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## Federal Subsistence Board News Release



Forest Service

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY FOR EULACHON CLOSED IN FEDERAL WATERS IN AREA 1D – BURROUGHS BAY AREA**

KETCHIKAN, AK—Ketchikan-Misty Fiords District Ranger Jeff DeFreest has announced that he is acting immediately to protect eulachon stocks in the Burroughs Bay/Unuk River area north of Ketchikan, Alaska. The District Ranger, as in-season manager, is closing the Federal subsistence eulachon fishery to all users in Federal public waters in the Burroughs Bay/Unuk River area (Area 1D) due to very low fish numbers in 2004 through 2010. The Federal Subsistence Board has delegated this in-season management authority to him. The closure will be effective 11:59 P.M., Sunday, February 20, 2011 and continue until 11:59 P.M., April 20, 2011. Any eulachon caught in this area must be immediately returned into the water unharmed.

Few eulachon have returned to the Burroughs Bay area since 2003. A similar closure was issued by the USDA Forest Service for the Burroughs Bay eulachon in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. Unfortunately, once again very few eulachon were seen in the area during the 2009 monitoring efforts. DeFreest stated, “Eulachon are an important subsistence fish for many residents of Southeast Alaska, so I’m acting to protect these stocks in hopes we can rebuild fish populations for the future.”

The strength of the eulachon return is determined by the amount of harvest by federally qualified subsistence fishermen and through observations made by Forest Service personnel. In 2004, only 1,500 pounds of eulachon were harvested and very low numbers of returning eulachon were seen by either fishermen or Forest Service personnel. In 2005 through 2010, no fish were harvested and only a few eulachon (42) were seen in the area. Monitoring efforts by the Forest Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), and

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fishermen since 2001 have provided baseline information, but still little is known about the eulachon after they leave the river system for saltwater. Since the projected escapement of eulachon in the Burroughs Bay area for 2011 is unknown at this time, the eulachon fishery will be closed to all users for 60 days to provide for spawning escapement needs for any fish that do return in 2011.

The USDA Forest Service manages subsistence fisheries in fresh waters of the Tongass National Forest. The ADF&G continues to manage subsistence fisheries in marine waters of the State of Alaska. This special action has been coordinated with, and parallel actions are being taken by, the ADF&G as they apply to the eulachon fisheries in Burroughs Bay area.

“With this concurrent action by the ADF&G and the U.S. Forest Service, both Federal subsistence and State subsistence eulachon fishing in fresh and saltwater are closed in Area 1D for 60 days as of 11:59 P.M. Sunday, February 20, 2011,” DeFreest said. Area 1D includes Burroughs Bay and extends north of Rudyard Bay in East Behm Canal to Chin Point in West Behm Canal. The Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, in cooperation with ADF&G, will continue to monitor returns to this system and will provide a further update in the event that a change in the situation occurs.

For additional information, please contact Jeff DeFreest at (907) 228-4100 or Will Young at (907) 228-4137. Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program can be found on the web at <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/home.html>.

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