



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/southeast>

February 9, 2024

Sent Via Email

Ms. Madison D. Sheahan
Secretary
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
2000 Quail Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70898

Dear Ms. Sheahan,

Congress appropriated \$300 million through the 2023 Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 117-328) and \$200 million under the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act, 2022 for fisheries disaster assistance. On January 29, 2024, NOAA allocated \$27,179,590 of these funds to respond to the impacts of the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 Louisiana saltwater finfish, shrimp, and oyster fishery disasters. We allocated these funds to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries based on fishing revenue losses.

BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

NOAA Fisheries has determined that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries will receive \$27,152,411 to address the impacts of these fishery disaster events as identified above and as allocated in Table 1. NOAA Fisheries will provide you with these funds, after we receive, review, and approve a grant application. Your grant application must reflect the appropriate use of funds and considerations as outlined here and in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended by the Fishery Resource Disasters Improvement Act (16 U.S.C. 1861a(a)). Funds may be expended for administrative processes of the recipient, as well as to sub-recipients, for the purpose of economic analyses that may be necessary for a detailed spend plan.

Funds can be used to address a range of impacts including impacts to commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen, charter businesses, subsistence users, processors, shore-side infrastructure, and the fishing ecosystem and environment. These funds should be used for activities that restore the fishery, prevent a similar disaster in the future, or assist the affected fishing community. NOAA strongly recommends that recipients utilize these funds to strengthen the long-term economic and environmental sustainability of the fishery, with an emphasis on addressing the factors contributing to the fishery resource disaster and minimizing future uninsured losses, if applicable. This can include, but is not limited to, activities such as habitat restoration, research, state-run buybacks, job retraining, and fishery-related infrastructure.

REQUIRED CONTENTS

In addition to the requirements outlined in the Grants.gov application portal, your application for this award must:



- Describe the main categories for funding, as applicable (e.g., habitat restoration, research, state-run buybacks, job retraining, and fishery–related infrastructure) that restore the fishery or prevent a similar failure in the future and assist fishing communities affected by such failure.
- Articulate how the activities identified in your spend plan will be prioritized.
- If your spend plan includes a request for direct payments, the project narrative must address direct payments as follows:
 - Describe why direct payments, instead of long-term economic and environmental measures, are the best mechanism to address the fishery disaster, and describe the anticipated economic impact on the local fishing community.
 - Describe how you will determine who is eligible for direct payments and verify their eligibility.
 - Describe how you will determine the disbursement amounts of direct payments.
 - Describe the appeals process and how you will determine if an appeal is granted or not.
 - Funds cannot be used to pay for losses already covered by insurance.
 - Federally recognized tribes may consider household fishery participation when allocating direct payments; however payments may not be provided directly to minors

Your application and any associated sub-award spend plans should also, if applicable, identify funds available from other federal programs for disaster relief and describe the process you use to coordinate across disaster funding from multiple agencies. Finally, your application should explain how you are taking into account, where applicable, the availability of funds to mitigate impacts, such as insurance. Funds provided by NOAA under this award shall not be used for specific grant-related activities for which the recipient has received Federal or other funds. Requests for costs paid by other sources may be subject to prosecution under the False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. Section 3729 et seq.) and 18 U.S.C. Section 287.

As soon as possible, please have a member of your staff contact Derek Orner from NOAA Fisheries' Office of Management and Budget, Financial Assistance Division to begin the grant application process via the Grants.gov website. You may contact him at (410) 570-2268 and derek.ornier@noaa.gov. As required under MSA Section 312(a)(6)(D), we shall receive the submission of your application and any associated sub-award spend plans within 120 days (*June 8, 2024*). We look forward to working with you to expedite the distribution of this much-needed assistance to the affected fishing industry and affiliated constituents.

Sincerely,

Andrew J. Strelcheck
Regional Administrator
Southeast Regional Office

Cc: Derek Orner, NMFS MB
Ryan Montegut, LDWF

Table 1.

Fishery Disaster	Award
2021/2022 Louisiana saltwater finfish, shrimp, and oysters	\$7,450,423
2020/2021 Louisiana saltwater finfish, shrimp, and oysters (2020 Hurricane Season)	\$19,701,988
TOTAL	\$27,152,411