

## State Seeks Federal Aid For NC Fisheries Due To Florence Damage

By Administrator

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US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross granted Governor Cooper's request for a disaster declaration related to damage to North Carolina's marine fishing industry in Hurricane Florence.

"Recreational and commercial fishing are important economic drivers for our state and families along North Carolina's coast. I appreciate Secretary Ross's recognition of the damage to these vital industries caused by Hurricane Florence. We must rebuild smarter and stronger than ever and I will continue to work with our federal, state and local partners to bring recovery funds to those who need them," said Governor Roy Cooper.

The declaration of disaster is a critical step for Congress to appropriate fishery disaster assistance. Since Hurricane Florence, Governor Cooper has worked with members of North Carolina's congressional delegation to secure federal recovery funds.

In November, the governor sent congressional leaders a request for an additional \$6.3 billion in federal aid including a declaration of disaster for North Carolina's fisheries and \$20 million for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Disaster Assistance. North Carolina's full federal request is \$8.8 billion.

According to the state Division of Marine Fisheries, the North Carolina commercial fishing industry generated more than \$96 million in revenue in 2017. Declaring a federal fishery resource disaster can assist with long-term relief for commercial fishing families struggling to make a living while repairing their businesses. Hurricane Florence's historic rainfall and powerful winds destroyed boats, gear and buildings critical to fishing businesses.