



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

October 23, 2018

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

Dear Secretary Ross:

As you know, Hurricane Michael struck the Florida Panhandle on October 10, 2018. Following the storm, I have traveled to every impacted community to ensure that they have the resources they need to recovery. Hurricane Michael was one of the strongest storms on record to ever hit Florida and has had a significant impact on Florida's fishing industry in an area of the state where fishing is an important component of our economy and is a traditional activity. I respectfully request that you declare a federal fishery resource disaster as outlined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1864 and 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.

The force of Hurricane Michael's impact on our commercial and recreational fisheries is expected to be significant. We have 85 seafood wholesale dealers in the five coastal counties most affected by the storm and nearly 1,000 commercial fishers in these counties. There are 325 licensed charter captains also residing in these five counties. We expect that a significant number of these commercial and recreational businesses have been affected by Hurricane Michael, as well as impacts to similar fishing related businesses in other counties. In addition to the effects of the storm on the commercial and recreational fisheries, subsistence fishermen have been likely impacted due to damages to fishing piers in the affected areas.

Fishing related businesses suffered from damaged infrastructure; lost gear and vessels; displacement because of damaged or lost housing; damaged boating facilities; cancellation of charter fishing by clients; lack of bait; ruined product because of power outages; a lack of transportation routes and other reasons. Other tourism-based infrastructure supporting these industries have also been damaged or lost in some areas. We are doing what we can to get fishermen back on the water again but request your immediate assistance.

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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 at the end.

Rick Scott
Governor

cc: Mr. Earl Comstock
Mr. Chris Oliver
Dr. Roy Crabtree
Mr. Eric Sutton