



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: April 8, 2023

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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 24

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from as far south as Hot Springs Bay, to as far north as Middle Island, and west to Vitskari Rocks. Survey conditions today were poor with turbulence affecting and ultimately ending the survey with 30 knot east winds and partly cloudy skies, although the visibility was excellent. Of the area surveyed, approximately 1.7 nautical miles (nmi) of active spawn was observed at Middle Island, Kasiana Islands, and the Goddard area. The cumulative spawn estimate is approximately 60.0 nmi.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound from Crescent Bay to West Crawfish Inlet. Several schools of herring were located on sonar throughout the surveyed area, most notably in Big Bay and throughout Windy Passage.

Two successful test sets were conducted today; the results were:

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
8:30	Big Bay	50	10.7 %	0.8 %	92 g	51.7 %
8:35	Dorothy Narrows	75	8.6 %	0.6 %	100 g	41.7 %

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 these areas the department considered the following: 1) the areas sampled today were 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.

Approximately, 1,600-tons of herring were harvested during the fishery that occurred on April 7. Approximately 10,900 tons of herring have been harvested this season. No fishery occurred today.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Sunday, April 9.

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

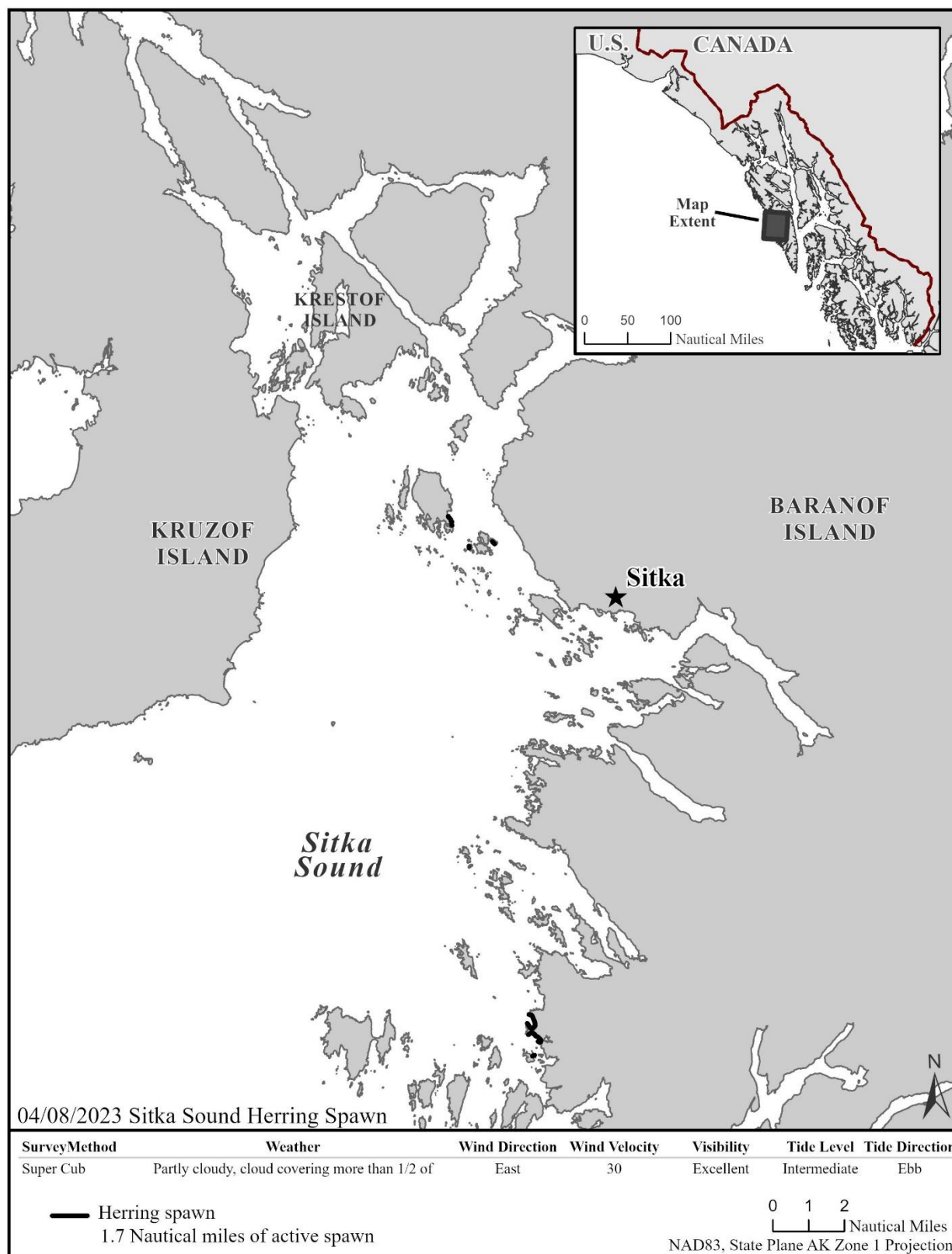


Figure 1.— Map of the active spawning areas in Sitka Sound during the aerial survey on April 8, 2023.