



# Assistive Technology: Gone Fishing

Fishing is a popular recreation activity in West Virginia. More than 20,000 miles of streams and over 100 public fishing lakes provide anglers of all ages with a wide variety of prospects.

Fishing increases socialization, and plays an important role in our state economic plan. Each year, thousands of fishermen visit West Virginia to take part in dozens of fishing tournaments for anglers of all ages.

Most of the people who grew up in this region started fishing when they were very young as a family activity. It provides a way to bond with friends and family members, and keeps traditions alive.

As an activity, fishing can be available to anyone with a fishing pole and a desire to catch the big one. And thanks to assistive technology (AT), people with disabilities are able to enjoy this sport.

## Finding AT That is Right for You

There is a large amount of AT available for fishing, whether you prefer to fish from a boat or from the shoreline. These items include power casters, pole holders, knot tiers and even power reels. There are also many different types of wheelchairs and mobility devices to help you access a favorite fishing hole.

The West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) is available to assist you with finding and trying devices. Call WVATS at **800-841-8436** for more information.



# Resources



Finding information for anglers with disabilities is often the first step. In addition to local resources, there are several national organizations available to help. These include Fishing Has No Boundaries, Inc. (FHNB) and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA).

Funding is also available in many cases to help you pay for adaptive fishing equipment. If you are in need of AT for fishing, there are several programs available that may be able to help you. These include TBI Funds for You, Community Living Services Program (CLSP) and Family Support.

## Licenses & Permits

There are a variety of licenses and permits that allow you to fish all over the great state of West Virginia.

Any West Virginia resident who has served in the armed forces of the United States and has been discharged because of a service related disability can hunt or fish without obtaining a license. In fact, any active duty member of the armed forces can fish without a license while on leave or furlough.

Any West Virginia resident who is totally blind may fish without a license. A written statement

or certificate from your doctor will be needed as proof that you are fully blind. This will be needed to show a Division of Natural Resources (DNR) officer if you are stopped while fishing.

There are also many licenses available to youth, older adults and individuals with developmental disabilities. So, before you head out to fish look online at [wvdnr.gov](http://wvdnr.gov) to obtain the license you need to be able to legally fish.

For more information, contact the WVDNR at **304-558-2754**.

[www.wvats.cedwvu.org](http://www.wvats.cedwvu.org)

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