

Audio file

[Independent Perspective #1819 \(Nicholas Green\).mp3](#)

Transcript

00:00:01 Speaker 1

Welcome to Independent Perspectives, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living (WNYIL). Our guest today is Nicholas Green, environmental program specialist and accessibility coordinator of Region 9 from the Department of Environmental Conservation. And I'm your host, Ernie Churchwell. Welcome to the program, Nick.

00:00:20 Speaker 2

Good morning. Thank you for having me.

00:00:20 Speaker 1

It's our pleasure, and we understand that you've got the lowdown on a number of disability accommodations that have been made in state facilities and what can you tell us that people listening will want to know?

00:00:36 Speaker 2

So, I speak for all state land that is managed by the DEC and recently we just launched the Accessible Recreation Destinations Map. And when you go on this on the internet, it'll have a map for you that shows there will be a basically a handicap parking symbol.

00:00:57 Speaker 2

On each spot that is deemed an accessible recreation destination there, there will be all kinds of different features that are accommodated.

00:01:07 Speaker 2

So, at the minimum, there's going to be parking and there's going to be a trail that will get you to the features that are going to be deemed accessible. That can be anything from a fishing platform to just a nice picnic area to trails to kayak launches, etcetera.

00:01:27 Speaker 2

And the kayak launches are pretty exciting as well because they have lots of handlebars for people who may be transporting themselves from a wheelchair into a kayak. And so,

the state has spent \$5,000,000 doing these renovations and so we're happy to launch this accessible recreation destination and we also have ways to get people out there cheaper which are the disabilities permitting programs. So, we have an access pass, which is free access to most day use areas and discounted camping reservations for DEC and state parks. So, this would be applicable to basically all recreation lands in in New York State you show your medical documentation and an application and you get this pass.

00:02:22 Speaker 2

It's pretty great and I'm actually out here in in Birch Run Wildlife Management area displaying some of this this morning and I know that your listeners can't see, but there's a fishing platform that I'm on.

00:02:36 Speaker 2

I'm at a picnic table that has a wheelchair accessibility, and then also there's a great parking area with a trail that actually leads to another trail and also up to the fishing platform that is all paved and made to be highly accommodating.

00:02:58 Speaker 2

So, this is a good example of a site that is accessible.

00:03:04 Speaker 1

Oh, that access pass really sounds like news you could use as the saying goes. Are there other things that people should be aware about that aware of that is good for the whole state?

00:03:17 Speaker 2

Yeah, absolutely. So, veterans with service-connected disabilities also have discounts for different hunting passes, different permits as well. And there are if you aren't a veteran, there are still other free fishing licenses for individuals who are blind or permits for hunters with disabilities. And recently there was a thing that a lot of people are asking questions about, which is crossbow hunting. And there is a recent disability waiver that you can get to do crossbow hunting if you aren't able to draw a bow back, so a lot of people have been excited about that recent change.

00:04:04 Speaker 1

We're running low on time, but I'm sure people will have questions. What's the best way to contact you or your website?

00:04:12 Speaker 2

So, the best way to contact me is going to be nicholas.green@dec.ny.gov and our website. The best place to look is going to be just typing into Google accessible recreation destinations DEC and the first link that pops up will be our Accessible Recreation Destinations page.

00:04:40 Speaker 1

Terrific. Thanks for being with us Nick.

00:04:42 Speaker 1

Thank you very much.

00:04:43 Speaker 1

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