Best practice projects for disabled people

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Basic

There are people with disabilities who want to visit protected areas.

What we need:

- Willing to help
- Solidarity
- Educated staff
- Creativity
- Willing to give experience

Information – Information – Information
• **Accessibility Information for National Parks**

The [National Parks: Accessible to Everyone website](#) provides a substantial amount of information to help make that happen, including state-by-state listings and descriptions of:

• accessibility accommodations for specific parks
• accessible programs and exhibits for specific parks
• parks with features accessible to the visually impaired or blind
• parks with features accessible to the hearing impaired
• parks with accessible camping
• parks with accessible picnic areas
Wheelchair visitors

- Wheelchair lift
- Special roads
- Different ways – so that they can not feel, they get less, but different!
- More interactivity to let them concentrate more on different things, not on the difficulty of moving – hearing, birdwatching, etc.
- Extrem equipments – chair moved as in extrem parks
Dog Control

- There are a few potential problems related to dogs while using a wheelchair. People using wheelchairs are in a sitting position, and therefore are more vulnerable to aggressive dogs. It is even hard to avoid playful and slobbery dogs.

1. No dogs allowed.
2. Dogs permitted only on a hand held leash.
3. Dogs on leash or under voice and sight control.
Best practice: Boulder Area Accessible Natural Sites & Trails

- Boulder Colorado – city and county Boulder

- Provide educational programs, giving appropriate consideration to a variety of disabilities.

- Information Dissemination Create ways to disseminate information that will provide accurate, timely and user-friendly information for people with disabilities:
  - Web site information, including Interactive Mapping Service (IMS) technology;
  - Signs with accessibility considerations.

- Community Involvement

- Soliciting input from the public to learn how we can better serve people with disabilities;
Detailed and informative map
Good description

• providing descriptive trail data,
• BUT!! using only that approach would be a barrier to trail users with cognitive disabilities.
• trails should be identified with a difficulty rating similar to the way ski resorts label slopes as green, blue, black or double black.
• Suggestion: both descriptions and difficulty ratings. It is incumbent upon the user to experiment with the information provided to make their own choices based on individual abilities.
Five elements are considered when determining accessibility

1. **Cross Slope** = Sideward (horizontal) slant of a trail or access route.
2. **Running Slope** = Forward incline/decline (vertical) slant of a trail or access route.
3. **Obstacles** = Any protruding object, natural or human-made.
4. **Surface Material** = Natural or human-made surface composition.
5. **Width** = How wide the trail or access route is.

**Difficulty Ratings**

**Easy** = *Most* people who use wheelchairs should be able to use with little or no difficulty.

**Moderate** = *Some* wheelchair users may find it difficult to maneuver.

**Difficult** = Constructed or natural barriers exist. *Many* wheelchair users may have difficulty.

**Most Difficult** = Difficult terrain or lack of usable features exist. *Most* wheelchair users will probably not be able to use.

Eleven *Tips for a Perfectly Accessible Road Trip*
FAIRGROUNDS LAKE

Boulder County Parks and Open Space

Rating: easy-difficult
Surface: crusher fines, concrete
Width: Avg: 7’
Min: 7’
Cross slope: Avg: 1%
Max: 10% for 3’
Grade: Avg: 2%
Max: 5%
Picnic: 2 tables (difficult)
Other Users: anglers, dogs on leash
Parking: 2 designated spots plus general parking
Structures: none
Restrooms: yes, at nearby Roger’s Grove
Location: Fairgrounds Lake is off of Boston Ave.
between Hover Rd. and Sunset St. at the
Boulder County Fairgrounds Park in
Longmont.

Description
Fairgrounds Lake offers a loop trail about 0.75 miles long. Most of the crusher fines and concrete trail has less than a 2% grade except for an 80’ section at 5%. What makes this otherwise easy trail difficult is a very short section that has a cross slope of 10%. Watch out for tipping over sideways. Also, there are several areas on the trail where puddles and mud occur in wet weather. The parking lot has two designated spaces and provides a connection to the St. Vrain Greenway which is a concrete path. There are picnic tables near the parking lot, but they do not have clear paths to them. Some may be able to negotiate over grass. Offering little shade, the area is generally used for viewing the mountains, fishing, bird watching and walking. There is no clear access to the shoreline for wheelchair users. Restrooms are located at Rogers Grove, north of Fairgrounds Lake.
Virtual tour

http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1161&Itemid=1614
Other ideas

• **360-degree view CD ROM** - The CD ROM shows the interiors and exteriors of the four caves/dwellings open to the public and is offered free to people with disabilities who specifically ask for it.

• In Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Colorado visitors who use wheelchairs can venture into the dunefield. **Two sand wheelchairs** – chairs especially designed for over-sand travel – are available for loan at Great Sand Dunes’ visitor center. One is designed for adults, and one for children. Although helpers must push the chairs, their large inflatable tires allow short, fun trips.

• In Padre Island National Seashore, Texas **Special wheelchairs with oversized wheels.** Because the chairs are designed not only for the sand but also for use in shallow water, they enable those with severe physical impairments to experience the ocean and the wonders of being on a natural beach.

• **Study trail in the high trees** – Geschriebenstein Naturpark Österreich

• **Special birdwaching tower** - for wheelchairs – Nationalpark Neusiedlersee
Nationalpark Neusiedlersee
Boatstouren for people with wheelchair
People with deafness, and difficulty hearing

- Smelling
- Touching
- Reading
- Moving
- Seeing/waching
- Hearing Helper Tour Guide System
- several touchable exhibits
- sign language interpreters (!!!!training in one of the follow up projects??)
Smell trail in Pintér-garden
Visitors with blindness, low vision

- Very simple: ranger can describe specific objects
- Smelling – smell trail, smell walking tours
- Touching - an interpretive, tactile model for example from a lakebed
- Sound walking tours
- Audio guides with special information
- Audio stations at key locations throughout the site
- Allow visitors with visual impairments to put on gloves and touch various objects in the house while on a tour. A ranger will guide the visitor to the selected items in the rooms. Mainly, sculptures and chairs are the designated objects.
Padre Island National Seashore, Texas

- The park’s animals are examined in depth by using skulls, shells, feathers, skins, and bones from wildlife commonly found within the national seashore. Campers can touch and explore the individual specimens so that they can better appreciate the animals’ sizes and shapes and discover the unique adaptations that help them survive.

- The program also includes a trip to the beach, where campers have the chance to wade into the surf, help pull a seine, and use other collecting equipment to capture and gently handle some of the sea creatures in the surf zone. With the assistance of sighted staff members, the campers hold and learn about the variety of invertebrates and fish that inhabit the shallow coastal waters. The activities are geared toward helping campers develop a greater appreciation and understanding of the diversity of species found on barrier islands.
Extreme ideas – future for us?

Wheelchair bungee jumping in Cairns, Queensland