2-10-09 Presentations & Hearing: Southeast Alaska Herring Management Issues

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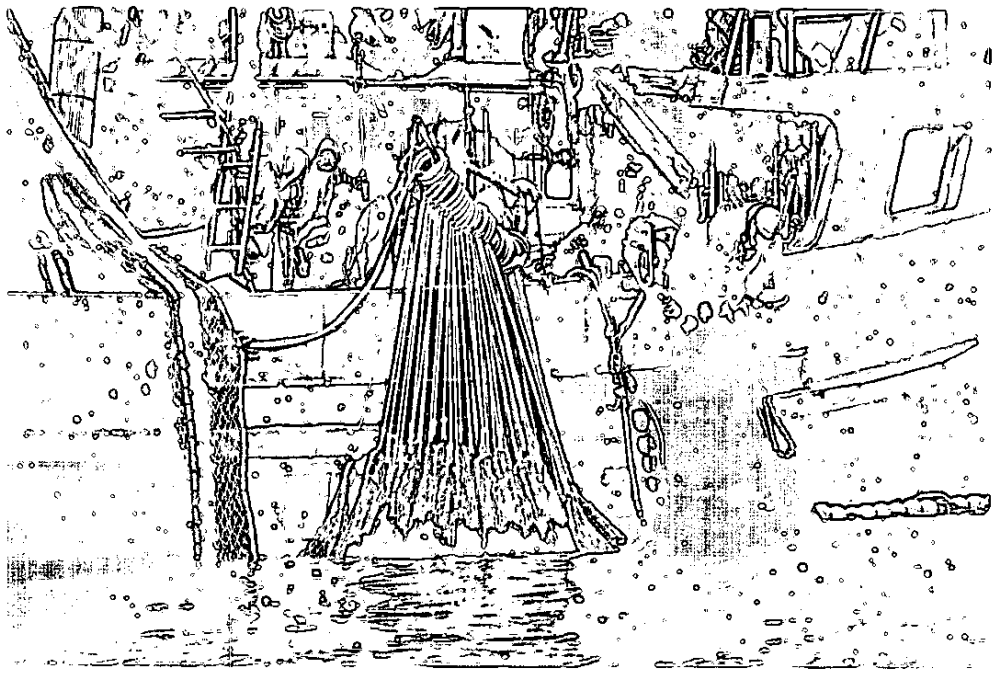
Southeast Alaska Herring Fisheries

Report to the Alaska State Legislature
House Fisheries Special Committee
February 6, 2009

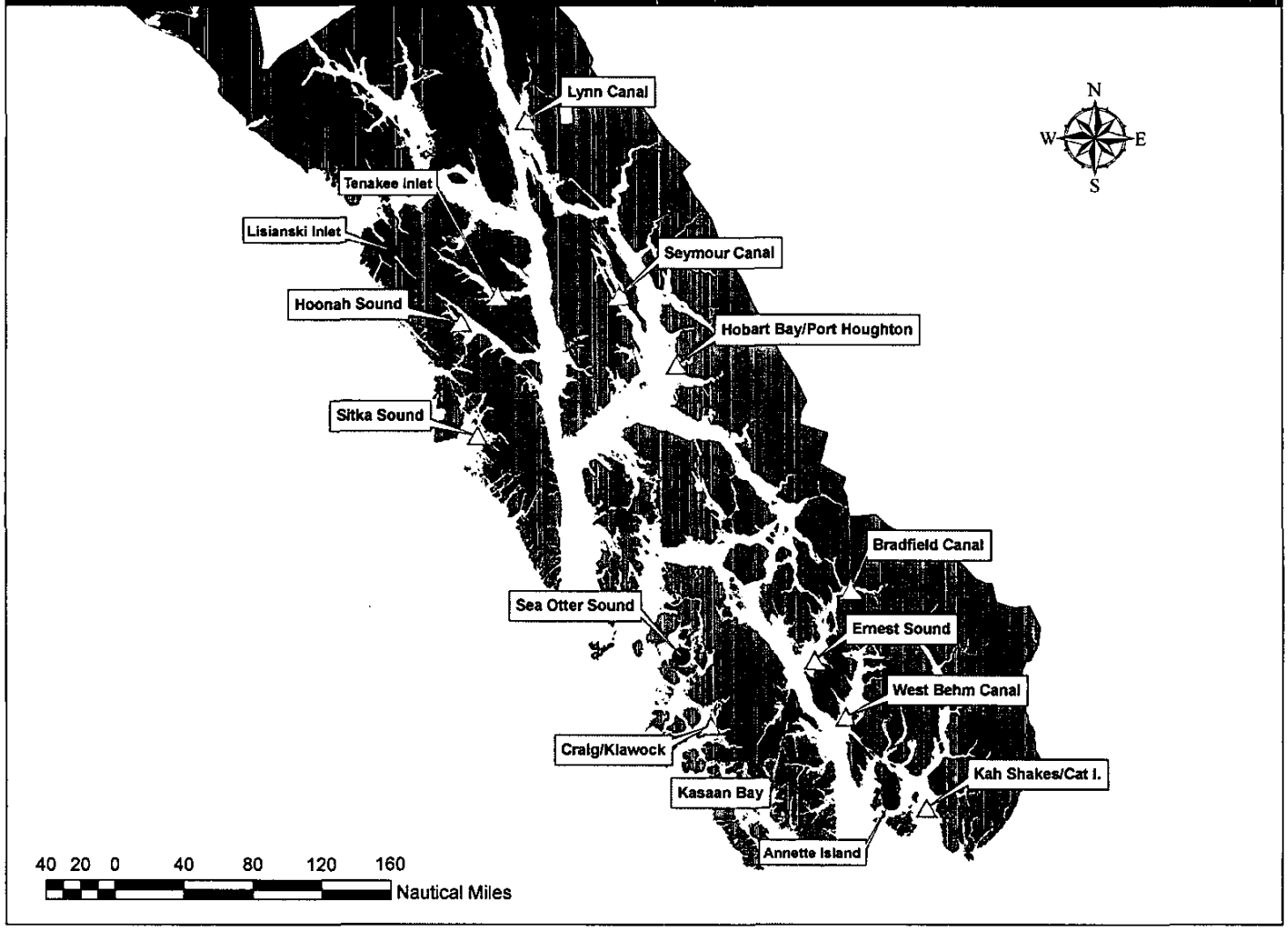
Kyle Hebert
Alaska
Department of
Fish and Game



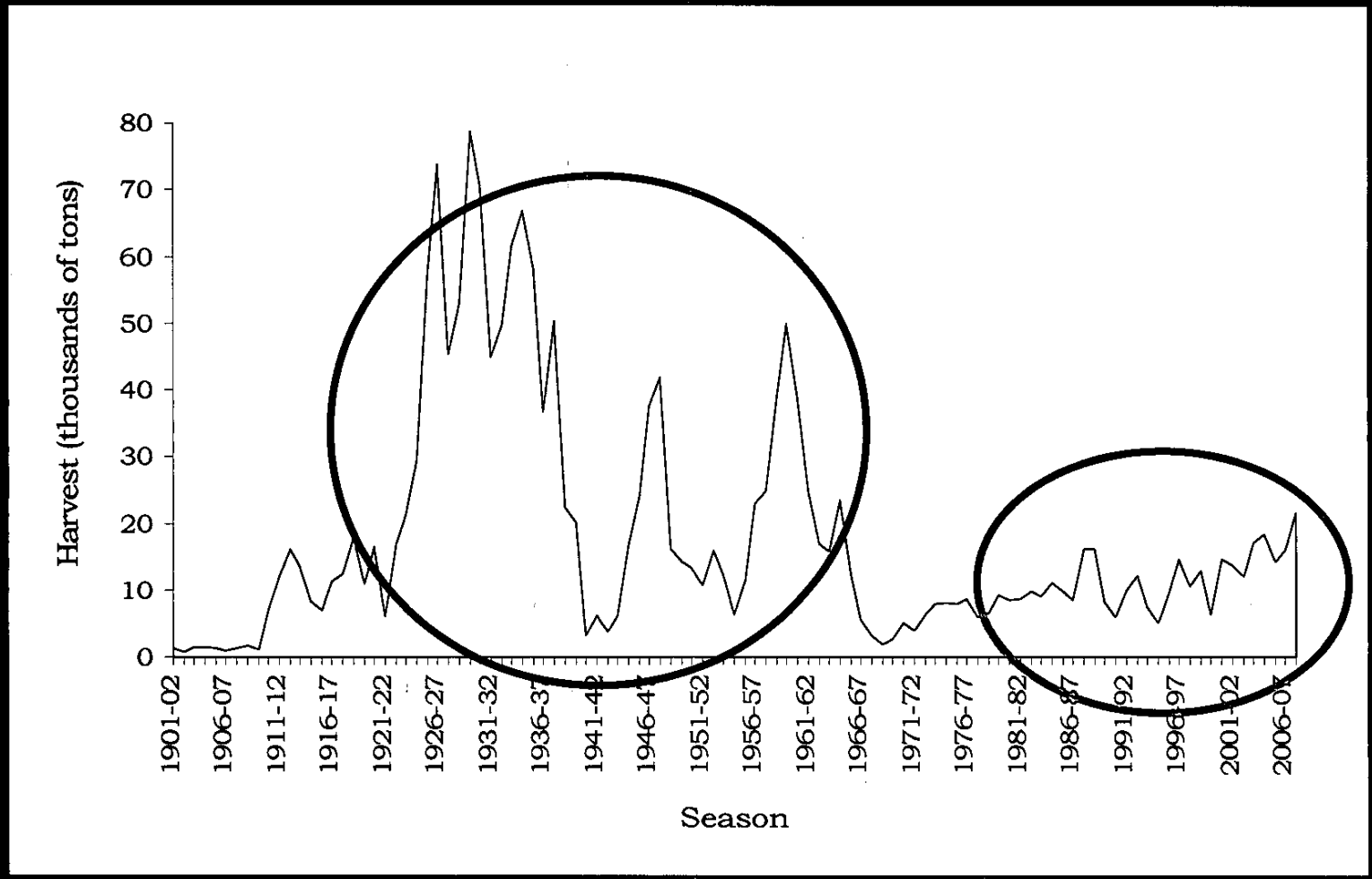
Outline

- Historical review of herring fisheries
- Review of herring management plan
- Stock assessment and harvest rate approach

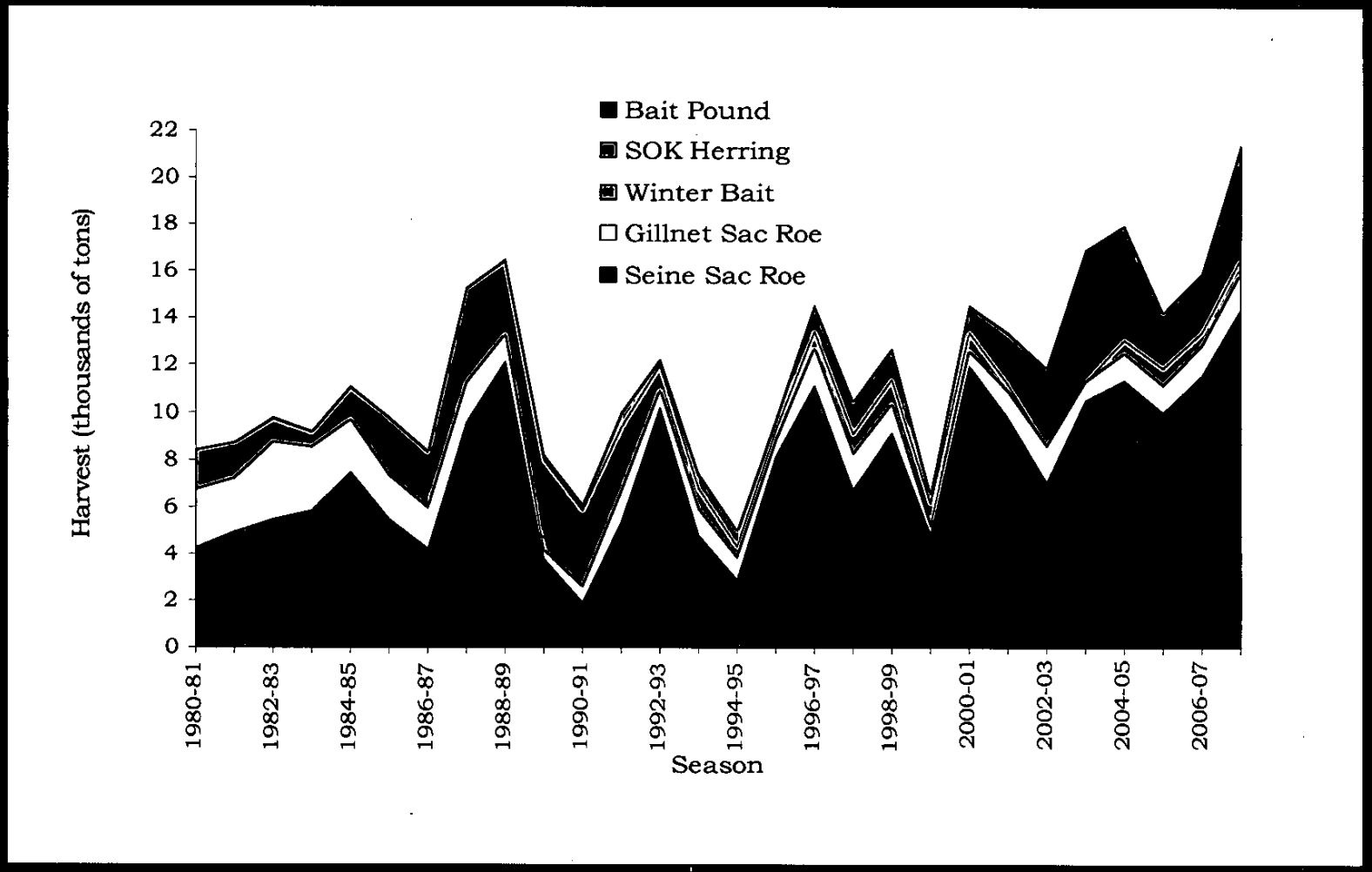
Southeast Alaska Herring Spawning Areas



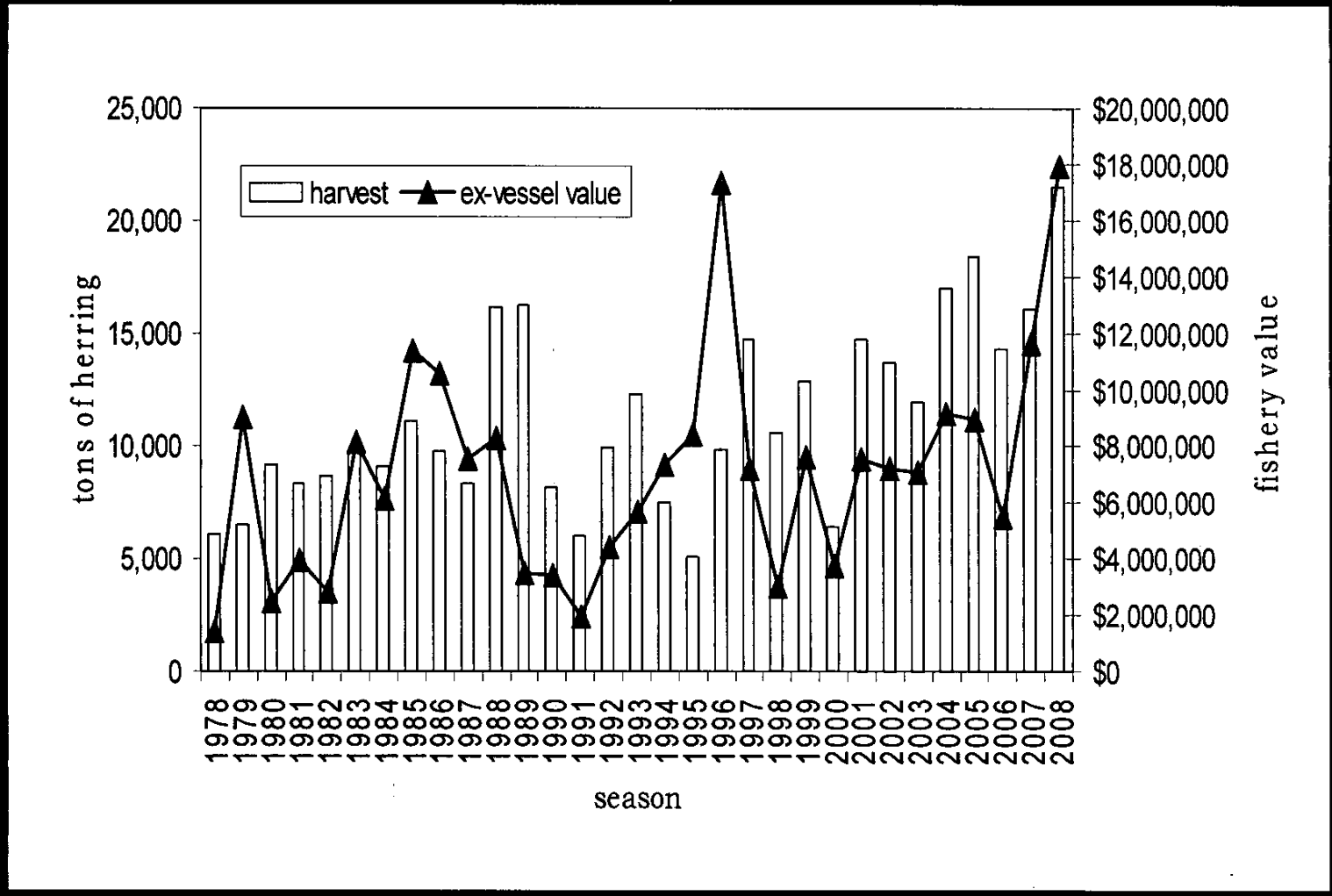
Historical Total Herring Harvest in Southeast Alaska



Southeast Alaska Herring Harvest by Fishery



Historic Harvest and Ex-vessel Value



5 AAC 27.190. HERRING MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR SOUTHEAST ALASKA AREA

1. Shall identify [illegible] herring spawning areas;

2. Shall establish [illegible] below which fishing will not occur;

3. Shall [illegible] of mature herring for each stock before allowing fishing to occur;

4. Except as provided elsewhere, may allow a harvest of herring at an [illegible] of the estimated spawning biomass when that biomass is above the minimum threshold level;

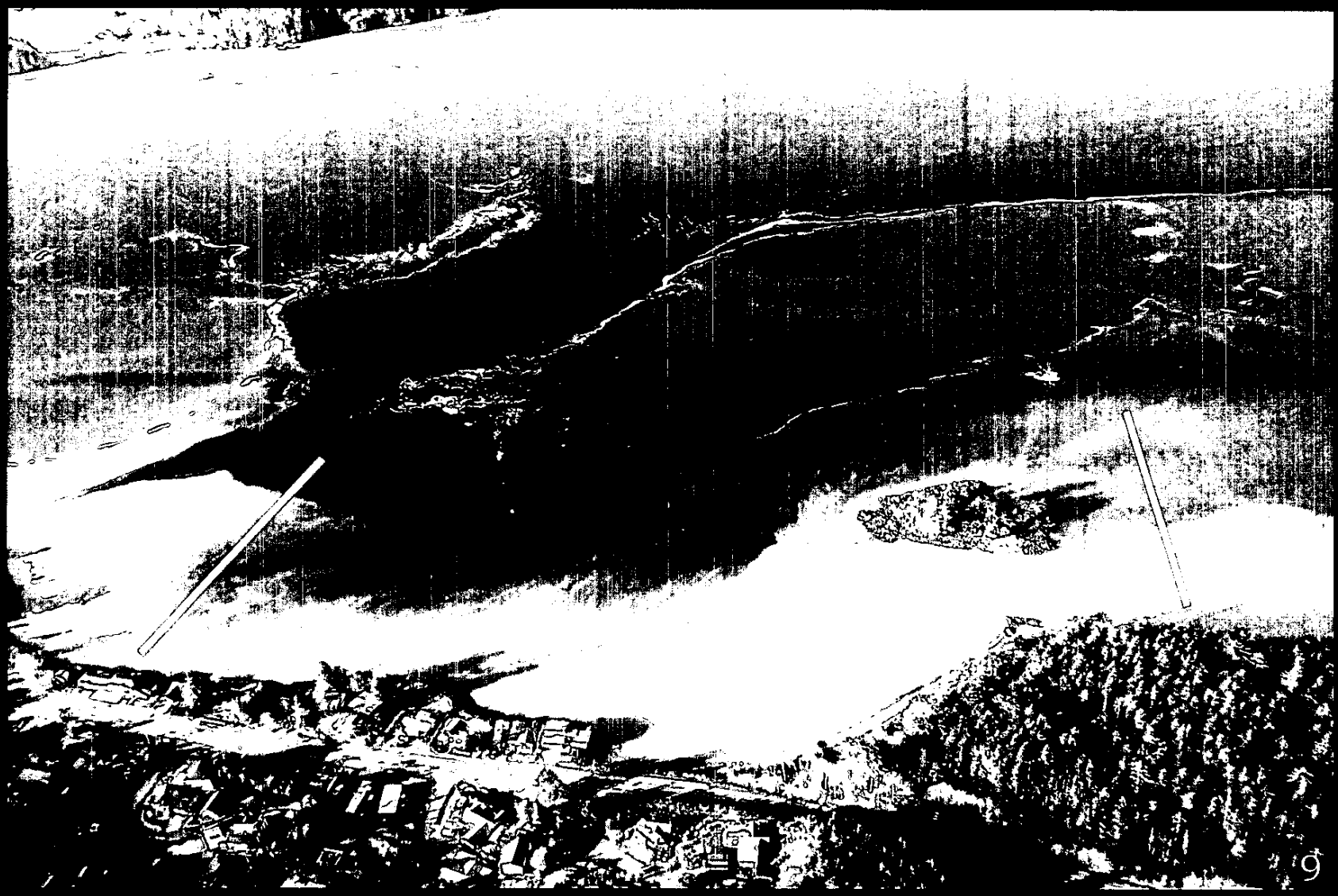
5. May identify and consider sources of mortality in setting harvest guideline;

6. By emergency order, may modify fishing periods to minimize incidental mortalities during commercial fisheries.

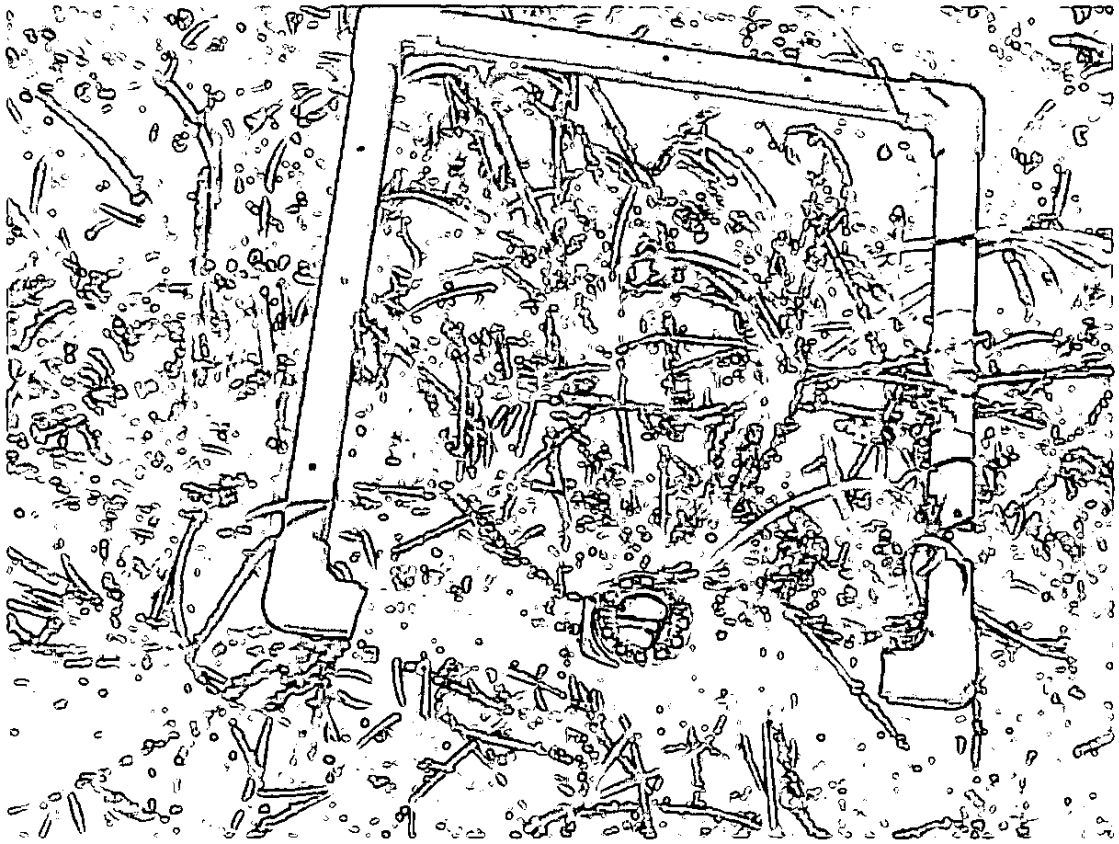
Thresholds

- If forecasted below, no fishery
- Goals of thresholds
  - Protect herring stocks from sharp reductions due to recruitment failure
  - Maintain adequate forage for predator species

