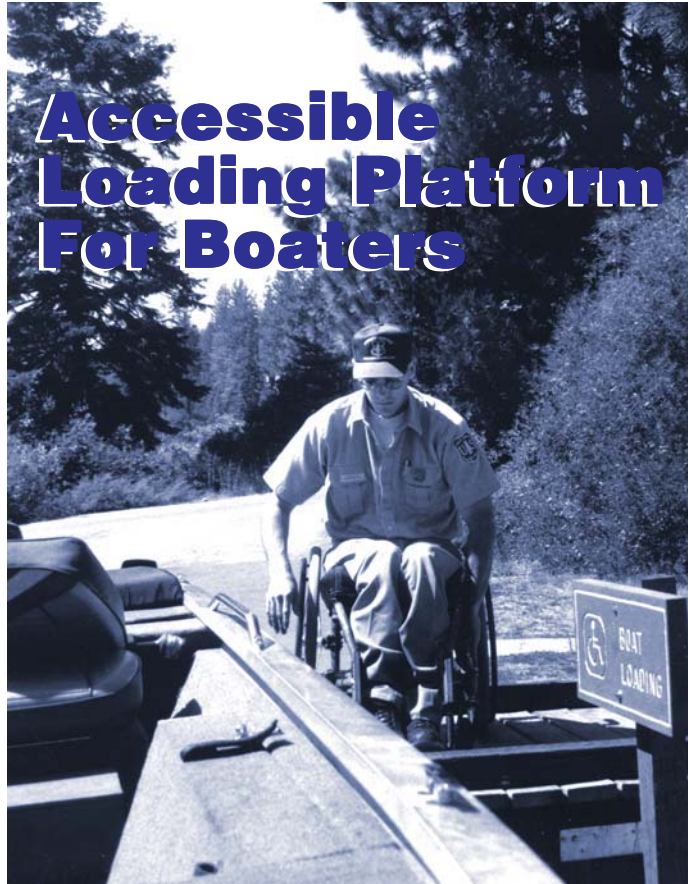


Accessible Loading Platform For Boaters



Bob Beckley
Project Leader

USDA Forest Service
Technology & Development Program
Missoula, Montana

9E92A43—Access Ramp for Boaters

July 2000

The Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), has developed this information for the guidance of its employees, its contractors, and its cooperating Federal and State agencies, and is not responsible for the interpretation or use of this information by anyone except its own employees. The use of trade, firm, or corporation names in this document is for the information and convenience of the reader, and does not constitute an endorsement by the Department of any product or service to the exclusion of others that may be suitable.

The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, and so forth) should phone USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Contents



| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Need for Safe Access | 2 |
| Project Assessment | 3 |
| Types of Ramps | 4 |
| Costs | 5 |
| Employee Safety | 6 |
| The Ramp and Boarding Platform | 7 |
| Siting Ramps | 8 |
| Signs | 9 |
| Accessibility Standards | 10 |
| About the Author | 10 |
| Appendix A—Plans for Concrete Ramp, Earth Ramp With Retaining Wall, and Timber Ramp | 11 |
| Appendix B—Accessibility Rules, Definitions, and Handrail Diagrams | 19 |
| Appendix C—Ramp Diagrams and Tables | 21 |

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following persons for their support of this project:

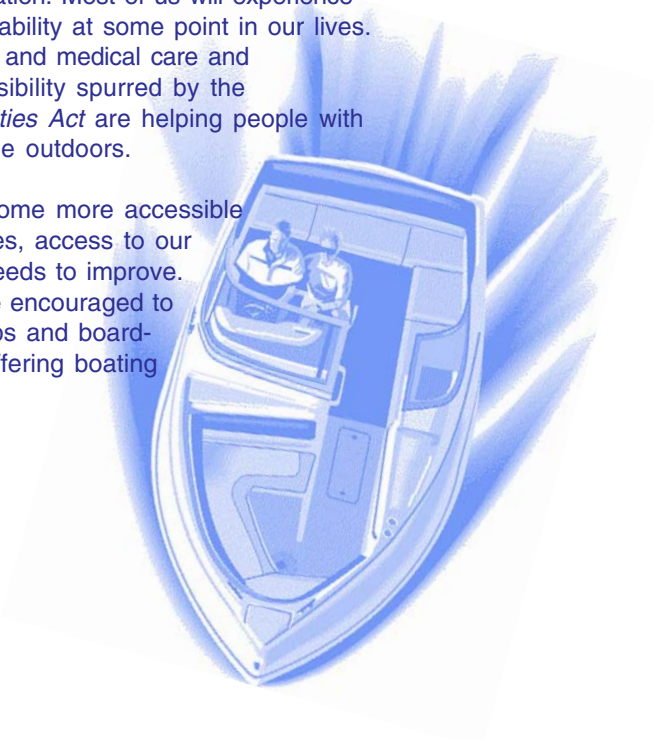
Gary Hoshide Missoula Technology and Development Center
Deb Mucci Missoula Technology and Development Center
Steve Orvavetz ... Missoula Technology and Development Center
Dick Paterson Washington Office Recreation

Special thanks to Greg Marks, from the Prather Ranger District on the Sierra National Forest for his valuable insight, assistance, and commitment to the accommodation of people with disabilities.

Introduction

Outdoor recreation opportunities abound on Federal, State, and private lands. More and more people with disabilities are venturing into the great outdoors. People with disabilities represent about 15 percent of the United States population. Most of us will experience at least a temporary disability at some point in our lives. Advances in technology and medical care and improvements in accessibility spurred by the *Americans With Disabilities Act* are helping people with limited mobility enjoy the outdoors.

As recreation sites become more accessible to people with disabilities, access to our lakes and waterways needs to improve. Recreation planners are encouraged to include accessible ramps and boarding platforms at sites offering boating access.



Need for Safe Access

Safely getting into or out of a boat can pose problems for anyone. The boat may be moving and unstable.

In cases where a floating dock is being used, both the boat and dock may be moving. Entering a boat that has been pulled to shore also poses problems, especially if the shore-line is steep or rugged.

For an individual with a mobility impairment, getting into or out of a boat poses additional hazards and risks. A boarding platform on the shore can help reduce the risks (Figure 1).



Figure 1—A boarding platform on the shore can reduce the risks of getting into and out of a boat.

Project Assessment

Greg Marks, Forest Accessibility Coordinator for the Sierra National Forest, was injured in a helicopter accident in 1983. Although Greg now depends on a wheelchair for mobility, he remains an avid fisherman

and boating enthusiast (Figure 2). Greg asked the Missoula Technology and Development Center (MTDC) to evaluate and modify several ramps to assist resource and recreation planners in making our waterways more accessible.



Figure 2—Greg Marks, Sierra National Forest, shows how he gets into a boat from his wheelchair.