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RC 71



✦ **5 AAC 33.520. Southeastern Alaska Area Eulachon Smelt Management Plan**

✦ (a) Eulachon smelt (*thaleichthys pacificus*) may be taken in the Southeastern Alaska Area only by a CFEC permit holder. Before taking eulachon smelt, a CFEC permit holder must register with the department no later than March 1 of each calendar year.

(b) Eulachon smelt may be taken only from 12:01 a.m. March 2 through 11:59 p.m. May 15.

(c) Eulachon smelt may only be taken in the following areas in the Southeastern Alaska Area:

(1) Unuk River and Klahini River: north of 56° 02' N. lat.;

(2) Chickamin River: east of a line from Fish Point to Trap Point;

(3) Stikine River: inside of a line from Babbler Point to Hour Point along the shore of Wrangell Island to Point Highfield to the southern end of Liesnoi Island to the southern end of Greys Island to the small island near the eastern entrance of Blind Slough to the nearest point of Mitkof Island to the prominent point of Mitkof Island nearest Coney Island to the northern end of Coney Island to a point 500 yards north of Jap Creek on the mainland shore;

(4) Bradfield Canal: east of the longitude of Duck Point.

(d) Eulachon smelt may only be taken by beach seine, purse seine, hand purse seine, dip net, or cast net.

(e) The maximum harvest level for each area described in (f) of this section will be divided equally among permit holders.

(f) The maximum harvest levels for the taking of eulachon smelt in the Southeastern Alaska Area are as follows:

(1) Unuk, Klahini, and Chickamin Rivers combined: 25,000 pounds;

(2) Bradfield Canal: 5,000 pounds;

(3) Stikine River: 5,000 pounds.

(g) A permit holder who sells eulachon smelt from the permit holder's vessel or processes the permit holder's own catch, or a processor who sends unprocessed catch out of the state, must comply with the permit and reporting requirements of 5 AAC 39.130.

✦ **History:** Eff. 7/21/99, Register 151; am 6/14/2000, Register 154; am 3/11/2001, Register 157

✦ **Authority:** AS 16.05.251

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*Proposal 243 is a board-generated proposal created by the board at its October 2012 meeting. This proposal will be considered by the board at its STATEWIDE FINFISH AND SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES meeting scheduled for March 19-24, 2013.*

**PROPOSAL 243 – 5 AAC 39.212. Forage Fish Management Plan.** Modify by the addition of Pacific herring as follows:

**5 AAC 39.212. Forage Fish Management Plan.**

- (a) This management plan governs the commercial harvesting of forage fish species in the waters of Alaska.
- (b) The board finds that forage fish perform a critical role in the complex marine ecosystem by providing the transfer of energy from the primary and secondary producers to higher trophic levels. The higher trophic levels include many commercially important fish and shellfish species. Forage fish also serve as important prey species for marine mammals and seabirds.
- (c) The board finds that abundant populations of forage fish are necessary to sustain healthy populations of commercially important species of salmon, groundfish, halibut, and shellfish.
- (d) Except as otherwise provided in 5 AAC 03 – 5 AAC 39, forage fish may not be commercially taken.
- (e) A vessel fishing in a directed groundfish fishery may retain a maximum allowable bycatch of forage fish equal to no more than two percent of the round weight or round weight equivalent of the groundfish on board the vessel.
- (f) For the purposes of this section, "forage fish" means the following species of fish:
  - (1) Family Osmeridae (capelin, eulachon, and other smelts);
  - (2) Family Myctophidae (lanternfishes);
  - (3) Family Bathylagidae (deep-sea smelt);
  - (4) Family Ammodtidea (Pacific sand lance);
  - (5) Family Trichodontidae (Pacific sandfish);
  - (6) Family Pholidae (gunnells);
  - (7) Family Stichaeidae (pricklebacks, warbonnets, eelblennys, cockscombs, and shannys);
  - (8) Family Gonostomatidae (bristlemouths, lightfishes, and anglemouths);
  - (9) species of the Order Euphausiacea (krill);
  - (10) Family Clupeidae (Pacific herring).**

**ISSUE:** Currently, the *Forage Fish Management Plan* does not specify Pacific herring as a forage fish.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** Regulations will remain unclear regarding whether the Alaska Board of Fisheries considers Pacific herring as a forage fish.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** N/A.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Members of the public.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** This proposal will not affect anyone currently participating in commercial herring fisheries that are specified in regulatory Chapters 5 AAC 03–5 AAC 39.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** None.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Board of Fisheries. (formerly ACR 1)