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Interior Secretary Cecil D. Andrus today announced he was cOITU11-itting the Department to participate in efforts for salmon rearing and other cooperative action to attempt to reverse the decline in the salmon and steelhead fisheries on the Klamath and Trinity Rivers in Northern California.

In a letter to Huey D. Johnson, Secretary for Resources in California Andrus said:

"Over the past year I have had the opportunity to review your proposals for cooperative efforts involving the Department, the California Resources Agency, Indians and other interested parties to restore the fishery resource and rehabilitate the watershed in the Klamath Trinity Basin.

“I am convinced that only through such cooperative action involving those interests can we hope to reverse the tragic decline in the salmon and steelhead fisheries, prevent further degradation of the habitat, and restore these resources to their former levels.”

Andrus noted that Johnson's efforts to obtain $250,000 in State funds for fiscal year 1979-80 to share in the costs of salmon rearing and watershed rehabilitation activities were indicative of Johnson's personal commitment to the protection of these valuable resources.

"I sincerely hope that the California legislature will now take the final steps necessary to insure these funds are provided in the State's budget," Andrus said.

The federal government's trust responsibility to the Indians of the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation provide an additional incentive for participation by the Interior Department in the Klamath-Trinity salmon restoration program, Andrus said.

“I have committed the Department, he said, "to respond to the concern for the resources expressed by you, Indians of the Reservation, and others and to participate in the proposals for salmon rearing and watershed rehabilitation."

The Department has allocated $207,500 for fiscal year 1979 for initial salmon restoration activities, Andrus said. These funds will provide for construction and maintenance of salmon rearing ponds with a capacity for 400,000 juvenile salmon, help meet the costs of caring for the salmon at other fish-rearing facilities, and be used by the Indians of the Reservation to hire a biologist to assist them in determining the timing and size of the salmon runs.

The Interior Department published its 1979 regulations for fishing conservation on parts of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers in Northern California March 20. The regulations include a ban on Indian commercial fishing on the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation and other measures designed to reduce fish harvesting.

This year's salmon runs are dangerously low as the result of the 1976 drought which has seriously affected fish runs from California to Alaska.