



ROY COOPER
Governor

MICHAEL S. REGAN
Secretary

STEPHEN W. MURPHEY
Director

November 1, 2020

Dear Potential Applicant:

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act authorized the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to provide \$300 million for economic assistance to affected fishery participants due to the coronavirus (“COVID-19”) pandemic. The North Carolina CARES Act Fisheries Relief Program (“Program”) received approximately \$5.4 million from this funding to provide financial relief to fishery-related stakeholder groups affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through direct payout. The affected stakeholder categories approved for payments are commercial fishermen (including shellfish license holders), marine aquaculture operations, seafood processors and dealers, and for-hire fishing operators.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (“NOAA”) Fisheries guidance requires applicants to demonstrate a sustained reduction in revenue greater than thirty-five percent (35%) due directly to COVID-19 during the period between March 1 and May 31, 2020, as compared to the average revenue for that same period of March 1 – May 31 for the five preceding years of 2015-2019. Instructions and an example of how to calculate this reduction are included on Page 2 of the Program Self-Certification and Assurances (Affidavit) included in this application package. One of the objectives of the Program is to make participants whole; that is, to put them in the same position financially as they would have been had COVID-19 not occurred. NOAA Fisheries also requires that any relief monies received from the Program cannot result in a participant’s annual (January to December) 2020 earnings exceeding their five-year average annual (January to December) revenue between the years 2015-2019. Participants will not be allowed to retain any fisheries relief monies that advance their annual (January to December) 2020 earnings beyond their previous annual (January to December) five-year average and may be required to pay back some or all of the relief monies that exceed their annual (January to December) five-year average earnings from years 2015-2019. If you feel that your annual 2020 earnings may exceed your previous annual five-year average, you will need to consider whether or not you should apply for assistance from the Program.

If you feel that you qualify and would like to participate in the Program, please complete the enclosed forms:

- Program Self-Certification and Assurances (Affidavit)
- Program Application
- State of North Carolina Substitute W-9 Form

Please include all three documents, as well as all supporting documentation showing proof of identity and revenue loss as described on the application. Applications and supporting documentation must be delivered in person to the NCDMF Headquarters Office located in Morehead City or postmarked by 5pm on November 30, 2020. Applications and supporting documentation cannot be submitted to other NCDMF offices. Applications and supporting documentation that are submitted after 5pm on November 30, 2020 will not be considered.

If you have any questions about the Program, you may send an email to covid19relief@ncdenr.gov or call NCDMF staff in Morehead City, NC at (252) 808-8105 or 1-800-682-2632 (toll-free in N.C. only).

Sincerely,

Stephen W. Murphey
Director