BECOMING AN OUTDOORS-WOMAN:
BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES FOR PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

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ABSTRACT

Only one percent of American women are involved in the hunting/shooting sports. Nine percent of American women go fishing.

A 1990 conference at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point identified the primary barrier to participation for women in outdoor recreation as a lack of educational opportunities for women (Thomas & Peterson, 1993). This conference led to the formation of Becoming an Outdoors-Woman, an outdoor skills education program that reaches over 20,000 women throughout North America each year.

Two conferences were conducted in April and June 2002 to identify the barriers and strategies for including women with physical disabilities in outdoor recreation through the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program. The method of data collection included individual and group input around three topic areas: barriers to participation faced by women with physical disabilities, strategies to increase participation of women with physical disabilities, and specific action plans or goal oriented items that agencies can implement.

The results from these discussions indicate that women with physical limitations face similar barriers to participation in outdoor recreation as do women without physical limitations, including a lack of educational opportunities and feeling unwelcome. Women with physical limitations also face accessibility issues and fear or intimidation by instructors and participants. This study suggests that through a commitment to inclusive programming and by addressing the barriers identified, agencies will reach many more women, and a deeper understanding between service providers and participants may be gained.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are a number of professors, friends, leaders, and relatives who deserve my undying thanks for the way they have shaped, inspired, and challenged me to grow into the woman that I am today. To limit the list for purposes of this acknowledgements section, I say ‘thank you’ to the following individuals:

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INTRODUCTION

Over a decade ago, the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, under the direction of Dr. Christine L. Thomas, raised the question, "Where are the women when we look at hunting, fishing, and non-harvest outdoor recreation?" Through a conference, titled "Breaking Down the Barriers to Participation of Women in Angling and Hunting," participants identified 21 areas of concern. These included expense and availability of suitable equipment and clothing, societal pressures, and a lack of information. Within this diversity of issues, one major theme emerged; outdoor recreation lacked educational opportunities for women (Thomas & Peterson, 1993). In order to assist women in negotiating this constraint, Thomas and her peers developed the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshop (BOW). In 2000 alone, over 300 BOW and Beyond BOW weekend workshops and field days were held serving approximately 20,000 women (Schnell, 2000; D.H. Lueck, personal communication, November 27, 2001). Numerous awards and an endorsement by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Executive Committee reflect the success of the BOW program (Thomas, Ensign, & Lueck, 1999).

Although BOW workshops now serve in meeting the educational needs of over 20,000 North American women each year, the diversity of participants is limited. In an effort to increase programming to a broader audience, Becoming an Outdoors-Woman with two successive grants from the US Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid program, once again posed the question, "Where are the Women?" The first study addressed minority and low-income women. Thus, the second study was focused on women with physical disabilities in outdoor recreation.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Leisure & Outdoor Recreation

In order to discuss the issues surrounding women with physical disabilities in outdoor recreation, a shared vocabulary is necessary. Leisure is frequently referred to as meaningful experiences, time, and events that influence one’s quality of life. This includes activities above and beyond what is needed to maintain daily life (Henderson, 1990; Perrin, 1992; Theobold, 1978). Jackson (1994) identified outdoor recreation as a subset of leisure due to the more ‘real’ constraints to participation in outdoor recreation than other forms of leisure. This is reflected in higher costs for participation in outdoor recreation via equipment and travel, coupled with a lack of opportunities and availability of transportation (Jackson, 1994).

Becoming an Outdoors Woman

The Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program has three main areas of instruction: hunting/shooting, fishing/angling, and non-harvest activities (e.g. camping, hiking, nature photography, etc.) (Thomas & Peterson, 1993). Attending a BOW workshop has had the following quantifiable impacts on participants: increased activity in outdoor recreation, increased interest in resource management, increased purchase of hunting and fishing licenses and park permits, and a more positive attitude toward state natural resource management agencies (Ensign, 1999; Lueck, 1995; Lueck & Thomas, 1997; Thomas, Ensign, & Lueck, 1999).

Although BOW has been successful, the women who attend workshops represent a limited section of the American population. BOW participants tend to be well-educated,
middle-aged, Caucasian women with an above-average income. They usually have no children or none currently at home (De Bin, 1998; Lueck, 1995).

To broaden the audience served, BOW has sponsored research and applied strategies for increasing the diversity of participants. An exploratory workshop in 1999, called “Introducing Women of Color and Low-Income Women to Natural Resource-Based Recreation: Barriers and Strategies,” addressed the question of how to attract a more ethnically-diverse audience. Workshop participants identified three major barriers faced by minority women in outdoor recreation. They are: 1) lack of role models, 2) lack of education and 3) not feeling welcome (Lueck & Thomas, 2000; Schnell, 2000).

Outdoor Recreation

During 2001, more than 80 million Americans 16 years or older participated in fish and wildlife-related outdoor recreation. Sixteen percent of Americans age 16 and older went fishing. A total of 34 million anglers spent on average 16 days fishing. Also in 2001, 13 million Americans 16 years old or older went hunting. Finally, wildlife watching was pursued by more than 66 million Americans 16 years of age or older. (U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2002). The data also show that patterns in outdoor recreation activities form early in life. For example, nearly 70% of all active hunters were introduced to hunting by age 15 (O’Leary, Behrens-Tepper, McQuire, & Dottavio, 1987).
Women in Outdoor Recreation


Leisure research has begun to address how socialization impacts both males and females. Henderson (1996) reported that institutionalized gender roles impacted women more than biological sex. Jackson and Henderson (1995) found that women, more so than men, met more societal expectations that constrained their leisure pursuits than men.

Persons with Disabilities in Outdoor Recreation

People with physical disabilities are underrepresented in outdoor recreation activities and programs. There are 35-45 million Americans who are currently or permanently disabled. External barriers, including economics, limited grant funds
available to small service providers, a lack of education, public attitude, transportation, and architecture must be negotiated for persons with disabilities to participate in outdoor recreation (Frazee & Mahoney, 1991; Sugerman, 1996; Thomas & Peterson, 1993; Zimmerman, 1990). There are also large gaps in current research (Henderson, 1996).

McCormick (2000) reported major barriers to participation of persons with disabilities in outdoor recreation. The two most significant barriers were personal health risks (76% of respondents) and physically limiting conditions (57% of respondents). Whereas persons without disabilities ranked “not enough time” as one of the most significant barriers to participation, people with disabilities did not (McCormick, 2000).

Social barriers and perceived constraints to outdoor recreation also exist (Frazee & Mahoney, 1991). As with most women, people with disabilities report a lack of feeling welcome (Perrin, 1992).

Despite multiple barriers, systemic changes are taking place through legislation such as the Handicapped Archer Law, 1986, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1992. These laws provide support for persons with disabilities in outdoor recreation. For instance, special hunting licenses, non-ambulatory hunting permits, and modified crossbow permits now provide increased access to hunting for persons with disabilities (Jones, 1995).

McCormick (2000) found that although persons with disabilities participate in outdoor recreation in fewer numbers than those without disabilities, those who do participate do so more frequently. Blinde and McClung (1997) reported benefits, including increased self-esteem and empowerment, resulted from participation of people with disabilities in recreational activities.
Women with Physical Disabilities in Outdoor Recreation

In the United States, women make up over half of the people with disabilities (Rubin, 1988 in Bedini & Henderson, 1994; Wendell, 1989). Henderson and Bedini (1997) studied the relationship between gender, leisure, and disability. Their findings indicated that women with disabilities perceived a strong difference in how they experienced leisure compared to men with disabilities. Rather, women with and without disabilities generally faced many of the same constraints. These included time, money, and physical and emotional safety (Henderson & Bedini, 1997; Henderson, Stalnaker, & Taylor, 1988). However, the magnitude of negotiating constraints was multiplied for women with physical disabilities (Henderson, 1996). Henderson argued that general research on women does not encompass all barriers that women with disabilities face in order to become active in outdoor recreation. Rather, women with physical limitations face an additional constraint of accessibility and lack opportunities to suggest ideas about leisure options (Bedini & Henderson, 1994).

PROBLEM

Early leisure research of the 20th century represented barriers to recreation as insurmountable issues. By the mid-1980’s, researchers began looking at ways that individuals actually addressed or could address these constraints (Little, 2000). Little and McIntyre (1995) reported that women recognized and negotiated many of the constraints they found when pursuing outdoor recreation. Yet, Henderson (1990) warned that women do not fit into one broad category. She noted that research must take into account life experiences, education, and lifestyles.
Women with physical disabilities remain underrepresented in outdoor recreation pursuits. In order for a broader audience of women to participate, the scope of research needs to broaden (Blinde & McClung, 1997; Lewko, 1980; Henderson, 1990, 1996). Therefore, by increasing the knowledge about women with physical disabilities in outdoor recreation, the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program may assist more women in overcoming their leisure constraints.

**SUMMARY**

The general body of research about women in leisure is growing. Yet hunting, fishing, and non-harvest outdoor activities still pose significant barriers to women with physical disabilities. In research and in the field, women with physical disabilities are significantly underrepresented. Facilitating opportunities for input among women with physical disabilities about leisure options will add to the body of research focused on inclusive outdoor recreation.

**OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this study was to identify participation barriers faced by women with physical disabilities in outdoor recreation. The research focus was on the barriers faced in hunting/shooting, fishing/angling, and non-harvest education and outdoor recreation. Strategies and action items to break down the identified barriers were also addressed. Finally, this study compared participant answers in the primary conference and secondary workshop session to two previous studies addressing barriers to participation in outdoor recreation by women in general and women from ethnic groups.
METHODS

The objective of this research was to identify the issues surrounding women with physical disabilities in outdoor recreation. Data was collected from individuals within the outdoor recreation and disabled communities. The intention was to provide information that could lead to increased participation of women with physical disabilities in educational outdoor recreation programs.

Two study groups were identified and results from each group were then compared. The main study group met at a working conference titled, “Breaking Down Barriers, III: No Limits.” During this two-day event, participants addressed issues that must be negotiated by women with physical disabilities in order for them to participate in outdoor recreation. They also addressed strategies and specific action items that agencies could utilize to increase participation of the target population. The participant make-up of the study group included individuals interested in disability issues. Familiarity with BOW or similar programs was varied. Participants ranged from active BOW coordinators to individuals without knowledge of BOW. Diversity of experience in outdoor recreation and varying physical abilities were sought in participants. Participants were self-selected via conference registration and represented both the disabled community and those resource personnel who may or may not be physically disabled.

The secondary study group was made up of BOW coordinators, directors, and volunteers. Common among all members of this group was a strong interest or involvement in outdoor recreation programming. Interest in and understanding of inclusive programming was varied. Participants were self-selected via registration for a
larger conference. Participants contributed verbally during approximately four hours of large and small group topic discussions.

The method of data collection included individual and group input around three topic areas: barriers to participation faced by women with physical disabilities, strategies to increase participation of women with physical disabilities, and specific action plans or goal oriented items that agencies can implement. Participants were asked to determine barriers and strategies related to hunting, angling, and non-consumptive outdoor recreation.

Data was collected through working sessions focused on barriers, strategies, and action items. The nominal group process was utilized allowing for participant observation and notes and large group round-robin discussions followed by a systematic ranking process. The findings were published and distributed to all BOW programs across North America. Finally, data was compared to results of the previous two Breaking Down Barriers conferences as illustrated in the Discussion and Future Implications sections that follow.

