



**Advisory Announcement**  
***For Immediate Release: March 27, 2023***

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**SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 12**

An additional aerial survey was conducted yesterday afternoon that added 1 nautical mile (nmi) of additional spawn that expanded on the southern Kruzof Island shoreline, increasing yesterday's spawn estimate to approximately 3 nmi. Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Redoubt Bay to Cape Edgecumbe and as far north as the Magoun Islands. Survey conditions were good with clear skies and 10-knot winds. Herring schools were seen in Deep Inlet and Redoubt Bay during the aerial survey. Approximately 7.7 nmi of active herring spawn was seen on the southern and southeastern Kruzof Island shoreline from Cape Edgecumbe to around Shoals Point, and south of Fred's Creek (Figure 1). Herring predators were concentrated around Inner Point and west of Cape Burunof and Povorotni Point.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound from Makhnati Island to Long Island, from Deep Inlet to Peisar Island, and the eastern Kruzof shoreline from Shoals Point to Hayward Strait. Several very large schools of herring were located on sonar from Kamenoi Point to Inner Point, from Makhnati Island to Jamestown Bay, and from Cape Burunof to Peisar Island.

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

| Time  | Area               | Tons | % Mature Roe | % Immature Roe | Avg weight | % Female |
|-------|--------------------|------|--------------|----------------|------------|----------|
| 09:15 | Inner Point        | 75   | 8.8 %        | 3.8 %          | 141 g      | 53.5 %   |
| 09:29 | Inner Point        | 150  | 8.4 %        | 3.2 %          | 124 g      | 49.6 %   |
| 11:03 | Makhnati Island    | 150  | 8.7 %        | 1.8 %          | 121 g      | 43.0%    |
| 13:14 | N of Peisar Island | 300  | 8.3 %        | 2.1 %          | 109 g      | 47.1 %   |

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 sampled today 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 Tuesday, March 28.

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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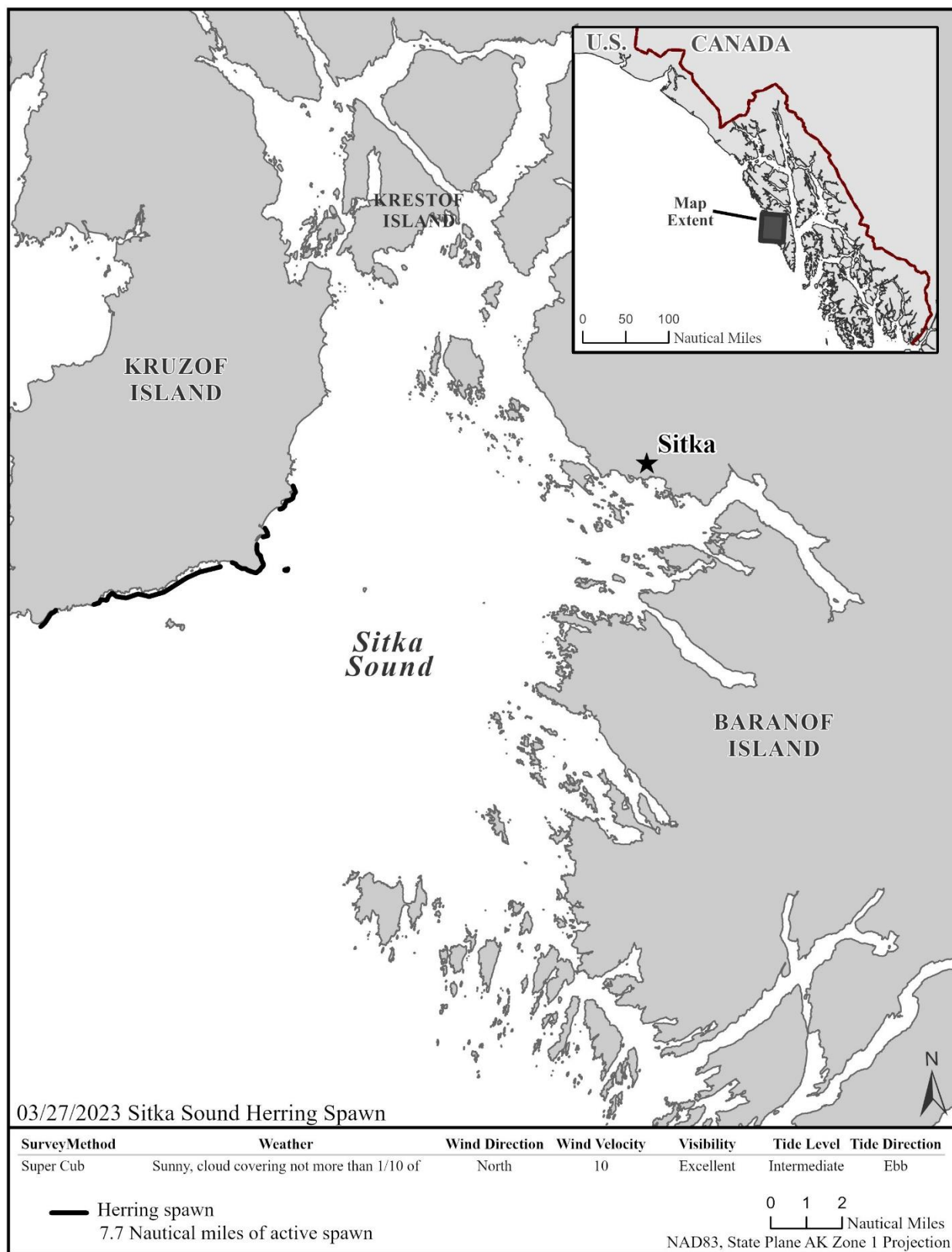


Figure 1.— Map of the active spawning areas in Sitka Sound during the aerial survey on March 27, 2023.