



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**The Secretary of Commerce**

Washington, D.C. 20230

February 8, 2018

The Honorable Rick Scott  
Governor of Florida  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Scott:

Thank you for your letter requesting determinations of commercial and catastrophic fishery failures due to a fishery resource disaster as a result of Hurricane Irma's devastating impact on Florida's 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 State of Florida.

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 your state to develop a spend plan to assist with the recovery of Florida'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