The nominal group process was used for data collection. As defined by the Iowa State University Extension (2001), the nominal group process can be used to effectively identify issues and solutions through a facilitated discussion. The use of this process helps insure that all subjects participate and the facilitator maintains control of the setting. The basic steps defined by the Iowa State University Extension for the nominal group process are:

1) Form multiple groups of five-eight participants each

2) Introduce group members
3) Distribute problem statements around issue

4) Allow for silent participation through writing

5) Facilitate round-robin sharing of ideas

6) Facilitate discussion and clarification

7) Facilitate definition of priority areas through multiple voting technique
RESULTS

Breaking Down Barriers, III: No Limits

On April 12-13, 2002, 19 adults came together at a conference center in Chaska, MN. Attendees consisted of people with physical disabilities, state resource management agency personnel, university staff, disability advocates, and resource providers, all of whom were interested in making outdoor recreation more accessible.

Participants were self-selected through registration for the conference. Scholarships were provided for women with physical disabilities and low-income women, including students, to cover the cost to attend. Eight states were represented, with a total of nineteen participants (15 women and four men), speakers, and coordinators. Participants ranged in experience and age from college students to a retired electrician. Members of state agencies, private disability organizations, and university staff were also in attendance. Some participants were able-bodied and others had mild to more limiting physical disabilities. All participants identified themselves as outdoor enthusiasts and/or disability advocates.

Barriers, strategies, and action items were identified by the participants both individually and through large group sessions.

Barriers:

Thirty-five barriers were listed by the participants (Appendix I). Utilizing the nominal group process in which weight was given through multiple votes, participants ranked individual barriers. Four overarching themes exist in the barriers identified: physical barriers, societal barriers, agency-related barriers, and communication barriers.
Within all themes personal and interpersonal barriers rather than systemic barriers were a top concern. These included:

- Stress or intimidation between the person with a disability and the instructor
- Lack of knowledgeable instructors qualified in providing accessible and inclusive instruction
- Lack of knowledge of available resources and accessibility of these services by women with physical disabilities

The group also identified two issues that do not specifically fit in the theme areas but are worth mentioning:

- Hygiene issues in a male-dominated or threatening environment
- Lack of financial resources and too proud to ask for money. (This again may be connected with a lack of knowledge about available resources.)

Similarly, strategies identified addressed a need to bridge the gap of understanding and communication between agencies and women with physical disabilities.

**Strategies:**

Thirty-two strategies were identified to break down the barriers noted above.

Participants then prioritized the strategies. Among these strategies, eight were highlighted as most important. These were as follows:

- Develop specific instructor training session for increasing programming that is accessible for and inclusive of all people
- Network with agencies that provide services to find instructors, interpreters and equipment
Invite persons with disabilities to participate in workshops by networking with rehabilitation centers

Recognize varied education/ability levels: be specific on brochures that agency is accessible and welcoming of all people. Utilize a variety of visuals to stress inclusion.

Send specific invitations to individuals: reach people with disabilities through support groups and organizations where they may already be active

Rate classes for physical difficulty in publications

 Invite those with special interest and ability to help plan workshop

Develop a cadre’ of motivational speakers to spark interest and motivate others

  Motivational speakers should include women with disabilities who are disability advocates and outdoor enthusiasts

Within all of the strategies listed, the ranking process was again used to acknowledge overall themes or importance. The strategies identified by the participants were focused on agency participation and centered on two areas: 1) developing a network to reach women with physical disabilities and 2) developing a deeper understanding within the agency about the disabled community and means to provide inclusive programming. Two other areas that were highlighted were: 1) use accessible facilities and 2) invite qualified people with disabilities to become instructors/role models.

Action Plan:

The participants identified action items to meet the top barriers and strategies.

The action items were addressed within three themes: Agency Involvement, Instructors
and Role Models, and Publicity and Partnerships. The highest ranked action items within each category were as follows:

**Agency Involvement**

- Develop a BOW Accessibility Committee
- Invite a disability advocate or role model to speak to agency directors about accessibility issues at International or Regional Conferences
- Acquire grant funding for adaptive equipment
- Conduct a field day for BOW agency, targeting recruitment to persons with disabilities (PWD)
- Conduct instructor training to increase participation of PWD as role models
- Analyze and update websites for increased accessibility.

**Instructors and Role Models**

- Conduct a special training of instructors with and without disabilities for higher-level instructor certification in teaching strategies for effective programming that is both accessible and inclusive. Develop an instructor training manual or supplemental section to current manual.
- Compile a list of publications and resources for instructors
Publicity and Partnerships

➢ Develop language that highlights that BOW is attentive to and accommodating for individual needs of participants. Make accessibility language in publications standard across BOW programs.

➢ Design a brochure/poster that features women with physical disabilities as a part of the BOW program. Place at rehabilitation centers, support group sites, etc.

BIII Session Two: Coordinator Conference

During the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Coordinator Conference, a second, shorter version of ‘Breaking Down Barriers, III: No Limits’ was held. This conference took place on June 22, 2002 and included 24 participants, two facilitators and four observers. As in the original ‘BIII’ conference, the nominal group process was utilized; participants were asked to give input on barriers, strategies, and action items in relationship to women with physical disabilities pursuing outdoor recreation options. The group included BOW coordinators, directors, and volunteers. The participants were all actively involved as volunteers, coordinators, or participants of outdoor recreation education for women. The interest or experience with disability issues among participants varied. As in the first conference, participants identified and then ranked barriers, strategies, and action plan items.

Barriers:

Thirty-nine barriers were identified (Appendix II). In this second conference, all five of the most significant barriers as indicated by participants were barriers that an agency has responsibility to address. The highlighted barriers identified were:
accessibility of facilities, transportation within the workshop, adaptable equipment, instructor training, and understanding/responsibility to provide reasonable accommodation.

Strategies:

Twenty-three strategies were identified to break down the barriers noted above. Participants then prioritized the strategies. Among these strategies, six were highlighted as most important. These were:

- Use accessible facilities
- Change language to reflect inclusiveness; use welcoming messages
- Contact U.S. Dept. of Justice to request information on ADA requirements
- Provide disability awareness and skills training for instructors
- Coordinate participant needs with instructors
- Increase knowledge of disability issues, adaptive equipment, resources, etc.

Action Plan:

The participants identified action items to meet the top barriers and strategies. The action items were addressed within three themes: Agency Involvement, Instructors and Role Models, and Publicity and Partnerships. The highest ranked action items within each category were as follows:

- Change language in publications to
  - reflect accessibility and inclusiveness of organization
- provide information in an inclusive manner

- Contact U.S. Dept. of Justice of information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - Get guidelines for reasonable accommodation
  - Ask ADA representative to attend and critique workshop
  - Ask ADA representative to help with instructor/coordinator training

- Develop risk management plan

- Identify sponsors and purchase equipment for loan

- Develop resource list for equipment, support, etc. that provide adaptations
### TABLE I: BARRIERS COMPARISON FROM THREE CONFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Breaking Down Barriers III: Women with disabilities</th>
<th>BIII, Coordinator Conference: Women with disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top Priority</strong></td>
<td>Lack of $/Pride keeps from asking</td>
<td>Accessibility of facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Personal Issues’ in male environment</td>
<td>Transportation within the workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of qualified instructors</td>
<td>Adaptable equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stress/intimidation by both the PWD and instructor</td>
<td>Instructor training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignorance of availability and whether or not it is accessible</td>
<td>Reasonable accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Theme Areas</strong></td>
<td>Social/Cultural</td>
<td>Agency-responsibility barriers: physical and institutional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information/Networking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutional/Agency</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Barriers I: Women</th>
<th>Barriers II: Minority Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top Priority</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling Unwelcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Image of sport as portrayed by anti-hunting movement</td>
<td>Lack of Role Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expense or availability of suitable equipment</td>
<td>Lack of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social pressure who view hunting as a man’s sport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of female role models</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being raised in a non-hunting or angling family</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of information</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Major Theme Areas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family/Cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of educational opportunities</td>
<td>Knowledge/ information</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Role Model</td>
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DISCUSSION

*Breaking Down Barriers III*

A comparison of the Breaking Down Barriers III (BIII) conference and the second session held during the Coordinator Conference identified similar barriers with dissimilar emphasis on these barriers.

The Coordinator Conference (CC), BIII session, though shorter in time frame, paralleled the 'Breaking Down the Barriers III: No Limits' conference held just two months prior. The number of participants was similar (19 at BIII and 24 at the coordinator conference) along with the ratio of men to women (BIII: 15 women/4 men; CC: 20 women/4 men).

With many similar demographics, similar results were anticipated. The number of barriers listed by each group was similar (BIII: 35, CC: 39). Between the two groups, 74 barriers were listed. Forty-two barriers included the same response from both groups or responses referring to the same barrier (eg. accessible facilities not available vs. accessibility of facilities), while another 32 barriers were either more indirectly linked or completely different. Although a number of barriers were either directly or indirectly linked between the groups, the prioritization or weight of each perceived barrier was distinctly disparate.

While BIII participants highlighted personal and interpersonal barriers to participation the CC participants highlighted barriers to providing participation outlets. This may be due to any number of factors, including the following: the coordinator conference participants were perceived as able-bodied, whereas BIII had a diversity of people with varied limitations; the CC participants all work and/or volunteer with
agencies that provide outdoor recreation education vs. at BIII, all participants identified themselves as individuals interested in making outdoor recreation more accessible; and the BIII participants all self-registered due to personal interest in inclusive programming vs. the CC participants registered for a larger conference and through that decision were required to participate in this study.

The Coordinator Conference registrants participated in this study due to necessity resulting from two issues: 1) Some of the coordinators that attended the June conference were interested in the April conference but due to budget limitations were not allowed to participate in both; and 2) Despite extensive recruiting efforts, Barriers III generated fewer registrants than anticipated. Therefore the choice was made to utilize part of the coordinator conference to solicit agency staff opinion.

BIII participants highlighted personal/interpersonal barriers. This included 'fear and intimidation between women with physical disabilities and outdoor recreation instructors.' Interestingly, but not surprisingly, the CC participants listed financial and agency-based barriers as the highest priority.

The relationship between the fear or intimidation identified by the diverse BIII participants and financial and agency limitations identified by agency staff is one that needs to be further explored. Participants of Barriers III identified that agency staff and instructors are unsure, uninformed, or simply intimidated by women with physical limitations and that this relationship conversely is also intimidating to the female participant. Staff evaluations from the Coordinator Conference indicated similar concerns. The question then is to what extent is intimidation the cause of agency staff’s
perception of barriers. For example, are the barriers of monetary constraints real or perceived?

**Barriers I, II, & III**

'Breaking Down Barriers, III: No Limits' was specifically designed in the same manner as two previous working conferences (Barriers I and II) with the intention of comparing the results of the three studies. Barriers I focused on a general populace of women while Barriers II was centered on ethnic minority women. Finally, Barriers III looked at women with physical limitations.

Two-thirds of the barriers to participation of women in outdoor recreation as defined during the original Barriers conference (Barriers I) directly or indirectly related to lack of educational opportunities. Other specific barriers included 1) Image of sport as portrayed by anti-hunting movement, 2) Expense or availability of suitable equipment, 3) Social pressure who view hunting as a man’s sport, 4) Lack of female role models, 5) Being raised in a non-hunting or angling family, 6) Image of ‘slob’ hunter or ‘rambo’ attitude which is a ‘turn-off’, and 7) Lack of information. During Barriers II, three main barriers to participation of minority women in outdoor recreation were identified: 1) Feeling unwelcome, 2) Lack of role models, and 3) Lack of educational opportunities/information.

The intention of Barriers III (BIII) was to generate a list of barriers and strategies for inclusive programming by state agencies and programs such as BOW. A comparison of BIII to the previous workshops was conducted to see if the barriers and strategies
listed are similar for all three groups: women, ethnic minority women, and women with physical disabilities.

In Barriers I, over half of the barriers identified directly or indirectly related to a lack of educational opportunities. Within BI, the most often cited barriers also reflected image/societal pressure along with financial constraints and a lack of role models.

With Barriers II, a lack of educational opportunities and lack of role models were once again identified. Similarly, image of the sport was also a top barrier. Yet, whereas Barriers I identified social pressure as “from peers who view hunting as a man’s sport,” Barriers II identified social pressures as “not feeling welcome”.

In Barriers III, the most highly ranked barriers did not address image as a main issue but they did have other similarities. As in BI and BII, Barriers III also addressed a lack of educational opportunities. The defining aspect of this for BIII participants was that women with physical disabilities lack knowledge about whether or not an educational opportunity is accessible and inclusive.

Other similar barriers were also addressed. Finances, role models, and appropriate education were marked consistently as areas of concern. Once again ‘not feeling welcome’ was important for women with physical disabilities just as it had been for minority women. Lack of interest in participating was NOT mentioned in any of the studies; suggesting that if these barriers were addressed, the number of women in outdoor recreation activities could increase.
FUTURE DIRECTIONS

While the population of women involved in outdoor recreation still lags behind the percentage of men involved, some women, namely those who are white, upper-income, able-bodied, and middle aged are becoming involved in programs such as BOW. This leads to a number of possible study questions:

➢ Will the strategies identified in Barriers II and III, when fully implemented, significantly increase the participation of under-represented populations in outdoor recreation programs?

➢ How much influence does the interest or knowledge of agency staff impact the outreach performed toward inclusive programming?

➢ What is the magnitude of the barriers for each group of women? For instance, financial constraint has been indicated as a barrier for all three groups identified; therefore:

  o How much do financial constraints determine the type, length, and amount of outdoor recreation pursued by individual women?

  o Is there a significant difference between the populations and the financial constraints they face?

➢ Societal pressure and image is another barrier addressed at all three Barriers conferences. If women with physical disabilities, minority women, and the general populace of women all face societal pressures, to what degree are these issues congruent? Does each group of women face similar pressure but experience it at different magnitudes, as previous research suggests? (Henderson & Bedini, 1997; Henderson, Stalnaker, & Taylor, 1988) Or are the societal
pressures perhaps similar for each group in magnitude, while being altogether different pressures?

There are two areas of research to address. First, further research needs to include posing the above listed questions concerning women with disabilities pursuing outdoor recreation. Second, strategies and action plans need to be implemented and studied for their effectiveness in increasing outreach to women with physical limitations. These action items, as identified by the BIII and CC participants, include:

- Developing a BOW Accessibility Committee and/or disability coordinator
- Inviting disability advocates and role models to speak to agency directors about accessibility issues at international or regional conferences
- Identifying sponsors and purchasing adaptive equipment
- Conducting instructor training to increase participation of PWD as role models
- Analyzing and updating websites for increased accessibility
- Changing the language in publications to
  - Reflect accessibility and inclusiveness of organization
  - Provide information in an inclusive manner
- Contacting the U.S. Dept. of Justice of information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), in order to:
  - Request guidelines for reasonable accommodation
  - Ask ADA representative to attend and critique workshop
  - Ask ADA representative to help with instructor/coordinator training
- Developing a risk management plan
- Developing an ‘Accessibility Training Manual’ that includes:
- A database of adaptive equipment resources
- New curriculum
- A list of resources
- A list of guidelines
- A list of funding sources
- An accessible facility checklist

Identifying study groups and testing the questions raised is only the beginning. With dedication to address the barriers identified, the possibility for reaching women through outdoor recreation programs will only increase. Through a commitment by agency staff to provide inclusive programming, not only may more women be reached, but also a deeper understanding between service providers and participants may be gained.

Research has shown that women want to be involved in outdoor recreation. It also has shown that such participation impacts sales, attitudes, and future involvement in outdoor recreation.

Yet, according to this study it appears that many agency staff members are either intimidated about teaching women with physical disabilities or disinterested in addressing these barriers. Many agencies are facing budget scrutiny and time limitations as fewer people are expected to accomplish more work. This too fosters the fear of outreaching to people with disabilities as money and time barriers loom in the minds of personnel. Yet this is the time for agencies to utilize the resources they have as effectively and efficiently as possible. Through increased outreach, a particular organization sets itself apart from other similar groups that do not address women with physical limitations.
Agencies have an opportunity to develop more support within an aging population, a population that is increasing in diversity and disability. Agencies also have a legal and ethical responsibility to provide more inclusive programming. Agency staff must educate themselves and their instructors about disability issues and strategies for inclusion. Through education and outreach, agencies will assist all females who are interested in "becoming an outdoors woman."
LITERATURE CITED


APPENDIX I

BECOMING AN OUTDOORS-WOMAN:
REACHING OUT TO WOMEN WITH PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS
THROUGH THE BECOMING AN OUTDOORS-WOMAN PROGRAM

***Conference Proceedings***

Chaska, Minnesota
April 12-13, 2002
Sponsored by the International
Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program
BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS, III: NO LIMITS

REACHING OUT TO WOMEN WITH PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS
THROUGH THE BECOMING AN OUTDOORS-WOMAN PROGRAM

Conference Proceedings

Chaska, Minnesota
April 12-13, 2002

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Special thanks to Jean, Don, and the Minnesota BOW program.

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Welcome to Minnesota

Allen Garber, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

What a wonderful day! Welcome to Minnesota. Who is from out of the state of Minnesota? That’s wonderful. I didn’t know there was such a representation from across the country.

I would like to tell you a little about the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) for you non-Minnesotans. It’s a large agency that has about 2,800 full-time employees and about 1,500 part-time employees. We have a wide range of responsibilities. There are nine operating divisions in the MN DNR. We have 69 state parks in Minnesota and they are our crown jewels of outdoor recreation. We have an Enforcement Division. The gentleman back there is a conservation officer. We have a Trails and Waterways Division who make trails for all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles, along with walking, biking, and roller-blading trails.

We have a Forestry Division. We have almost three million acres of state forest in Minnesota. We timber harvest on them and we also provide recreation. We have a Wildlife Division, which is our biggest. That is traditionally what you may think the Department of Natural Resources is. They’re involved in hunting activities. We have a Fisheries Division, which manages the fish and does all the research about how to keep the fish population sustaining into the future so that everybody can keep enjoying fish. We have an Ecological Services Division, which has to do with non-game species, non-hunted species, and plants and invasive species, eradicating invasive species including Eurasian milfoil, and zebra mussels.
We have a Lands and Minerals Division which surprises a lot of people, but the Department of Natural Resources has a lot to do with mining in our state. We issue a lot of the permits that the mines get and what’s even more important, once a mine is dug in our state, there are requirements that the land eventually be returned to the way it was. It’s called mine reclamation and the DNR has a large responsibility in it. We have a Waters Division. We have, as you know, 10,000 plus lakes in our state. Our Waters Division is very concerned with how development occurs around the lakes and the water quality in our lakes. Then we have people who support these activities. Any large agency that’s doing all kinds of different jobs needs things like cars, and buildings, and computers, and personnel services. So we also have those services.

Our agency is very controversial because in our state people are just absolutely passionate about the outdoors. That’s good, but when I looked over your agenda for the afternoon, I would rather be with you then do what I have to do this afternoon. I have to meet with a number of environmental group representatives. I have asked them to tell me what they think about our attempts to provide trails for all-terrain vehicles that are becoming tremendously popular in this state. I am sure they are going to have plenty to tell me. Anyway, we have a very wide responsibility.

With regards to what you’re here for, I am a strong supporter of the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program. I understand that women are under-represented in outdoor recreational activities and I think that the way you do it, women teaching women, is a wonderful opportunity. Breaking down barriers I think is absolutely wonderful.

I’m a very strong supporter of our efforts to make available our outdoor attractions: our parks, our trails, and hunting activities to people with disabilities. I’ve
been personally very active with a group in our state that provides hunting activities to disabled veterans. I am very interested and active in that and I think the theme of your conference is just excellent. For our program in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, our efforts on this behalf, we get no criticism for it, all compliments for it. People say it's money well spent, it's supported widely. It's just one of the nice things that we do and I am glad to participate in and support it.

Have a wonderful time in this great weather.

Thank you.
BOW Overview: Welcoming Women Outdoors

Peggy Farrell, Assistant Director, International Becoming an Outdoors-Woman

Good afternoon and welcome to the Barriers III- No Limits conference. I enjoyed meeting and visiting with you over the lunch hour. We have a really diverse and interesting group of people participating in this event, and I look forward to sharing ideas with each of you over the next day and a half. Some of you are very familiar with Becoming an Outdoors-Woman, the program sponsoring this conference. Others are new to the program and we are really pleased that you’re joining us this weekend. Before we get to the fun activities we have scheduled for this afternoon, I’d like to show a brief slide presentation highlighting some of the history of Becoming an Outdoors-Woman and also future directions of the program. The slide talk begins by telling the “story” of some concepts that led to the creation of the BOW program.

It is a commonly held misconception that the idea of outdoor women is a new one. Women have been outdoors for centuries. They have been there as helpers, companions, and decorations. But other women set out to do more. Fly Rod Crosby, first licensed fishing guide in Maine, went streamside with her Victorian gown and tea service, and guided Teddy Roosevelt. Or Martha Maxwell, Colorado huntress credited with being the first to display mounted animals in a way that depicted their natural habitat. Fran Hamerstrom became a world-renowned wildlife biologist. In spite of these famous role-models, numbers of women a field have remained low compared to numbers of men.

In 1990, Dr. Christine Thomas of the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point became involved in a project to look at the reasons why fewer women were doing
outdoor activities. They held a conference called "Breaking Down the Barriers to Participation of Women in Angling and Hunting" or Barriers I.

Participants at the conference broke into small groups and brainstormed barriers and strategies for creating opportunities for women in the outdoors.

Expense and availability of suitable clothing was suggested as a barrier. Manufacturers play to the 90%: men, and who can blame them. Still, that relegates most women to searching through the racks of men's clothing to come up with something that pinches in the chest, sags in the crotch, and covers our fingertips.

Equipment can also be a problem. The overwhelming variety of choices and the male dominated sales staff can be intimidating if you don't know what you are looking for.

And for the smaller among us, the search for equipment can bring a whole new meaning to the term chest waders. While finding a properly-sized shotgun presents its own set of challenges.

Tradition is also a barrier. Tradition is how society expects you to act. When you step outside your traditional role, the social pressure is there to push you back in. We've come a long way since the day of the "domestic science department," but there are those folks who have a definite mindset as to what the "role" of women should be. Early childhood conditioning is also a problem. We establish expectations for our children very early on and expect them to adhere to them. We know who typically gets the guns. And who gets the dolls. While some of the barriers identified are beyond our control, others are barriers that can be removed if we use the right strategies.
That's where the "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman" program comes in. BOW programs provide learning opportunities in a supportive, non-competitive, comfortable atmosphere. BOW workshops begin on Friday afternoon and end around noon on Sunday. Attendees participate in four activities, choosing from a list of over 20 courses. The activity offerings are balanced, between 1/3 hunting and shooting, 1/3 fishing, and 1/3 non-consumptive courses, like camping and canoeing.

