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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

I write to request the assistance of the U.S. Department of the Interior with disaster relief efforts for Puerto Rico and Florida in the wake of Hurricanes Fiona and Ian.

On September 22, 2022, President Biden approved a Major Disaster Declaration for Puerto Rico, which triggers the allocation of emergency funds. On September 29, 2022, the President approved another Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Florida. I ask that the Department of the Interior, in its role as the Coordinating Agency of the Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Support Function (NCR RSF), provide leadership, coordination, and oversight to ensure appropriate response and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore natural, cultural, and historic resources in accordance with the role of the NCR RSF.

Puerto Rico is struggling to recover in the wake of yet another natural disaster and is focusing its efforts on restoring essential services to residents. In addition, it is also imperative to preserve the island's cultural and natural resources, including the San Juan National Historic Site and various National Wildlife Refuges. It is crucial that all relief programs and funds are fully extended to the island's 3.2 million U.S. citizens, as they would on the mainland.

I also urge you to help the Government of Puerto Rico and the State of Florida by identifying any further assistance and program eligibility for restoration of these important resources.

Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva
Chair
U.S. House Natural Resources Committee