



DEP NEWS RELEASE

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT SET FOR SUNDAY AT ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK

(15/P43) TRENTON – The 24th annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament, a popular competition for anglers young and old, will be held at Island Beach State Park on Sunday, May 17, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin announced today.

The family-friendly tournament, which had long been an October staple but made a successful move to the spring last year, offers participants an excellent opportunity to engage in or learn more about the sport of surf fishing. The tournament runs from 6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

“We saw a renewed enthusiasm for the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament last spring and registration numbers for this year's competition are up,” Commissioner Martin said. “We look forward to a great day for anglers and families from New Jersey and neighboring states as we kick off the summer tourism season on our beautiful beaches.”

Springtime fishing at Island Beach State Park allows for the possibility of large catches at any given moment. Last year's tournament saw more than 200 fish measured and entered in the tournament, the most fish caught in many years.

The individual who catches the overall largest – or longest - fish wins the "Governor's Award" and will have his or her name engraved on the Governor's Cup, which is permanently displayed at Island Beach State Park. Fishing equipment is also awarded to winners in a variety of species and age group categories.

“We've had some great fishing this spring and we anticipate continued excellent surf fishing opportunities and hundreds of anglers, which should make for an excellent tournament,” said DEP's Director of Fish and Wildlife Dave Chanda. “Anglers will have an opportunity to land some striped bass and bluefish and be recognized for their fishing prowess.”

“If the bluefish bonanza we have seen recently continues this weekend, we're going to have an extraordinary tournament,” said Tim Burden, president of the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association, one of the event's key sponsors and supporters. “We have seen a few monster sized blues that are bigger than last year's winning fish, which means we could have a new Governor's Cup Tournament bluefish being recorded.”

The registration fee on the day of the tournament is \$20 for ages 18 and older and \$5 for ages 13-17. There is no fee for children 12 and under.

All funds raised by the tournament go toward a variety of good causes, including the recent purchase of 15 brand new specialized wheelchairs that provide the disabled and elderly beach access, construction of access ramps for disabled saltwater anglers, surf fishing instruction programs and equipment, and marine education and restoration projects.

The Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament is sponsored by the DEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife and Division of Parks and Forestry, the New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association, and the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association.

For more information about the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament visit <http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/gaft.htm>.

Tournament anglers may be asked to verify their compliance with the NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program. If not already registered for 2015, please do so before hitting the beach the day of the tournament. Registration is quick, easy and free. Anglers simply need to log on to <http://www.nj.gov/dep/saltwaterregistry> and follow the instructions on the page.

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