



GAO Review of NOAA's Fishery Disaster Assistance

Background

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an independent, nonpartisan agency within the legislative branch that works on behalf of the U.S. Congress. GAO is currently reviewing National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Fishery Disaster Assistance at the request of Senator Dan Sullivan of Alaska. GAO will issue a publicly available report to Congress based on the findings of our review. Our research methods include interviews with federal, Tribal and state agency officials, fishery commission staff, and other interested parties to learn about their experiences with the program.

Purpose

GAO is interested in learning about experiences with fishery disaster assistance. The team plans to speak with Tribal and state level fish and wildlife agencies that have requested assistance through the program. Additionally, the team would like to meet with fishers that have received assistance through the program. The GAO team would like to hear about experiences with the program and any challenges and opportunities to address challenges.

Preliminary Research Objectives

1. What is the process to determine whether a fishery disaster has occurred and to disburse funds?
2. What does available information show about the number of fishery disaster assistance requests submitted from January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2024 and how funding has been used in selected disasters?
3. What challenges, if any, exist in the administration of the fishery disaster assistance program, and what opportunities exist to help address them?
4. What has GAO's past work reported about other selected federal disaster assistance, loan, and insurance programs?

GAO Points of Contact

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