Fostering Inclusivity in Parks and Recreation: Expanding Access for EveryBODY

VERMONT ADAPTIVE Ski & Sports

Molly Tobin & Norm Staunton

Who we are

Norm Staunton

- Director of Operations at Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sport
- Adaptive Examiner for Professional Ski Instructors of America
- Instructor Trainer Candidate for Adaptive Paddling/American Canoe
- Certified Instructor/Adaptive Instructor in surfing, sailing, SUP, kayak,
- CARSS II
- UNH Master's Program in Adventure Education
- MBA from UVM

Molly Tobin

- Part-time Program Coordinator for Vermont Adaptive
- Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student at UVM
- Certified Instructor/Adaptive Instructor in kayak, SUP, skiing, mountain biking & rock climbing
- CARSS I
- WFR and LNT certified

Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sport

- **Year round, state-wide recreation program for people of any ability or disability**
- **Volunteer based**
- **Offer lessons regardless of ability to pay**
- **Believe sports and recreation provide a physical, mental and social experience that is immeasurable in promoting self-confidence and independence in an individual.**
- **Operate bases across the state**

What is Accessibility?

Accessibility is the practice of making information, activities, and/or environments sensible, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible.

Accessibility is about identifying and responding to conditions of in-access, about providing equitable opportunity, regardless of a person's abilities or circumstances.

Accessibility is a highly subjective, cultural practice, less an objective, technical process.

Accessibility is not just for people with disabilities. It accounts for differences in functional abilities, age, language, culture, education, and economic position.

History of Adaptive Sports and Cultural Norms

- **Institutionalization Era & Institutional Sports**
- **WWII, Vietnam War, Medical Advancements, Special Olympics & Paralympics**
- **Mainstreaming Era- Physical Inclusion- "something wrong"**
- **Inclusion Era- Social Inclusion, "Inspiration Porn"**
- **Social Model Era/Now- Time of transition**
- **Next?**

ADA vs Universal Design

ADA

- Legislation that sets standards for accessible design, which are requirements for public buildings and facilities.
- Is binary; it either meets or does not meet the standards.
- Focuses on protecting civil rights for people with disabilities.

Universal Design

- Recognizes a wider spectrum of abilities, to create things that are easier for everyone to use.
- Intended to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation.
- Can apply to products, architecture, and homes.

What is Inclusion?

The NPRA defines inclusion as removing barriers, both physical and theoretical, so that all people, including those with physical and cognitive disabilities, have an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits of parks and recreation.

Spectrum of Inclusion

Physical Inclusion

Social Inclusion

Risk of Accessibility

Access

Experience

Fully accessible for all is not the point.

What can you do?

Community Representation

Prioritizing Accessibility & Universal Design

Messaging and Expanding Accessibility in Online and Printed Resources

Partner with Existing Local Adaptive and Community Programs

Accessibility Audit, Continuing Education, and Staying up-to-date with Current Trends

Start Small: Make Changes and Design Programs for a Specific Goal

Community Representation

Ensuring that all community members voices are represented when it comes to decision-making about programmatic offerings or facility improvements/expansion.

Oakledge Park Universally Accessible Playground
Burlington, VT

Oakledge for All

In 2012, Oakledge For All brought the idea of a universally accessible playground to Burlington Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront.

In 2016, when Oakledge was selected by BPRW, the design phase included an extensive public engagement effort to collect feedback, ideas and promote awareness about the project.

- Provides play opportunities for everyone
- Supports social, physical, and cultural diversity
- Strengthens our community
- Provides access to Lake Champlain and the Burlington Bike Path
- Offers a unique range of recreational play features, rehabilitation equipment, and nature-based experiences for children and adults
- Exceeds ADA standards and achieves universally accessible (UA) principles

Park and recreation agencies should consider all populations when planning events, installing park improvement projects or creating new programs. Ensuring that all park and recreation offerings are accessible and inclusive should be a top priority to positively influence participation and access for those with disabilities.

