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# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner*  
*Jeff Regnart, Director*



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Sitka Area Office  
304 Lake Street, Room 103  
Sitka, Alaska 99835  
Date: March 14, 2013  
Time: 4:00 p.m.

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#### **SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE #1**

The department conducted the first aerial survey of the 2013 season on Thursday, March 14. This survey covered Sitka Sound, south to Crawfish Inlet and north to Salisbury Sound. Spotting conditions were only fair with windy conditions outside of bays and passes. No herring were seen during the survey. In Sitka Sound a total of 24 whales were observed. Whales were concentrated in waters offshore between Kruzof Island and Crow Island, and offshore north of Middle Island. Two whales were seen west of the Gavanski Islands and one whale was seen north of Vitskari Rocks. In Salisbury Sound, one whale was seen near Sinitsin Island. Areas to the south of Sitka were generally quiet though bird activity was observed in the Eastern Channel area. Conditions were marginal for obtaining a detailed assessment of sea lion distribution in the survey area. The highest concentration of sea lions was observed off Mountain Point and Inner Point. Otherwise only scattered smaller sea lion groups were seen during the survey. Based on the distribution of whales and sea lions, it appears that herring are most concentrated in the deepwater trenches west and north of Middle Island. The results of this survey are considered normal for this date.

The first test sample is scheduled to be taken Monday, March 18. The department plans to dispatch the *R/V Kestrel* from Petersburg to Sitka when roe samples indicate the need to put the fishery on 2-hour notice. A pre-fishery organizational meeting will be scheduled at some time close to when the fishery is placed on 2-hour notice. The next announcement will occur no later than Monday, March 18.

Permit holders wanting to make practice sets may do so in the deeper waters of Eastern Channel south of Jamestown Bay.

Updates will be posted on the ADF&G web site listed below, and on a recorded message phone at (907) 747-1009.

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

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