



**Advisory Announcement**  
*For Immediate Release: March 14, 2023*

**CONTACT: Aaron Dupuis**  
**Sitka Area Management Biologist**  
**aaron.dupuis@alaska.gov**  
**(907) 747-6688**

**SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 2**

Today's aerial herring survey covered from Povorotni Point in Sitka Sound to Salisbury Sound. Survey conditions were good with partly cloudy skies, light winds, and excellent visibility. No herring schools or spawn were observed today; however, herring predators were observed along the Kruzof Island shoreline from Inner Point to Kamenoi Point, Guide Island, west of the Siginaka Islands, and near Bieli Rock. Humpback whales were mostly concentrated in the shallower waters of the Kruzof Island shoreline from Inner Point to Hayward Strait and in deeper waters west of Bieli Rock. It did appear that some whales have shifted to the deeper waters west of Bieli Rock since yesterday. Large numbers of sea lions were observed off the rockpiles between Inner Point and Rob Point. Additionally, several sealions were seen traveling north in Neva Strait. Predator numbers and locations are unusual for this time of year; typically, humpback whales are concentrated in the deeper waters near Bieli Rock and Vistskari Rocks and sea lions are mostly concentrated at haulout areas near Biorka Island and West Crawfish Inlet.

Department and industry vessels surveyed the Hayward Strait area yesterday and located several very large schools of herring between Guide Island and Kamenoi Point.

One successful test set was conducted yesterday, the results are as follows:

- 2:18 p.m., Hayward Strait, 30-ton set, mature roe – 0%, immature roe – 8.3%, average weight – 115 g, and 42.7% female.

Herring mortality associated with test sets is likely minimal and there is no evidence that the small number of fish taken has any measurable impact on the subsistence fishery. Nevertheless, to ensure reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvest of herring roe would not be negatively impacted by test setting, prior to authorizing test fishing in this area the department considered the following: 1) test setting in the area of Hayward Strait is well outside the commercial closed waters and core subsistence areas; and 2) the fish encountered during test fishing in this area would represent a small fraction of the overall biomass in the area.

The next aerial survey is scheduled for Wednesday, March 15 and the next fishery update can be expected after the survey is completed.

All aerial herring survey data can be reviewed online, including spawn lines and photos, in an interactive map application found at: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.herring#maps> or scan:



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

Office	Ketchikan	Petersburg	Wrangell	Sitka	Juneau	Haines	Yakutat
ADF&G	225-5195	772-3801		747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
AWT	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220