



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: March 29, 2026

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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 11

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Eastern Channel to Cape Burunof, Inner Point to Krestof Sound, and Promisla Bay to Watson Point. No herring schools or spawn were observed. Herring predators were observed throughout the surveyed area. The largest concentrations of humpback whales were observed near Cape Burunof, Inner Point, and the Chaichei Islands. A large group of sea lions were seen near Entry Point. Predator numbers and locations observed during today's flight are typical for surveys conducted during this time of year.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound today from Crescent Bay to Cape Burunof, from Freds Creek to Rob Point, and from Crow Island to Watson Point. Very large schools of herring were observed from Crescent Bay to Whale Island and from Inner Point to Rob Point. Scattered schools of herring were observed near the Chaichei Islands, and from Cape Burunof to Long Island.

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

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
10:56	Kamenoi Point	100	13.5%	0.5%	162g	57%
11:17	Inner Point	250	12.5%	0.1%	176g	49%

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 area from Inner Point to Kamenoi 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 this area.

Two openings of the Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery occurred today as stated in field announcements on VHF channel 10. The two open areas for this fishery included the area from Crescent Bay to Indian River and from Shoals Point to Kamenoi Point. The area from Crescent Bay to Indian River south of 57°02.88' N lat, north of 57°01.69' N lat, west of 135°16.61' W long, and east of 135°20.20' W long was opened from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Figure 1). The area from Shoals Point to Kamenoi Point south of 57°08.15' N lat, north of 57°00.80' N lat, and west of 135°32.28' W long was opened from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Figure 2). The emergency orders corresponding with today's opening are EO 1H0426 and EO 1H0526. Harvest estimates from today's fishery will be included in the next advisory announcement. Approximately 812 tons of herring were harvested in the fishery that occurred on March 28. Since March 27 approximately 1,440 tons of herring have been harvested.

The department has determined that the openings 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 20 indicated that there is a very large biomass of herring distributed throughout Sitka Sound; 2) scattered schools of herring have been observed within regulatory closed waters since March 20; 3) no subsistence branch sets were observed within the open areas.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Monday, March 30.

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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<i>ADF&G</i>	225-5195	772-3801		747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
<i>AWT</i>	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220

