



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: March 25, 2024

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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 8

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Cape Burunof to Salisbury Sound and Cape Edgecumbe. Herring schools were visible from the air in the vicinity of the Magoun Islands, Crescent Bay, and Leesoffkaia Bay. Approximately 3.4 nautical miles (nmi) of herring spawn was observed on Kasiana Island, Halibut Point, Apple Island, Crow Island, Gagarin Island, and Fred's Creek (Figure 1). Herring predators were seen widely distributed 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 in Hayward Strait. Sea lions were concentrated on points and rock piles between Sitka Point and the Magoun Islands and in St. John Baptist Bay.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound from Harbor Point to Krestof Sound, from Promisla Bay to the Siginaka Islands, and from Crescent Bay to Samsing Cove. Very large schools of herring were observed between Cape Burunof and Long Island, in Samsing Cove, and from Kamenoi Point to Brady Island.

No test sets were conducted today.

An opening of the Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery occurred today from 11:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., as stated in field announcement on VHF channel 10. The initial open area for this fishery included the waters of Hayward Strait and Krestof Sound south of 57°11.24' N lat and north of 57°09.16' N lat (Figure 2). The emergency order corresponding with today's opening is EO 1H0424. No harvest estimates from today's fishery are available at this time but will be included in the next fishery update. Approximately 1,910 tons of herring were harvested in the fishery that occurred on March 24.

The department has determined that the opening described above would not harm a reasonable opportunity for participants in the subsistence fishery to harvest the amount of roe necessary for subsistence uses. When making this determination, the department considered: 1) vessel surveys conducted by the department beginning on March 20 indicated that there is a very large biomass of herring distributed throughout Sitka Sound; 2) schools of herring were observed within regulatory closed waters on the vessel survey that occurred on March 25 from Harbor Point to Starrigavan Bay; 3) herring spawn was observed within commercial closed waters and core subsistence areas today; 3) while subsistence branch sets were observed within the open area, no herring spawn was observed.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Tuesday, March 25.

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:



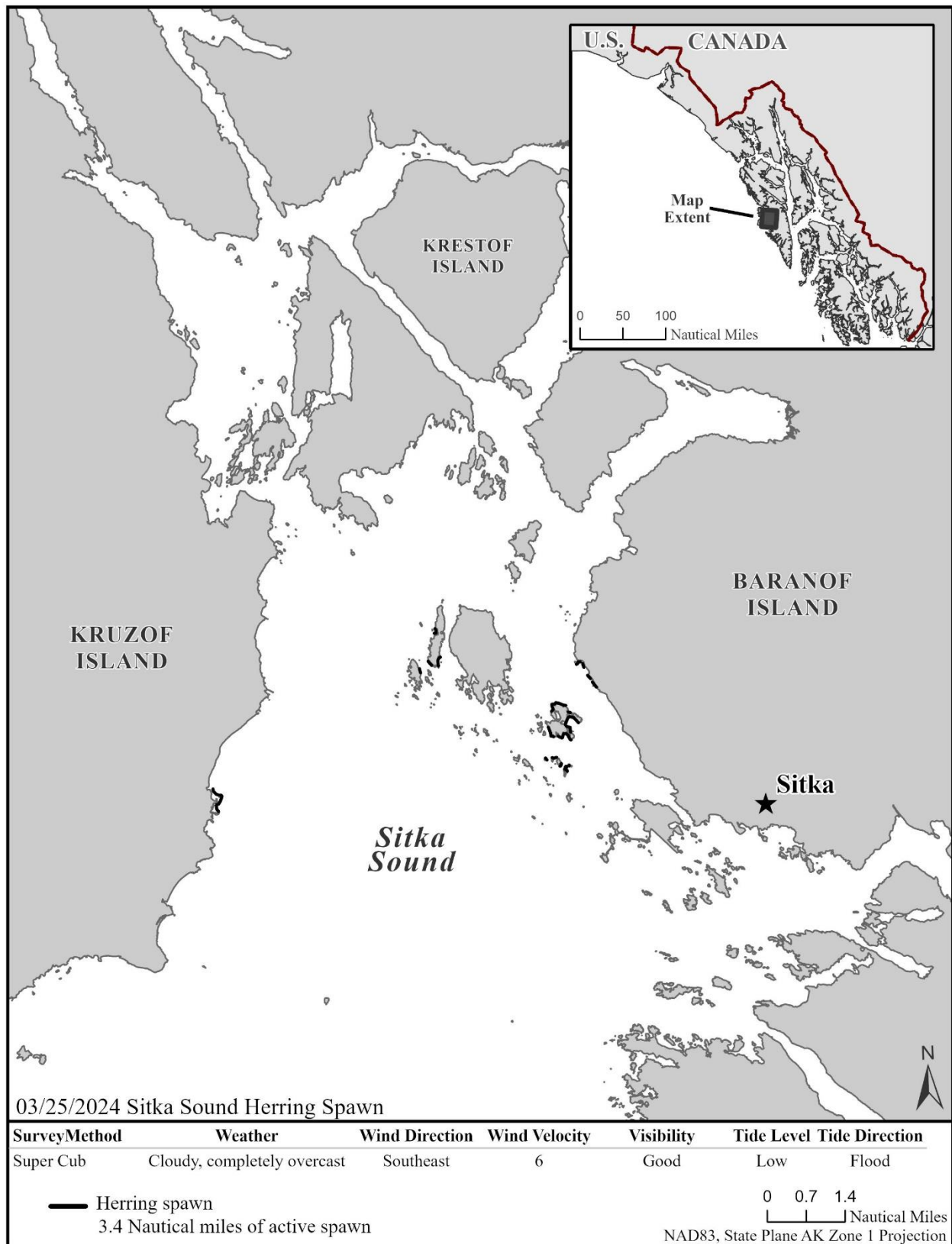


Figure 1.— Map of the active spawning areas in Sitka Sound during the aerial survey on March 25, 2024.

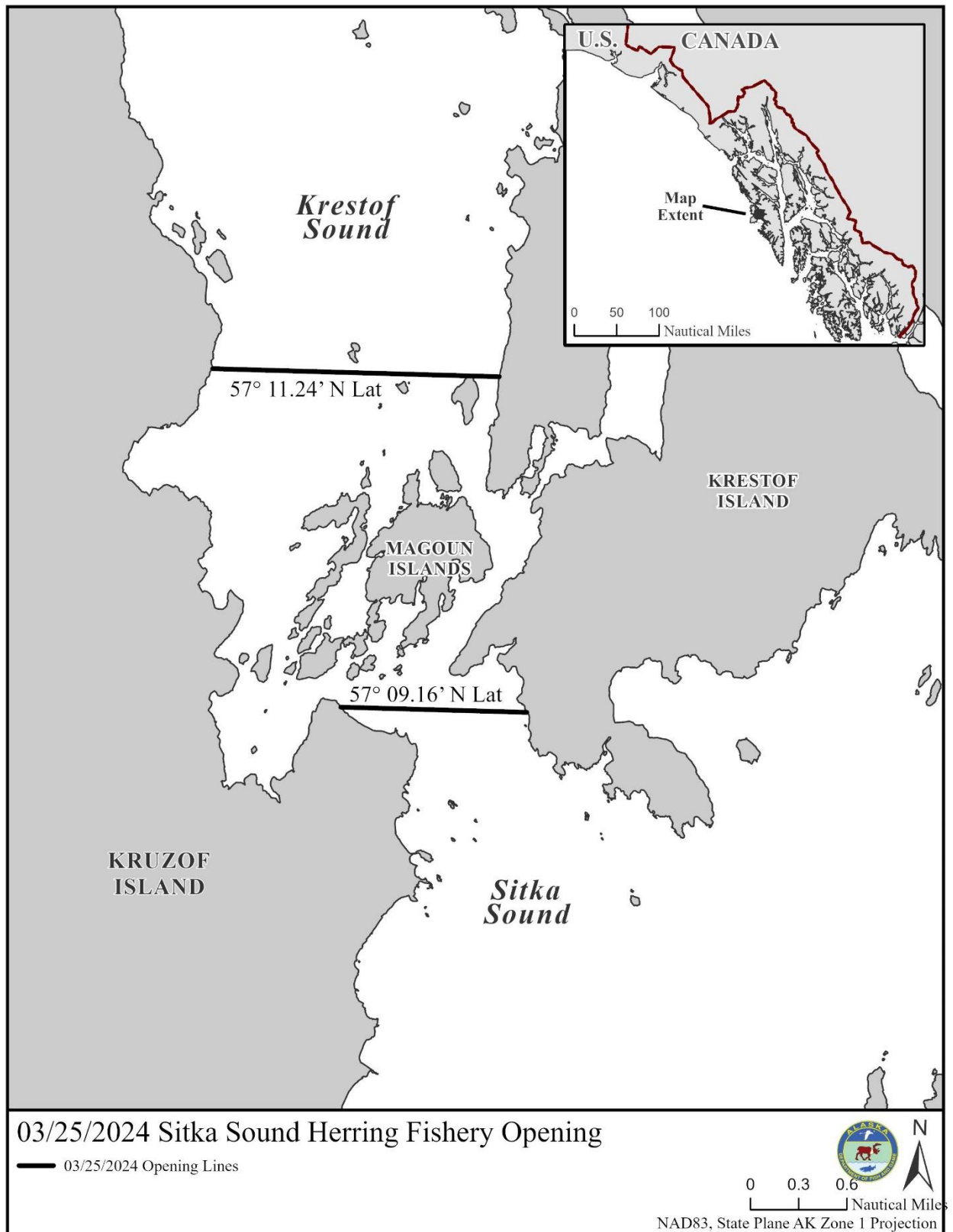


Figure 2.— Map of the area open for the March 25, 2024, Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery.

Advisory Announcement web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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