



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

June 3, 2010

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor of Florida
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist:

Thank you for your letter requesting a commercial fishery failure determination in the State of Florida due to the Deepwater Horizon rig explosion and oil spill. Recognizing the enormity of adverse effects of this oil spill causing large areas of Federal and some State waters to be closed to all fishing in order to protect human health and the marine environment, I made a positive commercial fishery failure determination under section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act on May 24, 2010, for the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. I am extending that declaration to include a fishery resource disaster for affected fisheries in waters off the State of Florida.

We are making this determination in order to recognize the damage to marine fisheries and associated economic hardship on affected fishermen and dependent businesses. This disaster determination will help ensure that the Federal Government is in a position to mobilize the range of assistance that Florida fishermen and fishing communities may need.

We all recognize the financial hardship that this spill has caused for commercial and recreational fishermen and businesses that are dependent on those fisheries. BP—as a responsible party—can and must pay the costs. Thus far it has paid \$40.2 million on 31,987 total claims. I pledge that the National Marine Fisheries Service—an arm of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—will work with the State of Florida to address issues within the affected fishing communities.

The Department's Economic Development Administration and Minority Business Development Agency—in close coordination with NOAA—have been in the Gulf Coast region, meeting with economic development agencies and affected communities to assess the potential economic implications and effects from the spill. The Department stands ready to respond with the resources that we have available from our traditional suite of economic development programs and tools. If you have any questions, please contact April Boyd, Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary Locke".

Gary Locke