



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Secretary of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

February 8, 2018

The Honorable Kenneth E. Mapp
Governor of the United States Virgin Islands
Charlotte Amalie, VI 00802

Dear Governor Mapp:

Thank you for your letter requesting determinations of commercial and catastrophic fishery failures due to a fishery resource disaster as a result of Hurricanes Irma and Maria's devastating impact on the United States Virgin Island's (USVI) fishing industry. After reviewing your correspondence and the information provided from NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in this regard, I have determined that, pursuant to section 312 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), a commercial fishery failure has occurred due to a fishery resource disaster. I have also determined that, under section 308(d) of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act (IFA), commercial fishermen have been harmed as a result of such fishery resource disaster. Lastly, I have determined that a catastrophic regional fishery disaster has occurred under section 315 of the MSA for the USVI.

These determinations provide the basis for Congress to appropriate disaster relief funding under the MSA and IFA. Should Congress appropriate disaster relief funding, NMFS will work with the USVI to develop a spend plan to assist with the recovery of the USVI's fishing industry and fishing communities.

If you have any further questions, please contact Michael Platt, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,

Wilbur Ross