

Press release**April 10, 2023****Contact:** ADCNR's Marine Resources Division, (251) 861-2882 or (251) 968-7576**Applications Now Being Accepted for Alabama's 2019 Fishery Disaster Relief Program**

The Alabama Marine Resources Division (MRD) of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) announces that it is currently accepting applications for disaster assistance to eligible affected individuals and businesses under the 2019 Consolidated Appropriations Act (PL 116-6) and the 2019 Supplemental Disaster Appropriations Act (PL 116-20) for losses suffered by Alabama's marine fishing industry in 2019, due to freshwater intrusion.

This program was developed to assist Alabama fishery-related businesses impacted by the freshwater intrusion in overcoming economic losses. Those engaged in commercial fishing, seafood processing, non-retail seafood dealers, live-bait dealers, oyster aquaculture, seafood aquaculture and commercial party boats (charter for-hire) are encouraged to apply.

"I am very thankful that these funds have finally been released by NOAA Fisheries and the Office of Management and Budget," said Chris Blankenship, ADCNR Commissioner. "This has been a long time in coming. Right after the floods in 2019, we worked with our coastal congressional delegation to secure these much-needed funds. I am glad the funds will now be able to be distributed to the impacted fishermen and seafood dealers in Alabama."

To be eligible for the reimbursement program, qualifying fishery-related businesses must have experienced revenue loss as a result of the freshwater intrusion between January 1 and December 31 of 2019, compared to their average gross revenue earned in the preceding five years (2014-2018).

Only Alabama residents and tribal members that are licensed as saltwater commercial fishermen (those that possess licenses for fishing, taking/catching of oysters, taking/carrying shrimp, gill net fishing, and crab catching), seafood or oyster aquaculture operators, non-retail seafood dealers or processors, live-bait dealers, and for-hire vessel owners/operators are eligible to participate in the program.

Qualifying individuals and businesses must be able to substantiate their income reduction and complete the application process. Applicants holding more than one eligible license may submit one application for all licenses or one application per license.

The total available federal allocation to Alabama participants is \$8,619,393. Due to the limited amount of funding, Alabama's combined need may far exceed the funds available for disbursement. Therefore, a proportion of funds available to each applicant will be determined once all applications have been reviewed.

Completed applications and supporting documentation can be mailed, shipped or hand delivered to the MRD office located at 999 Commerce Dr., Gulf Shores, Alabama, 36542. Applications must be postmarked no later than Friday, June 2, 2023. Completed applications can also be hand delivered by 5 p.m. that day. Electronic copies (including email) will not be accepted. For more information about the program, including FAQs and the application form, visit www.outdooralabama.com/2019-flood-relief.

ADCNR promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources through four divisions: Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries. Learn more at www.outdooralabama.com.

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