Kootenay Adaptive Sport Association

Adaptive Trail Standards to consider:

Trail Width:

RECOMMENDED aMTB TRAIL WIDTH		
GREEN	BLUE	BLACK
♿	♿	♿
1.80 m | 6 ft | 72 in	1.50 m | 5 ft | 60 in	1.20 m | 4 ft | 48 in

Camber/side slope:

SAFETY SHOULDER 0.5m

1200 MIN. - 1800mm TYP.

3-5% SLOPE

3 / 1

COMPACTED NATURAL TREAD SURFACE TO 95% S.P.D.
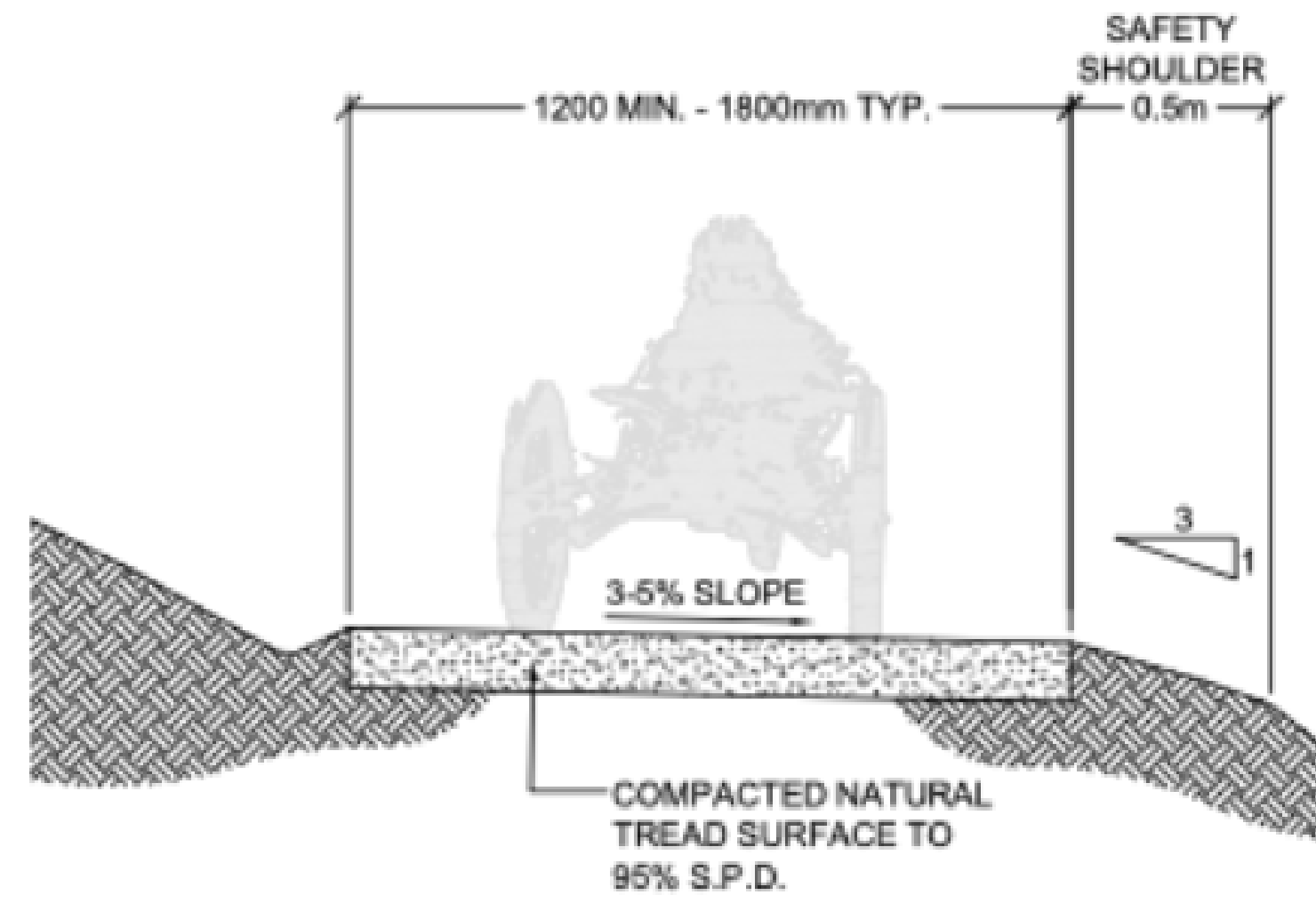
Corners, banks & berms:
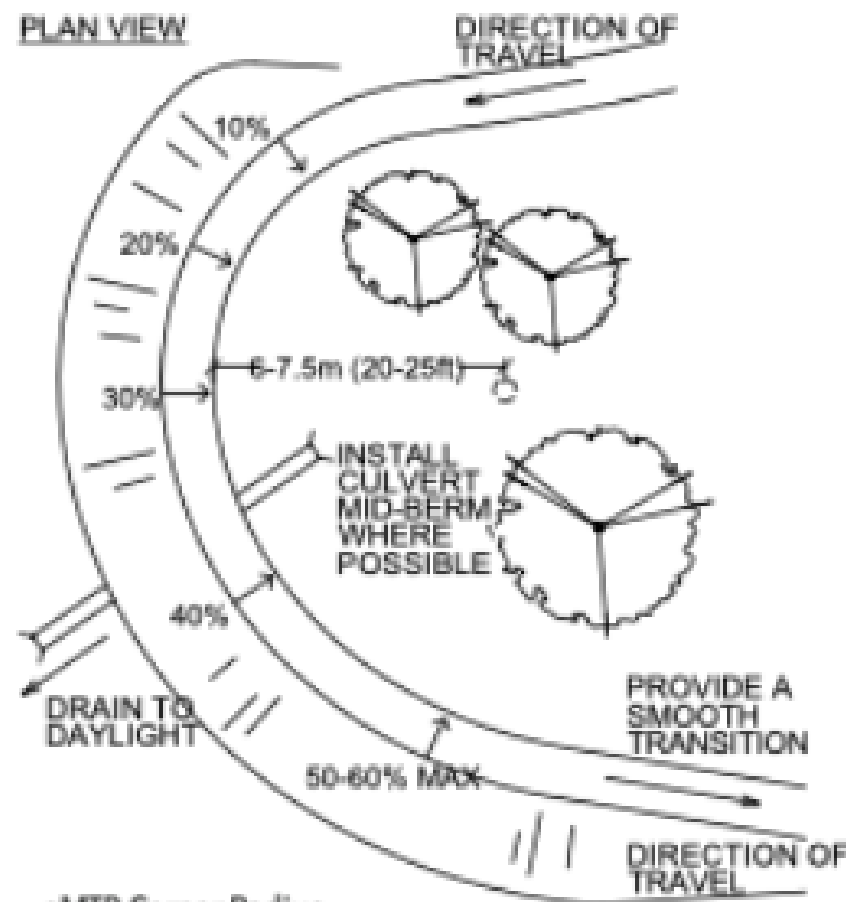
Figure 4 - aMTB Corner Radius

