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

July 28, 2026

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

We received your letter requesting a determination of a commercial fishery failure for the Florida 2022 commercial fisheries due to Hurricane Ian.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) evaluated information from the impacted fisheries. Upon review, I have found that four of the five fisheries in the request (shrimp (food), lobster (bully net), lobster (diving), and finfish (pelagic longline), but not finfish (net gear in the Federal waters)) meet the requirements under former section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) and/or the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act.

This determination now makes the above-mentioned four 2022 Florida fisheries eligible for fishery resource disaster assistance. The Department of Commerce will allocate disaster assistance for these fisheries. After the Secretary of Commerce makes a positive fishery disaster determination under the MSA, the requesting state or tribal government can make a written request to the Small Business Administration (SBA) certifying at least five small businesses in the disaster area have suffered substantial economic injury resulting from the positive fishery disaster determination. Under this Economic Injury declaration, SBA's Disaster Loan Assistance program is available to small businesses with financial losses directly related to the declared disaster. For more information on the SBA Loan program please visit: www.sba.gov/disaster. Programs within the Department (e.g., Economic Development Administration grants) may also be available.

If you have any questions, please contact Geofrey MacLeay, Director of Oversight in the Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-1749 or GMacLeay@doc.gov.

Sincerely,

Howard W. Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce