



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: March 29, 2024

CONTACT: Aaron Dupuis

Sitka Area Management Biologist

aaron.dupuis@alaska.gov

(907) 747-6688

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 12

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Dorothy Narrows to Salisbury Sound and St. Lazaria Island. Herring schools were visible from the air in the vicinity of Leesoffskaia Bay. Approximately 26.2 nautical miles (nmi) of herring spawn was observed scattered along the Sitka road system from Watson Point to Halibut Point, along the causeway, and on Japonski, Battery, Kasiana, Apple, Crow, Gagarin, Chaichei, Neva, Siginaka, and Middle Islands, along the Kruzof Island shoreline from Lava Island to Mountain Point, in Hayward Strait, Kresta Point, and in Redoubt Bay (Figure 1). Herring predators were widely distributed throughout the surveyed area. No significant concentration of predators was noted today.

Department and industry vessels surveyed Sitka Sound from Deep Inlet to Samsing Cove, from Cape Burunof to Dorothy Narrows, from Eastern Bay to Krestof Sound, and in Salisbury Sound. Scattered schools of herring were located throughout the surveyed area and larger schools of herring were found from Deep Inlet to Samsing Cove and from Hayward Strait to Krestof Sound. Many of the schools of herring were located in very shallow water along the surveyed shorelines.

No test sets were conducted today.

An opening of the Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery occurred today from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., as stated in field announcement on VHF channel 10. The two open areas for this fishery included areas north and south of Sitka. The area north of Sitka included the waters of Hayward Strait and Krestof Sound south of 57°11.24' N lat, north of 57°08.00' N lat, and west of 135°30.76' W long. South of Sitka included the area of Deep Inlet, Samsing Cove, Aleutkina Bay and contiguous waters south of 57°00.81' N lat and east of 135°21.93' W long. The emergency order corresponding with today's opening is EO 1H0924. No harvest estimates from today's fishery are available at this time but will be included in the next fishery update. Approximately 1,970 tons of herring were harvested in the fishery that occurred on March 28. Since March 22, an estimated 8,595 tons of herring have been harvested.

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 20 indicated that there is a very large biomass of herring distributed throughout Sitka Sound; 2) schools of herring were observed within regulatory closed waters on the vessel survey that occurred on March 29; 3) herring spawn was observed within commercial closed waters and core subsistence areas today and there has been a cumulative total of 23 nmi of herring spawn within regulatory closed waters since March 23; 4) while subsistence branch sets were observed within the open northern area, those branch sets were not located within active spawn.

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

<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>	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

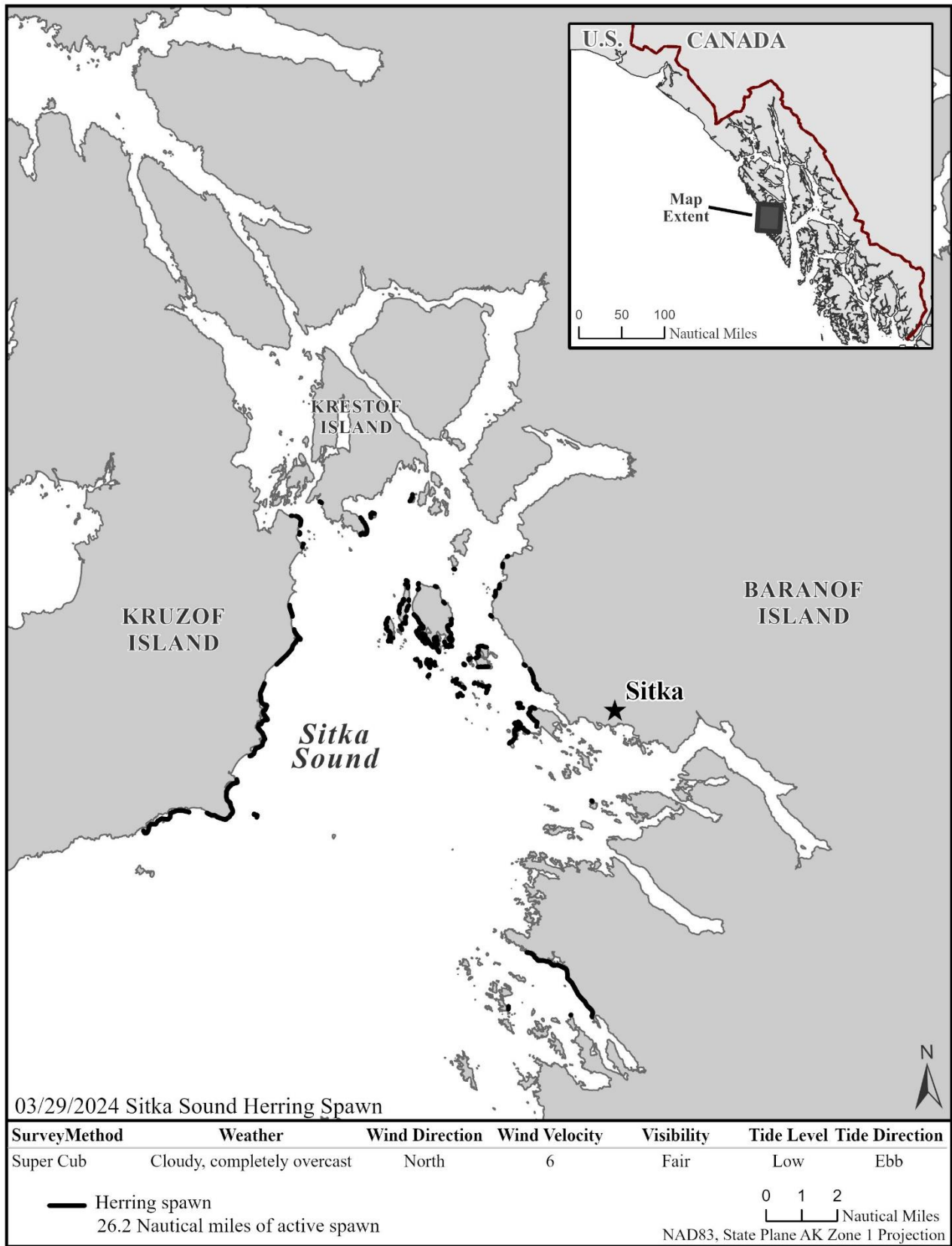


Figure 1.– Map of the active spawning areas in Sitka Sound during the aerial survey on March 29, 2024.