



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

October 2, 2017

Secretary Wilbur Ross
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

As you know Hurricane Irma struck the Florida Keys on September 10, 2017 and made its way north battering our east and west coast destroying infrastructure and affecting families throughout most of the state. This storm has had a significant impact on Florida's fishing industry. I respectfully request that you declare a federal fishery resources disaster as outlined in of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1864 and 16 U.S.C. § 1861a, and the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act, 16 U.S.C § 4107, as well as clauses to trigger support from the Economic Development Administration. This broad based disaster declaration would be similar to the approach utilized in response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012 and would provide streamlined and expedited relief for businesses that rely on Florida's commercial and recreational fishing industry.

Fishing in Florida is a vital industry in our economy and is important to our residents as well as our tourists. According to a US Fish and Wildlife Service survey conducted in 2011, Florida leads the nation in the number of saltwater fishing anglers. In 2016 recreational saltwater fishing had an economic impact of \$7.6 billion. The dockside value of commercial fisheries in Florida is estimated to be \$244 million.

The magnitude of Hurricane Irma's impact on the recreational and commercial fishery in Florida is expected to be significant. Fishermen have lost income due to lost gear and vessels; being displaced because of damages and/or lost housing; damaged boating facilities; cancelation of charter fishing by clients; lack of bait; power outages causing loss of product, lack of transportation routes and other reasons. Other infrastructure supporting these fisheries have also been damaged or lost. Shellfish harvesting has been suspended in affected areas due to water quality concerns. I have observed some of these losses first hand in some of the hardest hit areas. We are doing what we can to get the fishermen on the water again, but request your assistance.

Secretary Wilbur Ross
October 2, 2017
Page Two

The State of Florida is prepared to provide any information that you need to properly assess this situation. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized initial "R" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Scott
Governor

cc: Mr. Earl Comstock
Mr. Chris Oliver
Mr. Roy Crabtree
Mr. Nick Wiley