

# Shore-based Fishing Opportunity at Island Beach State Park Boasted Unique Regulations Last Year

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## Program Overview

**Marine Fisheries Angler Program:** Shore-based Enhanced Fishing Opportunity Program

**Species:** Summer flounder

**Where:** Island Beach State Park

**When:** June 14, 2014 through September 27, 2014

**Regulations:** A two fish bag limit;  $\geq 16$  inches; shore fishing only

**Goal:** To estimate the additional landings of the reduced size limit to determine if it affects NJ's overall recreational harvest target.

Last year's Shore-based Enhanced Fishing Opportunity Program at Island Beach State Park (IBSP) allowed anglers to keep smaller fish while collecting recreational harvest data. The bag limit was reduced to two fish from IBSP shorelines, but the size limit was also reduced to a 16-inch minimum total length. Summer flounder caught between 16 and less than 18 inches were required to be brought to a check station to receive a tag, confirming that the fish was legally taken from IBSP waters. Anglers that caught two 16-inch or greater summer flounder at IBSP could still attempt to fill a New Jersey daily bag limit of five fish, but the other three summer flounder had to be taken outside of IBSP at 18 inches or greater.

At the check station, fish were measured, weighed then tagged to confirm legal harvest within the park. A creel survey ran concurrently with the Program, with agency staff interviewing anglers providing valuable demographic information, catch and effort data as well as biological data for all species caught at the park during the Program season. Data collection included species name, length, weight, disposition and number of fish caught.

During this Program, 176 summer flounder between 16 and less than 18 inches were tagged and 271 creel surveys were conducted. A total of 337 fish were caught amongst those anglers, 155 of which were summer flounder; 48 were available catch with the other 289 fish released.