

## Makeda Okolo - NOAA Federal

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**From:** Makeda Okolo - NOAA Federal  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 10, 2019 3:29 PM  
**To:** Benjamin Friedman - NOAA Federal  
**Subject:** Fwd: Chair Grijalva, Rep. Huffman Request Documents From Commerce Sec. Wilbur Ross on "Sharpiegate" Political Interference, Threats Against NOAA Staff

FYI

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**From:** Sarvana, Adam <[Adam.Sarvana@mail.house.gov](mailto:Adam.Sarvana@mail.house.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Sep 10, 2019 at 1:34 PM  
**Subject:** Chair Grijalva, Rep. Huffman Request Documents From Commerce Sec. Wilbur Ross on "Sharpiegate" Political Interference, Threats Against NOAA Staff  
**To:**



**September 10, 2019**

Media Contact: Adam Sarvana  
(202) 225-6065 or (202) 578-6626 mobile

## Chair Grijalva, Rep. Huffman Request Documents From Commerce Sec. Wilbur Ross on "Sharpiegate" Political Interference, Threats Against NOAA Staff

*Washington, D.C.* – Chair Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.) and Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif.), chair of the Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife, wrote to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross today [requesting a series of documents](#) on his reported threats against long-time National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) officials in connection with President Trump’s inaccurate, widely debunked claim that Hurricane Dorian would put Alabama at risk of storm damage. The Natural Resources Committee has jurisdiction over many of NOAA’s functions, including fisheries and coastal zone management, among others.

President Trump's insistence that he was correct in his false assertion that Hurricane Dorian threatened Alabama has become known as "Sharpiegate," after the White House released an obviously doctored map of the hurricane's expected path across the Southeast. The lawmakers' letter is available at <http://bit.ly/2kCpdEY>.

On Sept. 9, the *New York Times* [reported](#) that on Sept. 6, Ross called Dr. Neil Jacobs, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Acting Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, to instruct him to "fix the agency's perceived contradiction of the president" and threatened to fire NOAA's political staff. Later that day, NOAA issued a false, unsigned statement contradicting an earlier accurate tweet from the National Weather Service's (NWS) Birmingham, Ala., office saying that Alabama was not at risk from Hurricane Dorian.

"If true," the lawmakers write, "these allegations, along with your prior promulgation of regulations to allow overfishing, demonstrate a potential pattern of intent to exert political influence over the agency's scientific integrity."

Grijalva and Huffman request three sets of documents by Sept. 24:

1. All documents, communications, and records of communications referring or relating to the creation or drafting of NOAA's unsigned September 6 statement;
2. All documents, communication, and records of communications from Secretary Ross and Department of Commerce staff referring or relating to participation in communication related to Hurricane Dorian; and
3. All documents and communications from NOAA and NWS employees referring or relating to participation in communications related to Hurricane Dorian.

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