

United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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EMS TRANSMISSION 2/14/97  
Information Bulletin No. 97-72

To: All Field Officials  
Attn: Staff Involved With Disability Access,  
Recreation, and River Management

From: Director

Subject: Universal Access Workshop - Call for Nominations  
DD:4/4/97

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Wilderness Inquiry, Inc., are sponsoring a Universal Access workshop which will be held at the Taos Resource Area in Taos, N.M. on April 21-23, 1997. Plans call for the workshop to commence at 8:00 a.m., Monday, April 21 and will conclude at noon Wednesday, April 23.

The purpose of the workshop is to provide river management and outdoor recreation staff with information and techniques to assure programs conducted by BLM or outfitters operating on BLM lands and related waters are universally accessible and available to a wide range of customers, including those with disabilities.

The BLM State Accessibility Coordinators should send a consolidated list (fax, E-mail, or hard copy) of workshop nominees by name, duty station, and title to the Director (250), 204 LS, Attn: Kay Ellis by April 4, 1997.

#### Background

Regulations implementing accessibility legislation, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), require agencies (federal and private) to make accommodations in programs and facilities to meet the needs of disabled users. This includes programs in outdoor recreation areas, such as backcountry campsites and water-based recreation activities. Providing accessibility to these areas is a challenge to staff who often lack knowledge and direction in developing and implementing appropriate, cost-effective solutions to barriers.

The workshop agenda will include discussion about different disabilities and how a specific disability might impact on the person's ability to participate in outdoor recreation activities, physical barriers to participation and solutions, current resources, methods and strategies for achieving universal access, and the interrelationship between resource protection, maintenance, interpretive activities and universal access.

The agenda will include a one-day meeting in the new Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center during which participants will be involved in discussions and exercises related to universal access issues. Discussions and issues will focus on backcountry and river-based recreation activities. The first day will be followed by a one and one-half day (one overnight) raft field experience on a segment of the Rio Grande. During the field experience, workshop participants will assess camping and recreation sites for accessibility and participate in group discussions regarding backcountry and river recreation access issues. Disabled facilitators with expertise in this area will participate in all phases of the workshop. This workshop will also be used to field test a new manual produced by Wilderness Inquiry titled Universal Access: Guidelines for Outfitters Operating on Public Lands.

We recommend a cross section of river management, outdoor recreation, and accessibility program staff at all levels of the Bureau attend this important workshop.

#### Logistics

The only expenses for this workshop are travel-related. A block of rooms has been reserved for April 21 and 22 at the Don Fernando de Taos (Holiday Inn). The rate of \$60/single and \$65/double is well within the Taos per them rate and includes breakfast. All participants will make their own reservations and must identify themselves as BLM staff. Meals will be provided on the river portion of the workshop. Car rental is not necessary as the "Shuttle Jack,, service operates between the Albuquerque airport and the hotel (\$40 each way). The hotel also has two shuttle vans that will provide free transportation to the meeting locations and throughout Taos in the evening.

Should you have detailed questions about logistics, agenda, or amenities related to the workshop, contact Kay Ellis, BLM, Headquarters at (202) 452-7799

Signed by:  
Jack C. Peterson  
Manager Recreation

Authenticated by:  
Robert M. Williams  
Directives and Records  
Group, W0540

1 Attachment  
1 - Draft Agenda Topics (1 p)

**Draft Agenda Topics**  
**Universal Access Workshop**  
**April 21-23, 1997**

**Introduction** - Why are we doing this anyway?

**Panel Discussion with Disabled instructors** - Everything you always wanted to know about disabilities, but were afraid to ask!  
Real lives, real experiences.  
Treating people like people.  
BLM customer needs and interests.  
"People First" philosophy

**Synopsis of Accessibility Legislation** - We would do it anyway, but it's the law...  
Architectural Barriers Act  
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act  
Americans With Disabilities Act

**Key Concepts of Accessibility** - Dependence vs. Independence The "functional" approach vs. "disability approach." Outdoor recreation activities - accessibility guidelines. Adaptations to equipment and programs.  
Making programs work for everyone.  
Liability issues.

**Public Outreach** - Making our programs accessible and letting people know about them!

**River Field Experience** - Putting it all together!  
The "real" thing.  
From the classroom to the water.  
Barriers and solutions.  
Group interaction.

**Where Do We Go From Here?**  
Group wrap up.  
Action planning and future directions.