



**RON DESANTIS**  
GOVERNOR

October 15, 2022

Secretary Gina Raimondo  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

Hurricane Ian struck Southwest Florida on September 28, 2022, as a Category 4 storm with one of the largest eye walls ever recorded and sustained winds exceeding 150 miles per hour. The storm then proceeded northeast across the State destroying infrastructure, flooding homes and businesses, and threatening the lives of every person in its path. The impact of this storm poses a significant threat to Florida's commercial and recreational fishing industries. Accordingly, I request that you declare a federal fisheries 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.

Hurricane Ian has already caused substantial damage to Florida's commercial and recreational fishing industry. Fishermen have lost income due to lost gear and vessels; being displaced because of damages (including complete loss of business and infrastructure); damaged boat facilities, cancelation of charter fishing due to lack of suitable vessel causing inability to fulfill client trips; lack of bait; power outages causing loss of product and inability to restart business; lack of navigable waterways and roadways; and many other reasons. I have traveled to the affected communities and witnessed these devastating impacts on Florida's fishing industry.

Florida's fisheries are vitally important to the State's economy through their impact on commercial and recreational fishing and tourism. According to the most recent US Fish and Wildlife Service survey, Florida leads the nation in the number of saltwater fishing anglers. In addition, Florida's recreational saltwater fishing industry has an economic impact of \$9.2 billion, while the dockside value of commercial fisheries is estimated at \$244 million. The State of Florida needs your assistance to address these critical needs and support Florida's fishing industry.

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Thank you for considering this request. The State of Florida is prepared to provide any additional information you need to assess the situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron DeSantis", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Ron DeSantis  
Governor

cc: Mr. Eric Sutton, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission