



Advisory Announcement
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SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 10

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Povorotni Point to St. Lazaria Island and as far north as Krestof Sound. Survey conditions were good with overcast skies and 15-knot winds. No spawn was seen, but herring schools were observed within regulatory closed waters among the Kasiana Islands and just north of Galankin Island. Herring predators were scattered across Sitka Sound. Rafts of sea lions were seen along the Kruzof shoreline from Shoals Point to Kamenoi Point. Humpback whales were seen from St. Lazaria to Low Island, Inner Point to Kamenoi Point, west of Kasiana Islands, and north of Long Island.

Department and industry vessels surveyed south of Sitka from Indian River to Long Island and in the northern portion of Sitka Sound from Fred's Creek to the Siginaka Islands. Several very large schools of herring were located from Fred's Creek to Guide Island, near the Siginaka Islands, and from Makhnati Island to Breast Island. Additionally, several schools of herring were observed within regulatory closed waters from Harbor Point to Makhnati Island and in Crow Pass.

Five successful test sets were conducted today; the results are as follows:

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
07:12	Indian River	75	10.1 %	1.7 %	145 g	44.0 %
08:39	Kamenoi Point	150	10.0 %	1.9 %	128 g	43.4 %
08:52	Rockwell Island	300	11.5 %	2.5 %	132 g	55.5 %
10:51	N. Whale Island	75	9.5 %	1.4 %	142 g	40.1 %
14:36	Inner Point	150	7.6 %	3.2%	147 g	42.7 %

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) the areas of Hayward Strait, Inner Point, Whale Island/Rockwell Island are outside the commercial closed waters and core subsistence areas; and 2) the fish encountered during test fishing represented a small fraction of the overall biomass in each area.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Sunday, March 26.

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>.

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