

# ACCESSIBILITY SUMMARY

BLM



Moab Field Office





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### Expands Whitewater Accessibility for America's Injured Veterans

The BLM Moab Field Office is expanding programs that offer access to whitewater rafting for America's injured veterans, and for other special populations. Highlighted below are several of these accomplishments.

#### **Colorado River Pilot Program:**

The BLM Moab Field Office launched three special programs for the 2011 and 2012 seasons to enhance opportunities for veterans with disabilities and other special populations to experience one of America's premier whitewater rivers.

- Four launches in Westwater Canyon, a challenging whitewater experience, have been set aside for veterans of the American military with service-related disabilities. The BLM is facilitating partnerships between the 18 outfitters who operate in Westwater Canyon and organizations serving disabled veterans. The BLM has reserved 200 user days for these partnerships, and has waived the Special Area fee for Westwater use.
- On the Colorado River Daily segment near Moab, up to 26 non-overlapping week-long permits for adaptive sports organizations and educational groups are available. An organization may outfit itself directly on this river segment, provided it meets Utah State commercial boating law and standard BLM stipulations for commercial river operations. Interested organizations should [apply](#) directly to Moab BLM for opportunities.
- The BLM is exploring the potential to facilitate development of an adaptive training program to sharpen the field skills of outfitters and guides in the many aspects of accessibility, with a special emphasis on improving access to the outdoors.



#### **Outfitter Opportunities for the Disabled:**

The Moab Field Office has many outfitters who serve special populations, with an impressive variety of outdoor experiences. SPLORE is an outfitter whose target clientele is special populations. SPLORE has held a special recreation permit with the Moab Field Office since 1983, and has permits to conduct river trips in Westwater Canyon, the Colorado River Daily and Labyrinth Canyon on the Green River. The organization has partnered with the Salt Lake City Veterans' Administration Hospital for 20 years to offer trips to disabled veterans. That institution recently recognized SPLORE for providing "outstanding service to thousands of our veterans through programs such as camping, canoeing, Nordic skiing and whitewater rafting." SPLORE has served over 40,000 individuals with disabilities, their families and caregivers on Utah's public lands, national forests and national parks.

#### **Accessibility Summit**

Four representatives from the Moab Field Office attended the Accessibility Summit hosted by BLM in Denver, Colorado on October 15, 2010, to gather issues of concern to disabled veterans groups. Ideas to expand opportunities for disabled veterans to use their public lands were exchanged. The summit was also attended by representatives of the outfitting community as well as representatives from adaptive sports groups, non-profit groups and other state and federal agencies.



Additional outfitters have also served special populations to utilize the outstanding recreation opportunities in the BLM Moab Field Office. A sampling of these programs include:

- Adrift Adventures has partnered with Wasatch Adaptive Sports, the Steve Young Foundation and the University of Utah to offer river trips to special populations, including

injured veterans, those with spinal cord injuries and wheelchair bound quadriplegics and paraplegics

- Adventure Bound outfitted two Westwater trips per year from 2004 to 2009 for the Wounded Warriors Program, serving veterans disabled in war. These trips were in partnership with Colorado Discover Ability, a non-profit organization serving disabled populations.
- Holiday River Expeditions has provided numerous trips (mostly Desolation Canyon, not Westwater) for groups from Shriner's Hospital and the University of Utah Burn Clinic.
- Telluride Adaptive Sports held a

hand cycle event that included a day of rafting during the 2010 season and will be holding two similar trips during the 2011 season.

- Rally on the Rocks (UTV event) had a veterans' only trip on the Hells Revenge Jeep Route; the group raised monies toward the Wounded Warriors program.

In addition, many outfitters serve special populations within the parameters of a regular or chartered trip. For instance, World Wide River Outfitters and Western River Expeditions have outfitted many river trips for scout groups and school groups whose members often include those with disabilities, including wheelchair-bound individuals.

## Accessible Facilities in the Moab Field Office:

The BLM Moab Field Office has a long history of providing accessible facilities at its many recreation sites. Examples include:

- Reconstruction of Takeout Beach (the takeout for the Colorado River Daily) for accessibility. Added accessible facilities include walkways, toilets, a shade shelter and ramps. SPLORE participated in the design for this facility.
- Construction of fully accessible facilities at Big Bend Campground, Moab BLM's flagship campground. Facilities to enhance accessibility at the campground include shade shelters, an accessible walkway to the Colorado River, accessible toilets and walkways throughout the core of the campground, and two fully accessible campsites.
- Addition of accessible walkways at numerous toilets throughout the Moab Field Office. All new toilets are constructed to accessible standards. The goal of the Moab BLM is to have every one of its 100 toilets be accessible; to this end, eleven older toilets are being retrofitted for accessibility in the summer of 2011, using special funds awarded by the BLM Washington Office.
- Construction of the Gold Bar Campground group sites as an accessible facility. This facility, which can serve up to 120 campers, has accessible walkways, toilets, picnic tables, and fire grills, as well as two large accessible shade shelters.
- Needles Overlook, a recreation site which offers outstanding views of Canyonlands National Park and the Colorado River gorge, received two new 600 foot-long walkways so that mobility-limited people could enjoy the panoramic views. An accessible parking area was constructed and new accessible toilets were installed. A two-site accessible picnic area was added to the facility. The longer trail to the end of the point was also improved for ease of access.
- Paved paths totaling eight miles in the North Moab Recreation corridor and along the Colorado River have been constructed to enhance outdoor opportunities. These paths are usable by wheelchair bound people, hand-power bicyclists with disabilities, and walkers who need paved pathways in order to enjoy the outdoors.

