
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner
Sam Rabung, Director



Contact:
Eric Coonradt

Sitka Area Office
304 Lake Street, Room 103
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Phone: (907) 747-6688
Fax: (907) 747-6693

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SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sitka. . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today that the Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery will be on 2-hour notice effective 8:00 a.m., Sunday, March 17, 2019. This means that a fishery could be expected with a minimum of two hours notice after the effective time.

An aerial survey was conducted today covering Sitka Sound from Cape Burunof to Hayward Strait. Weather during today's flight was good with east winds at 15-20 knots and overcast skies. No herring or herring spawn was observed on today's flight. The highest concentration of herring predators was observed between Bieli Rock, Inner Point, and Hayward Strait where numerous whales were seen working in deeper waters north of Bieli Rock and approximately 300 sea lions in several large groups holding off the rock piles. Additionally, two whales and a small group of sea lions were observed in Western Channel from Signal Island to Battery Island. South of Sitka, two whales were observed in outer Eastern Channel.

A 250-ton sample taken yesterday by the *F/V Hukilau* in Promisula Bay yielded 109-gram average size herring, 9.04% mature roe, 2.71% immature roe, and 49% female. Given the observed herring schools in shallower waters and the mature state of this sample, the department is placing the fleet on 2-hour notice.

The department will hold an organizational meeting with fishermen, processors, and interested individuals at 1:30 p.m., Saturday, March 16 at the Westmark Hotel meeting room.

All processors, fishing vessels, and tenders must be registered with the department before participating in the fishery.

The *R/V Kestrel* will be arriving Sitka on Sunday morning, March 17.

Seine boats wanting to conduct practice sets or stretch nets may do so in Eastern Channel south of Jamestown Bay until further notice.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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