



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

June 8, 2016

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

Florida continues to break records in the number of visitors to our state, and last year we were proud to welcome 105 million tourists to Florida. With white sandy beaches, top attractions, and world class boating and fishing, Florida's Gulf Coast communities are a big part of this success story.

To help boost tourism and give families more recreational fishing opportunities, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission expanded red snapper seasons in Gulf state waters annually starting in 2013. The 78-day season in state waters is 69 more days than the season in federal waters, which is only nine days. With no federal red snapper season in the Atlantic Ocean this year, and only nine days to fish in federal Gulf waters, it is imperative that our communities can take full advantage of the limited federal red snapper season.

On Monday, June 6, I declared a State of Emergency for 34 Florida Counties due to the rough seas, high winds, and heavy rains associated with Tropical Storm Colin. These weather conditions prevented anglers in Florida from participating in a significant portion of the nine-day federal red snapper season. On behalf of the State of Florida and our Gulf Coast communities, I request the recreational red snapper season in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico be extended by three weekend days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) before July 1 to make up for fishing opportunities lost due to Tropical Storm Colin.

Saltwater fishing in the Gulf of Mexico has a \$7.6 billion economic impact in Florida every year, and June is one of the most important months for tourism and recreation in Florida. I urge you to extend the recreational season during a weekend this month to ensure Floridians and our visitors have the opportunity to fish for red snapper

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and Florida's Gulf coast communities can make up for economic losses caused by this storm. Thank you for your consideration of Florida's access to this important recreational opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized flourish at the beginning.

Rick Scott
Governor

cc: Nick Wiley, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Roy Crabtree, National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Region