



M. J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

# State of Louisiana

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July 25, 1997

Rolland A. Schmitt  
Assistant Administrator  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Springs, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Schmitt:

I am requesting financial assistance for Louisiana under Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Several natural events have occurred in Louisiana during the last year which may have had significant impacts on the commercial fisheries in the Pontchartrain Basin. During the summer of 1996 the lower portion of the basin experienced red tide. This event adversely affected fisheries operations and severely impacted the oyster industry. During the spring of 1997, southeast Louisiana experienced unusually high rainfall and Mississippi River discharge, and cooler than normal temperatures. These environmental conditions may have adversely affected the production of shrimp and crabs in the Pontchartrain Basin. Also, the opening of the Bonnet Carre Spillway diverted high volumes of Mississippi River water directly into Lake Pontchartrain, further complicating the problems for local fisheries and fishermen.

In accordance with Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, I am requesting that the Secretary of the Department of Commerce consider the impacts of these catastrophic events on the important commercial fisheries of Louisiana and make funds available to address the impacts.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. Foster, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

M. J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.

c: Louisiana Congressional Delegation