Some of the most popular activities include rifle marksmanship and shotgun skills, fly fishing and fly tying, archery and bow hunting along with winter BOW activities like dog mushing, snowshoeing, make your own fur garments, and ice fishing.

So who participates in BOW? Participants have ranged in age from 18-92. Some are so green they haven’t been out in their own backyard. Others are experienced enough to become instructors with the program. They’re single, divorced, married, some have kids, some don’t, some are from low-income situations and need financial assistance to attend the program, others’ generously make personal donations to help fund scholarships. They’re excited to be able to share common interests with other women and value highly the camaraderie that happens at BOW.

Over the course of now almost a dozen years, the BOW program has grown from the idea of a single pilot workshop offered in Wisconsin to an award-winning, widely recognized program in 43 states and 7 Canadian provinces. Like any successful educational program, BOW recognizes the need to reach out to under-served audiences. We started by welcoming women in general to outdoor recreation. In 1997, BOW coordinators across the country expressed concern with how few ethnic minorities participate in the program. They reported percentages a low as zero with a high of 10
percent and an average of six percent minority participation. Minority instructor numbers were even lower.

In 1999, International BOW held the Breaking Down Barriers II Conference: Introducing Women of Color to Natural Resource-Based Recreation. Like Barriers I, conference participants identified barriers to participation by the target audience and brainstormed strategies. We found that men and women from ethnic groups are interested in becoming instructors and serving as role models. We also found that women of color would attend an outdoor skills workshop if some of the constraints to attendance were removed.

BOW conducted a workshop in Missouri to train minority instructors who would go on to act as role models teaching in BOW workshops. We also held a one-day field event in Wisconsin, personally inviting minority employees of the US Forest service office in Milwaukee. The field day attracted the highest percentage - 19% - of ethnic minority women - to a BOW event to date. BOW continues to reach out to an ethnically diverse population by creating role models, issuing specific invitation for minorities to attend workshops, and making sure our printed and electronic publications include images of diversity.

With this conference, we are beginning a new outreach effort to welcome another under-represented group in our programming – people with disabilities. The ideas we generate together at Barriers III - No Limits will contribute to important research designed to help BOW and other outdoor education programs better serve people of all abilities in their recreational pursuits. Thanks again for being part of this effort.
I also need to recognize the many sponsors who have made this program possible, in particular the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid program that has provided funding for this research.

In closing, I’d like to leave you with some wonderful images. With your help, we’ll see more of these kinds of images in the years to come.
Mini-BOW Workshop Overview

On the afternoon of April 12, 2002, Barriers III participants were invited to join in two mini-BOW sessions. The purpose of this mini-workshop was 1) to introduce all participants to the basic format of a BOW class, 2) to provide participants an opportunity to experience a workshop as a BOW participant, both as a learning opportunity and a camaraderie-building experience, and 3) to better understand some of the excitement and barriers that may be faced by people with physical disabilities when participating in these activities.

For the first session, all participants chose 'air-gunning.' This indoor activity allows for basic, hands-on education about safe handling of guns and introductory skills training in shooting. During the second 1½ hr. session, one person participated in the Map and Compass skills class. The rest of the participants chose Outdoor Cooking.
Conference Overview

Diane Lueck, Director, International Becoming an Outdoors-Woman

Welcome again to Breaking Down Barriers III: No Limits. Thanks so much for being here. I'm Diane Lueck, Director of the International Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program.

First, let me introduce the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman staff members who have worked hard on making this conference possible:

Peggy Farrell and Michelle Gransee are running the show. Michele Miller will be our facilitator tomorrow. Jean Bergerson is our co-host, the BOW coordinator for Minnesota. You met Instructors, Kelly Wisinski and Don Slinger, and finally our special guest, Dr. Christine Thomas, Founder of BOW.

I want to give you just a little overview of what we’ll do for the rest of the conference, and why.

As Peggy noted in her introduction, the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program was developed after a conference noting the specific barriers women had that kept them from hunting and fishing. Because education was a component of many of those barriers, BOW educational workshops were developed. Then, in response to the low numbers of ethic minority women at our workshops, we held another conference to strategize how to overcome barriers perceived by that group.

And now, in response to interest from resource management agencies all across the country, we are going to look at barriers and strategies for involvement of women with physical limitations in resource-based recreation.
So tomorrow, we’ll be doing a lot of discussion group work. We’ll pull out everything we can think of that might be a hindrance to participation in outdoor recreation. Then we’ll see what we can come up with to overcome those barriers. We’ll also try to determine what agencies and educational programs like BOW and Wheelin’ Sportsmen-NWTF can do to facilitate strategies.

As you may know, many people were interested in attending this conference, but were unable to get funding or permission to travel. So one follow-up we are doing will be to hold a session at our BOW coordinators conference this summer, to confirm or add to the information we get at this conference. I’ll be looking to the coordinators who are here this weekend for help with that session.

We may be a small group, but we have an important job. The work we do will be shared all over the country to try to help women, and most likely men as well, enjoy the great outdoors. We’ll be sending you a copy of the Proceedings from this conference as well. I look forward to being with you, and learning from you.
Introduction of Larry Nelson

Diane Lueck, Director, International Becoming an Outdoors-Woman

I met our first speaker, Larry Nelson, through committees of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The dedication and passion that he showed when he talked about agency involvement with accessibility issues made me sure that I wanted him to talk with you.

Larry is now with the Colorado Department of Wildlife - Endangered Resources. He recently moved there from the Minnesota DNR (Department of Natural Resources), where he was instrumental in getting the agency to highlight resource accessibility, particularly involving the DNR website. Larry is going to talk with us tonight about how agencies can “Open the Outdoors.”
Open the Outdoors

Larry Nelson, Colorado Division of Wildlife

I can't remember when I didn't have a passion for the great outdoors. It is something I have always enjoyed and have grown to cherish. I am lucky because I have always had plenty of opportunity to fuel my interest. Over the years, I have come to realize that opening the outdoors for any of us depends upon opportunities. Opportunities provided by places, people and equipment.

I grew up on a peninsula surrounded by wetlands and wildlife. I watched the birds - among which were a bald eagle or two, a nearby rookery of great blue herons, and my favorites, the ducks and geese. A bird in flight was always a particular thrill. I fished sunfish, had gophers for pets, hunted with a BB gun, shot archery and skated on the frozen lake. What a wonderful place, one component of opportunity. When I was in grade school, I remember liking being outdoors so much that I viewed meals as an inconvenient necessity, because I usually had to go inside to eat.

As I grew up, so did my interest in hunting and fishing. For people of my generation, outdoor interest was usually cultivated by dads guiding their sons. But for me, my dad was killed in a plane crash when I was six, leaving a single mom for me, my 12 year old sister and my little sister who was born two weeks later. My mom also became owner and operator of one of Minnesota's largest mink ranches. She was a busy lady who didn't know how to hunt and wasn't comfortable with guns. But, she lined me up to go hunting and fishing with relatives and friends. She encouraged me, jokingly offering to pick my ducks before my first hunt and then keeping her promise. Before I was old enough to drive, I remember her taking me to a duck marsh in the morning darkness, and
leaving me there with my decoys and shotgun all day, and picking me up in the evening. I had the desire, but she was the most important person in providing me with my earliest opportunities. Remember, people are the second component of opportunity.

My mom raised the three of us, put all of us through college and then retired. When she was 80, my wife said, ‘Why don’t we take your mom canoeing on the 4th of July?’ When I asked her about going canoeing, she said, ‘Well, that would be different.’ I asked again, and she said, ‘It would be too much work for you.’ Asking if she was interested, one more time, she said, ‘I suppose that would be ok.” I call that Norwegian enthusiasm.

And, here is the proof of our outdoor experience. The place of opportunity was the wetland around the site of our old mink ranch. She enjoyed it so much we repeated the trip two years later. She had provided me with outdoor opportunities when I was young. Now we were doing the same for her decades later.

Sometimes the person who opens the outdoors is your spouse. This pretty lady didn’t hunt or fish until she married me. Now, she goes fishing just for the halibut. And, here she is on a 5-day Alaska float trip. She says she is glad she did it, but doesn’t need to do it again. She and I have now hunted and hiked together for 35 years, and she has become my favorite turkey-hunting partner. Because of her weak knees, we have to be more innovative to continue our outdoor pursuits.

And finally, I’m going to add equipment to the mix. This is my friend Jonathan Leslie, who had a motorcycle accident when he was 20 that left him with the use of his arms and upper body but not enough strength in his fingers to pull a trigger. He gave up on hunting and fishing after his accident, and was about to give up on life. But, his
friends provided him with opportunity, propping him up on a sawhorse overlooking some
decoys with instructions to shoot if a duck flew in. He missed the duck, but said he got
three decoys. Years later, I asked him about his excitement for hunting and he said, “It’s
what I live for.”

After the accident, he graduated from college with a degree in mechanical
ing engineering, and designed much of the equipment I am about to show you. I might also
mention that his deer-hunting partner is a lady named Bea Shaughesy, a 92 year old lady
with a heart condition who has hunted for almost 70 years. They both belong to Capable
Partners, a group that puts people with disabilities together with able-bodied people so
that both can enjoy the great outdoors. Here is a structure at Swan Lake that provides
wheelchair access for wetland observation in the spring and summer and duck blinds
during the waterfowl season.

So, regardless of your disability, if you have the desire to hike, camp, hunt, fish or
maybe just enjoy a pretty sunset, there is some combination of place, people, and
equipment that will ensure that you have the opportunity. Minnesota is one of the best
states for providing places of opportunity for people with disabilities.
Introduction of Sheila Burnham, Keynote speaker

Diane Lueck, Director, International Becoming an Outdoors-Woman

Several years ago, I had a life-changing experience. I was invited to work with a group in Alabama, Wheelin’ Sportsmen of America (which is now part of NWTF), to help them integrate educational components into their activities for people with disabilities.

I fell in love. I was fortunate to be involved with a number of mini-BOW sessions with the group, mentoring on hunts, and making some life-long friends.

One of the reasons I wanted us to hold this particular conference was because I specifically wanted Sheila Burnham to be our keynote speaker. I didn’t know what else we would plan for the conference, but that was always in my mind.

Although Sheila retired last year, she is still working tirelessly as an advocate for people with disabilities (PWD), through SILC, State Independent Living Council, the Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities, and the Cerebral Palsy Foundation.

I’ve had the great pleasure to spend time with Sheila, hunting, visiting, laughing, and I know that you will enjoy her stories.
Keynote Address

Sheila Burnham, Disability Advocate

I was interested in what Larry had to say when he began his speech. He said he had always had a love of the outdoors. He had always been able to go out and participate in so many things that you take for granted here. I myself was never in the outdoors until three years ago. That was the very first time I had ever hunted.

I was injured ten years ago. I’m a spinal cord injury. I was active as an advocate, but it wasn’t until I went to Jackson, Mississippi. I had asked for a transfer there, because I knew I wanted to retire there, because that was where I was born and raised, and believe me nobody goes to Jackson unless they’re born there--to retire. There’s nothing to do. You have people coming through going to California or people coming through going to Texas that know you. They’ll stop and spend the night and visit with you but they don’t tarry very long.

I love it; it’s a very low pace. We have two speeds in Mississippi, that’s slow and slower. That’s just where I wanted to be, that’s where I wanted to retire.

I was Miss Wheelchair Mississippi ‘98-‘99 and that had nothing to do with beauty. It has nothing to do with age, and has everything in the world to do with how well you speak for people who cannot speak for themselves that have disabilities. You go into meetings and you go into a lobbying situation, you go into the legislature and get in to the governor and speak for folks that have strokes, children that have CP, and their families that are both working and cannot get out and do things. A whole myriad of people depend on you to speak for them. I took that very seriously when I took that job. I happened to meet a man named Kirk Thomas who was also a paraplegic, and about my age and lived
in Birmingham. I at that time was living in Jackson and I had met him through his parents. Wheelin’ Sportsmen was his organization. That was his mission. He had had a catfish round up in Meridian. I had been over there and helped him with it and met his parents and met him. He’s just a real motivational speaker. I mean he’s just a tremendous guy. If you have ever had a chance to see him or see him on television or listen to him speak, he really is charismatic.

So he calls me and says, “Sheila we’re having a hunt down in Union Springs, Alabama.” He says, “We’re going to pair up ten women with disabilities with ten women in the industry.” And I said, “What do you mean, in the industry?” I don’t know anything about hunting now, remember this.

He says, “They’re either journalists or they’re vendors or they’re representing Remington shotguns, fishing equipment, TV show hosts, things of that nature.” So I said, “You know, Kirk, I have never even shot a gun. I certainly have never killed an animal. I am not sure that you would even want me there.” And he said, “Sheila, I’ve got to have ten women.” And he said, “Now, it’s September and this hunt is in the first week of December and I am having a hard time finding ten women that will come down there.” Of course, I am feeling guilty, and I said, “Well, you know, I did promise that I would represent people that could not speak for themselves.” So I said, “Ok, I’ll come down there. First of December, I’ll be there.” I said, “But I’m not sure that I’m going to be able to kill anything. Now you are going to have to understand that.” He said, “No problem hon’, just sit there.” If you know Kirk, you know that’s exactly what he’d say to me. So, I said, “Ok.”
My brothers have always hunted with daddy. I mean, they squirrel hunted ‘cause my grandfather was very Southern. His favorite breakfast in the whole wide world was squirrel country fried with rice and gravy and biscuits. So, even though none of us ate squirrel, when squirrel season opened, daddy, Ellis, and Joe were out shooting squirrels, skinning them, and putting them up so granddaddy would have breakfast on Sunday. That was his special meal. But the boys had always hunted.

But my sister and I, we were there Saturday scrubbing the wooden floors, and ironing. This was back when the starch was, like, you would wring the starch out, sprinkle it down and iron it. Some people can’t remember that. But, that was our chore. That was our fun part that we had to do. I didn’t have a deprived childhood; I had wonderful parents, don’t get me wrong.

But, I called my brother Joe who lives about 45 minutes from me and told him that night. I was panicked and I said, “Joe, I’ve been invited to a deer hunt. I don’t want to make a fool of myself. I would like you to at least show me how to use a gun, loan me a gun, and let me shoot.”

“Nothing to it sis’, be glad to help you out.”

Well you have to understand that in Mississippi bow season opens October first. So, Joe bow hunts and he also deer hunts. But bow season ran on and I wasn’t getting too excited about it because the hunt was the first weekend of December. And then Thanksgiving got there and gun season started and I was getting a little bit upset about what I was going to be doing.
So when I went over to Thanksgiving dinner. I said, “You know Joe, you have been promising me for a long time that you were going to take some time and show me how to shoot guns.” He said, “Well now is as good a time as any.”

And it’s drizzling rain outside so we get on the four-by-four. We go down to the end of his place where he has his target set up and he gives me an hour’s lecture on safety. It’s a .243 for God’s sake, but he gives me an hour’s lecture on safety, and let’s me shoot three bullets. And he says to me, “Ok, you’re ready. Let’s wipe it off. Keep it out of the case, because we don’t want it to rust.” Then he said, “Good luck.” So, that was the preparation for the hunt.

Well, I get down to Union Springs and they have a wonderful facility there in Sedgefield. It is privately owned. It is one of those high-dollar places where people pay like $12,000 to go hunt and they have ten women that are so varied. They have a young girl that is about 8 or 9 with a congenital heart problem. They have a lady that is a cancer survivor. They have two or three others that are spinal cord injuries. We didn’t have anybody blind at that particular one, but at the Ultimate Hunt they did have a blind hunter. We were all green. There were one or two ladies that had hunted before.

I happened to be matched up with a lady named Kathy Butt. Kathy is an outdoors journalist and photographer and she lives in Nashville, TN. She is so nice. Have you ever sat down with somebody and talked about five minutes and you just click? You just know that this is going to be a friend. This is going to be a person that you are going to like, you know, for the rest of your life. It’s a strange feeling, but I think every one of us has met somebody like that.
She was very calm. She said, “I’ll be sitting with you in the blind.” Of course, we were in a ground blind and another young man, Mark Gregg, that was the meat, the beef. Oh yah, he was a big ol’ boy. And he was single. And they nick-named him ‘Bubba.’ But he drove the truck down and picked me up like I weighed nothing and set me down in the ground blind. Kathy was right next to me. He was on the other side of me. And my brother had given me strict instructions. He said, “You do not wear make-up. You scrub down with this soap, and you do not talk in the blind.” He was a serious hunter.

So I was sitting there trying to do exactly what Joe had told me. I got my shooting stick up. We were in front of this beautiful green vale. And Kathy and Mark are just jabbering away like nothing’s happening, you know. The turkeys are gobbling. Everything’s carrying on. I’m thinking to myself, “They should really be quiet. Joe wouldn’t like this.”

But, Mark had told me, he said, “Now, when a deer comes out, if you can’t shoot it, it’s perfectly alright. A lot of women cannot shoot.” and he said, “A lot of men that I’ve guided, when it actually comes right down to it, cannot kill an animal. There’s nothing wrong with that, we understand.”

And I said, “Ok.” I really didn’t know if I would be able to shoot an animal or not, because I had never shot one. Well, you know, about 45 minutes later, the sun comes out, and the birds start chirping. It’s 26 degrees down there and you are freezing to death. And our deer kind of meander real, real slow, you know. Some folks say theirs just run right out in the middle of the field at one time and start to eat. But those Mississippi deer and those Alabama deer have been hunted so much, they’re so skittish
they meander out and they look up about 30 feet to see where the tree stands are. But anyways, I had a fairly nice doe right there in front of me. She was right there. And they said, “You know you can shoot anytime you want to.” I said, “Ok.” And you know what went through my mind? I thought, “If I don’t shoot, Kathy Butt is going to get my deer.” I promise you. And I never thought I would be competitive like that, but I am going to be honest with you and I said, “I’m going to shoot this doe because I don’t want Kathy to get it.” And I shot that doe and she just went ‘ploomp’ down and I went, “There’s nothing to this.” And that was the beginning of my hunting experience.

Like I said, Diane was there because BOW was partnering with Wheelin’ Sportsmen at that time to make sure that everything went smoothly.

Jerry DeBin, who is the BOW coordinator for Alabama, was there; Kathy Butt was there; Tes Jolly was there, she and her husband Ron. And Ron had been a video photographer for years and years. They were just really good friends. They said, “You know, you ought to come to a BOW.” I didn’t even know what a BOW was. They said, “Becoming an Outdoors-Woman.” In Alabama in the spring, first weekend in March, and in the fall, the first weekend in October, they have these get-togethers. They said, “You just ought to come. You would really enjoy it.”

So I promised them I would go, and when I give somebody my word, I try to hold up to it. Then Kathy Butt said, “Sheila, you will love turkey hunting.” I had just killed one deer! I don’t know anything about turkey hunting. She says, “Oh you are going to have to come up next year and go turkey hunting.” And I thought, “Oh yeah well, people say all sorts of things, but when push comes to shove, she will probably forget all about it.”
But I went to the first BOW. I put down ATV’s. I wanted to do ATV’s. I
wanted to do trap-shooting and I wanted to do the bow thing. The guys were so nice.
They didn’t have an ATV that had the controls on the handles. So they actually rigged up
a piece of wood so I could crank the four-wheeler. They were so paranoid about whether
or not it was going to work. The first thing, when I got there Friday, Jerry came out and
he said, “For goodness sake, go down here and let these guys show you what they have
done to the ATV. They have been paranoid that you might be too short or that your legs
might be too long and they will need to do something to this ATV starter before you get
here.”

And of course, they had done a wonderful job. It looked like it had been milled to
me and shined up and polished and everything else. I felt like, “Gosh, I’m so special that
they would do something like that for me.” I thought the guy was going to get on the
front and let me hang on, I thought that was what the ATV was going to be like
motorcycle riding or something. I am still really, really dumb about the woods. As far as
the trap shooting goes, they had a sister and brother combination there. Ronda Cole and
her brother shoot trap and they teach together. Her brother Larry is very much structured.
How you should hold the gun, what you should keep your eye on, and what have you.
When I rolled out there, they went, “Hi.” And I said, “Hi. Can y’all show me how to do
this?”

And they said, “Well, we have never had anyone in a wheelchair before. We
don’t know.” And I said, “Well, we can just try, because I have never tried shooting
traps from a wheelchair.” I said, “It will just be a learning experience for both of us.”
They were both really good instructors. I’m still not good at it. It’s something you have to do a lot, I think, to actually become adroit at it. I would really love to, that is going to be my next focus. I would really like to become, not perfect, but maybe 80% at least, where you don’t embarrass yourself.

After that BOW I went away feeling like I had made some really good friends that would stay in touch with me. And two weeks later, Kathy called me and said, “We want you to come to Nashville.” She said, “Foster and I have a farm that we bought over in Kentucky. We just let friends hunt there. We hunt turkey and we also hunt deer.”

It happened to be southeast of Bowling Green in the Amish country. They had about 300-325. Beautiful countryside out there. They had an old farmhouse. They put a new floor in and put a new bathroom inside, but it was kind of rustic.

And she said, “Foster and I are worried about how we’re going to get you in the house.” I said, “Don’t you worry about that, I can pop up the stairs or whatever.” They put me on a four wheel when I got out of the car and they just pushed me on up, and that was how I got into their house. Foster, bless his heart, he’s a taxidermist, and he doesn’t say much. But when he says something you better listen to him.

And he had said, “I always heard about the different places where the turkey might be.” He was trying to explain to me about turkey hunting, and he said, “We can’t just put up a tent or something Sheila, or just put you out against a log, because that turkey is going to come in and that’s their living room. They are going to see you and think, “Hmm, there’s a new recliner in my living room and I didn’t buy that recliner. So I don’t think I’m going to stay here because I don’t like that recliner. We’re going to have to figure out to put you somewhere where the turkey can’t realize you’re there.”
So, honest to goodness, most people don’t believe this, but he went out and dug behind three trees. He dug a trench that was about three feet deep that she and I could sit in.

I got on the four-wheeler at four o’clock with him that morning and she got on the other four-wheeler. We went out and right on top of a ridge.

She said, “Can you get on Foster’s back?” And I said, “Yeah, but I’m worried about Foster’s back.” And she said, “Well don’t worry about Foster’s back because he only has to carry you a short way.” So I said, “Ok.”

So I got on Foster’s back and she takes a picture of it, of just my butt hanging down, because I don’t have any muscles in it anyway, and I just said, “This is just so inappropriate.”

But, anyway, Foster carries me to this pit. I mean, there’s these three trees sticking up and there’s this brush, and he’s got these little holes that are out, and he sets me down in the pit.

