



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: March 27, 2026

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SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE # 9

Today's aerial survey covered Sitka Sound from Eastern Channel to Frosty Reef, St. Lazaria Island 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 from Crescent Bay to Makhnati Rock and near Bieli Rock. Gray whales were observed from Shoals Point to Hayward Strait. Large groups of sea lions were seen near Deep Inlet and Inner 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 Whale Island. Very large schools of herring were observed throughout the survey area.

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

Time	Area	Tons	% Mature Roe	% Immature Roe	Avg weight	% Female
8:40	Crescent Bay	50	10.5%	0.6%	177g	52%
9:40	Crescent Bay	50	12.0%	0.6%	151g	54%

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 near Crescent Bay 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.

An opening of the Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery occurred today from 12:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m., as stated in a field announcement on VHF channel 10. The open area for this fishery included the waters of Crescent Bay 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 (Figure 1). The emergency order corresponding with today's opening is EO 1H0226. Harvest estimates from today's fishery will be included in the next advisory announcement.

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) scattered schools of herring have been observed within regulatory closed waters since March 20; 3) no subsistence branch sets were observed within the open area.

The next aerial survey and fishery update are scheduled for Saturday, March 28.

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

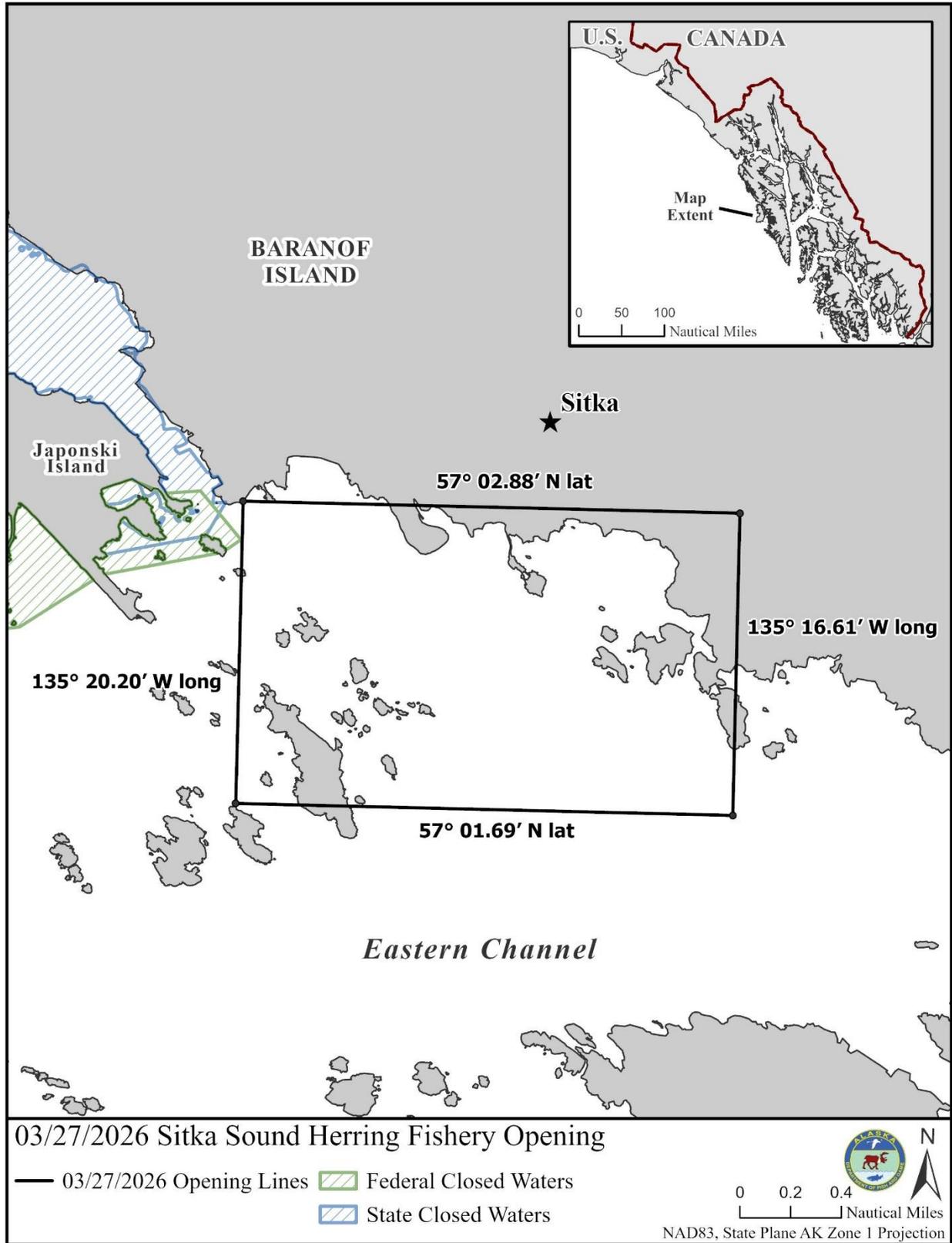


Figure 1.– Map of the area open for the March 27, 2026, Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery.