



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Governor Cuomo Announces NY Works Funds \$1.35 Million in New and Improved State Park Playgrounds on Long Island

JOHN J. FLANAGAN October 18, 2012

| ISSUE: **STATE PARKS**

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation will build and renovate playground areas at ten state Parks across Long Island. The park improvements are funded with \$1.35 million from the Governor's New York Works initiative.

"It is important that children have a safe and engaging place to play, and these NY Works projects will give them just that in State Parks across New York," said Governor Cuomo. "The numbers tell the story of more and more people visiting the parks, and I encourage everyone to visit these new and improved areas inside the state parks as well as the beauty that New York has to offer."

Under the initiative, State Parks will build or create new playgrounds at two parks and install new playground equipment at ten parks across Long Island. The playgrounds will be accessible to people with disabilities and have distinct areas for younger and older age groups. Each playground will have its own unique themes reflecting characteristics of the park. Playground improvements will be coupled with site improvements, including shade trees or canopies, seating, water fountains and trail/walkway connections to the rest of the

park.

The state parks include:

Brentwood State Park, Brentwood – a new soccer-themed playground will be installed at the park popular for its athletic fields used by youth sports leagues.

Belmont Lake State Park, North Babylon – improvements to the existing playground will create a “Bug” theme, including a dragonfly seesaw and butterfly climbing structure.

Bethpage State Park, Farmingdale – improvements to the existing playground near the picnic area will create a “Woodland Nature” theme, including ladybug, bee and mushroom play structures.

Heckscher State Park, East Islip – improvements to the existing playground will create a “Wildlife” theme with features that mimic the deer, osprey and fox that live in the park.

Hempstead Lake State Park, West Hempstead – improvements to the existing playground will create a “Carousel” theme, with colorful playground and benches arranged in a circle, mimicking the nearby Carousel.

Hither Hills State Park, Montauk – improvements to the existing playground will create a “Sea and Sand” theme, including a dolphin spring ride and sea creature inlays in the rubberize surface.

Montauk Point State Park, Montauk – improvements to the existing playground will create a “Surf and Tides” theme, including a ship’s bow play feature and functional telescope.

Orient Beach, Orient – improvements to the existing playground will create a “Maritime” theme, including a sailboat sandbox and seahorse spring rider.

Sunken Meadow State Park, Kings Park – a new “Animal Habitats” themed playground will be installed, including birds nest and hollow log climbing features near Field 4 East.

Valley Stream State Park, Valley Stream – improvements to the existing playground will include creating a blue and green “Stream” theme, including turtle-shaped climbing features and spring rides.

Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos said, “The funding provided through NY Works is helping build and repair critical infrastructure across the state, while also making important investments in our public facilities. I applaud Governor Cuomo for this latest round of funding for the improvements to Valley Stream State Park and other parks so that children and their families can safely enjoy these playgrounds well into the future.”

“Great news for the children at Brentwood State Park who are playing on new turf soccer and baseball fields constructed in 2009. By next spring, a new soccer/baseball themed playground will be complete and ready for use by the community. Belmont Lake State Park has been selected to have the existing playground refurbished with a new 'bug' theme that kids are sure to love. I want to thank New York State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey for investing these funds in our communities,” Senator Owen H. Johnson said.

Senator Kemp Hannon (R-Nassau) said, "The New York Works Initiative, which is creating new jobs and supporting economic development across the State and on Long Island, will bring much-needed improvements to the playground at Bethpage State Park and Hempstead Lake State Park. It will create a ‘Woodland Nature’ theme, incorporating several new play structures on the existing playground at Bethpage, and a ‘Carousel’ theme will be created at Hempstead Lake, with a colorful playground and benches arranged in a circle, mimicking the nearby Carousel. I am pleased to continue working with Governor Cuomo to improve our State Parks, while at the same time creating new jobs and bolstering our

economy.

“Upgrading the playground at Bethpage State Park will ensure that Long Island children have safe and modern play equipment to enjoy for years to come. Our parks are year round family destinations that allow us to experience the great outdoors and stay fit. I applaud Governor Cuomo for using the New York Works Program to invest in our State Parks and for rebuilding our State’s infrastructure at all levels,” said Senator Carl L. Marcellino.

“Our state parks are so important to New York’s families and future that it is important that we continue to improve and protect them whenever possible. By utilizing the funding that was approved jointly by the Governor and the Legislature, State Parks is honoring our state’s commitment to all our residents and visitors who use these facilities now and in the future. I applaud this program and all efforts to improve, enhance and preserve our state parks,” said Senator John Flanagan.

"Heckscher State Park is one of the natural gems of not only the 3rd Senate District, but Long Island as a whole," said State Senator Lee Zeldin (R, C, I- Shirley). "Many of my constituents frequent Heckscher regularly and these improvements to the playgrounds not only improve the safety for the children using them but also provide an enjoyable experience for all. I commend Governor Cuomo and my colleagues in the Legislature for working to secure this funding which will benefit all of us here on Long Island."

“In light of the childhood obesity epidemic, this is a great opportunity that the Governor has proposed to get our youth active again. This playground is a perfect setting and a step in the right direction that addresses the health of our children,” Assemblywoman Earlene Hooper said.

“I am delighted that these funds will be used to improve the playground area in Belmont Lake State Park. There are few things better in life than a playground inside a park. A playground is a statement that speaks of how much we care about our children. Playgrounds

allow kids to play outside imaginatively and actively. Additionally, the construction of the playground will create new local jobs. This improved playground area is sure to create a buzz among parents and children,” said Assemblyman Bob Sweeney.

Assemblyman Fred Thiele stated, “Tourism is a cornerstone of New York’s economy, particularly on Eastern Long Island. The continued success of this industry, including the many jobs its supports, depends on the State’s continued investment in our park infrastructure. The allocation of \$2.6 million for park infrastructure from Governor Cuomo’s New York Work’s initiative, including Hither Hills State Park and Montauk Point State Park, will insure that New York State’s park system continues to be the nation’s best.”

“This will be a major investment in the community of Brentwood. I commend Governor Cuomo for answering our call to provide additional funding for sports facilities in our community. This new expanded facility will help keep more of our youth off the street and keep them involved in positive activities,” said Assemblyman Phil Ramos.

“I am pleased to work with Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to ensure the continued enhancement of one of the state’s truly great parks,” said Assemblyman Michael J. Fitzpatrick. “Come next spring, the new Sunken Meadow State Park playground area with a theme on ‘animal habitats’ will be yet another reason for the families of Smithtown, as well as those from across Long Island and the state, to enjoy the natural beauty and recreational opportunities of this jewel on the Long Island Sound.”

“The upgrade to this playground is a welcome improvement to Bethpage State Park that will be enjoyed by many children and families,” said Assemblyman Charles Lavine. “This project is the perfect example of how Governor Cuomo’s successful New York Works initiative is working not only to better our state, but our individual communities as well.”

"Governor Cuomo's NY Works projects continue to create jobs in a true win-win for Long Island. With both Bethpage and Hecksher State Parks they have created two terrific new playgrounds for families to enjoy the outdoors and have put Long Islanders to work in the process," Assemblyman Phil Boyle said.

"I'm proud that working with Governor Cuomo, the New York Works program and Commissioner Rose Harvey that New York State will be funding a new, themed playground for Hempstead Lake Park for residents to enjoy. This new addition will compliment the park's carousel. There's no question that New York State is continuing its commitment to our working families, parents and children," said Assemblyman Brian Curran

"Orient Beach State Park is a jewel of the New York State park system," Assemblyman Dan Losquadro said. "This National Natural Landmark is a place where residents take their children to participate in outdoor activities, and now through the New York Works initiative improvements will be made to the existing playground to celebrate the nautical character of the North Fork. I would like to thank Governor Cuomo for allocating the funds to help make these improvements possible."

"This program is another example of our continued reinvestment in our state and our local communities. In particular, it's important that we create accessible playgrounds so that all children can enjoy the recreation that our state parks have to offer," said Assemblyman Edward Ra.

Construction of the playgrounds is expected to take place in the off-season, with playgrounds ready for use by next spring.

State Parks plans to fix, modernize, or create over 50 playgrounds, particularly in those parks with high visitation by families and their children. The New York Works initiative is creating 20 new or improved playgrounds to further connect families to parks in the next year.

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversees 178 state parks and 35 historic sites. For more information on any of these recreation areas, call 518-474-0456 or visit www.nysparks.com.