



Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503



FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU of LAND MANAGEMENT
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BUREAU of INDIAN AFFAIRS

FOREST SERVICE

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE EULACHON FISHERY CLOSED IN DISTRICT ONE

SPECIAL ACTION: FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

Under authority of: 36 CFR 242.10 and .19
50 CFR 100.10 and .19

Special Action No: 13-EU-02-18

Issued at: Ketchikan Alaska, February 26, 2018

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Saturday, February 24, 2018

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, April 24, 2018 unless superseded by subsequent special action

EXPLANATION:

This Special Action closes Federal public waters draining into District 1 to the taking of eulachon. All eulachon incidentally caught must be immediately released into the water unharmed. Subsistence fishing for species other than eulachon in drainages flowing into District 1 continues to be permitted. All lawful subsistence gear for species other than eulachon may continue to be used in Federal public waters. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has also implemented a similar closure within the entirety of District 1 for the State subsistence, personal use and commercial fisheries.

REGULATION: 50 CFR 100.27(e)(13)(ii) and 36 CFR 242.27(e)(13)(ii) are amended to read:

*§___.27(e)(13)(ii) You must possess a subsistence fishing permit to take salmon, trout, grayling, or char. You must possess a subsistence fishing permit to take eulachon from any freshwater stream flowing into fishing Sections 1C or 1D. **Eulachon may not be taken from waters draining into District 1 from 12:01 a.m., February 24 through 11:59 p.m., April 24, 2018***

Federal Subsistence Board by delegation to:

/s/Susan A. Howle
SUSAN A. HOWLE
District Ranger
Ketchikan-Misty Fjords Ranger District
26 February 2018

JUSTIFICATION:

Populations of eulachon in District 1 have been critically low since 2005. Monitoring efforts by the Forest Service, ADF&G, and fisherman since 2001 have provided base line information that indicated a decline in the populations of District 1 eulachon. Although river surveys have occurred to document adult returns, little is known about the eulachon after they leave river systems for saltwater.

District 1 historically supported subsistence, personal use and commercial fisheries for eulachon. In 2004, only 1500 pounds of eulachon were harvested and very low numbers of returning eulachon were seen by both subsistence fisherman and Forest Service personnel. Very few eulachon were seen annually in the area from 2005 through 2010. Portions of District 1 have been closed since 2005 due to the severe declines in local eulachon returns and critically low numbers returning to the area overall.

Managers are starting to see signs of recovery. From 2011-2015, eulachon returns of unknown size occurred in both Burroughs Bay and the Carroll Inlet area. Eulachon again returned to the area in 2016 and 2017, however in far less abundance than observed during the previous years. Genetic analysis of Carroll Inlet eulachon showed that they are genetically similar to Unuk River eulachon.

Despite recent returns, the stock sizes in District 1 remain critically low. With the stocks at these levels, there are few options available to managers for conservation other than closure. The eulachon life cycle is typically five years. Based on the numbers observed for the last three years it is not likely a harvestable surplus will be available in 2018. It is anticipated that all eulachon returning to District 1 in 2018 will be needed for spawning to rebuild the area eulachon returns. Therefore, Federal public waters draining into District 1 will be closed to the taking of eulachon to provide for conservation of eulachon.

DISTRIBUTION:

RADIO

KBRD Radio; KCAW Radio; KRSA Radio

PRINT

Ketchikan Daily News; Sitka Sentinel; Juneau Empire

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

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