding is continued over the next five years.

This is an important issue to the citizens of Washington State and I want you to know that I am committed to working with you to address the challenges that lie ahead. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future and discussing your thoughts in response to these questions.

Sincerely,

Norm Dicks
Member of Congress