



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**RESTORATION OF FISHERMAN’S WALKWAY AT ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK  
COMPLETED**

*SANDY-RAVAGED BOARDWALK ALLOWS FOR BEACH WHEELCHAIR AND  
FISHING ACCESS*

**(15/P11) TRENTON** – Fisherman’s Walkway, a popular and functional surf fishing access point at Island Beach State Park that was completely destroyed by Superstorm Sandy, has been fully restored and is now reopened, Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin announced today.

Approximately 1,000 feet of wooden walkway, measuring about eight feet in width, has been constructed starting from Parking Area 7, providing fishing access for persons with disabilities and other anglers on foot who prefer more mobility in transporting their fishing equipment from the parking area to the ocean.



“The restoration of Fisherman’s Walkway will help make non-motor vehicle fishing access much easier for all of our visitors,” Commissioner Martin said. “We have seen incredible progress at Island Beach State Park since Superstorm Sandy and the completion of this boardwalk is an important milestone in the park’s recovery.”

Work on the walkway began in late September and was completed in late December by GCS Contractors Corp. The walkway officially reopened this month after inspection. The \$203,000 project was funded by Corporate Business Tax dollars. The DEP is seeking reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Fisherman’s Walkway has been a popular destination for people with disabilities, anglers and other pedestrians since it was first constructed in 1995 with funds through the Americans With Disabilities Act. Its location within the park is south of lifeguarded swimming areas and north of mobile sport fishing access roads.

“Fishermen’s Walkway is one of the most popular assets within the park,” said Island Beach State Park manager Ray Bukowski. “Obviously, it is utilized heavily by fishermen and it affords a tremendous access point for all park visitors. It is also enjoyed, especially this time of year, by birders and other visitors.”

“As advocates of providing beach access for the public, we are thrilled about the reopening of Fisherman's Walkway,” said Tim Burden, president of the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association. “Outside of the two main bathing areas, the A7 walkway is the only other beach access point for persons that are physically challenged. We’re happy it’s been put back to good use.”



Since Superstorm Sandy hit in October, 2012, Island Beach State Park has seen the repair or restoration of the boardwalks and the lifeguard station at Ocean Bathing Area 1, the gatehouse and maintenance buildings within the park.

A major repair of the Sandy-damaged north jetty at Barnegat Inlet, at the southern tip of the park, was completed in October. A state-funded dune replenishment project to bolster a vulnerable section of the northern most section of the beach was completed in 2013.

Shaped by storms and tides, Island Beach State Park is a narrow barrier island stretching for 10 miles between the ocean and Barnegat Bay. It is one of New Jersey's last significant remnants of a barrier island ecosystem and is one of the few remaining undeveloped barrier beaches on the north Atlantic coast.

For more on the park, including information on 2015 Mobile Sportfishing Vehicle permits, visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/island.html>.

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