



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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 6

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Redoubt Bay to St. Lazaria Island and Krestof Sound. No herring schools or spawn were observed today. Humpback whales were observed throughout the surveyed area, with the largest concentrations located between Fred's Creek and Hayward Strait. Sea lions were concentrated near rockpiles between Fred's Creek and Kamenoi Point. Predator numbers and locations are typical for this time of year.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound from Fred's Creek to Eastern Bay, from Dog Point to Watson Point, and from Crescent Bay to Aleutkina Bay. Herring were seen throughout the survey area. In many areas, herring schools were tighter to the beach in shallower water. Large concentrations of herring were observed north of the breakwater to Kasiania Island and along Kruzof Island from Fred's Creek to Mountain Point. South of Sitka, several small, scattered schools were located in Deep Inlet.

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

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
10:34	Kresta Point	30	9.8%	3.0%	135g	51%
10:50	Mountain Point	100	10.1%	2.1%	162g	52%

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 these areas the department considered the following: 1) the areas near Kresta Point and Mountain Point are 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 these areas.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Saturday, March 22.

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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