



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Secretary of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

June 5, 2023

The Honorable John Bel Edwards
Governor of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Governor Edwards:

Thank you for your letter requesting a determination of a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster for Louisiana's 2020 saltwater finfish, oyster, and shrimp fisheries.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has evaluated information from the impacted fisheries. Upon further review, I have found that the request for a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster for the 2020 saltwater finfish, oyster, and shrimp fisheries meets the requirements under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act.

In order to have a positive determination, there must be a commercial fishery failure from an allowable cause. The disaster was due to the impacts of the 2020 hurricane season, which is an allowable cause under the MSA. The commercial fishery revenue losses were in the range of 35 to 80 percent, and NMFS concluded that these losses qualify due to the severe winds and flooding from these storms that caused widespread damage to coastal fishing communities.

This determination makes these fisheries eligible for fishery disaster assistance. In the near future, using funds Congress has already appropriated for fishery disasters, the Department of Commerce will allocate disaster assistance for these fisheries. In addition, with this determination, eligible businesses and other entities in Louisiana may be able to access other loan/funding programs through other Federal relief programs (e.g., Small Business Administration loans). Programs within the Department of Commerce (e.g., Economic Development Administration grants) may also be available.

Should you have any questions, please contact Susie Feliz, Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663 or SFeliz@doc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gina Raimondo".

Gina M. Raimondo