



## Eulachon (Fraser River population)

### [Submit Your Comments Here](#)

Information summary and [survey](#) for the consultations on adding Eulachon (Fraser River population) of to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as Endangered – **Please provide your input by November 30, 2016**

#### Consultations

Let your opinion be heard

Canada's *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) provides legal protection for wildlife species at risk to conserve biological diversity. It also acknowledges that all Canadians have a role to play in the conservation of wildlife species.

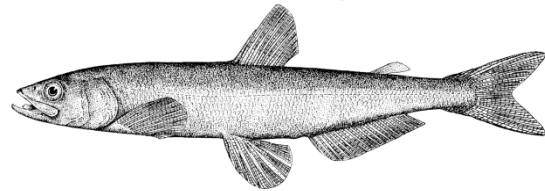
Before deciding whether the Fraser River population of Eulachon (*Thaleichthys pacificus*) will be added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as Endangered, we would like to hear your opinion, comments, and suggestions regarding the possible ecological, cultural, and economic impacts of listing or not listing this species under SARA.

#### Adding a species to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk

The process of listing a species under SARA consists of several steps: it begins with a status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and ends with a Government of Canada decision on whether or not to add a species to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk. Public consultations are conducted to gather the opinions of Canadians and are an important step in this process.

#### Facts about Eulachon

Eulachon are small (less than 20cm in length) anadromous fish, and are one of the 10 smelt species in the family *Osmeridae*. The species is also referred to as candlefish, oolichan, and ooligan, amongst other names. Eulachon have significant cultural and economic value to coastal First Nations in British Columbia (B.C.).



Eulachon are endemic to the northeastern Pacific Ocean, occurring from California to the eastern Bering Sea. Eulachon populations have declined throughout their range since the mid 1990's.

They spend more than 95 percent of their life in the marine environment, and only enter freshwater systems during spawning, egg, and early larval stages.

Within B.C., Eulachon are believed to occur in at least 38 glacially fed rivers; with the Fraser River being the only river included in the Fraser River DU (Figure 1).

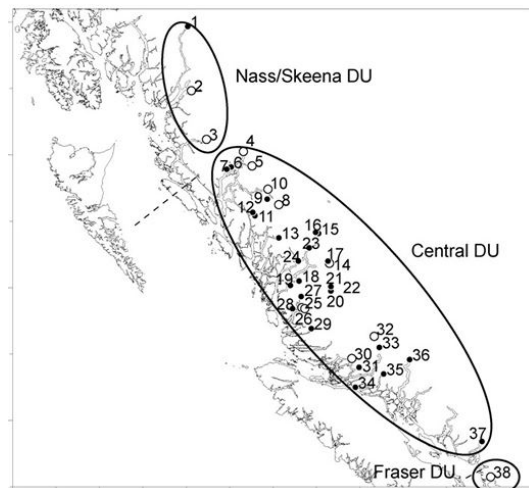


Figure 1. Distribution of the three populations (DUs) of Eulachon within Canada (COSEWIC 2011).

## Aquatic Species at Risk



### Who assigned the Endangered status to the Fraser River population of Eulachon?

COSEWIC is an independent committee of experts that assesses which wildlife species are in some danger of disappearing from Canada and assigns a status to these species. It conducts its assessments based on the best available information including scientific data, local ecological knowledge, and Aboriginal traditional knowledge. In 2011, COSEWIC assessed Eulachon within British Columbia waters as three populations: the Central Pacific Coast and Fraser River populations as Endangered and the Nass/Skeena population as Special Concern. Under SARA, an endangered species is defined as one that is facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

### Why is Eulachon (Fraser River) at risk?

COSEWIC assessed the Fraser River population as 'Endangered' because this population's spawning biomass reached a historic low of only 10 tonnes in 2008. Based on the available spawning stock biomass time series, the 10-year decline rate was estimated to be 98%. The small spawning area for this population constitutes a single location.

Factors contributing to the coast-wide decline of Eulachon populations are unclear. DFO has undertaken many activities since 1995 to protect Eulachon. Threats to individuals as well as their habitat occur in both freshwater and marine environments.

Presently, commercial and recreational fisheries for Eulachon are closed within Canada. First Nation fisheries for Eulachon remain active on the Fraser River, but are significantly reduced from historic levels due to declines in runs. Eulachon are incidentally caught in commercial shrimp trawl and groundfish trawl fisheries. Activities that may lead to habitat degradation on the Fraser River include dredging, industrial and agricultural pollution, shoreline development, and forestry.

### If a species is listed under the *Species at Risk Act*

If the Fraser River population of Eulachon is listed as Endangered, the prohibitions of SARA would immediately come into effect in Canadian waters. It would be illegal to kill, harm, harass, capture, possess, buy, sell, or trade Eulachon. However, activities that may affect the species or its critical habitat may be permitted under SARA section 73-74, or exempt under section 83, where that activity does not jeopardize the survival or recovery of the species. A recovery strategy and subsequent action plan(s) would be developed to identify measures to address known threats. Critical habitat—the habitat necessary for the survival and recovery of Eulachon—would need to be identified, to the extent possible, in a recovery strategy or action plan and protected from destruction.

**We would like to receive your comments on the potential impacts of adding or not adding Eulachon (Fraser River population) to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk under SARA designated as Endangered.**

**Your comments are important.**

**Please fill out the [survey](#): we want to hear from you.**

Before completing this survey, you may wish to review the following background information found at the links below:

- [2011 COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report on the Eulachon](#)
- [Recovery Potential Assessment](#) (DFO's peer-reviewed scientific advice);
- Management Scenarios; and an analysis of the economic benefits and costs of the management scenarios (<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/sara-lep/eulachon-eulakane/fr-eula-ff-eng.html>)
- other information can be found on the Species at Risk Public Registry at [www.sararegistry.gc.ca](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca).

**Thank you for completing this [survey](#).**  
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