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Diag. Ch. No. 8556-1

Department of Commerce and Labor
COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

O. F. Fittmann
Superintendent.

State: *Alaska*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Hyd. C. Sheet No. *2865*

LOCALITY:

*Russian Harbor &
Lisovinas Strait*

1906

CHIEF OF PARTY:

W. C. Hodgkins

U. S. C. & G. SURVEY,
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Descriptive Report

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to accompany Hydrographic Sheet No. 2865,

Russian Harbor and Sitkinak Strait, Alaska,

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COAST AND
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The work shown on this sheet is fragmentary and of small extent, the very bad weather conditions prevailing throughout the greater part of the season spent in this locality having afforded insufficient time to do anything in the way of a regular development of this area.

Sufficient information was, however, gathered to assure us that Sitkinak Strait is a safe route for any class of vessels, while Geese Island Strait, between the islands of that name and the Kodiak shore, and forming the eastern approach to the opening called on the chart Russian Harbor, should be carefully avoided by any one not possessed of good local knowledge, as it seems to be much obstructed by reefs.

In moderate weather there is fairly good anchorage in Russian Harbor, off the entrance to Aiaktalik, in about eight fathoms, hard sand bottom. There is little shelter, however, and when the wind blows with any force there are heavy tide rips in the passage on account of the strength of the tidal currents. Naturally, these are more noticeable at spring tides.

The whole area to the westward and southward of Aiaktalik Island is also subject to these tide rips, which sometimes cover comparatively small spots and again stretch out into long lines of breakers of very formidable appearance. This is especially the case in Sitkinak Strait, where a double

line of breakers sometimes extends right across the strait from Aiaktalik to Sitkinak. These rips, so far as observed, are heaviest when a westerly wind is blowing against the flood tide. They are often dangerous for boats and might sometimes trouble small vessels.

The southern shore of the Geese Islands should be avoided and while the water seems bold up to Little Aiaktalik or Sundstrom Island, there is a reef in the bight to the eastward and the strength of the currents around the south cape of the island makes it advisable to give this island a reasonable berth.

In the middle of Sitkinak Strait off this island there is a bank of considerable extent, with depths of from five to seven fathoms according to the stage of the tide.

The Sitkinak shore is clear to the eastward of Valley Point but foul to the westward of that point. It is prudent, until a closer survey is made, to keep a mile from shore even east of Valley Point.

Aiaktalik Harbor is fairly well sheltered but shallow with a depth of from fifteen to eighteen feet at low water and cannot be recommended for vessels of any size, though well suited for small craft of light draft.

W. C. Hodgkins

Chief of Party.