



RON DeSANTIS
GOVERNOR

December 15, 2020

Secretary Wilbur Ross
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

Due to the extensive and ongoing impacts of Hurricane Sally on Florida's fishing industry and fisheries resources, I respectfully request that you declare a federal fishery resources disaster as outlined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1864 and U.S.C. § 1861a, and the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act, 16 U.S.C. § 4107.

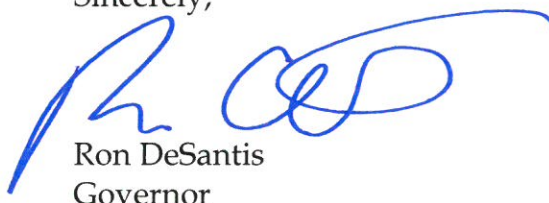
As you know, Hurricane Sally made landfall near Gulf Shores, Alabama on September 16, 2020 as a Category 2 storm. However, due to the structure and path of Hurricane Sally, almost the entire State of Florida felt some effects. Hurricane Sally brought thunderstorm activity and heavy rains to many parts of the state, the most significant of which was felt in northwest Florida. As a result, I requested, and FEMA approved, a major disaster declaration for thirteen counties in the region, stretching from Escambia County to Franklin County.

The fishing industry in northwest Florida is vitally important, both economically and culturally. In the area encompassed by the FEMA disaster declaration, we have nearly 1,000 commercial fishers, more than 100 wholesale dealers, more than 600 charter captains and 69 aquaculture farms all integral to the local, state, and national fishing industry. The strong winds, tidal surge and floodwaters from Hurricane Sally negatively impacted these businesses resulting in, among other disruptions, damaged infrastructure, loss of gear and vessels, cancellation of charter fishing trips, and destruction of aquaculture equipment. The fishing industry is resilient, and the State of Florida has continued to do all we can to get our fisherman back working and on the water again, but we request your immediate assistance to help accelerate recovery.

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Thank you for your continued focus on issues that are important to Florida's economy and for your steadfast commitment to recovery from Hurricanes Michael and Irma. The State of Florida stands ready to provide an additional information you need to properly assess the impacts from Hurricane Sally. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ron DeSantis', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Ron DeSantis
Governor

cc: Mr. Eric Sutton, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission