



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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 6

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Redoubt Bay to Krestof Sound and Cape Edgecumbe. Herring schools were visible from the air in the vicinity of Olga Strait. Approximately 0.25 nautical miles of herring spawn was observed on the eastern side of Kasiana Island. Herring predators were seen throughout the surveyed area; however, predator activity was focused along the Kruzof Island shoreline from St. Lazaria to Hayward Strait. The largest concentrations of humpback whales were located near St. Lazaria Island and Inner Point. Sea lions were concentrated on points and rock piles between Sitka Point and the Magoun Islands. Additionally, several whales were observed south of Long Island.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound from Harbor Point to Hayward Strait, along the Kruzof Island shoreline from Inner Point to Krestof Sound, and from Aleutkina Bay to Samsing Cove. Numerous schools of herring were observed between Harbor Point and Dog Point, through the Siginaka Islands, and from Eastern Bay to Promisla Bay. Very large schools of herring were seen from Inner Point and Hayward Strait and south of Long Island.

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

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
11:17	Inner Point	150	9.3 %	2.7 %	139 g	47 %
12:51	Hayward Strait	100	8.9 %	1.6 %	132 g	43 %
12:44	Promisla Bay	60	8.7 %	3.7 %	115 g	52 %
13:17	Samsing Cove	200	10.2 %	3.0 %	130 g	54 %

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 near Inner Point, Hayward Strait, Promisla Bay, and Samsing Cove are outside the commercial closed waters and core subsistence areas; 2) the fish encountered during test fishing represented a small fraction of the overall biomass in these areas; 3) numerous schools of herring and spawn was observed within commercial closed waters and core subsistence areas today.

The estimated harvest from the fishery that occurred on March 22 was approximately 340 tons of herring.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Sunday, March 24.

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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