PLAN VIEW — DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

10%
20%
30%
40%
50-60% MAX

6-7.5m (20-25ft)

INSTALL CULVERT MID-BERM WHERE POSSIBLE

DRAIN TO DAYLIGHT

PROVIDE A SMOOTH TRANSITION

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

Figure 5 - aMTB Berm

60% MAX SLOPE

30°

LINEAR BANKED COMPACTED NATURAL TREAD SURFACE TO 95% S.P.D.

AVOID CONSTRUCTING A "CONCAVE" OR SCOPPED CORNER

Figure 6 - aMTB Rollers

PROPER SPACING

2.5m (8ft) MIN. SPACING

AVOID
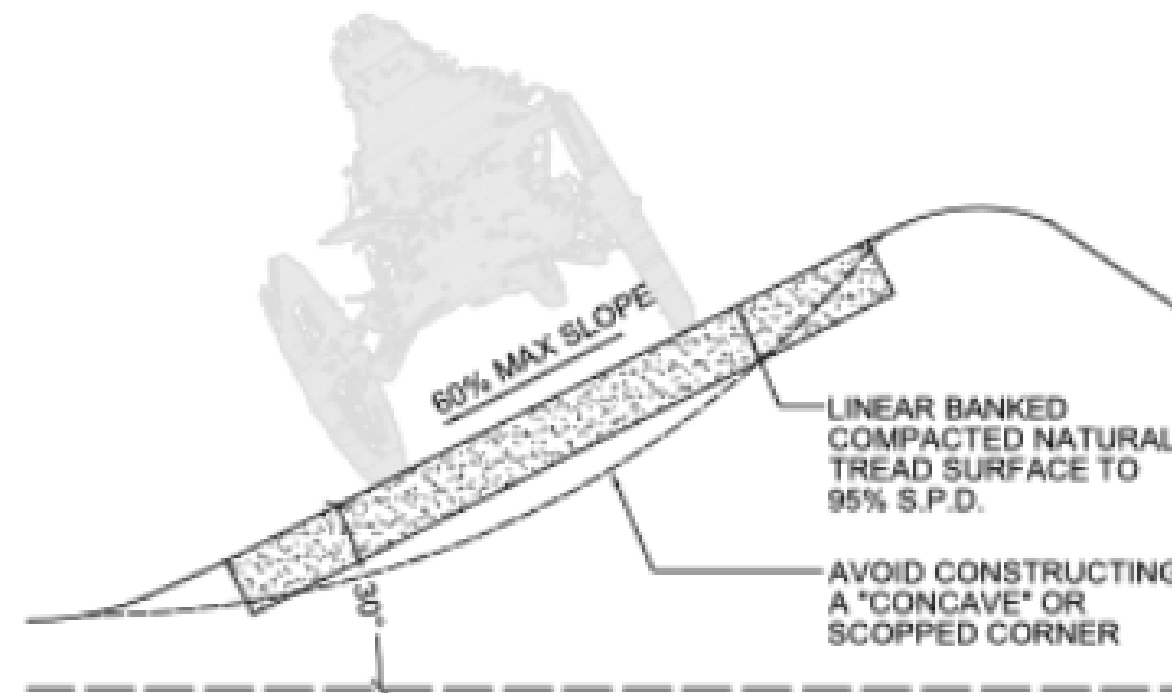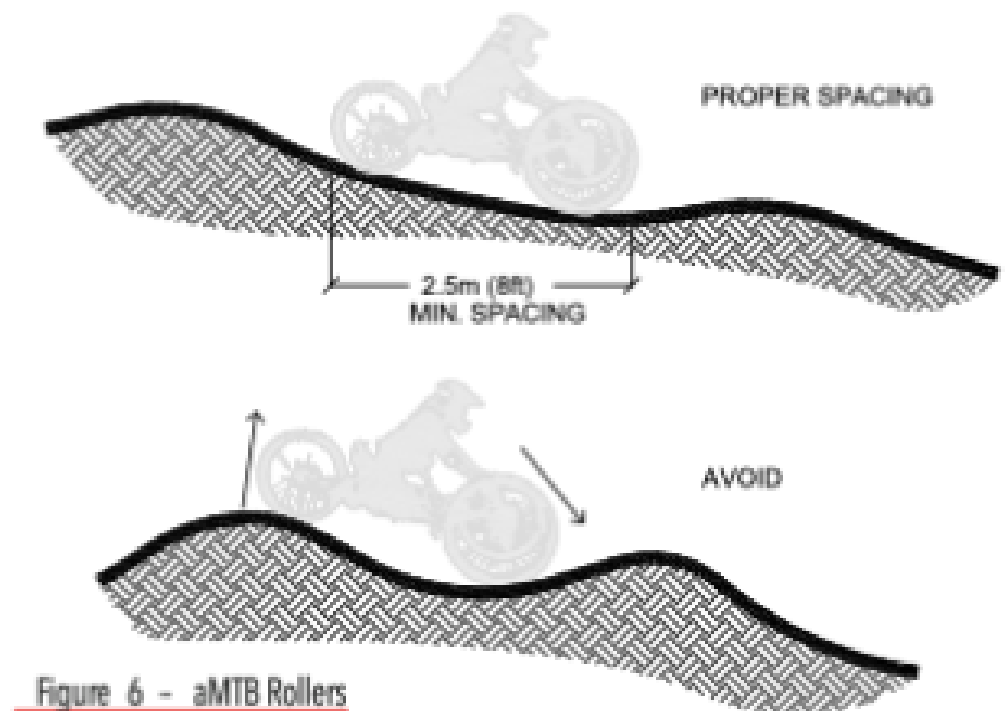
For more information visit…
https://kootenayadaptive.com/adaptive-mountain-biking-trail-standards/

