



Advisory Announcement
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SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 4

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Cape Burunof to Krestof Sound and St. Lazaria Island. No herring schools or spawn were observed today. Herring predators were seen throughout the surveyed area; however, predator activity was focused along the Kruzof Island shoreline from Inner Point to Hayward Strait. The largest concentrations of humpback whales were located near Mountain Point. Sea lions were concentrated on points and rock piles between Sitka Point and the Magoun Islands. In general, predator locations shifted significantly eastward along the Kruzof Island shoreline relative to the previous aerial survey.

Department and industry vessels surveyed along the Kruzof Island shoreline from Sitka Point to Krestof Sound. Scattered smaller schools of herring were observed between Sitka Point and Fred's Creek and very large schools of herring were seen between Fred's Creek and Hayward Strait.

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

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
10:18	Hayward Strait	200	1.9 %	8.6 %	90 g	-
10:40	Mountain Point	100	6.6 %	3.9 %	143 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 area near Mountain Point and Hayward Strait is 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 these areas.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Friday, March 22.

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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