
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Sam Cotten, Commissioner
Scott Kelley, Director



Contact:
Eric Coonradt

Phone: (907) 747-6688
Fax: (907) 747-6693

Sitka Area Office
304 Lake Street, Room 103
Sitka, Alaska 99835
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Time: 1:00 p.m.

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sitka. . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today that the Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery will be on 2-hour notice effective 7:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 20, 2018. This means that a fishery could be expected with a minimum of two hours notice after the effective time.

An aerial survey was conducted today covering Sitka Sound from Eastern Channel to Hayward Strait. Weather during today's flight was good with south winds at 10 knots and overcast skies. No herring spawn was observed on today's flight. Several large herring schools were observed in Crow Pass spanning its entire length. The highest concentration of herring predators has moved to the Crow Pass/Bieli Rock area, where numerous whales were seen feeding on the herring schools observed in the area and several large groups of sea lions were observed near the whales. Predators remain in the Inner Point/Mountain Point area but not in concentrations observed in yesterday's flights. Two test fish vessels were available for today, however no samples were taken by the time of this News Release.

Limited jig samples taken in Crow Pass showed mature male and female herring. Given visibility of herring schools in shallow waters, lack of commercial sample and mature herring in the jig sample, the department is placing the fleet on 2-hour notice.

The department will hold an organizational meeting with fishermen, processors, and interested individuals at 1:00 p.m., Monday, March 19, at the Westmark Hotel meeting room.

All processors, fishing vessels, and tenders must be registered with the department before participating in the fishery.

The *R/V Kestrel* will be arriving in Sitka on Tuesday morning, March 20.

Seine boats wanting to conduct practice sets or stretch nets may do so in Eastern Channel south of Jamestown Bay until further notice.

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