



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Secretary of Commerce

Washington, D.C. 20230

February 8, 2018

The Honorable Ricardo Rosselló Nevares
Governor of Puerto Rico
San Juan, PR 00902-0082

Dear Governor Rosselló Nevares:

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

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 Puerto Rico to develop a spend plan to assist with the recovery of Puerto Rico'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