

From: Governor's Press Office [Governor'sPressOffice@eog.myflorida.com]
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Subject: Gov. Scott Directs FWC to Ease Regulations, Waive Fees for South Florida Commercial Fishing Industry Following Hurricane Irma



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Gov. Scott Directs FWC to Ease Regulations, Waive Fees for South Florida Commercial Fishing Industry Following Hurricane Irma

MARATHON, Fla. – Governor Rick Scott directed the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to implement several changes to help South Florida's commercial fishermen recover from the effects of Hurricane Irma and get back to work. The elimination of these regulations combined with the waiving of fees will allow more commercial fishermen in South Florida, especially the Florida Keys, get back to work by easing certain tag requirements and allowing more cooperation in the industry. The Governor has been laser focused on ensuring that the entire state recovers from Hurricane Irma, as well as the Florida Keys, which was one of the hardest hit areas. The Governor has set a goal of October 1st to have the Keys open for business.

Governor Scott said, "Hurricane Irma affected nearly our entire state, and we are aggressively working to make sure the every family and industry has the ability to recover quickly. This week, I've travelled across the state to tour damage and hear directly from families and communities on what we can do to help. The Florida's commercial fishing industry plays a large role in our economy, and I am proud the FWC can waive fees and reduce regulations so they can get back to work."

Brian Yablonski, Chairman of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, said, "FWC has been on the front lines of Florida's preparedness, response and recovery to Hurricane Irma. By partnering with the Governor and helping get South Florida commercial fishermen and women back on the water, we are demonstrating our commitment to Florida's full recovery. As a Commission, we are glad to reduce these regulations and waive fees so this important livelihood can begin to move forward."

This action includes extending the renewal period for some commercial fishing permits set to expire Sept. 30, 2017 and relaxing regulations for commercial lobster harvesters in Collier, Dade and Monroe counties by not requiring traps to be tagged until Dec. 1, 2017. This allows commercial fisherman to replace traps that were lost in the storm while waiting for no-cost replacement tags. Fees for replacement tags have also been waived. The orders also allow for authorized commercial fishers

to cooperate with each other to retrieve trap gear from the water and return it to the owner. The commercial harvest of spiny lobster has a dockside value of more than \$40 million dollars per year.

EO 17-42 – Hurricane Irma: Regulatory Relief for Commercial Fishers Statewide

<http://myfwc.com/media/4293035/EO17-42.pdf>

EO 17-43 – Hurricane Irma: Regulatory Relief for Commercial Spiny Lobster Trap Fishers in Collier, Dade and Monroe counties <http://myfwc.com/media/4293038/EO17-43.pdf>

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