



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: April 9, 2023

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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 25

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Windy Passage to St. John Baptist Bay, and west to Shoals Point. Survey conditions today were fair with scattered showers occasionally affecting visibility, with 20 knot southeast winds, and cloudy skies. Approximately 6.6 nautical miles (nmi) of active spawn was observed from Dorothy Narrows to around the Goddard area, and at Middle Island. The cumulative spawn estimate is approximately 64.8 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. However, very large schools of herring were observed throughout Windy Passage.

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

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
10:00	Dorothy Narrows	50	7.2 %	1.7 %	82 g	-
12:00	Golf Island	50	6.8 %	1.2 %	88 g	-

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.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Monday, April 10.

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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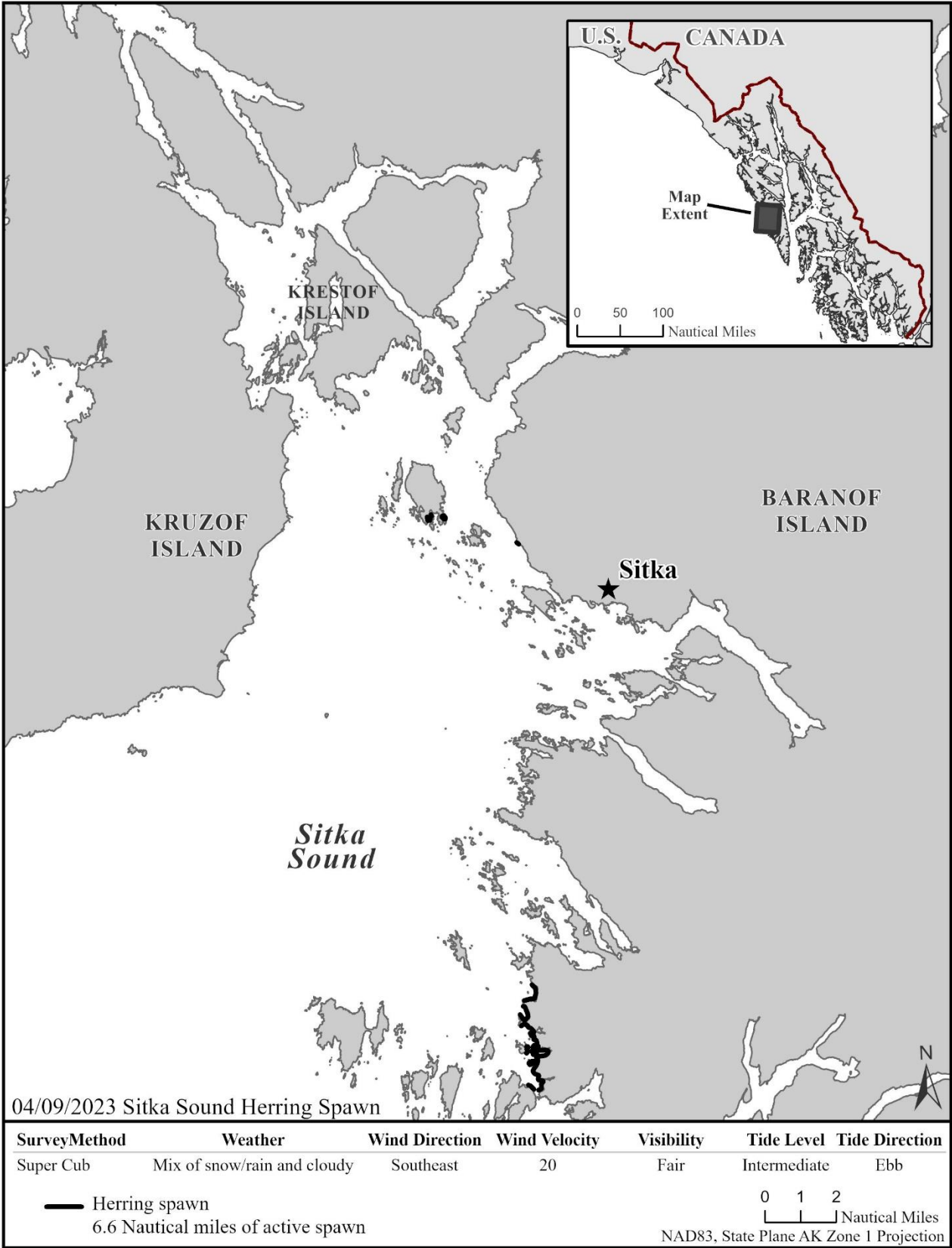


Figure 1.– Map of the active spawning areas in Sitka Sound during the aerial survey on April 9, 2023.