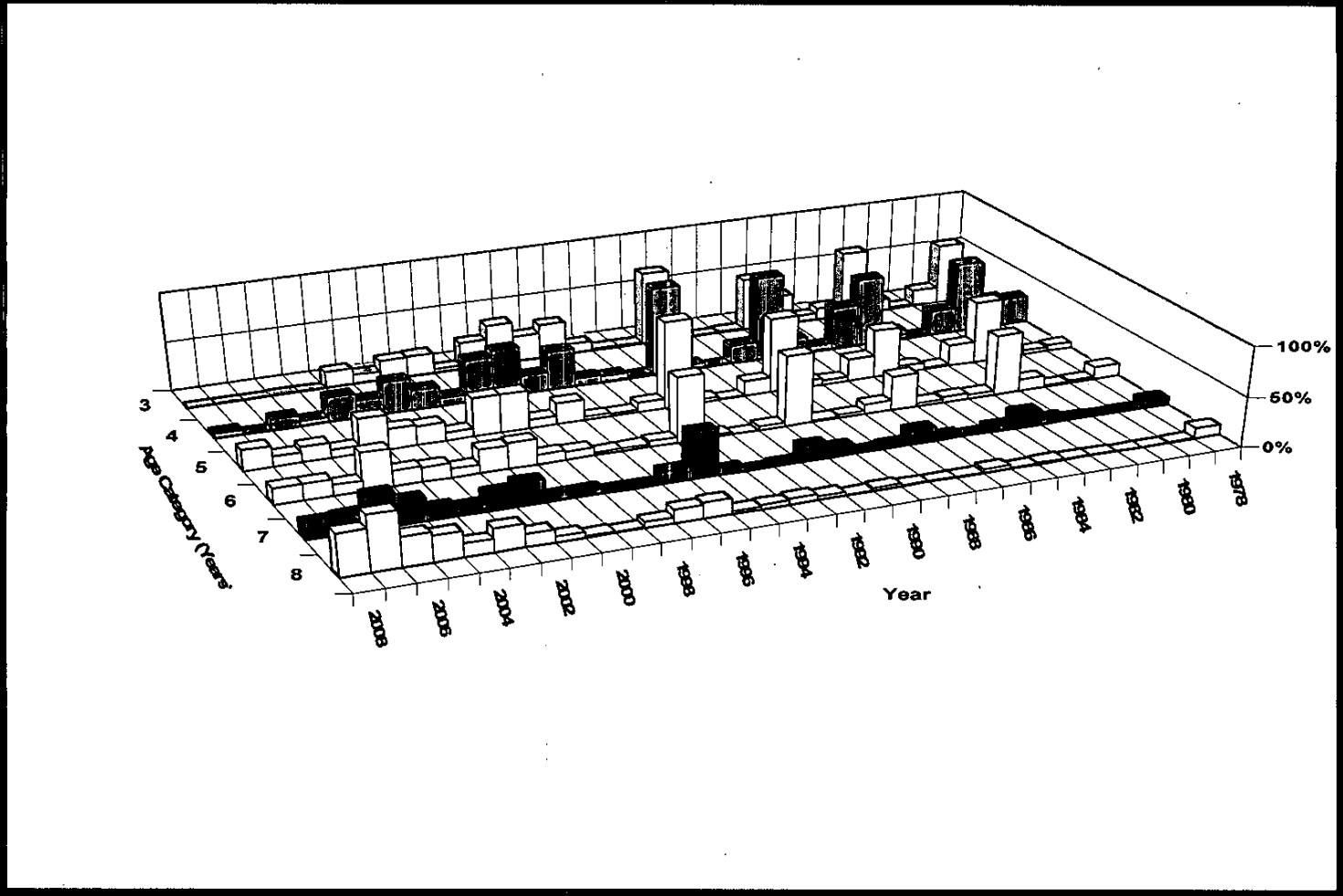
Aerial view of herring milt



Egg deposition estimates

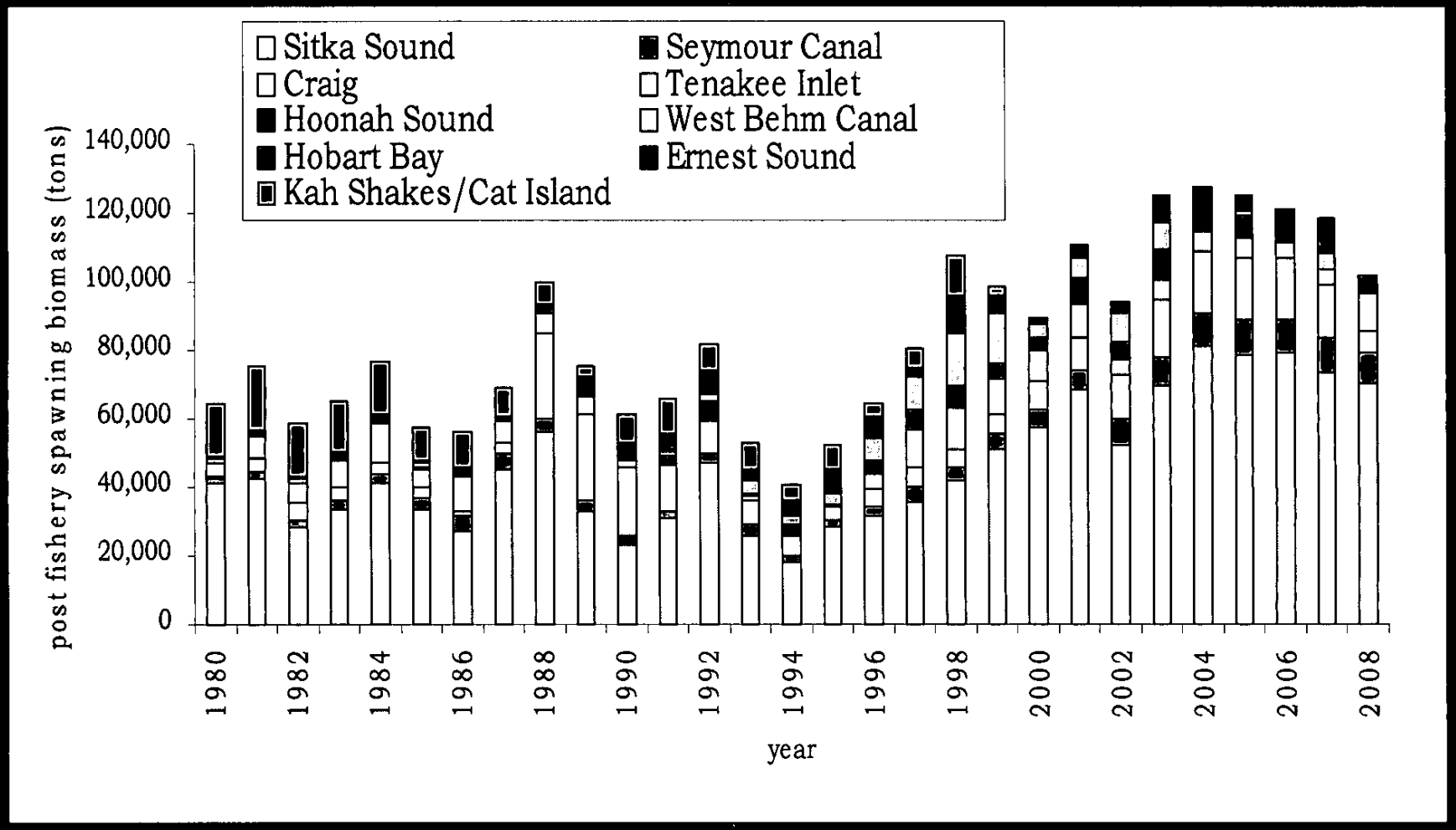


Herring Age Compositions (Sitka Sound cast net)

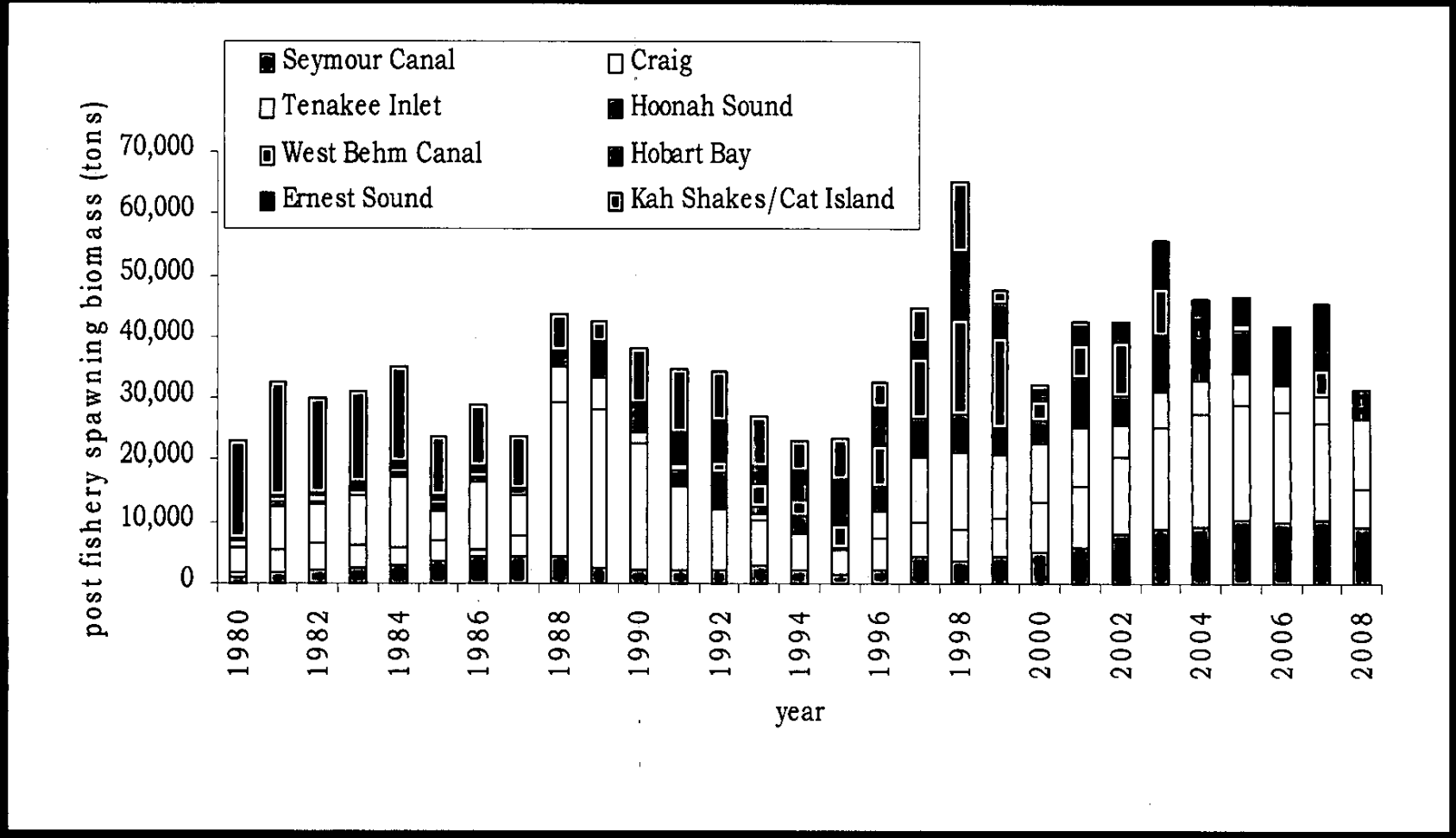


Note: Age Category 8 includes all herring age-8 and older

Southeast Alaska Herring Stock Size Estimates 1980-2008



Southeast Alaska Herring Stock Size Estimates Excluding Sitka Sound: 1980-2008



Two models used to forecast herring biomass:

1) Age Structured Analysis (ASA)

2008 Escapement - Mortality + Growth + Recruitment = 2009 biomass

data used: spawn deposition
catch age composition
spawning age composition
weight at age
fecundity at age

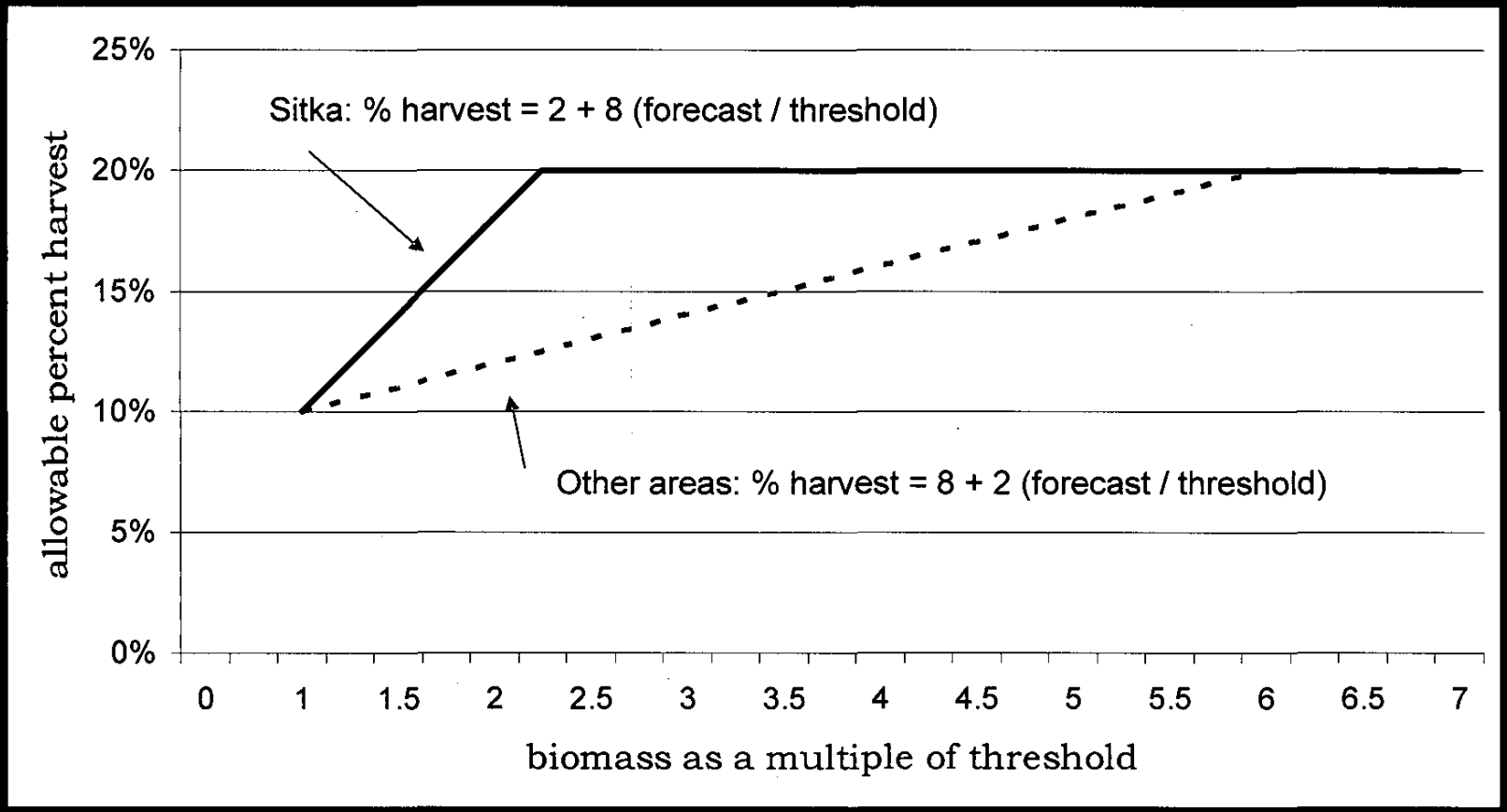
2) Biomass Accounting

2008 Escapement + standard growth - standard mortality = 2009 biomass

(standard growth and mortality = average values from ASA areas)

data used: spawn deposition
spawning age composition
weight at age
fecundity at age from nearest ASA area

Southeast Alaska herring harvest rate formulas



Comparison of herring maximum harvest rates

- Alaskan stocks: most 20%, some 15%
- British Columbia stocks: 20%
- Washington stocks: 20%
- California stocks: 20%
- North Atlantic: 12-16%

3283

A Herring Impaired Ecosystem
Is it worth the risk?

Dr. Evelyn Brown

Currently - Flying Fish Ltd

Background: over 10 yrs at ADFG with much of that as a herring biologist; EVOS PI for herring damage assessment; over 10yrs as UAF researcher; served 2 yrs as fisheries biologist for Metlakatla on Annette Island in early 80s)

PhD (UAF) – Dissertation Title:

Stock Structure and Environmental Effects on Year Class Formation and Population Trends of Pacific Herring in Prince William Sound, Alaska

flyingfishltd@embarqmail.com 509-493-8900

Evolution of Herring Fisheries and Management

- Early 1900s – the SE Alaska herring complex was huge with massive harvests over 100K tons; spawning occurred in a host of locations and large juvenile herring schools were observed in the inlets and bays
- Marine mammal and seabird predators were reduced via whaling and bounty programs (sea lions, seals, & eagles); massive salmon harvests reduced predation by salmon on herring. Later in the century, offshore harvests by Japanese and Koreans removed thousands of predatory species like sharks.
- The removal of these species simplified the dynamics controlling herring and placing man as the main predator/removal source for juveniles and adults
- The population was probably reduced by WWII when the industry and markets began to collapse (see Andy's timeline)
- When roe markets were developed in the 70s, the population was at low levels and an order of magnitude smaller than the one earlier in the century
- Stock assessment and monitoring began in earnest in the late 70s ; the frame of reference used today in management does not include the early years; i.e. our measuring stick began with a depleted stock.

Present Day Complexity

- The current population is a fraction of the size from a century earlier and many localized spawning areas have disappeared (i.e. stock contraction)
- Marine mammal, seabird, and shark populations have recovered and along with the enhanced salmon production, have increased the predation pressure on herring substantially, especially since the 80s. Man must now share the " harvest" with a host of other species. Humpbacks have been observed eating juvenile herring in PWS and SS.
- Climate change is introducing a new twist that will affect herring from bottom up (change in ocean conditions/plankton) and top down (new predators like tuna and whiting) and from within (new diseases accompanying food stress and changing temperatures)
- Meanwhile, the grassroots management in the form of ADFG has been systematically gutted with less money for assessments and research; ADFG has been forced to rely more and more on model outputs (i.e. ASA) often based on a single population level index
- ADFG is not equipped to adapt to the complex system dynamics; they are forced to modify basic herring biology (e.g. maturation rates) to make the data fit the expected shape of the model
- The forecasted population can be easily manipulated by using a different observed index (e.g. spawn deposition versus miles of spawn), using different maturity schedules, changing the fecundity rates (nos. eggs per gram) and changing the mortality schedule for each age.
- Vince's analysis shows that using alternative rates, the population could be significantly smaller than ADFG is forecasting; our analysis shows the existence of two stable population states – high and low since the 70s; PWS shows the exact same stock dynamics and probably operates under similar forcing mechanisms (i.e. PWS and SS analogous populations). We can use the two for contrasting.
- We feel that using the "high" number is extremely dangerous; we can demonstrate that given observed stock dynamics, the SE population is at a high risk for collapse. Given the current predation pressure (which includes a commercial harvest), once collapsed the stock will remain "trapped" at a low density state just like PWS is today. We believe that the fishery and whales can change herring distribution and affect spawning behavior (effects mainly felt by subsistence users)

SE Alaska Sans Herring

The impacts of a collapsed stock extend beyond the direct effect on herring harvest stakeholders (commercial and subsistence). Indirect impacts include:

- Lower average salmon sizes (already happened) and ultimately decreased marine survival; smaller halibut and reduction of other herring fish predators
- Create at risk marine mammal populations culminating in lawsuits (i.e. Pollock – Alaska Peninsula)
- Impacts on the sport charter industry, whale and sea bird watching tourism
- Jeopardy for marine mammals and subsistence harvest will likely result in a federal take-over of fisheries and research (some in Alaska are banking on this)
- Open niches once occupied by herring to non-commercial species like sand lance and juvenile pollock (i.e change the community structure)
- Low herring populations due to "trap" dynamics for years to come
- Huge expenditure by the state for herring recovery (how expensive was salmon enhancement?), required environmental impact studies, response to lawsuits, a new bureaucracy to deal with the joint state-federal oversight
- Increased economic hardships on local communities and zero income to state

Key Questions and Data Needs

- Stock Structure
  - define the SE herring complex structure, interactions among local stocks including interdependencies (i.e larvae from one region feed recruits to another); this has been done in PWS
  - Establish relationship between diversity , number and distribution of spawning sites and SE complex stock size
- Effects of scale of fishery and predation on herring distribution and spawning behavior
  - do fleets and whales alter spawning and overwintering areas? Are herring "on the run"?
  - Population large; scale of fishery & predation << scale of herring distribution/spawning vs
  - Population small; scale of fishery and predation => scale of herring distribution/spawning
  - Estimate and monitor whale predation rates
- Recruitment
  - Where are the larval & juvenile herring and how can they be protected or enhanced?
  - Where are the survival "bottlenecks"?
  - What dictates year class strength?
- Modeling
  - Include more than one stock index to weight the ASA; reinstate winter surveys and beef up spring indices
  - Track and measure vital rates affecting the model (i.e. fecundity/reproduction, maturity rates, and mortality rates)
  - Incorporate ecosystem effects (predation, disease, competition, climate via size at age) into forecast modeling
  - Develop a habitat correction model for egg deposition, miles and mile-days of spawn (BC has done this with their spawning data).

Short Term Action Plan

- Push impending BOF proposals to immediately adopt conservative (lower) estimate of stock in recognition of "at risk" status
- Result is a decrease of the quota and a restriction of fishing near spawning localities in danger of extinction; preserves traditional harvest localities
- Convene a workshop to discuss a new research, assessment and management plan for SE herring; invite PWS stakeholders, managers, and researchers to discuss shared goals and resources (i.e improve cost-effectiveness of efforts via scale of activities)
  - At the workshop discuss standardization of herring data collection methods, assessments and modeling across the state (currently, each region can adopt its own methods and tools; comparison a among regions is extremely difficult and data is hard to obtain
  - Discuss "herring clearing house" data site; PWS has a data portal under construction which could be expanded statewide
- Increase ADFG budget for regions with stocks at risk (SE, PWS, Cook Inlet, Kodiak)
- Consider ADFG reorganization to enable modernization

Long Term Action Plan

- Remove ADFG from adversarial position and encourage co-operative efforts with local resources (STA, KHAC, other local groups and agencies)
  - Improve transparency/data sharing; see http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/sci/herring/herspawn/pages/default5_e.htm
  - Return mission of ADFG and BOF back to conservation and away from harvest maximization
  - Add conservation of local spawning areas and diversity in distribution as a management goal (common practice in Canada and with Atlantic herring)
- Model co-management structure using Canadian models (site above and http://hcrs.bc.ca/hcrs_science.php); a diverse oversight committee is responsible for management with ADFG advisory and operating with state law frameworks
  - Schedule a workshop with Canadian specialists involved in fishery co-management (i.e. Rob Stevenson, George Rose, Jake Schweigert)
  - The cost of co-management is much lower than 100% government because local resources are incorporated (fishing boats, subsistence harvesters, school kids, the list is endless)
  - One advantage is that socioeconomic issues can be considered within the guidelines for conservation (i.e. opt out of harvest when price is low or fish are small – cannot do this under current structure)
  - Main advantage is empowerment of all stakeholders and a change in the human dynamics; energy toward cooperation rather than toward conflict
  - Economic impact on local communities will be significant; i.e. money flows to local ADFG and research org and local resources instead of regional or out-of-state federal government labs
- Using co-management structure, establish a herring research and assessment plan using co-funded sources (i.e. State of Alaska should not have to pay for all of this)
- Once stocks have recovered and there is a healthy fishery, make use of research quotas to pay for research and assessment programs.
  - Excise tax on charters/tourism, etc. can contribute to conservation plans just as commercial fisherman pay an aquaculture tax for salmon enhancement (whether they agree with enhancement or not)
  - Fisherman and other stakeholders "take turns" performing assessment and data collection; their involvement in turn increases their ability to co-manage with a common conservation goal

Note: Others will speak about socioeconomic actions (permit buybacks, restructuring loans for processors, etc.)

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February 10th, 2009

PUBLIC TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ALASKA LEGISLATIVE FISHERIES COMMITTEE

Introduction of Dr. Thornton, Dr. Brown, and Dr. Patrick, and Mike Miller of STA

Thank you each for allowing us the opportunity to testify on the issue of depleted herring stocks throughout Southeast Alaska and other parts of the State. This issue is of grave concern to thousands of residents in our coastal communities. Scientists agree that along with Washington State and British Columbia, the entire ecosystem of Southeast Alaskan waters is dependent on the health of *local* herring stocks.

