
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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SITKA SOUND SAC ROE HERRING FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sitka...The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today that the Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery will be closed for the remainder of the 2018 season. The last fishery occurred on March 26 and since then the department has not been able to identify a body of good quality herring to hold another opening. The department announced the season closure on the VHF radio at 11:00 a.m., April 3. The decision to close the fishery was made in consultation with industry representatives.

Multiple factors were considered in closing the fishery: The completion of the first spawn event with documented spawn to date totaling 13.3 nautical miles (nmi); 92% of the forecast biomass was below the size necessary to satisfy market requirements; Extensive vessel and aerial surveys conducted over the last several days have not identified a biomass of pre-spawning herring of the quality necessary to fulfill market requirements.

The total harvest this season is approximately 2,800 tons, 8,330 tons short of this season's GHF of 11,128 tons. The quality of the harvest was reportedly good with larger than average weights and good roe recovery. The department will continue to monitor for additional spawn through the month of April. Last season, 62.3 nmi of herring spawn was mapped; peak spawn occurred on April 8, and the last spawn was observed on April 21. The *R/V Kestrel* will be in Sitka Sound beginning Saturday, April 7, to support the spawn deposition survey and no further sonar surveys are planned. The department will provide a final update of the results of this season's spawn event later this spring.

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

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