

## **DLNR SOLICITING LETTERS OF INTEREST FOR FISHERIES DISASTER RELIEF**

Honolulu- The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) is seeking to identify commercial fishers operating in the Hawaii-based pelagic fisheries, bottomfish fisheries, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands lobster fisheries, and precious coral fisheries managed by the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council who may have been negatively affected by federally imposed fishing restrictions or closure of fishing grounds.

"These commercial fishers may be eligible for a share of \$1.6-million in Federal Disaster Relief Program (FDRP) funding for gear replacement, vessel modifications and other costs relating to compliance with Federal regulations or the seeking of alternate fisheries. This funding comes from a one-time, direct lump sum payment to the State of Hawaii for economic assistance to fisheries affected by federal closures or fishing restrictions," said Peter Young, DLNR Chairperson

Any impacted individual or organization in Hawaii considering applying for direct assistance should submit a Letter of Interest to the FDRP Coordinator under the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) at DLNR. The letter should detail the financial impacts of Federal closures and restrictions on the fisher's business. Projects should target a goal for completion of one year from time of funding.

The response from this solicitation of letters will determine the number of potential applicants who are interested in submitting project proposals, the amount of funds being requested, and the locations where public meetings should be held in the future to assist commercial fishers in further developing their proposals.

"We are pleased to be able to assist commercial fishers who have been negatively affected by Federal regulations or fishing area closures," said Young. "We hope that these funds can provide some relief to those who have been affected."

**The criteria for reviewing the proposals are currently being developed by a Technical Working Group (TWG) made up of commercial fishers, marine resource management professionals and scientists. The TWG will weigh the economic impact of Federal fishery closures or restrictions to each of the applicants, as well as the total number of applicants, the funding available and the relative merits of each project proposal. Any proposal submitted by a commercial fisher impacted by Federal closures or restrictions will be accepted. Each proposal will then be processed and the approved criteria applied to weigh the merits of the proposal and help the TWG determine who will receive an award and how much funding they will receive, taking into account **award amount and the benefit to the commercial fishing industry.****

Letters must be postmarked or received by September 16, 2005 and addressed to the DLNR FDRP Coordinator at 1039 Sand Island Parkway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96819.

Letters may also be submitted via email in MS Word or PDF format to

earl.miyamoto@verizon.net or via facsimile to (808) 832-5018.

More information on this program and an outline of the format for proposed Letters of Interest can be found on the DLNR website at [www.hawaii.gov/dlnr/dar/](http://www.hawaii.gov/dlnr/dar/) or obtained from the FDRP Office on Sand Island Parkway, telephone: (808) 832-5017.

###

Contact:

Earl Miyamoto  
FDRP Coordinator  
Division of Aquatic Resources  
(808) 832-5017