



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: April 5, 2022

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

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery will be open from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. daily, beginning on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, in the waters of Deep Inlet and Aleutkina Bay south of 57°00.81' N lat and east of 135°21.93' W long, and the waters south of the latitude of Povorotni Point at 56°57.13' N lat and north of the latitude of Aspid Cape at 56°41.75' N lat, except for the waters of Whale and Necker Bays (Figure 1) until closed by field or advisory announcement. Fishing boundaries and times may be modified by subsequent 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 22 indicated that there is a very large biomass of herring within Sitka Sound and numerous large schools of herring have been consistently observed within the regulatory closed waters; 2) the boundaries allowed for this fishery were restricted in order to direct the commercial fishery away from important subsistence areas; 3) the cumulative herring spawn mileage to date within regulatory closed waters is approximately 16.4 nautical miles (nmi); 4) the cumulative herring spawn mileage to date in all of Sitka Sound is approximately 48.6 nmi; 5) at the time of this announcement there were no known subsistence branch sets and no herring spawn observed on shoreline adjacent to the open area; 6) the department will monitor the open area for subsistence sets and should spawn occur there, closure lines will be announced to separate commercial activities from subsistence activities to help ensure that the quality of the subsistence harvest is not degraded.

The department continues to work with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in response to the grounding of the vessel in Neva Strait. This includes tracking the geographic extent of the spilled fuel and assessing any potential impacts to the subsistence and commercial herring fisheries in Sitka Sound. Because the State of Alaska has a zero-tolerance policy with respect to fuel contamination of seafood, the department will not open a commercial fishery or conduct test fishing in areas where there is a risk of fuel contamination of gear, vessels, or harvested fish. More information can be found on the DEC website: <https://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/spill-information/response/2022/01-tug-western-mariner-grounding/>

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

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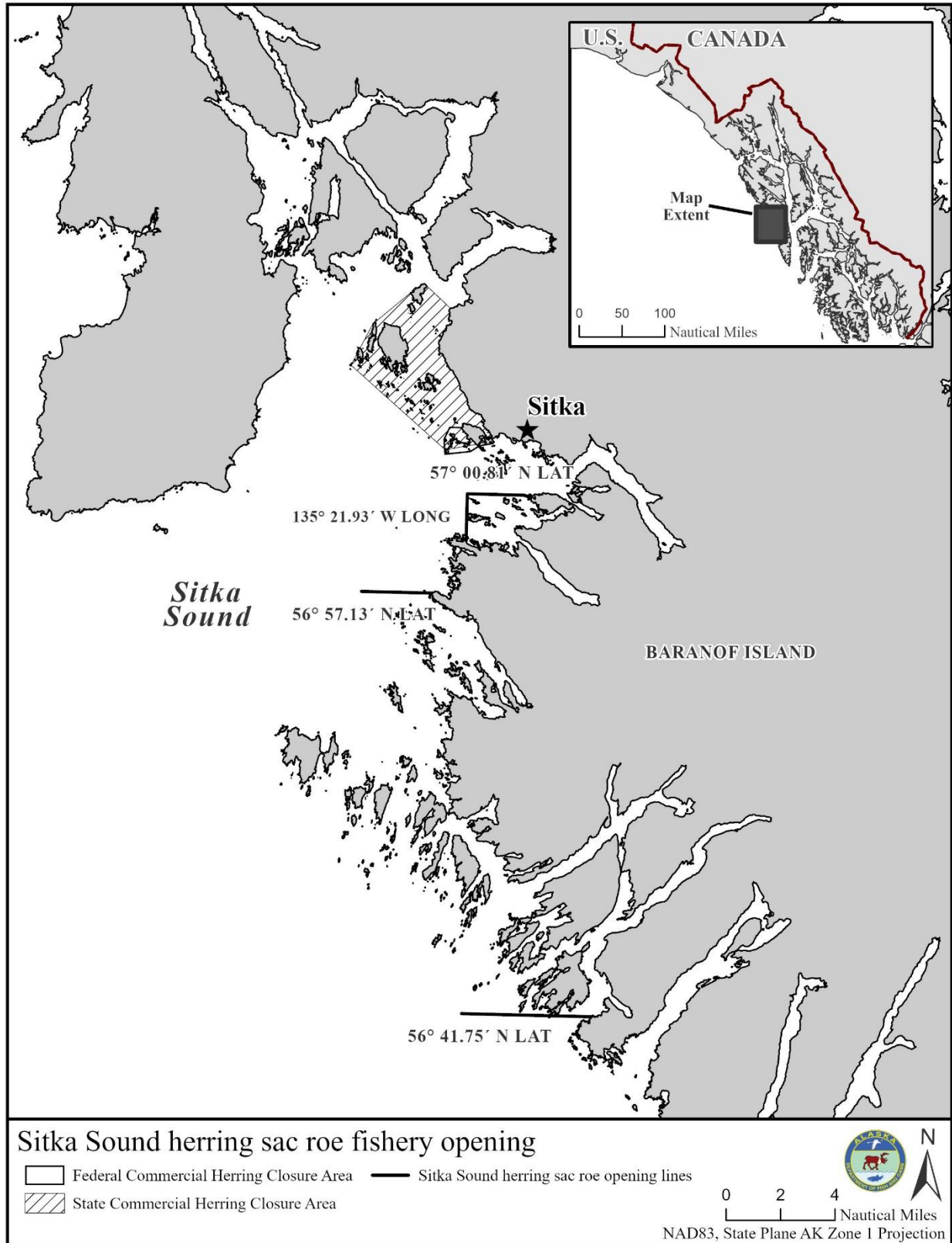


Figure 1.— Map of the area open for the Sitka Sound sac roe herring fishery beginning on April 6, 2022.