During the 1980s, many of us began to be concerned about local stocks targeted in unregulated bait fisheries and early sac roe fisheries that were not recovering. Our concerns grew when the large stock in Lynn Canal crashed in 1983 and did not recover. Later on in the 1980s, a pilot who owned a lodge near Kah Shakes expressed concern that what was once twenty miles of spawning grounds along the Kah Shakes shore was getting steadily smaller each year under pressure from the gillnet fishery. Letters were sent to politicians and meetings were held with ADF&G and assurances were given that the herring stocks were being well managed. After the crash of the *historic Kah Shakes* stock in 1990, we formed an organization called the Herring Coalition. By this time, it was apparent to everyone that herring populations were not recovering under ADF&G's management plan.

In 1993, we joined with the Annette Island Reserve in a law suit in an effort to prevent the state from targeting a herring stock that was also being targeted by the Reserve that had moved just outside the Annette Island boundary. This action was settled with the Reserve when the state offered them fishing jurisdiction over a disputed island not related to the case. Locals could not afford to continue the lawsuit on their own. Kah Shakes did not recover.

Since 1993, citizens not related to this fishery have participated in advisory committees and submitted numerous proposals to the Board of Fish in an effort to raise the level of conservation of our herring stocks. Although the mission of fish and game is supposed to be to "protect, maintain, and improve the fisheries" and

the Board's main role is supposed to be "to conserve and develop" fisheries resources, conservative herring proposals submitted by the public have been largely ignored. The "public participation" that ADF&G encourages on the surface only works well when the *public involved is a commercial interest* and is in agreement with the department. With many of board members being stakeholders in the fisheries who are appointed by the governor after a heavy lobbying effort financed by the industry, many Alaskans are concerned about the integrity of the Board. Fish and Game has failed to achieve the third goal in its mission statement which is to "increase public knowledge and confidence that wild populations of fish and wildlife are *responsibly* managed." In the case of herring management, there *is no* public confidence unless you are a herring fisherman.

Our herring stocks are but a fraction of historic levels. As a result, species that depend on them are showing signs of stress. There are both fewer and smaller halibut and king salmon in several consecutive years. Fifty-three percent of the diet of halibut and sixty-two percent of the diet of king salmon is herring according to research by the Canadian dept. of fisheries. Last year's winter king salmon fishery decreased by 53 ½% over the previous year. This might not be a cause for alarm were it not for the fact that king salmon are now listed as endangered in Washington, Oregon, and California. The fish from Washington spend a large part of their life cycle feeding in OUR waters. The herring stock in Puget Sound has crashed. The anchovy stocks that salmon fed on in California and Oregon were over-fished and crashed years ago. Prior to the crash of the New England Cod fisheries, Atlantic herring stocks crashed. The crash of the New England Cod fisheries put 20,000 people out of work. According to figures recently released by the Environmental Defense Fund, about 72,000 jobs have been lost because of dwindling salmon stocks in the Pacific Northwest alone.

Since the sac roe fishery began, the humpback whale population has increased from less than 1200 in the entire Pacific Rim, to about 4,000 whales migrating in just Southeast Alaska each year due to a federal recovery program. Fish and Game data shows that "Humpback whales in Alaska feed principally on herring, other small fish, and schools of krill." Each adult humpback consumes between 800 and 3,500 pounds of feed daily. Their total consumption of feed is between 3,200,000 and 14,000,000 lbs. daily. The steady decline observed in the herring population seems to correspond with the increase in the humpback whale population. Did the feds take this into consideration? We doubt it, and neither did ADF&G.

Had ADF&G and the Board of Fish listened to the public's concerns years ago, our fisheries resources might be much healthier than they are today. Instead, we are faced with the possibility of a federal take over of our fisheries. As we speak, the National Marine Fisheries Service is considering listing Southeast Alaska's herring stocks as threatened or endangered. This could be a catastrophe for our coastal communities. As Representative Paul Seaton said, this could affect mining, logging, and municipal wastewater discharge standards to the detriment of our economies at a cost of millions of dollars and a loss of hundreds of jobs in industries already

suffering from heavy-handed environmental restrictions. This threat is real and we cannot afford to ignore it.

In spite of all of this, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is planning on yet another consecutive RECORD harvest of one of the *last great herring stocks left anywhere in the world*, near Sitka Sound this spring. The value of this fishery is less than 2% of the overall value of combined fisheries in the state and is providing a supplementary income for participants in these other fisheries. With the prices of herring roe falling, and herring stocks depleted throughout the world does this make any sense?

To illustrate why this is a bad idea, and how this problem can possibly be fixed, I yield the floor to my colleagues.

Andy Rauwolf
Ketchikan Herring Action Committee

PREPARED STATEMENT OF

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Associate Professor of Anthropology

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Before the

HOUSE FISHERIES COMMITTEE

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

10 February 2009

Dear Members of the Fisheries Committee:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to report on an ongoing research project undertaken by me and several colleagues (beginning in 2007, to be completed in 2009), entitled " *Herring Synthesis: Documenting and Modeling Herring Spawning Areas within Socio-Ecological Systems over Time in the Southeastern Gulf of Alaska."* This project, funded by the North Pacific Research Board, was conceived in response to numerous comments and concerns I have documented about the status of herring in Southeast Alaska during the course of my anthropological research in the region over the past 20 years. The aim of the project is to better understand broad trends in the ecology of herring in Southeast Alaska by synthesizing historical and local sources of knowledge not widely consulted by fisheries managers at present in order to improve our collective understanding and management of these precious fish stocks.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

1) *Background*: Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii*) is a foundation and bellwether species for North Pacific marine ecosystems but productive spawning areas (and times) in Southeast Alaska are limited and historical population dynamics and ecology of the species are not well understood.
    - Communities with local and traditional knowledge (LTK) of herring fisheries claim that historical stocks were larger and spawning areas more numerous earlier in their lifetimes.
    - While shifts in stocks and spawning have been documented since 1980, no synthesis of the deeper archaeological, historical, and ethno-ecological records on herring spawning areas has been carried out.
    - The lack of deep historical knowledge in fisheries management is growing issue of concern. As marine biologist Callum Roberts puts it in his recent book *The Unnatural History of the Sea* (2007:xiv-xv): "A collective amnesia surrounds changes that happened more than a few decades ago, as hardly anyone reads old books or reports." This in turn can lead to a problem of "shifting environmental baselines" in management in which "we come to accept the degraded condition of the sea as normal. Those charged with looking after the oceans set themselves un-ambitious management targets that simply attempt to arrest declines, rather than rebuild to the richer and more productive states that existed in the past. If we are to break out of this spiral of diminishing returns and diminished expectations of the sea, then it is vital that we gain a clearer picture of how things have changed and what has been lost."
    - Our objective is to synthesize existing archaeological, ethnological, historical and biological records with data from interviews (60+) with herring fishers with significant long-term observations and local and traditional knowledge (LTK) of herring populations to build a historical and spatial database to: 1) identify the extent of historic and prehistoric herring spawning and massing areas; 2) link changes in herring spawn extent and intensity to environmental and human factors in the socio-ecological system; and 3) identify sensitive areas for protection and potential restoration of herring spawning.
2) *Key hypotheses* for the project include :

- 1. Present herring stocks, even in highly productive areas such as Sitka Sound, are essentially being managed in a "depleted status," representing a fraction of their historical abundance and distribution;
- 2. Significant long-term impacts to Southeast herring stocks distribution and abundance have been anthropogenic, in particular over-exploitation of the species by commercial herring fisheries in the last century (e.g., for herring reduction plants), but also disturbance, contamination, and degradation of critical spawning habitats;
- 3. Human dependence on herring as a food resource evolved through interactions with key spawning areas with abundant substrates for egg deposition (such as macrocystis kelp, rockweed, and eelgrass), with which many aboriginal settlements are associated, and was later enhanced through the development of engineered marinescapes (e.g., placement of hemlock boughs in intertidal areas), techniques for conserving herring stocks by regulating human harvests and disturbances to critical spawning habitat, and by the development of new technologies (such as the herring rake) for capturing whole herring in quantity.

3) *Preliminary results*:

- Our interviews have documented numerous herring spawning areas not previously identified in state and territorial management records (see Maps 1 & 2, compiled by Jamie Hebert). These spawning areas are represented by the green lines on the accompanying draft maps. Some of these sites still may be viable for herring spawning, and some local fishers report having experimented with transplanting herring spawn to historically productive areas in order to revitalize stocks.
- In addition we have been able to verify the spawning areas identified in state and territorial records (yellow lines) with local sources, and have record hundreds of observations about the qualities and changing status of these spawning areas (black dots and red triangles). Most of the green areas and many of the yellow ones are/were not major spawning areas. (Note: not all data has been entered/vetted in GIS)
- The interviews we have analyzed to date reveal a complex picture of herring stocks (in light of the first two hypotheses above), with many areas of historical spawning observed to be in decline or even barren, but some also displaying rebounding or cyclical trends. It is not clear to what extent decreasing numbers of herring in one spawning area may represent a shift to other areas.
- Sitka stocks are recognized as a uniquely large and relatively stable in producing quality spawn for subsistence, but other smaller stocks are also highly valued by local communities for subsistence and personal uses as well as their foundational role in supporting the marine ecosystem.
- Integration of LTK observations and select historical and environmental data layers in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping is being carried to analyze potential causal factors contributing to changes in contemporary herring stocks, including anthropogenic impacts (e.g., fishing, habitat degradation), as hypothesized, but also non-anthropogenic ones, such as marine mammal and salmon predation and climate change. In most communities, multiple factors are cited as contributing to changes in local herring stocks.
- There are no estimates of herring biomass in the pre- and early commercial fishing eras. However, historical analysis of the fisheries conducted by Fritz Funk for our project shows a long period of more-or-less constant catch, ranging from 4,000 to 10,000 tons,

from 1880 through 1918, when only one herring reduction plant operated at Killisnoo, near Angoon. With intensive capitalization in the early 1920s, there followed 3 waves of "boom-and-bust", where peak catches exceeded 40,000 tons annually. By the 1940s, the paucity of herring during the bust cycles attracted federal regulators, and quotas were enacted to preserve herring for other uses (food, bait; prey for other species). Note that the quotas always lag the catch in the declining phase of each cycle. Fishermen are first unable to find enough fish to catch the quota, then the quota is lowered in the subsequent year. There was no stock assessment focused on abundance estimation, so quotas merely reflected fishing experience from the prior year. The number of operating plants peaks in 1928; as the efficiency of factory processes and vessels increased, fewer plants, fishermen, and vessels could attain the same production as in the earlier, more labor-intensive era. The last plant closed in the mid 1960s. Overall fishing impacts associated with these plants were concentrated in central Southeast Alaska, especially South Baranof Island, Frederick Sound and Chatham Strait. (http://www.backwater.org/herring/history/Historical_Catch.html).

- As of January 2009, records from 228 archaeological sites have been reviewed by colleagues Madonna Moss, Virginia Butler, and J. Tait Elder. Only 25 of these sites were excavated and studied using methods appropriate for documenting small-bodied herring. Of this sub-set, 21 (84%) contain herring bones, which highlights the consistent use of the fish in the past. The earliest herring remains are about 8000 radiocarbon years old and from the Chuck Lake Site (49-CRG-237) on Heceta Island. Most of the records date to the last 4000 years. Many long-standing Native community settlements appear to be associated with important historical herring stocks. We are assessing patterns in herring use over time and space, comparing them with known cultural changes in settlement patterns, social organization, and technology, as well as environmental forces (e.g., changing climate, sea-level changes).
- Our project website, (http://herringsynthesis.research.pdx.edu/research/index.html) contains additional details on the progress and results of our research.

4) *Preliminary conclusions:*

- Better historical and local understanding of herring populations and their role in marine ecosystems is critical for assessing the long-term trends and health of these stocks and other species that rely on them for food. A precautionary principle toward management may be called for until broad-based historical-ecological studies assess the overall health and trends of herring stocks in Southeast Alaska and adjacent waters.
- Our research in the communities of Angoon, Craig, Hoonah, Juneau, Kake, Ketchikan-Saxman, Klawock, and Sitka is not comprehensive for the region, but indicates the value of local and traditional knowledge, combined with broader historical ecological enquiry, for assessing key herring impacts, relationships, and trends over time. Our data show that many herring spawning areas have declined resulting in increasing fragmentation and vulnerability of remaining stocks.
- Herring have shown vulnerability and resilience since the advent of commercial exploitation more then a century ago; however many local residents in communities with historically significant stocks are concerned about their present status. They are acting in their own ways to conserve them, including "reseeding" historical spawning areas. However, a broader, ecosystem-level strategy is needed to balance herring stocks.

February 3, 2009

To Who It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to express my concern about the dramatic downturn in the abundance of herring within SE Alaska . I have lived in SE Alaska since 1973 and during this period I have witnessed a dramatic decline in herring stocks from the Kah Shakes area near Ketchikan to Auke Bay in Juneau to all areas within SE Alaska. I have also noticed a dramatic increase in whale populations through out SE Alaska which appears to correspond with the decline in herring stocks through out the region. I am concerned that the decline in herring populations will impact the survival of salmon from all sections of SE Alaska (including the Ketchikan Area) as they migrate through their feeding grounds from the outside waters of SE Alaska (i.e. Sitka, etc) through to the inside waters of SE Alaska as they return to spawn.
In addition, I am concerned that the downturn in herring stocks will force predators such as seals, sea lions, etc to become more aggressive in feeding on out migrating juvenile salmon and steelhead as well as adults of these species as they return to their natal streams.

Sincerely:

Steve Hoffman
Retired Sport Fish biologist (area wide) ADF&G
PO Box 7064
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

2/8/08

Andy,

First let me commend you on your untiring efforts on this extremely important Herring issue in Southeast Alaska. Without people like you and those of us who actually see and know what has happened to the herring stocks this issue would go unnoticed given our current political and economical status.
Having been born and raised in Southeast Alaska and commercially fished for 40 plus years I feel quite qualified to tell you that since the harvesting of herring eggs on kelp back in the 1960's thru to the **huge** sac-roe seine fishery and gillnet herring fishery now I have seen the stocks go from catching herring between the finger floats as a child with your hands to hardly seeing a herring ever!
The King Salmon I catch now in the winter have little or no herring in them, mostly young cod, krill, or shrimp. What a drastic difference from the old days when every King Salmon you caught came up so plugged full of herring that they were spitting them out of their mouths. Furthermore, we now have to go much further and fish much longer to catch fewer kings than we used to catch. To put it simply, and using common sense, if you want to wipe out a species, all you have to do is target the eggs [babies]!!!

Hey you know what! That is what Hitler wanted to do!!!!!!!

Sincerely,

Charles Hanas
FV Sand Dollar

AFFIDAVIT OF BEN FLEENOR

STATE OF ALASKA)
) ss:
First District)

I, BEN FLEENOR, having first been duly sworn, do hereby allege and depose:

I am 69 years old and have lived in Ketchikan since 1942.

The ongoing controversy concerning the management (mismanagement) of herring stocks bring to my mind certain problems relating to the actions of the State Department of Fish and Game personnel. This must be the largest and most powerful of the many State bureaucracies and it seems accountable to no one. Even our most powerful legislators are unable or unwilling to get involved with problems of inappropriate behavior, even malfeasance regarding actions of this department and individuals therein.

This department takes a lot, if not all of the credit for the relatively good salmon runs of recent years. It is curious, to me, that the first healthy returns just happened to occur the same year that the 200-mile limit went into effect.

The King Crab fishery was virtually destroyed when the department caved in to the Wakefield interests and removed the 40-pot limit back in the early 60's. This fishery may never recover to a healthy status.

Southern Southeast Alaska supported a healthy winter king salmon fishery back in the 40's and 50's. That is when there was a relatively good stock of herring throughout the area. Tagging programs then indicated that many salmon of the Stikine, Unik and Chickamin rivers never migrated but nurtured and matured in Southeast Alaska. Of course, opening these rivers to gillnetters wiped these fish out anyway. However, who's to say that, given the good populations of herring we had in those days, that those salmon, many of which are propagated by hatcheries, would not be available today. These fish would presumably be outside the quota allotted by our Canadian, Pacific Northwest troll fisheries agreement; at least the winter harvest would enhance the local economies.

More to the point, when I suggest that there were relatively good stocks of herring in the mid 40's and through the 50's, I am only comparing this with that which I was told were enormous stocks that supported something like 100 reduction plants through Southeast Alaska.

In those days, I was among a few boats that trolled king salmon year round. We almost always looked for sizeable herring stocks before putting the gear in the water. Just a few of the sites that I recall will be noted:

Zimovia Straits - probably a square mile of herring laying off Thom's Place. They were so dense that the lines quivered when trolling through.

Hadley - the harbor was full in January.

Windfall Harbor - the same. Myers Chuck to Camano Point, Bond Bay to Spacious Bay experienced heavy spawning.

Spike Murphy would trap many tons of herring in his pound, then wait until they spawned out on his pound webb, before taking them for bait. Herring that were full of eggs would not keep well enough to be used for bait. Spike would complain that his webb would be so heavy with spawn, that he would have a hard time loading it aboard the Rio Grande to clean it up.

I also fished the other end of Behm Canal. Herring were spawning all the way from Pt. Alava to and through Princess Bay. Another area of heavy spawn was Sargent Bay. Beyond that, I couldn't say as that area was closed to trolling. I tried Kah Shakes several times as it was the site of heavy population of herring spawning all the way through Foggy Bay, but could never find many king salmon that would bite.

In late fall and early winter, Tongass Narrows would be so full of herring that my depth sounder could not penetrate to the bottom from Channel Island off Ward Cove to the south end of Pennock. This from shoreline to shoreline. I have counted as many as 150 sea lions feasting in this same area.

George Inlet, Carroll Inlet and Thorne Arm also had sizeable populations of spawning herring, these exist no longer.

I find it incredible that Fish & Game continue to pursue this fishery into oblivion. It can only be that they have little or no criteria to base their decisions on, to say nothing of the inaccuracy of their methods of estimating the biomass, this by their own admission.

It may be too late to save the herring but at least we should try and the sooner the better in my estimation.

Dated this 19th day of March, 1993.

Ben Fleenor

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 19th day of March, 1993.

Notary Public for Alaska
Commission expires: 11-15-96

(1)

MARCH 19, 1993

AFFIDAVIT

MY NAME IS DAVID WERNER, I AM 54 YEARS OLD. I MOVED TO SOUTH-EAST ALASKA IN 1967 AND STARTED FLYING COMMERCIALLY IN 1968. I HAVE OVER 18,000 HOURS FLYING THROUGH-OUT SOUTH-EAST ALASKA.

OVER THE YEARS I HAVE NOTICED A DRAMATIC DECLINE IN THE AMOUNT OF HERRING SPAWN FROM YEARS PAST. DURING THE LATE 1960's THRU THE MID 1970's I WOULD CONSISTANTLY SEE HERRING SPAWN IN ROUGHLY THE SAME AREAS AND IN THE SAME AMOUNTS FROM YEAR TO YEAR. TO ME IT IS AN EXCITING TIME OF THE YEAR AS THE THOUSANDS OF GULLS, SEA BIRDS, EAGLES, AND SEA LIONS WOULD CONVERGE IN AND AROUND THESE VAST SPAWING AREAS.

(2)

MARCH 19, 1993

AFFIDAVIT

I USE TO POINT OUT THIS SPECTACLE GOING ON BELOW US, TO MY PASSENGERS. BUT NOT ANYMORE, ITS A FAIRLY RARE SIGHT. AS THE HERRING FISHERIES WAS REOPENED AFTER THE HERRING REDUCTION PLANTS WERE PERMANENTLY CLOSED I HEARD WARNINGS FROM SOME CONCERNED FISHERMEN. I REMEMBERED THESE CONCERNS AND MADE IT A POINT TO WATCH THESE TRADIONAL SPAWNING AREAS FOR ANY SIGNS OF CHANGE. IT TOOK YEARS BUT THEN I STARTED NOTICING A CHANGE FOR THE WORSE. YEARS LATER SOME AREAS TOTALLY DIED OUT. SOME OF THESE AREAS WERE NOT EVEN REMOTELY CLOSE TO A HERRING FISH OPENNING AREA.

(3) MARCH 19, 1993

AFFIDAVIT

I MOVED TO CORDOVA IN 1991 BUT THE DECLINE OF SPAWN AND THE NUMBER OF SPAWNING AREAS PRIOR TO MOVING HAS BEEN VERY DRAMATIC TO SAY THE LEAST, IF NOT DOWN RIGHT SCARY. THERE IS SOMETHING VERY WRONG AND EVEN POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS GOING ON WITH THE HERRING POPULATIONS IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA FOR ME TO BE WITNESSING THESE DRAMATIC CHANGES. THIS SITUATION NEEDS IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.

SINCERELY

David Wenner

Notary Public In and For The State of Alaska

My Commission Expires: 12-12-96

BOX 1092
CORDOVA, AK 99574
PH. 424-5551

To : Alaska Department of Fish and Game

I moved to Sitka, Alaska in 1939 when I was 22 years old.I have now lived here in Sitka for 73 years 45 of them right on the water and I can **"Clearly"** remember when the **"Herring stocks where healthy"**. After they spawned the roe was over 12" deep on the beaches everywhere. Did you know that Silver Bay got it's name from the herring! It's been **"several years"** since there has been any herring or spawn in Silver Bay, Jamestown Bay, Redoubt Bay, Gotterd Bay, Whale Bay just to name a few. Based on Historical facts and over 73 years of personal observation I would say that our S.E. Herring stocks are in **"Great Danger of Collapse"**. The herring stocks in Alaska are the foundation/heart of or resource and it is very critical to properly manage them and do not allow **"Over Harvest"** to the point of **no return** like Lynn Cannell, Hoonah, Auke Bay, Tenakee, Ketchikan, Craig Etc.. Just take a good look at history the farther back you go the more healthy our herring stocks where. Do you think there is a connection that the fact that our herring stocks are at **very low** levels and the salmon and halibut fishing is on the decline? for the past several years. The king salmon stocks where so low this past 2008 season ADF&G closed the king salmon fishing right in the middle of the season. The silver salmon and halibut fishing in and around the Sitka area has "clearly" dropped off in the past several years and the low herring stocks would play a big factor. Even if the salmon and halibut stocks where healthy ....**how would they survive with no-herring/feed?**

It is a well known that **"Commercial Over Harvest"** is the main reason that Lynn Cannell, Kake, Ketchikan,West Beam Cannell, Hoona, Auke Bay, Tennakee, Silver Bay, Jamestown Bay have never recovered and it has been several years since there has been any spawn there at all.

I am deeply concerned that if you do not allow our "Herring Stocks to Recover" we will not have a resource at all!

Albert F Richter

I am 74 years old. I was born and raised in Sitka, Alaska. I began subsistence herring egg fishing in 1975. I would lay branches in front of Big Gavanski, Little Gavanski, Middle Island, all the way on to the other end of town by Pirate's Cove and Samsing Cove. I would do well laying branches in these areas. Since 1975 I have noticed a steady decline of herring, and in some places the herring are no longer returning; just as they have quit returning to Goddard Hot Springs and even Redoubt Bay due to over fishing of the herring stock. Furthermore, since the commercial fishing boats have been allowed to come into inside waters, there is hardly any herring spawn along Halibut Point Road, or into Thompson Harbor, as there used to be.

The Fish and Game tell us that the herring biomass is just moving around, but they're not. They're being fished out. I believe that even when the test sets are made, to monitor the herring fishing that, when released, roughly one third of the herring in the test set go straight to the bottom of the ocean, wasted, every test set.

I believe there is a need to reduce the allowed tonnage of herring fishing caught commercially, or possibly even stop the commercial herring fishing for a few years. We also need to include the herring caught in the test sets into the total tonnage caught thus giving us a more accurate depiction of the remaining uncaught herring in the biomass. We need to do this if we want to save the tradition of herring fishing for future generations, and protect the marine ecosystem.

Glenn G. Howard Sr. Glenn G. Howard Sr.

BY SIGNING THIS YOU/WE ARE IN FULL SUPPORT/AGREEMENT OF THE FOLLOWING

PROPOSAL- 199- 5AAC 27.035 CLOSURE OF REGISTRATION AREAS. CLOSE COMMERCIAL HERRING FISHERIES IN AREA 1-A THRU 16 AS FOLLOWS. ALL HERRING FISHERIES IN S.E. ALASKA: AREA 1-A THRU 16 SHALL BE CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. EXCEPTION: SUBSISTENCE PERSONAL USE AT CURRENT LEVELS.

PROPOSAL-203 CHANGING THE QUOTAS AND GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVEL (GHL) TO CAP THE HARVEST RATE PERCENTAGE AT 10% RAISE THE CONSERVATION THRESHOULD ,AND CAP THE (GHL) AT 10,000 TONS.

PROPOSAL-204 INCLUDE HERRING TAKEN IN TEST FISHERY IN THE GUIDLINE HARVEST LIMIT

PROPOSAL-234 INCREASE THE AMOUNT REASONABLY NECESSARY FOR SUBSISTENCE (ANS) OF HERRING EGGS FROM 265,000 TO 325,000 LBS (FROM 105,000 TO 158,000)

		phone	address
1-23-09	Paul Owen		
1-23-09	(Jane Brizgaloff)		
1-23-09	Anna Wintersy		
	Joyce E Howard Jr.		Box 2294 - Sitka
	Anita Wright		Box 2392 - Sitka
1/25/09			Box 186 Sitka
	Colin Arnold		209 Seward #1
1-24-09	Margaret H. Hope	747-8851	518 Monastery, Sitka
1-24-09	Fred H Hope	7-8851	518 Monastery, Sitka, AK
1/24/09	Patricia Alexander		310 Jarvis Sitka, Ak.
1/24/09	Sharon McGlinchey		316 Oja St. Sitka, AK
1/24/09	Irene D. Paul		705 Sirstad St. Sitka, AK
1/24/09		752-0643	Box 6012 Sitka, AK
01/24/09			
1/26/09	Jean Arnold	7-4512	P.O. Box 535 Sitka
1/26/09	Kathy Hope Erickson	747-6479	203 Crabapple
1-27-09		7-8824	Bx 1656
1-27/09	Ben Cicco	747-4839	
1-29-09	Anita Wright	747-5074	Box 2392 Sitka
27	Joyce E Howard	747-8229	Bx 2294 Sitka Ak.
01/29/09	Catherine J Owens	747-3583	415 Monastery Apt
1/29/09	Florence B Schultz	747-8426	1250-HPR Sitka
1-29-09	Clara Fleming	747-2909	P.O. Box 1255 Sitka
1-30-09		747-9385	P.O.B 6049 Sitka
1-29-09	Lisa M.	747-1360	P.O. Box 6049 Sitka
1/29/09	Rose M Ballinger	747-6174	606	St
1-29-09		747-8136	Baranof St Sitka
1-29-09	Darlene Dekin	747-4522	PO Box 6311 - Sitka
1-29-09		709-6960	3322
1.29.09		747.5058	309 Wachusett
1.29.09	Ashley	738.2683	405-B DeGroff

BY SIGNING THIS YOU/WE ARE IN FULL SUPPORT/AGREEMENT OF THE FOLLOWING

PROPOSAL- 199- 5AAC 27.035 CLOSURE OF REGISTRATION AREAS. CLOSE COMMERCIAL HERRING FISHERIES IN AREA 1-A THRU 16 AS FOLLOWS. ALL HERRING FISHERIES IN S E. ALASKA: AREA 1-A THRU 16 SHALL BE CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. EXCEPTION. SUBSISTENCE PERSONAL USE AT CURRENT LEVELS.

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	Glenn G. Howard	Sitka Alaska 602 Merrill St.
	Clarence B Dull	112 Ocean View Dr [illegible]
	[illegible]	1613 SMC Sitka 99835
	Karl T. Burkhart	1613 SMC Rd Sitka 99835
	Robert S. Baines	P.O. Box 8121 Sitka AK 99835
	Willie Dale Price	610 Merrill St. Sitka AK 99835
	John H. Littlefield	4102 HPR Sitka, AK 99835 [illegible]
	[illegible]	4102 HRB Sitka AK 99835 Roberta Littlefield
	Anne B. Rosin	2506 HPR Sitka AK 99835
	Al Richter	2506 Halibut Point Rd Sitka AK 99835
1-20-09	Herman K Davis Sr	Box 395 Sitka AK 99835
1-20-09	Michael E. [illegible]	Box 395 Sitka, AK 99835
1-20-09	Vida S. Davis	Box 395 Sitka
1-20-09	Mark E. Davis	Box 6438 Sitka AK 99835
1-20-09	Herman Davis Jr.	Box 395 Sitka, AK 99835
	Elizabeth A. [illegible]	602 Merrill Sitka AK 998[illegible]
1-21-2009	[illegible]	406 Hirst #4 Sitka, AK 99835
1-21-09	Adam [illegible]	2000 Anna Cir. Sitka AK 99835
1-22-09	CARL ANSELM, JR	1311 SMC Sitka Ak 99835
1-22-09	EMILY ANSELM	1311 SMC Sitka Ak 99835
1-22-09	Myron [illegible]	404 Lake St 1B Sitka AK 99835 966-[illegible]
1-22-09	[illegible] Howard	4108 Katlian St Sitka AK 998[illegible]
1-22-09	Darryl Howard	328 Cascade St Sitka 99835
1-22-09	[illegible]	190 [illegible] Sitka AK 998[illegible]
1-22-09	[illegible]	401 [illegible] Sitka AK 99835
1-23-09	John Sherwood	1209 H.P.R. Sitka AK 99835
1-23-09	Mary [illegible]	504 HPR Sitka, AK 99835
1-25-09	Randy P. [illegible]	612 Merrill St. Sitka, AK 99835
1-25-09	[illegible]	2716 HPR Sitka AK 99835

BY SIGNING THIS YOU/WE ARE IN FULL SUPPORT/AGREEMENT OF THE FOLLOWING

PROPOSAL- 199- 5AAC 27.035 CLOSURE OF REGISTRATION AREAS. CLOSE COMMERCIAL HERRING FISHERIES IN AREA 1-A THRU 16 AS FOLLOWS. ALL HERRING FISHERIES IN S.E. ALASKA: AREA 1-A THRU 16 SHALL BE CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. EXCEPTION: SUBSISTENCE PERSONAL USE AT CURRENT LEVELS.

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PROPOSAL-234 INCREASE THE AMOUNT REASONABLY NECESSARY FOR SUBSISTENCE (ANS) OF HERRING EGGS FROM 265,000 TO 325,000 LBS (FROM 105,000 TO 158,000)

1/15/09	George C. Phillips PO Box 6452 Sitka, AK 99835
1/15/09	[illegible] PO Box 1592 Sitka AK 99835
1/15	[illegible] 2318 HPR Sitka AK
1/15/09	[illegible] Po box 951 Sitka AK 99835
1/15/09	[illegible] 909 HPR #35 Sitka, AK 99835
1/15/09	[illegible] PO Box 1191 Sitka AK 99835
1/15/09	[illegible] P.O. Box 22 Pelican AK 99835
1/15/09	[illegible] Box 2076 Sitka AK 99835
1-15-09	Eric VanVeen Eric VanVeen 2309 HPR #23
1-15-2009	[illegible] Dave Zeiger POBox 631 TKE, AK 99841
1-15-2009	[illegible] Anke Wagner POBox 631 TKE AK 99841
1-15-09	[illegible] PO 6391 Sitka AK 99835
1-15-09	[illegible] Box 2 Sitka AK 99835
1-15-09	[illegible] Mike Korsmeyer Box 1235 Sitka AK 9983
1-16-09	Lucas McConnell Lucas McConnell 3510 HPR Sitka AK 99835
1-16-09	[illegible] 2500 H.P.R Sitka
1-16-09	[illegible] J. Spencer Severson 412 DeArmond St 99835
1-16-09	[illegible] Erik Holmdahl 4416 HPR Sitka 99835
1-16-09	Anna Bradley Anna Bradley 431 Andrews St Sitka
1-18-09	[illegible] Andrew M. Scorzelli P.O. Box 6416, Sitka, AK 99835

Central Council
Tlingit and Haida
Indian Tribes of Alaska

CENTRAL COUNCIL
tlingit and haida indian tribes of alaska
ANDREW P. HOPE BUILDING
320 West Willoughby Avenue • Suite 300
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1726

Executive Council of the Central Council
TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA

Resolution EC/ 09-05

Title: Supporting ADF&G Board Proposal 203, Change of the Harvest Level and Harvest Rate for the Sitka Herring Sac Roe Fishery

WHEREAS, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council) is a federally recognized tribe of more than 27,000 tribal citizens worldwide; and

WHEREAS, subsistence gathering and harvesting of herring eggs constitute our nutritional, spiritual, and cultural foundation since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act TITLE VIII enacting Federal legislation granting subsistence priority for rural residents over the priority harvest of all fish and game; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Fisheries has found that herring spawn in Sitka Sound (Area 13-A and 13-B) is customarily and traditionally used for subsistence; and

WHEREAS, under state law, Alaska Board of Fisheries is required to adopt regulations that provide for a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses of herring spawn; and

WHEREAS, the subsistence use of herring eggs is a statewide tradition for Alaska Natives, as eggs are shipped throughout the State of Alaska, and herring are the life support of our ecosystem, nourishing the salmon, halibut, and marine mammals we depend on; and

WHEREAS, despite continued efforts to work with the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game in collaborative management of the commercial herring fisheries, there continues to be extremely poor subsistence herring egg harvests due to the lack of quality spawn while the commercial fishermen continue to harvest record catches; and

WHEREAS, The Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) has submitted Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 203 to change the harvest level and harvest rate for the Sitka herring sac roe fishery as follows: the guideline harvest level for the herring sac roe fishery in Section 13-A and 13-B shall be established by the department, shall not exceed 10,000

TEL. 907-586-1432 www.ccthita.org TOLL FREE 800-344-1432

tons (currently there is no cap) and will be a harvest rate percentage that is not more than 10 % (current rate is set at 20 %). The fishery will not be conducted if the spawning biomass is less than necessary to support cultural and traditional uses; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Council hereby authorizes Central Council to support efforts to protect the subsistence harvest of herring eggs by supporting Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 203 which would change the harvest level and harvest rate for the Sitka herring sac roe fishery.

ADOPTED this 30th day of January 2009, by the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, by a vote of 6 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions and 0 absence(s).

CERTIFY

Connie M Sama COO
for President William E. Martin

ATTEST

Tribal Secretary Michele Metz

Central Council
Tlingit and Haida
Indian Tribes of Alaska

CENTRAL COUNCIL
tlingit and haida indian tribes of alaska
ANDREW P. HOPE BUILDING
320 West Willoughby Avenue • Suite 300
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1726

Executive Council of the Central Council
TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA

Resolution EC/ 09-06

Title: Supporting ADF&G Board Proposal 204, Include Herring Taken in Test Fishery in the Guideline Harvest Limit in the Sitka Sound Herring Sac Roe Fishery

WHEREAS, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council) is a federally recognized tribe of more than 27,000 tribal citizens worldwide; and

WHEREAS, subsistence gathering and harvesting of herring eggs constitute our nutritional, spiritual, and cultural foundation since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act TITLE VIII enacting Federal legislation granting subsistence priority for rural residents over the priority harvest of all fish and game; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Fisheries has found that herring spawn in Sitka Sound (Area 13-A and 13-B) is customarily and traditionally used for subsistence; and

WHEREAS, under state law, Alaska Board of Fisheries is required to adopt regulations that provide for a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses of herring spawn; and

WHEREAS, the subsistence use of herring eggs is a statewide tradition for Alaska Natives, as eggs are shipped throughout the State of Alaska, and herring are the life support of our ecosystem, nourishing the salmon, halibut, and marine mammals we depend on; and

WHEREAS, despite continued efforts to work with the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game in collaborative management of the commercial herring fisheries, there continues to be extremely poor subsistence herring egg harvests due to the lack of quality spawn while the commercial fishermen continue to harvest record catches; and

WHEREAS, the Sitka Tribe of Alaska has submitted Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 204 to include herring taken in test fishery in the guideline harvest limit in the Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery. Proposal 204 is intended to decrease test setting in the traditional subsistence area, curtail disturbing schools of pre-spawning herring, and limit incidental and unaccounted mortality.

TEL. 907-586-1432 www.ccthita.org TOLL FREE 800-344-1432

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Council hereby authorizes Central Council to support efforts to protect the subsistence harvest of herring eggs by supporting Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 204 which would include herring taken in test fishery in the guideline harvest limit in the Sitka Sound herring sac roe fishery.

ADOPTED this 30th day of January 2009, by the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, by a vote of 6 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions and 0 absence(s).

CERTIFY

for President William E. Martin

ATTEST

Tribal Secretary Michele Metz

Central Council
Tlingit and Haida
Indian Tribes of Alaska

CENTRAL COUNCIL
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Juneau, Alaska 99801-1726

Executive Council of the Central Council
TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA

Resolution EC/ 09-07

Title: Supporting ADF&G Board Proposal 234, Change the Harvest Level and Harvest Rate for the Sitka Herring Sac Roe Fishery

WHEREAS, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council) is a federally recognized tribe of more than 27,000 tribal citizens worldwide; and

WHEREAS, subsistence gathering and harvesting of herring eggs constitute our nutritional, spiritual, and cultural foundation since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act TITLE VIII enacting Federal legislation granting subsistence priority for rural residents over the priority harvest of all fish and game; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Fisheries has found that herring spawn in Sitka Sound (Area 13-A and 13-B) is customarily and traditionally used for subsistence; and

WHEREAS, under state law, Alaska Board of Fisheries is required to adopt regulations that provide for a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses of herring spawn; and

WHEREAS, the subsistence use of herring eggs is a statewide tradition for Alaska Natives, as eggs are shipped throughout the State of Alaska, and herring are the life support of our ecosystem, nourishing the salmon, halibut, and marine mammals we depend on; and

WHEREAS, despite continued efforts to work with the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game in collaborative management of the commercial herring fisheries, there continues to be extremely poor subsistence herring egg harvests due to the lack of quality spawn while the commercial fishermen continue to harvest record catches; and

WHEREAS, STA has proposed 234 to increase the Amount Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (ANS) for herring eggs set in state regulation in 2002, currently designated at 105,000 – 158,000 pounds to 265,000 – 325,000 pounds, based on the needs of Alaska Natives around the State.

TEL. 907-586-1432 www.ccthita.org TOLL FREE 800-344-1432

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Council hereby authorizes Central Council to support efforts to protect the subsistence harvest of herring eggs by supporting Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 234 which would increase of the Amount Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (ANS) herring eggs in Sitka Sound to 265,000 – 325,000 pounds.

ADOPTED this 30th day of January 2009, by the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, by a vote of 6 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions and 0 absence(s).

CERTIFY

for President William E. Martin

ATTEST

Tribal Secretary Michele Metz

Central Council
Tlingit and Haida
Indian Tribes of Alaska

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Executive Council of the Central Council
TLINGIT AND HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA

Resolution EC/ 09-08

Title: Opposing ADF&G Board Proposal 235, to Expand Permit and Reporting Requirement for All Harvest of Herring Spawn in Sitka Sound Area

WHEREAS, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council) is a federally recognized tribe of more than 27,000 tribal citizens worldwide; and

WHEREAS, subsistence gathering and harvesting of herring eggs constitute our nutritional, spiritual, and cultural foundation since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act TITLE VIII enacting Federal legislation granting subsistence priority for rural residents over the priority harvest of all fish and game; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Fisheries has found that herring spawn in Sitka Sound (Area 13-A and 13-B) is customarily and traditionally used for subsistence; and

WHEREAS, under state law, Alaska Board of Fisheries is required to adopt regulations that provide for a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses of herring spawn; and

WHEREAS, the subsistence use of herring eggs is a statewide tradition for Alaska Natives, as eggs are shipped throughout the State of Alaska, and herring are the life support of our ecosystem, nourishing the salmon, halibut, and marine mammals we depend on; and

WHEREAS, despite continued efforts to work with the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game in collaborative management of the commercial herring fisheries, there continues to be extremely poor subsistence herring egg harvests due to the lack of quality spawn while the commercial fishermen continue to harvest record catches; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the enactment of HR 39-Title VIII of ANILCA, Alaska Natives strongly believe and assert their rights to priority use and access to gather, hunt, and fish Alaska's natural resources and its fish and wildlife.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Council hereby authorizes Central Council to support efforts to protect the subsistence harvest of herring eggs by opposing Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 235 to Expand Permit and Reporting Requirement for All Harvest of Herring Spawn in Sitka Sound Area.

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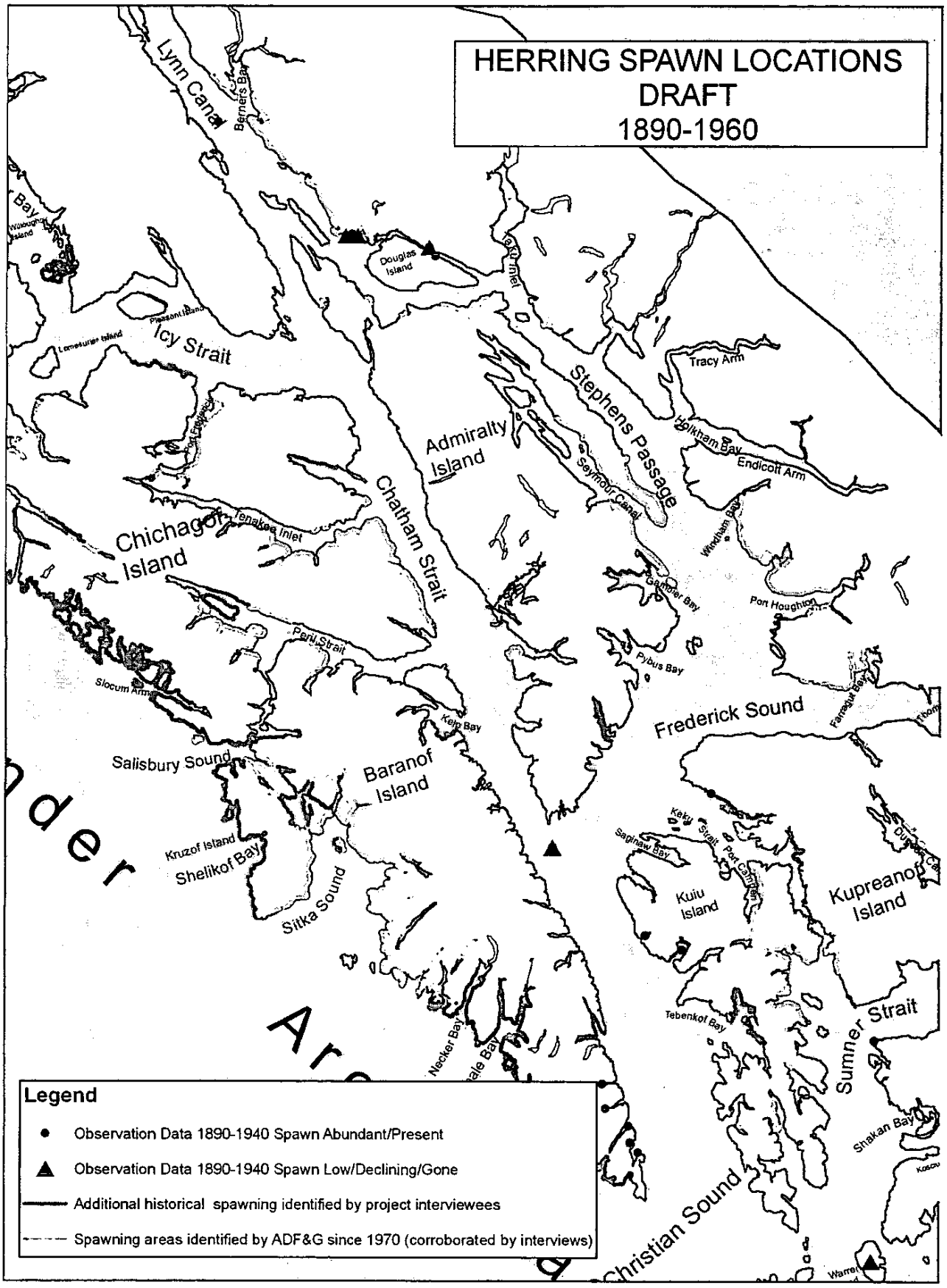
ADOPTED this 30th day of January 2009, by the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, by a vote of 6 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions and 0 absence(s).

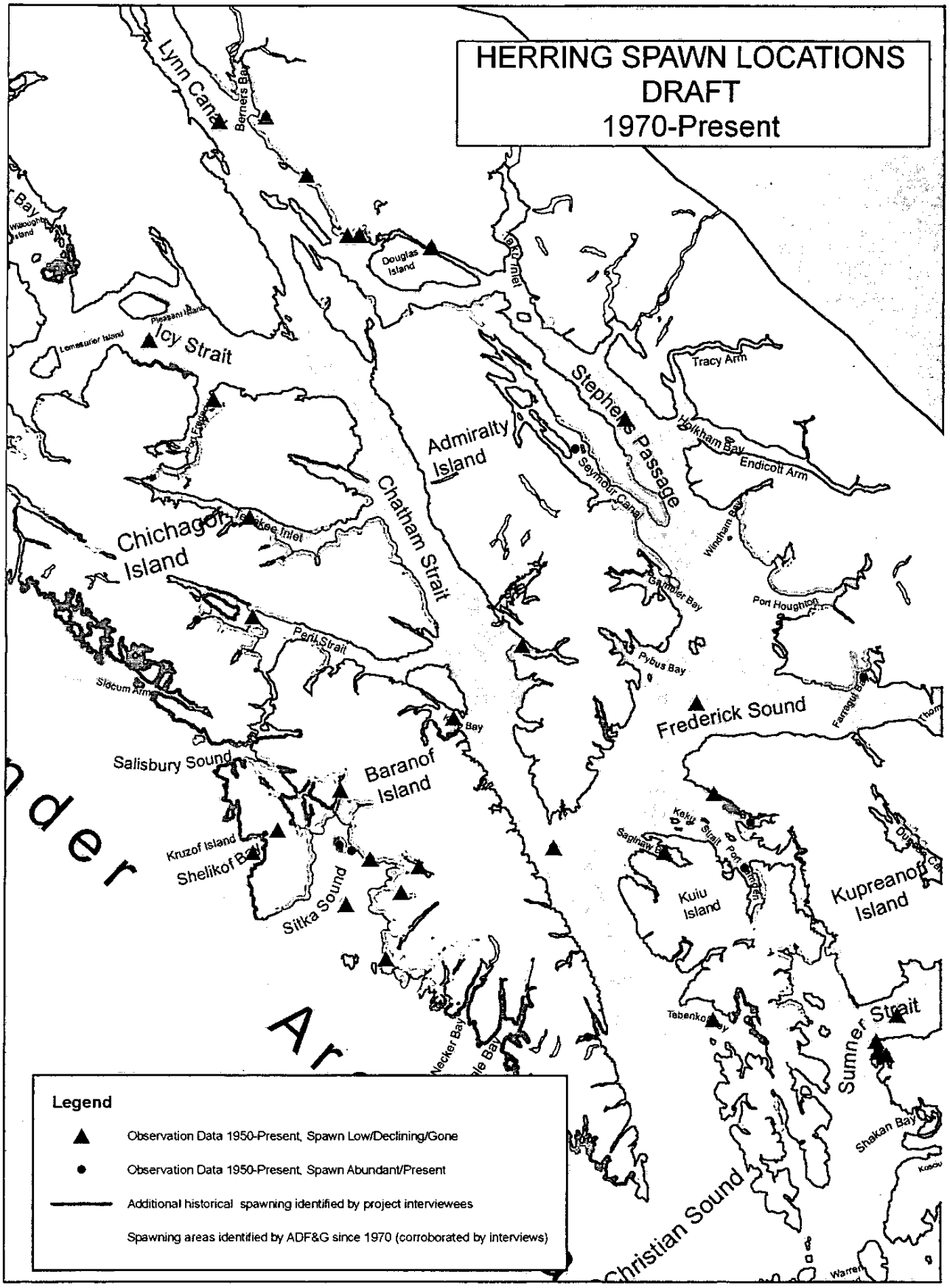
CERTIFY

President William E. Martin

ATTEST

Tribal Secretary Michele Metz


HERRING SPAWN LOCATIONS
DRAFT
1890-1960
Lynn Canal
Berners Bay
Douglas Island
Icy Strait
Pleasant Island
Lemesurier Island
Port Frederick
Chichagof Island
Tenakee Inlet
Admiralty Island
Chatham Strait
Stephens Passage
Tracy Arm
Holkham Bay
Endicott Arm
Seymour Canal
Windham Bay
Port Houghton
Gambier Bay
Pybus Bay
Peril Strait
Slocum Arm
Salisbury Sound
Kelp Bay
Baranof Island
Kruzof Island
Shelikof Bay
Sitka Sound
Frederick Sound
Farragut Bay
Keku Strait
Saginaw Bay
Port Camden
Kuiu Island
Kupreanof Island
Tebenkof Bay
Sumner Strait
Shakan Bay
Necker Bay
Christian Sound
Warren
Legend
Observation Data 1890-1940 Spawn Abundant/Present
Observation Data 1890-1940 Spawn Low/Declining/Gone
Additional historical spawning identified by project interviewees
Spawning areas identified by ADF&G since 1970 (corroborated by interviews)


HERRING SPAWN LOCATIONS
DRAFT
1970-Present
Lynn Canal
Berners Bay
Douglas Island
Icy Strait
Pleasant Island
Lemesurier Island
Port Frederick
Chichagof Island
Lisianski Inlet
Peril Strait
Sitka Bay
Salisbury Sound
Baranof Island
Kruzof Island
Shelikof Bay
Sitka Sound
Necker Bay
Chatham Strait
Admiralty Island
Stephens Passage
Seymour Canal
Tracy Arm
Holkham Bay
Endicott Arm
Windham Bay
Gambier Bay
Port Houghton
Pybus Bay
Frederick Sound
Kelp Bay
Saginaw Bay
Port Banks
Kuiu Island
Kupreanof Island
Tebenkof Bay
Sumner Strait
Shakan Bay
Kasaan
Christian Sound
Warren
Legend
Observation Data 1950-Present, Spawn Low/Declining/Gone
Observation Data 1950-Present, Spawn Abundant/Present
Additional historical spawning identified by project interviewees
Spawning areas identified by ADF&G since 1970 (corroborated by interviews)