



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

July 22, 2010

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator
Office of the Under Secretary
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
14th & Constitution Ave NW, Room 7316
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Gulf red snapper recreational season

Dear Dr. Lubchenco:

As you know, the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill has dramatically changed the landscape of marine fisheries management in the Gulf of Mexico. I understand the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has been working closely with NOAA Fisheries to offer as much fishing opportunity as possible in federal and state waters while insuring Florida's seafood continues to be safe for public consumption. I support these efforts wholeheartedly, and I am writing to request your assistance to expedite measures that will provide more fishing opportunities in Florida as soon as possible.

I understand you and your staff have supported a program to monitor fishing effort for red snapper so a supplemental season can be offered if effort is reduced due to impacts of the oil spill (as we expect). With the financial support of NOAA Fisheries, scientists from the FWC have been able to significantly step up their recreational harvest monitoring during this year's red snapper fishing season. According to the FWC, they have been able to collect quality data, which they will share with your office. I remain hopeful that we can quickly evaluate the enhanced data we are collecting and let Florida's recreational anglers know at the earliest possible time if it will be possible to add additional fishing days this season and when those days will occur.

I also would like to stress the importance of expediting the process for reopening federal waters for all fishing as soon as they are deemed safe. The current closures place major limitations on access to red snapper fishing and would diminish the value of a supplemental season. We have initiated the sampling and testing necessary to reopen Florida's state waters where the presence of oil was confirmed by visual observation and has now moved out of the area. I urge you to continue to press for a rapid process for reopening all federal waters where the presence of oil was never confirmed or where oil is no longer present.

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We want to take every appropriate action with expediency to help revitalize our coastal communities that have been seriously impacted by the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill; allowing additional fishing opportunities for red snapper could be an important component of such recovery. Your ability to analyze the fishing effort data and quickly make the appropriate critical decisions would be of great value to our affected communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if we may be of any assistance to you.

Sincerely,



Charlie Crist

cc: Roy Crabtree, Regional Administrator, NOAA Fisheries
Rodney Barreto, Chairman, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission