



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: March 19, 2024

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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 2

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Crawfish Inlet to Hayward Strait and St. Lazaria Island. No herring schools or spawn were observed today. Herring predators were seen throughout the surveyed area; however, predator activity was focused along the Kruzof Island shoreline from Shoals Point to Hayward Strait. The largest concentrations of humpback whales were located near Fred's Creek and Inner Point. Sea lions were concentrated on points and rock piles between Fred's Creek and Brent's Beach. Predator numbers have been steadily increasing since aerial surveys began.

Department and industry vessels surveyed along the Kruzof Island shoreline from Fred's Creek to Hayward Strait today and observed several very large schools of herring in shallower waters. The relative volume of fish observed in this area has increased from the vessel survey conducted on March 18.

Two successful test sets were conducted today; the results are as follows:

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
11:33	Inner Point	100	1.3 %	6.3 %	81 g	40.9 %
13:25	Mountain Point	100	9.6 %	2.2 %	158 g	47.9 %

Herring mortality associated with test sets is likely minimal and there is no evidence that the small number of fish taken has any measurable impact on the subsistence fishery. Nevertheless, to ensure reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvest of herring roe would not be negatively impacted by test setting, prior to authorizing test fishing in this area the department considered the following: 1) the area of Inner Point and Mountain Point is outside the commercial closed waters and core subsistence areas; and 2) the fish encountered during test fishing represented a small fraction of the overall biomass in these areas.

The Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery will be placed on 2-hour notice effective 8:00 a.m., Wednesday, March 20, 2024.

The *R/V Kestrel* is scheduled to arrive in Sitka the morning of March 20 and will immediately conduct a vessel survey.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Wednesday, March 20.

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>.

<i>Office</i>	<i>Ketchikan</i>	<i>Petersburg</i>	<i>Wrangell</i>	<i>Sitka</i>	<i>Juneau</i>	<i>Haines</i>	<i>Yakutat</i>
<i>ADF&G</i>	<i>225-5195</i>	<i>772-3801</i>		<i>747-6688</i>	<i>465-4250</i>	<i>766-2830</i>	<i>784-3255</i>
<i>AWT</i>	<i>225-5111</i>	<i>772-3983</i>	<i>874-3215</i>	<i>747-3254</i>	<i>465-4000</i>	<i>766-2533</i>	<i>784-3220</i>