



Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Rd, Mail Stop 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

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

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY FOR EULACHON CLOSED IN DISTRICT ONE

SPECIAL ACTION: FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

Under Authority of: 50 CFR Part 100.27(i)(13)(i) and (ii)
36 CFR Part 242.27(i)(13)(i) and (ii)

Special Action No: 13-EU-01-17

Issued at: Ketchikan, Alaska, March 2, 2017

Effective Date: Monday, March 6, 2017 12:01 AM

Expiration Date: Wednesday, May 4, 2017 11:59 PM, unless superseded by subsequent special action.

EXPLANATION: This Special Action closes Federal public waters draining into District 1 to the taking of eulachon. The closure begins on Monday, March 6, 2017 at 12:01 a.m. and continues through 11:59 p.m. May 4, 2017. 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(i)(13)(i) is amended to read: (i) Unless restricted in this section or under the terms of a subsistence fishing permit, you may take fish other than salmon, trout, grayling, and char in the Southeastern Alaska Area at any time. (ii) You must possess a subsistence fishing permit to take salmon, trout, grayling, or char.

§__.27(i)(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., March 6 through May 4, 2017, 11:59 p.m.

Federal Subsistence Board by delegation to:

/s/ Jeff DeFreest

JEFF DEFREEST

District Ranger

Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District

2 March 2017

JUSTIFICATION: Populations of eulachon in District 1 have been at critically low levels since 2005. Monitoring efforts made 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 still 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. From 2005 through 2010, very few eulachon were seen annually in the area during this period.

Due to the sharp declines in the overall number of eulachon, along with critically low numbers returning to the area, portions of District 1 have been closed since 2005. Managers are starting to see signs of a stock recovery. From 2011-2015, unknown sized returns of eulachon occurred in both Burroughs Bay and also in the Carroll Inlet area. Eulachon again returned to the area in 2016, however in far less abundance than seen during the previous years. Genetic analysis of Carroll Inlet fish showed these fish to be genetically similar to Unuk River eulachon.

Despite these returns, the stock sizes within District 1 still remain at critically low levels. 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 2017. It is anticipated that all eulachon returning to District 1 in 2017 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 by all users in 2017 to provide for conservation of eulachon.

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