

Division of Commercial Fisheries
Sam Rabung, Director

Sitka Area Office
304 Lake Street, Room 103
Sitka, AK 99835



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner

PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

Advisory Announcement
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CONTACT: Aaron Dupuis
Sitka Assistant Area Management Biologist
(907) 747-6688

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 3

Sitka...Aerial surveys conducted since the previous fishery update issued on March 19 covered Sitka Sound from Biorka Island to Krestof Sound. Weather during the flights was moderate. No herring spawn has been observed; a large school of herring was seen near Kresta Point on March 21. The highest concentration of herring predators is north and west of Bieli Rocks and in Eastern Bay; numerous whales were seen working in deeper waters west of Bieli Rocks and in Eastern Bay. Several hundred sea lions were observed in several large groups holding off the rock piles. South of Sitka, a small number of sealions were observed in Eastern Channel. Predator numbers and locations are normal for this time of year.

The vessel surveys conducted by the *R/V Kestrel* since March 19 of north Sitka Sound showed an increase in biomass of herring in the deeper waters west of Bieli Rocks. Numerous scattered schools of herring were located near Kresta Point, Eastern Bay, and the deeper waters east of Middle Island. The *R/V Kestrel* will depart Sitka on March 25.

The next fishery update can be expected on Thursday, March 26 or sooner if aerial or vessel surveys show a significant change in predator or herring distribution, or if herring spawn is observed.

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

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