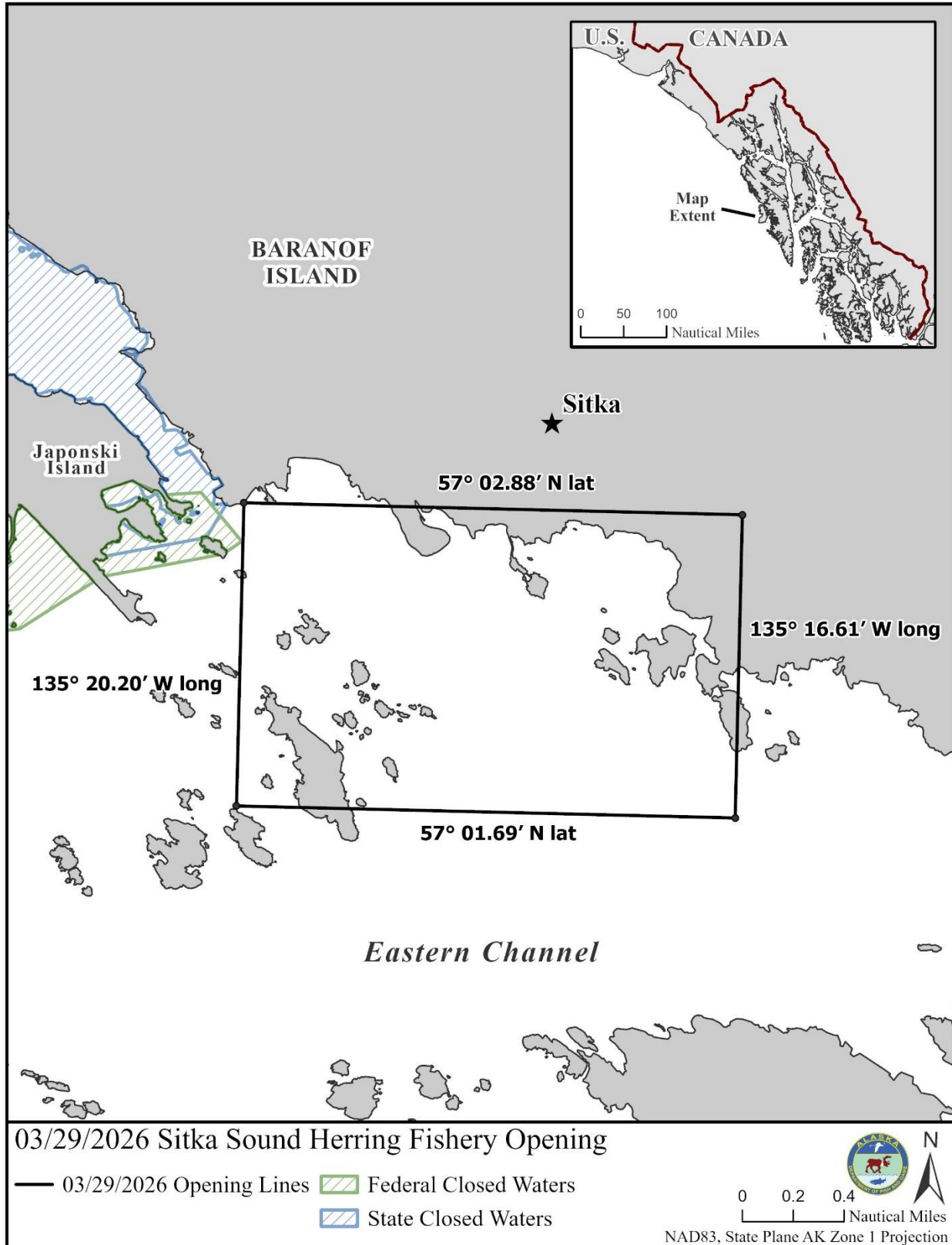


Figure 1.– Map of the area open for the March 29, 2026, Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery that occurred from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. near Crescent Bay and Indian River.

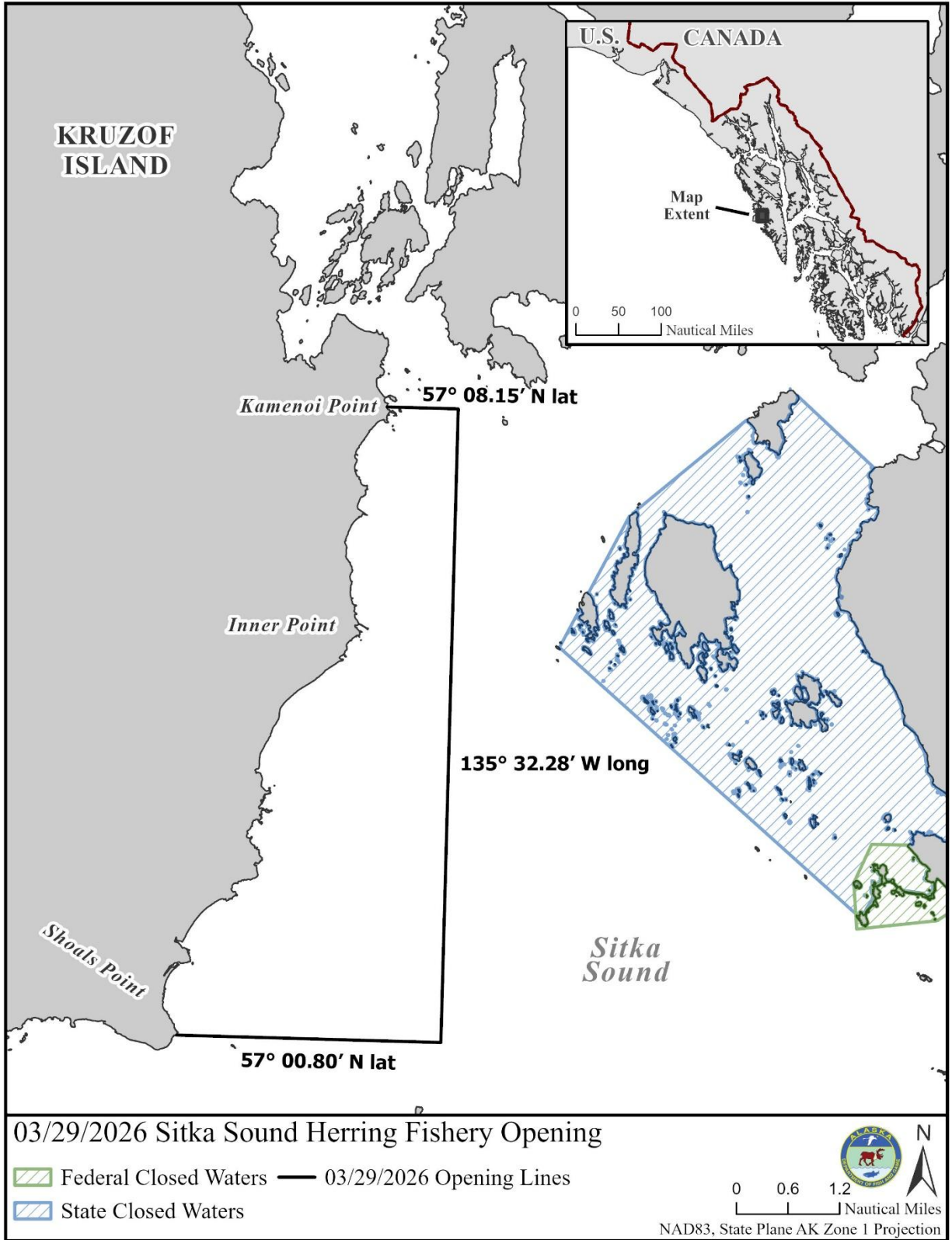


Figure 2.– Map of the area open for the March 29, 2026, Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery that occurred from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. from Shoals Point to Kamenoi Point.