And he says, “Ok Kathy, you’ve got to get down there too.”

Kathy wasn’t expecting to have to get down in the pit! But, she was the caller because I didn’t know a dog-gone thing about calling turkeys. When we got down into the pit he starting flinging leaves on us. He literally buried us in leaves, behind the three trees where he had dug out that three foot trench.

It was so funny, because before daylight this guy walks down the power line. Nobody else was supposed to be hunting in that area. So when he got really close to us, Kathy said, “Oh shoot, oh shoot.” I never heard her cuss at all. She said, “Oh shoot, oh
shoot, look what’s coming.” The guy coming near us never saw us, and she said,
“What’s your name?” And he jumped like he’d been shot.
And he turned around and told her his name. She said, “You are not supposed to
be here. You’re supposed to be about 200 yards on the other side on Old Man
Brookman’s place.”
And he said, “I thought this was Old Man Brookman’s place.”
She said, “No it’s not, it’s over there.” And then she said, “Oh, I hope they
haven’t busted up the turkeys.”
So we’re still sitting there and I’m thinking, “I wonder what’s crawling on my
legs, I wonder what’s going on in my pants.” I can see spiders crawling. But I didn’t say
a thing.
And daylight comes and we don’t see any turkeys. But we see this guy walking
out in front of us and he’s wearing sunglasses and he’s got his shotgun strung across his
arm and I looked over to Kathy and said, “I don’t think we’re going to shoot any birds
today.”
And she said, “Have you ever seen anybody hunting in sunglasses?”
This guy’s looking over there and we have decoys out. In Kentucky you can put
decoys out; in Alabama you can’t. But anyway, he sees the decoys out there. And we’re
getting real tickled and we’re trying not to laugh.
And this guy is looking and he’s looking. I say, “You know he could see a lot
better if he’d take those damn sunglasses off, you know.”
You know, when you’ve got a facemask on, no one can hear you.
This guy never did see us. Finally, she waved like this with a bare hand.

Needless to say, I didn’t kill a turkey that time. It was fun. We got to see turkeys, we got to see them you know 44 yards away, dusting, strutting, you know. It was a lot of fun, but we didn’t get any turkeys.

I went back, and I told my brother. I said, “I would like to take up bow hunting.” Because I thought at the BOW that Tes made it look so easy. Tes and Pam Morgan. My brother had shot competitively for about nine years. He said, “Well it’s not real easy,” he said, “But I’d be glad to show you.”

And Kathy had told me. She said, “Don’t buy a bow.” She said, “I write all kinds of articles for people on bows.” And she said, “I’ll send you a Browning, and it’s a child’s bow.”

And I thought, “I don’t need a child’s bow. I’ve been pushing this chair, I’ve got so many muscles…” Twenty-five pounds was all I could pull back, ok. I was doing good to pull back 25 lbs.

Needless to say, I didn’t do much hunting until the next year when I got my bow.

That’s one thing I learned about my brother. He and I have bonded so much in these three years since I’ve been hunting. He has so much patience with me. Of course, he didn’t know how to teach me to shoot. He didn’t know that the angle needed to be at two o’clock or three o’clock. We had to be really careful. When I’m pulling back the bow, it can’t hit any part of the wheelchair.

One thing I think you all will enjoy. We set my 20 yard pin. I was doing pretty good with that 20 yard pin. So, I went over to my house and he set a 30 yard pin.
I kept missing. He’s a man of few words, but he said, “Sister, are you shooting the 20 yard or the 30 yard pin?” And I was shooting a 20 yard at a 30 yard target. So I learned a really good lesson there.

It wasn’t long after that, Kathy knew Jim Zumbo, because she had written in a magazine that he is editor of for the North American hunter. She and Jim had been at a convention and Jim was telling her about this hunt in Wyoming that he had help start in 1988, called Helluva Hunt. It was an antelope hunt and every year they have 15 or 16 disabled hunters across the nation that they ask to come over to hunt. So Kathy happened to tell him, “I have a friend that’s in a wheelchair. I bet she would love to come.”

And he said, “We haven’t had many women over there. If she wants to come, I would be glad to fax her an application.”

I did get accepted to go and that was in October, the first weekend in October. Again, we’re in a situation where there is 15 men and me. So I’m going, “Hi. How are y’all doing? Where are you from? Give me your cards.” All this kind of stuff.

I’d never hunted out of pick-up trucks before, but if you have a disability in Wyoming, you can hunt out of a truck and you don’t have to have a foot on the ground.

The other guys, so I was told, have to have at least one foot on the ground. They can lean over the hood, to shoot, or lean over the back, or whatever, or lean out; they can open the door and shoot out of the window, but they have at least one foot on the ground. Whether they do or not, I don’t know.

I had told the Sterns that I would not bring my rifle with me, because from Jackson, Mississippi to Wyoming I was having to change planes three times and I was
afraid my scope would get all mixed up. So, Jane is real short, she’s like 5’2” and she said, “You can use my gun when you get here.” And I said, “Thanks.”

So I get there and I meet my guide, Paul Yetz, and he’s from that area. He’s been scoping out the antelope. So, I thought antelope was going to be as stupid as deer. You all can laugh, but I didn’t know any different. They are kind of like big does in the South. When they pick me up in Casper to go to Douglass, Wyoming they’re just grazing by the side of the road like pets. I’m thinking, “We’re going to kill these little things?” They seem to be everywhere.

They had three prizes; a prize for the person that shot an antelope with the longest tines. They had a prize for the person that got the longest shot and they also had a prize for the person who got the first shot. They were making things as competitive as they could.

Paul had a huge Dooley truck. Then there was another gentleman behind him. We left out at 6 o’clock in the morning. It was kind of awkward even for me with my mobility to hold this gun. It was a Ruger that was cut down and had a Swarovski scope on it. I think the scope weighed as much as the gun did. I kept telling him, “You know I am having a tough time with this. It’s really heavy.”

He said, “If we see the antelope that I have been looking for, just lean it up against the window outside.” And I said, “Ok.”

We see this doe and she’s got seven bucks chasing her. I don’t know what this woman had, what kind of pheromones, but they are going lickety split just fast as they can.
Then they’ll stop and they’ll go “hah, hah, hah.” Like they’re all taking a break and then they’ll start out again.

We’re just hauling booty. We’re trying to wait for them to stop long enough so I can get the scope on it to shoot and the wind’s blowing on top of everything else.

So we’re riding and riding and riding and riding and they’ll stop for just a little while and then she starts back up and they start back up. Well, I got to a point where I just kept the scope on the animal because he said the third one and I was afraid that it was going to be the fifth. Even with the Swarovski, they were a long distance away.

They finally stopped. I had it in my sight, so I just pulled the trigger.

He said a bad word. Paul said a bad word. “You did not do that. You just wasted your bullet.” And I said, “I don’t know why. He’s laying down.”

He said, “Oh my God.” He and the guy behind him get off and they pace it off, because they have to pace it off. It was a 425-yard shot. It was strictly because of the Swarovski scope, I assure you. I had never had that before. He had 15” tines and he was the trophy of trophies. They even mounted it for me.

I came back and everybody thought, “Gee she really can shoot. She’s just not here as Miss Mississippi, Miss Hospitality.” I said, “Thank you guys. I appreciate it.”

Because of that hunt, because Kathy introduced me to Jim, I also got on the list for a hunt in North Dakota that was a bow hunt called the Twist of Fate Hunt. They have it in October of every year. Last October I went down to it.

Five or six of the guys that were at the Wyoming hunt also shot crossbows. They were there. I did get to shoot at a buck, but I got buck fever. My brother had always told me, “Start at the bottom, come up to the belly and then shoot.” Well, I saw it and shot
right over it. It was a wonderful time. If I did nothing but sit in the woods, it’s a big de-
stressor for me. I enjoy it. I get a lot out of it.

I got my first turkey at Tes’ in Alabama. I went down there. She had put up a
camo tent. She knew I didn’t get a turkey at Kathy’s. And she said, “Do you want to
come down here? We have a few turkeys on the place. It is kind of late in the season,
but every once in a while you get a straggler that will come out and you’ll maybe get a
shot at one.”

I said, “Sure.” What’s a five-hour drive to go turkey hunting. So I get in the car,
and I drove down there. I get down there about 1 or 1:15 and they are really anxious to
get me in a blind by 2 o’clock. Ron, her husband says, “Everybody that shoots their first
turkey on our place has to use my gun.”

Well, I did the thing that nobody is supposed to do. I did not shoot that gun
before we went out. But I said, “Ok Ron. If this is what you want, I would be glad to use
your gun to shoot my first turkey.” We’re sitting out there, it’s in a red clover field, and
we see a gobbler come out. We hadn’t been sitting there an hour, and he comes out, but
then there are no decoys out. As I told you, in Alabama you can’t put decoys out.

Tes is calling away. Boy, she’s just calling and he thinks that maybe there might
be something down there, but he doesn’t see anything. So he is very, very leery of what
he sees. And he goes back in the other way. And she says, “Just sit down, he’s going to
come back.”

So like most women, we both have our books that we’re reading. Is anybody else
in here like that? We’re reading our books in the stand, ok. And sure enough, about an
hour and ten more minutes, she says, “Oh my God, there he is.” Sure enough, there he
was, but he was in the middle of the field. He was much closer, and he had come down and he got kind of curious about the tent, I guess. And he was coming towards us.

And I was thinking to myself, "He’s not ten yards from me. I have to go down.”

So I go down to shoot this bird and it’s like I have shot a feather pillow. There are feathers everywhere. And he had a little ol’ skinny beard, but it’s like 9 ¾. And it was 23 lbs. He had 1¼ spurs. He was a nice bird; not something you’d want to mount, but still a nice bird.

So I was really, really excited about that. I am going to the Broken Wing pheasant hunt this year, here in Minnesota. And that’s all because of networking with BOW. But let me tell you this. I’ve just retired. There are four or five ladies; a group of us, we’re known as the cronies at work because we had worked together for 22 years. We married together. We divorced together. We went through deaths of husbands together; we went through cancer together; we went through children born with cp [cerebral palsy] together. I mean this is like an extended family and you know, as women, how that is. Every year between Christmas and New Year’s, we have a little get-together and we exchange Christmas gifts and we talk about what the kids did and what they’re up to and stuff. Because a lot of time at work we just don’t get a chance to do that type of get-together like we used to. So this year, we had our get-together at one of the restaurants there in Jackson. They’re sitting around, and we were exchanging gifts. And one girl had just got a gorgeous diamond bracelet that she had wanted forever and ever. Of course, she’s 60 years old now and she’s all wrinkled up. Why she wants a diamond, I don’t know. But it was something she had always wanted. I was happy for her, because it made her happy. Another lady got a Lexus and I was happy for her. I
don’t know why she wants that? I would rather have my three-door Saturn and go somewhere, because I like to travel. But, she’s happy. They get to me, and they say, “Sheila, what did you get for Christmas?” Well, I got a lot of neat stuff. But you know, the best thing I got was my carbon-clad pop-up camo tent. I can just flip it up myself. It comes right down and I can hop right into it, and I don’t get silhouetted. And they’re going, “You have absolutely gone off the deep end. Now this is the best gift you got?” And I said, “Yeah, it really was. It’s going to save me a lot of heartache out in the woods.” And they said, “This is just not like you.” But I said, “I still like to play Bridge. I still like to go places with y’all.” They have to be in by dark. They’re that age. They’re 55 to 60. You know, they have to be in by dark.