It's important to recognize that although spaces and programs may be open to all, those with physical or cognitive disabilities or their caregivers may feel more comfortable when that message is explicitly stated and supported. Consider adding messaging to promotional materials or on display in facilities that assures all community members that they are welcome. Aim to use people first language; for example, "a person with a disability" versus "a disabled person."

APPENDIX A - ADAPTIVE MOUNTAIN BIKING (AMTB) TRAIL DIFFICULTY RATING SYSTEM

	aMTB WHITE	aMTB GREEN	aMTB GREEN SQUARE	aMTB BLUE	aMTB BLACK	aMTB DBL BLK	aMTB DBL. BLK
TRAIL WIDTH: (ave/min)	1.8m+ (72"+)	1.8m/1.5m (72"/60")	1.7m/1.4m (66"/54")	1.5m/1.2/ (60"/48"+)	1.2m/1m (48"/40")	1.1m/0.98 m (44"/38.5")	<0.98m (<38.5")
TREAD SURFACE:	hardened or surfaced	firm and stable	mostly stable some variability	mostly stable some variability	widely variable	widely variable and unpredictable	widely variable and unpredictable
OBSTACLES (TTF):	no obstacles	obstacles full width 2" or less / no asymmetrical tread areas	obstacles full width 5" or less / partial width 2" or less	obstacles full width 8" or less / partial width 3" or less	obstacles full width 12" or less / partial width 6" or less	obstacles full width 12" or less / partial width 10" or less / assistance recommended	impassable obstacles / assistance required
UNAVOIDABLE BRIDGES: (wider if not straight)	1.8m+ (72"+)	1.5m+ (60"+)	1.5m+ (60"+)	1.4m+ (54"+)	1.2m+ (48"+)	1m+ (40"+)	<0.98m (<38.5") possible
MAX TRAIL GRADE:	10% (6 deg)	15% (8.5 deg)	20%+ (11 deg)	20%+ (11 deg)	20%+ (11 deg)	25%+ (14 deg)	25%+ (14 deg)
CAMBER: TURNS, BERM & TTF	level	only enough to drain	Some off camber possible: max 36.5% (20 deg)	Some off camber possible: max 36.5% (20 deg)	Some off camber likley: max 58% (30 deg)	Off camber certain: 58%+ possible (>30 deg)	Off camber certain: 58%+ possible (>30 deg)
CAMBER: TRAIL STRAIGHTAWAYS	level	only enough to drain	max outslope 5-8% (3-5 deg)	max outslope 5-8% (3-5 deg)	max outslope 8-14% (5-8 deg)	max outslope 8-14 % (5-8 deg)	14%+ (> 8 deg) outsloping possible
MIN FLAT CORNER RADIUS:	7.5m (24.5 ft)	6m (20 ft)	6m (20 ft)	6m (20 ft)	6m (20 ft)	4.5m (15 ft)	4m (13 ft)
MIN BERM CORNER RADUS:	n/a	n/a	6m (20 ft)	4.5m (15 ft)	4.5m (15 ft)	<4m (13 ft)	< 3m (10 ft)
EXPOSURE:	no exposure	no exposure	no exposure	minimal exposure	exposure likely	exposure likely	exposure likely
RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT: *Riders may choose to take equiment on trails falling outside of recommended trail difficulty at their own risk, but in this case support rider always recommended.							

