



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: April 6, 2023

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SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 22

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from as far south as West Crawfish Inlet, to as far north as St. John Baptist Bay, and west to St. Lazaria Island. Survey conditions today were fair with variable visibility, cloudy skies with rain, and 20-knot winds. Approximately 5.6 nautical miles (nmi) of active spawn was observed today, mostly concentrated in the Magoun Islands, Promisla and Eastern Bays, Siganaka Islands, south Middle Island, and Kasiana Islands. Smaller areas of spawn were located in St. John Baptist Bay and Hotsprings Bay. The cumulative spawn estimate through today is approximately 57.7 nmi.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound from Crescent Bay to West Crawfish Inlet. Several schools of herring were located on sonar throughout the surveyed area. Several large schools of herring were located between Frosty Reef and Hotsprings Bay. Very large schools of herring were also observed on sonar in the mouth of Windy Passage. No test sets were conducted today.

An opening of the Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery occurred today from 11:15 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. as stated in field announcement on VHF channel 10. The open area for this fishery included the waters of Sitka Sound north of 56°50.20' N lat, south of 56°52.21' N lat, and east of 135°25.09' W long. The emergency order corresponding with today's opening is EO 1H0823. Approximately, 2,180-tons of herring were harvested during the fishery that occurred on April 5. Approximately 7,200-tons of herring have been harvested this season. Harvest estimates from today's fishery will be included on the next fishery update.

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 23 indicated that there is a very large biomass of herring distributed within Sitka Sound; 2) no herring spawn nor known subsistence branch sets were observed within the area opened today; 3) herring have been spawning in Sitka Sound since March 26 through today, April 6, and the cumulative spawn estimate is 57.7 nmi; and 4) a cumulative estimate of approximately 17.1 nmi of herring spawn has been observed within regulatory closed waters this season.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Friday, April 7.

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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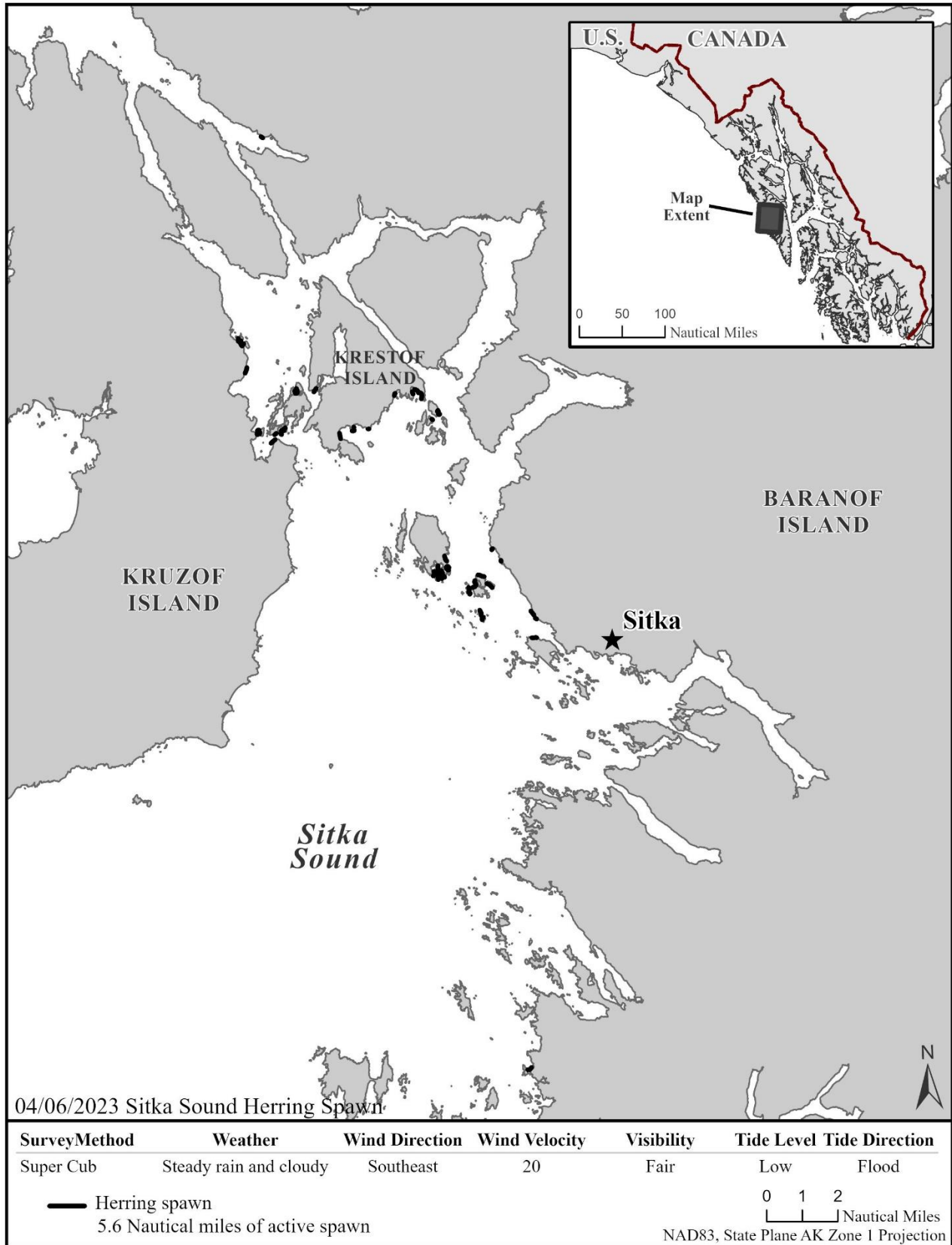


Figure 1.— Map of the active spawning areas in Sitka Sound during the aerial survey on April 6, 2023

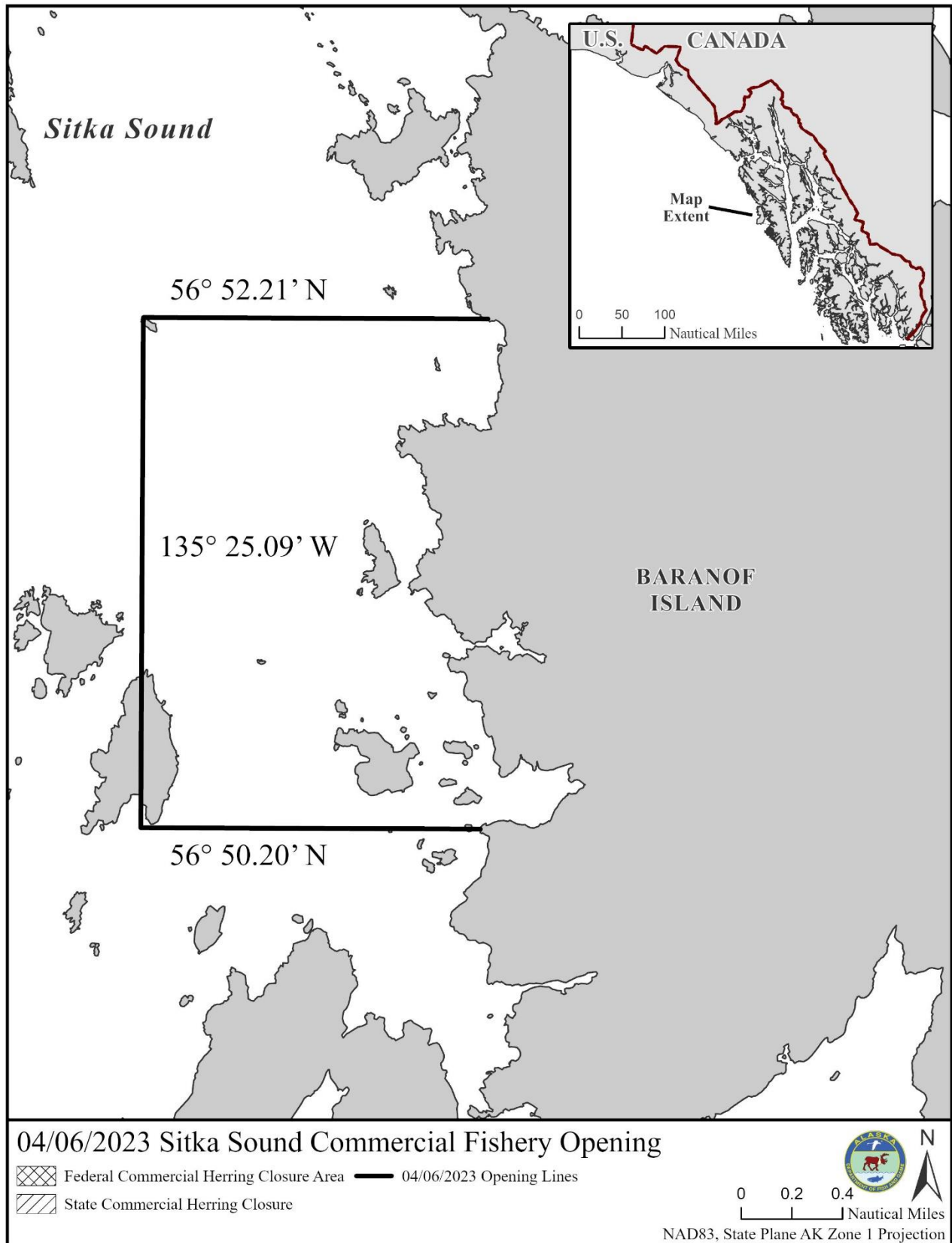


Figure 2.– Map of the Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery southern opening on April 6, 2023.