The BOW has just opened up a whole new world for me, as you can tell, just in the past three years. And it’s everything to do with that first hunt and those women I met three years ago. We are all still very good friends. We correspond a lot. We email a lot. We pray a lot together when things go bad. It’s a wonderful program and I’ve never had a problem with accessibility, at all.

Alabama is the only BOW that I go to. I called about the Mississippi BOW and I was told that it was held at a state park that wasn’t accessible and I would have to drive back and forth. Had it been accessible I certainly would have gone.

I look forward to visiting other BOWs, because I think it is so neat that women teach women. I can’t tell you how many men have come up to me at deer camps and my brother’s friends and will say, “Sheila, I would just love for my wife to hunt with me. What can I do? How can I get her to hunt with me?” I say, “Let her go hunting with another women. Don’t try to teach her anything.”
That’s how so many of my friends have got turned off to hunting. Because, whether it’s your son or your husband, they expect you to be perfect at it. You know, they have a small attention span where you’re concerned.

And I said, “Send her to a BOW.”

That’s Becoming an Outdoors-Woman. Let her go. Or send her to National Turkey Federation Women in the Outdoors. I think everybody should have a two-week course for all the women, because we can only reach a certain amount of women with our BOW program and we don’t reach enough. Even though women’s hunting certificates and their hunting licenses are going up every year, we need more and more women out there. Because, there’s nothing more fun than a group of women getting together, hunting together.

Now I’ve done that twice at Portland Landing and then again at Buckmaster’s in South Carolina. It was just like a big spend-the-night party. I loved it. I loved it. And we got a lot of hunting done, but there is a lot of camaraderie there too. I would love for us to have a big women’s hunting lodge that we could all go to in various parts of the country, because I think that would be a very unique experience and a lot of fun.
BARRIERS

Silent writing, facilitated small group discussions, and a large group round-robin were used to generate this list of barriers to participation in outdoor recreation faced by women with physical limitations.

Highlighted Barriers

The following barriers were ranked as the top or most significant barriers women with physical limitations face when negotiating participation in outdoor recreation activities.

➢ Feminine hygiene issues in a male-dominated/threatening environment
➢ Lack of instructors equipped to provide accessible and inclusive instruction
➢ People with disabilities (PWD) lacking financial resources will not ask for assistance due to pride
➢ Stress or intimidation between person with a disability and instructor
➢ PWD lack knowledge of availability of accessible opportunities

Agency/Institutional Barriers

➢ Lack of role models
➢ Lack of proper learning environment: instructors lack knowledge on how to teach women / disabled community
➢ Lack of understanding by agency personnel on what types of equipment are needed / how to adjust equipment that is there
➢ Lack of instructors equipped to provide accessible and inclusive instruction
➢ Generalized accessibility. Agencies often focus just on women in wheelchairs. Agencies need to recognize the diversity within the population.

➢ Stress or intimidation between person with a disability and instructor

➢ Agencies fear financial burden of becoming accessible

➢ Agency staff avoid making programs accessible due to personal fear of their own fragility or mortality

➢ Agencies believe their activity/event is accessible when it is not

**Communication/Information Barriers**

➢ PWD: Lack knowledge about events / opportunities / organizations

➢ Location: No availability of activity in area / programs don’t reach remote areas

➢ PWD: Lack knowledge of availability and accessibility of outdoor recreation events

➢ Knowledge: Those wanting to adapt equipment lack knowledge and vice versa

➢ Networking: Program providers are not reaching nor know how to reach disabled community

➢ Communication breakdown: General misunderstanding/lack of patience of able-bodied community for people with disabilities

➢ Ignorance: Able-bodied community lack understanding of people with disabilities

➢ Stereotyping: Language is used that reinforces stereotypes in communication

**Physical Barriers**

➢ Accessible facilities not available
Lack of adaptations on equipment
Lack of transportation
Feminine hygiene issues in a male-dominated or threatening environment
Strength needed to carry, bend, or lift weight
Endurance/effort it takes to get to a site
Special medical or emergency needs
Lack of adequate childcare

Mental/Social Barriers
Fear of failure by PWD
Safety issues: fear of being hurt
Lack of funds / Pride: ashamed to ask for money
PWD do not feel invited or welcome
Feeling one cannot take time for oneself
No one to participate with / no buddy system
Lack of motivation / self-image issues
Personal belief that ‘I am too old’ for a new activity
Time constraints
Prejudice attitudes and actions of society against people with disabilities
STRATEGIES

Silent writing, facilitated small group discussions, and a large group round-robin were used to generate this list of barriers faced to participation in outdoor recreation by women with physical limitations.

Highlighted Strategies

The following strategies were ranked as the top or most significant strategies that could be used to break down barriers women with physical limitations face when negotiating participation in outdoor recreation activities.

► Develop specific instructor training session for increasing programming that is accessible and inclusive of all people
► Network with agencies that provide services to PWD to find instructors, interpreters and equipment
► Network with rehabilitation centers in order to reach target audience
► Recognize varied education/ability levels: be specific on brochures that agency is accessible and welcoming of all people; and utilize a variety of visuals to stress inclusion
► Send specific invitations to individuals: reach people with disabilities through support groups / organizations where they may already be active
► Rate classes for physical difficulty in publications
► Invite those with special interest/ability to help plan workshop
► Develop a cadre of motivational speakers to spark interest/motivate others
Target women with disabilities who are disability advocates and outdoor enthusiasts

**Networking Strategies**

► Contact agencies that already provide services, such as interpreters, equipment adaptation, and instructors to build network and understanding between outdoor recreation field and the disabled population

► Contact recreational therapists and work cooperatively with them

► Network with rehabilitation centers in order to reach target audience

► Provide information to clubs that work with people with disabilities (PWD) and write articles in magazines on PWD active in outdoor recreation

► Communicate with the outdoor industry as to what the needs of PWD are

► Provide specific invitations – personal and through support groups

► Provide information through public radio, public TV, and other media

► Design a conference for agencies that cross state boundaries

► Contact churches to get interpreters that may volunteer for agency programs

**Institutional/Agency Strategies**

**Publications:**

► Brochures need to be more specific and visual. Take into account a variety of reading comprehension levels

► Supplement written literature with visual images in order to communicate with people through a variety of means
Inform through publications: rate classes for difficulty level and provide accessibility clause: “BOW is accessible and tuned to meet your special needs”

Instructors/Role Models:

- BOW instructor training or instructor manual supplement
- Provide higher instructor certification level for working with ‘special needs’
- Find ways to address self-esteem issues through role models
- Invite instructors who have disabilities to be role models
- Train PWD to be instructors
- Develop a cadre of motivational speakers to spark interest/motivate others
  - Target women with disabilities who are disability advocates and outdoor enthusiasts

Workshop Strategies:

- Resource audit: Have professional accessibility group evaluate workshop
- Facilitate transportation to workshops
- Invite those with knowledge/interest/and varying abilities to help plan workshop
- Design a special workshop to eliminate the fear of PWD to know what the workshops will offer
- Design buddy system to help reduce fears
- Conduct a Field Day event for people with specific limitations
- Recruit motivational keynote speakers to help facilitate understanding by PWD sharing with BOW women to dispel fears and intimidation
➢ Provide scholarships for a combined Beyond BOW: for able-bodied person (AB) with PWD and caregiver

➢ PWD bringing in an AB BOW participant to teach them

➢ Assess facilities: how they are geared to specific disabilities – concentrate efforts/be realistic

➢ Use accessible facilities

Funding:

➢ Funding sources: know what is available so that we can adequately provide for PWD

➢ Fundraising: train agencies and PWD on how to fundraise for PWD – equipment, scholarships, etc.

➢ Look for sponsors that support PWD – could fund specific workshops

➢ Scholarships for PWD and caregiver
ACTION PLAN

Silent writing, facilitated small group discussions, and a large group round-robin were used to generate this list of ideas for developing an action plan from the earlier discussions on barriers and strategies.

Highlighted Action Plan Items

The following action plan items were ranked as the top or most significant actions that agencies can take to assist women with physical limitations and break down the barriers to participation in outdoor recreation activities.

Agency Involvement

➢ Develop BOW Accessibility Committee

  o Composition: BOW state coordinators, International BOW representative, and Disability Advocates/Role Models

  o Focus: Breaking down barriers by further development of strategies and by networking with coordinators to test strategies

  o Method: phone calls, emails, etc.

  o Role: Conduct special ‘pilot’ workshops for PWD; communicate with agency directors; and speak to all BOW coordinators on behalf of pilot workshops’ successes and failures

➢ Invite Disability Advocate/Role Model to speak to agency directors about accessibility issues at international or regional conference

➢ Acquire grant funding for equipment for PWD
• Identify special disability grants for accessible equipment
  ▪ Develop list of possible funding sources
  ▪ Compile brief list of grant resources and disseminate information to coordinators, including website, timeframe, etc.

➢ Conduct field day for BOW agency
  • Market as a team-building workshop/training day
  • Invite everyone, specifically recruit persons with disabilities
    ▪ Networking benefits among PWD, and PWD and AB
    ▪ Increase diversity through information

➢ Conduct instructor training to increase participation of PWD as role models

➢ Analyze and update websites for increased accessibility

**Instructors and Role Models**

- Conduct a special training of instructors with and without disabilities for higher-level instructor certification; develop instructor training manual or supplement to current manual.
  • Recruit outdoor enthusiasts with disabilities to become instructors
  • Contact coordinators and request information on PWD who could become BOW instructors
  • Identify a state coordinator to host and help implement training
  • Confirm accessible transportation options

➢ Compile a list of publications and support for instructors to augment their knowledge about disability and accessibility resources in outdoor recreation
Include agencies/organizations
Email organizations – request information –
Design a packet of information for each state
‘Start at home’ – introduce employees to ‘Step Outside’ – how to work with women/children/PWD – introductory event

Publicity and Partnerships
➤ Develop language that highlights BOW’s commitment to be attentive to participant needs – make standard across BOW publications
  ➤ Go through existing brochures
  ➤ Include accessibility information; mark with ‘blue wheelchair’ symbol for easy recognition
  ➤ Provide message that reads ‘Available in Large Print.’ Print message in large print
  ➤ Update website / brochure – model it in Wisconsin brochure
  ➤ Present at coordinator conference
  ➤ Review language to make sure that information is presented in a way that others understand
  ➤ Make visual language all encompassing
  ➤ Contact ADA hotline to find out if there is a ‘People First’ group that can help review publications
  ➤ Identify possible training videos
➤ Design brochure/poster to reach out to the disabled community
- Include Braille component
- Include large font size
- Look to a university design class to construct poster
- Include visual representation of women with disabilities
  - Make images consistent
  - Use archery vs. guns in photo? Ask rehabilitation center
    - Maybe do two posters and see impact of each?
    - Recognize cultural affects – southern/northern, etc.