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT / CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS (LEGEND)

WHEELCHAIR:
- Manual wheelchair (with or without front wheel attachment)
- Powerchair
- Scooter
- Any other mobility related device

CROSS-COUNTRY (RECUMBENT / COMBINED CRANK & STEERING):
- One wheel in the front and two in the back
- Front wheel drive
- Seating – recumbent type seating with legs straight ahead
- Full or no suspension depending on brand

ALL-MOUNTAIN (RECUMBENT / COMBINED CRANK & STEERING):
- Two wheels in the front and one wheel in the back
- Rear wheeldrive
- Seating – recumbent type seating with legs straight ahead
- Full suspension or rear suspension only depending on brand

ALL-MOUNTAIN (KNEELING / HANDLEBARS W/ SEPARATE CRANK):
- Two wheels in the front and one wheel in the back
- Rear wheeldrive
- Seating – kneeling with cranks below you and handlebar above
- Full suspension or rear suspension only depending on brand

BOWHEAD ALL ELECTRIC
- Two wheels in the front and one wheel in the back
- Articulating front end
- Full electric with hand twist throttle; no crank; Rear wheel drive
- Seating – recumbent type seating with legs straight ahead
- Full Suspension

1 Add a Text Equivalent to Every Image

Adding a line of simple HTML code to provide text for each image and graphic will enable a user with a vision disability to understand what it is. Add a type of HTML tag to each image and graphic on your agency's website. The words in the tag should be more than a description. They should provide a text equivalent of the image. In other words, the tag should include the same meaningful information that other users obtain by looking at the image.

2 Post Documents in a Text-Based Format

Always provide documents in an alternative text-based format, such as HTML or RTF (Rich Text Format), in addition to PDF. Text-based formats are the most compatible with assistive technologies.

3 Avoid Dictating Colors and Font Settings

Websites and printed materials should be designed so they can be viewed with the color and font sizes set in users' web browsers and operating systems. Users with low vision must be able to specify the text and background colors as well as the font sizes needed to see webpage content.

4 Include Audio Descriptions and Captions

Videos need to incorporate features that make them accessible to everyone. Provide audio descriptions of images (including changes in setting, gestures, and other details) to make videos accessible to people who are blind or have low vision. Provide text captions synchronized with the video images to make videos and audio tracks accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The issues and solutions above were sourced from:
https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap5toolkit.htm

Partner with Local Adaptive and Community Programs

New England is a hub for adaptive recreation. Utilizing existing resources and other community programs is a great way to expand your parks and recreation programs reach.

Collaboration Projects

- Kingdom Trail Association (trail assessments, camps with KBF, etc)
- VMBA (trail assessments, grants, events, Community Builders, etc)
- US Forest Service (fishing pier, trails, braille signage, etc)
- Vermont Huts Association (camping, wheelchairs)
- Velomont Trail
- Vermont Dept of Tourism

Partner with Local Adaptive and Community Programs

Knowledge is Power

Determining your current accessibility is a helpful way to identifying where you can improve and expand.

There are many resources available for continuing education:

- Blaze Sports - CARSS Certification
- Safesport
- Move United
- National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA)
- Birdability

Accessibility language, policies, and best practices are always changing. It's okay to be corrected and be open to new language.

Start Small: Make Changes and Design Programs for a Specific Goal

Thank you! Questions?

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