GENERAL ACTION PLAN ITEMS

Agency Involvement

➢ Develop an International BOW Disability Coordinator position to address accessibility issues and inclusive programming
➢ Invite a Disability Advocate to speak to agency directors
➢ Identify funding sources and solicit grants for accessible equipment
➢ Clarify mission statement and website to reflect agency commitment to inclusive and accessible programming
➢ Request PWD’s participation through specific invitations and welcome evaluation by PWD of accessibility of programming
➢ Identify an accessibility expert to review agency/programs, perhaps from the State Independent Living Council (SILC)
➢ Identify PWD within agency and invite them to a BOW Field Day / instructor training to get agency even more involved
➢ Conduct program audits through outside resources such as the Center for Independent Living / Living Independence For Everyone (LIFE) –

➢ Conduct ‘inclusive programming’ planning sessions

➢ Investigate the possibility to tie into the Text Telephone (TTY) system

**Instructors and Role Models**

➢ Train state coordinators around disability issues utilizing information from ‘audit’ and through outside resources

➢ Train people with disabilities to become BOW instructors

➢ Team with resource personnel to conduct ‘instructor training’ for ‘higher-level’ certification

➢ Compile list of publications / resources for instructors

➢ Seek funding to support travel and expenses for people to come speak at workshops

➢ Request information from organizations already focused on disability and outdoor recreation

➢ Compile ‘international disability database’ with information about organizations, funding sources, ADA requirements, etc.

➢ Conduct another ‘national convention’ around disability issues in outdoor recreation
Publicity/Partnerships

Publicity:

➤ Develop language in publications that highlight agencies’ attention to individual participant needs. Make standard across BOW

➤ Provide ‘Large Print’ clause in large print font

➤ Provide more descriptive information or photos to answer the question, ‘What does it entail to participate in a BOW workshop?’ Include information such as distance, time walking, etc.

➤ Design a poster specifically identifying PWD (in the photos). Place at licensing locations, Centers for Independent Living and Rehabilitation Centers

➤ Design a standard inclusive press release – distribute to all BOW coordinators

➤ Design posters for specific venues, ie. rehabilitation centers

➤ Increase press releases/ newspaper articles on inclusive program offerings

Partnerships:

➤ Reach out to universities through putting posters up and contacting the disability coordinator

➤ Contact rehabilitation centers about upcoming BOW workshops and communicate interest in the involvement of women with disabilities and their caregivers

➤ Do one-day workshops with a rehabilitation center

➤ Connect with resource companies that help PWD find jobs

➤ Ask organizations connected with disabled population to come speak at BOW workshop or speak to BOW staff
➢ Ask PWD to speak to lunch groups (e.g. agency staff)

➢ Partner with groups who already have equipment, e.g. WDA/others

➢ Develop corporate partnerships outside typical funding sources
Wrap Up

*Diane Lueck, Director, International Becoming an Outdoors-Woman*

Before we summarize this afternoon, I’d like to make a few more thank you’s. First, the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman International sponsors listed in your packet made this conference possible. Thanks again to Michele Miller for facilitating, and Michelle and Peggy for keeping us on track. And, thanks all of you for being with us in this important venture.

Our task and I think, our fun, was to figure out what the barriers were for PWD in resource based recreation, and how we could knock them down and say “no limits.”

In the discussion of Barriers, what did we find that might keep YOU out of the field? Here’s just a sample:

- Lack of instructors providing accessible and inclusive instruction
- Lack of financial resources
- Stress/intimidation/lack of understanding between women with physical disabilities and instructors/agencies

When discussing strategies, we focused on what agencies and the BOW program can do. Here are some highlights:

- Increase the number of role models and instructors qualified to teach inclusively through specific recruitment of active outdoors-women who have a physical disability
- Offer scholarships for caregivers, through ‘buddy system’ recruitment
- Develop an Accessibility Committee to pilot strategies and promote accessible workshops and recruitment.
We’ve got a lot of great ideas to try to implement. This has been a great conference. We’re excited to share your ideas all across North America. We know that even with this small group, we can be effective. Thank you once again, and have a safe trip home.
Post-Conference Summary

The following is a brief summary of the plans the International BOW office has for concentrating our efforts on increased accessibility and recruitment of a more diverse audience at future workshops.

First, the BOW office plans to form an ‘Accessibility Committee’ focused on increasing inclusive programming. This will begin through developing a greater understanding of the barriers faced by women with physical limitations.

Secondly, International BOW staff will work to increase the database of resources available to BOW programs and individuals interested in breaking down the barriers faced by women with physical limitations who are interested in outdoor recreation.

Thirdly, through the ‘Accessibility Committee’, pilot workshops will be designed in a variety of states in order to test the strategies and action plans identified by the Barriers III participants.

Finally, the International BOW office will submit a Federal Aid grant for continuing this work and look into the possibility of developing a part-time ‘Accessibility Coordinator’ position. This person will assist in the long-term development of accessible programming.
# Participant List

**Breaking Down Barriers, III: No Limits**  
*Chaska, MN*  
April 12-13, 2002

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APPENDIX II

BECOMING AN OUTDOORS-WOMAN:
BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES FOR PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

***Conference Proceedings***

Jackson Hole, Wyoming
June 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2002
Sponsored by the International Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program
BARRENERS

Silent writing, facilitated small group discussions, and a large group round-robin were used to generate this list of barriers to participation in outdoor recreation faced by women with physical limitations.

Highlighted Barriers
The following barriers were ranked as the top or most significant barriers women with physical limitations face when negotiating participation in outdoor recreation activities.

► Accessibility of facilities
► Transportation within the workshop
► Adaptable Equipment
► Lack of instructors trained to be accommodating and inclusive, utilizing various learning styles in instruction
► Reasonable accommodation – what is reasonable accommodation? What does the agency need to do to offer reasonable accommodation?

Agency/Institutional Barriers
► Agency personnel lack knowledge about disability issues
► Combination need for interpreters, service animals
► Extra costs by PWD or agency (ie. Transportation needs, interpreters)
Different learning tools in the classroom needed (ie. More reading literature for a deaf person)

More physical contact may be needed – which could be intimidating for participant or instructor

Need for accommodation of what/who the PWD brings with them (ie. Seeing eye dog, caregiver)

Modifications that are needed (ie. Cooking on ground difficult for a wheelchair user)

Relying on others (having an aide)

Interpreters for deaf-signers

Schedule adjustment between classes, length of class

Intimidating to Instructors – PWD fear

Communication/Information Barriers

Continuation of activity after the workshop – available opportunities

No knowledge of activity level ahead of time – logistical issue

Availability of opportunities

PWD letting agency know what their needs are

Language/how we speak- not handicapped ‘verbage’

Physical Barriers

Acute specific needs (e.g. A person that has survived cancer buy can’t eat solid food)
- Personal hygiene issues
- Specific clothing needs
- Accessible transportation to workshop
- Weight as a disability

Mental/Social Barriers

- Perceived personal limitations, “I can’t do that”
- How PWD is perceived by others (Feels out of place)
- PWD may feel embarrassed about needing special attention
- Ability to have medical needs met
- PWD thoughts about how other students may react to them in the class
- Fear of instruction methods – will instructor be able to teach them as they need?
- Insecurity or lack of confidence
- Social barriers at workshops
- Lack of support from family
- Knowing your limitations
- Time needed
STRATEGIES

Silent writing, facilitated small group discussions, and a large group round-robin were used to generate this list of barriers faced to participation in outdoor recreation by women with physical limitations.

Highlighted Strategies

The following strategies were ranked as the top or most significant strategies that could be used to break down barriers women with physical limitations face when negotiating participation in outdoor recreation activities.

- Use accessible facilities
- Change language to reflect inclusiveness; use welcoming messages
- Contact U.S. Dept. of Justice to request information on ADA requirements
- Provide disability awareness and skills training for instructors
- Coordinate participant needs with instructors
- Increase knowledge of disability issues, adaptive equipment, resources, etc.

Strategies – Knowledge/networking

- Train qualified individuals with physical disabilities to become instructors
  - Work with current resource groups for ideas/possible instructors
- Contact U.S. Dept. of Justice on ADA for advise and assistance training, equipment acquisition, funds, and reasonable accommodations
- Invite people with disabilities (PWD) to assist in planning workshops
➢ Increase personal knowledge of disabilities and needs of PWD; contact ‘Person First’ for an information packet

➢ Learn more about how to target persons with special needs & increase agency knowledge on the ‘real’ needs that various people have

➢ Incorporate a group of PWD’s within planning and oversight of workshop/event

➢ Network with PWD/resource agency of PWD – to identify possible resources (equipment, interpreters, etc.)

➢ Consider special risks that apply

➢ Develop new sponsors specifically focused on increasing inclusion at workshops

➢ Increase knowledge of disability language (know the lingo)

➢ Design a workshop specifically for PWD

➢ Develop a mentor program

Strategies – Resources/Equipment

➢ Increase knowledge about adaptable equipment

➢ Do a ‘walk through’ of possible facilities to judge accessibility

➢ Work with/use accessible facilities

➢ Research transportation resources

➢ Learn more about adaptive equipment

➢ Solicit grant funds for equipment/interpreters and other creative fundraising (esp. foundations like M.S. Society)
Strategies - Publications

➤ Use welcoming language & messages in publications. Note accessibility and use icons to indicate

➤ Advertise workshops as being accessible and use photographs of PWD in publications

➤ Within registration form – provide significant room and opportunity for PWD to fill in their special needs

➤ Advertise/provide direct invitation to agencies that serve PWD

➤ Use images of PWD in publications/videos, etc.
ACTION PLAN

Silent writing, facilitated small group discussions, and a large group round-robin were used to generate this list of ideas for developing an action plan from the earlier discussions on barriers and strategies.

Highlighted Action Plan Items

The following action plan items were ranked as the top or most significant actions that agencies can take to assist women with physical limitations and break down the barriers to participation in outdoor recreation activities.

- Change language in publications to
  - reflect accessibility and inclusiveness of organization
  - to provide information in an inclusive manner

- Contact U.S. Dept. of Justice of information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - Get guidelines for reasonable accommodation
  - Ask ADA representative to attend and critique workshop
  - Ask ADA representative to help with instructor/coordinator training

- Develop risk management plan

- Identify sponsors and purchase equipment for loan

- Develop resource list for equipment, support, etc. that provide adaptations
**Action Plan Items – Overriding organization**

The following is a list of action plan items suggested by participants for an *overriding organization* (i.e. International BOW office).

➢ Identify sponsors for adaptive equipment

➢ Purchase equipment for loan

➢ Contact an ADA representative to help with instructor/coordinator training

➢ Develop an ‘Accessibility Training Manual’ or revise current publication to include:
  
  o A database of adaptive equipment resources
  
  o New curriculum
  
  o A list of resources
  
  o A list of guideline
  
  o A list of funding sources
  
  o A description of an accessible facility (what to look for)

**Action Plan Items – Individual Agencies**

The following is a list of action plan items suggested by participants for *individual agencies* (i.e. state BOW programs).

**Agency Involvement**

➢ Make facilities accessible through support from agency / locate accessible facilities and see if you can use them
➤ Continue to stay current with issues
➤ Define targets, set attendance goal
➤ Develop a risk management plan for medical needs
➤ Develop a contingency plan for specific needs (i.e., receive registration in the mail from a wheelchair user, check contingency plan for contacts of equipment, organizations, etc.)
➤ Find interpreters ahead of time

**Publicity and Partnerships**

➤ Contact media
➤ Take photos of active PWD
➤ Update brochures for accessibility
➤ Contact local/state ADA office
➤ Query/partner with accessible facilities
➤ Work with organizations that serve PWD
➤ Have ADA representative attend/critique workshop
➤ Get the guidelines from ADA and determine what classes need special equipment, need to be modified, how they need to be modified, etc.
➤ Contact local groups to invite PWD to be on planning committee
  o “Why Me”, PVA, Wheelin’ Sportsmen, Casting for Recovery
➤ Contact other state agencies for use of their facilities
➤ Change language in publications/registration; add photo’s/icons