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USDA Forest Service Technology & Development Program Missoula, Montana

9E92A43—Access Ramp for Boaters

July 2000

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Acknowledgments

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

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

Introduction

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

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

Need for Safe Access

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

bcases where a floating dock is being used, both the boat and dock may be moving. Entering a boat that has been pulled to shore also poses problems, especially if the shore-line is steep or rugged. For an individual with a mobility impairment, getting into or out of a boat poses additional hazards and risks. A boarding platform on the shore can help reduce the risks (Figure 1).

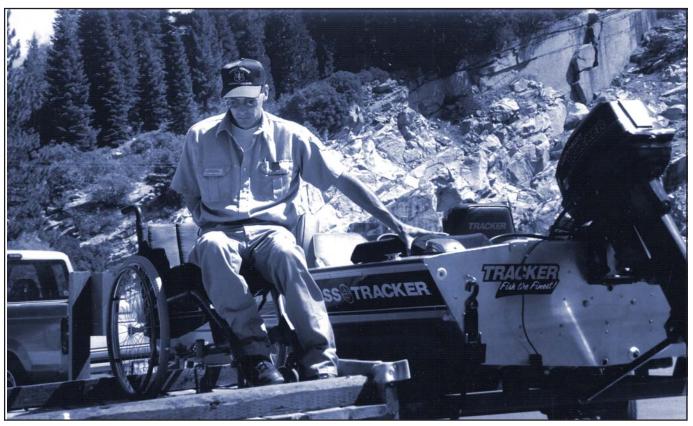


Figure 1—A boarding platform on the shore can reduce the risks of getting into and out of a boat.

Project Assessment

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

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

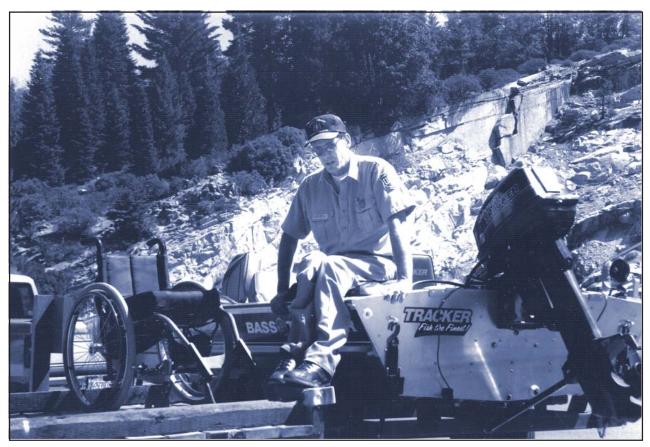


Figure 2—Greg Marks, Sierra National Forest, shows how he gets into a boat from his wheelchair.

Types of Ramps

TDC evaluated, modified, and redesigned three ramps to meet accessibility standards.

The types of ramps covered in this report include: the con-crete ramp (Figure 3), the earth ramp with retaining wall, and the timber ramp (Figure 4).

The concrete ramp shown in this report is a split-level ramp to accommodate boats of different heights. All

ramps may be modified to single or split level, as long as accessibility codes are met (Appendix B).

Construction plans for these ramps are included in this doc-ument and are also available on the Forest Service's internal network at http://fsweb.mtdc.wo.fs.fed.us. Any modifications that affect accessibility standards should be documented along with the reason for the modifications and a risk and liability assessment.



Figure 3—Split-level concrete ramps allow easy access to boats of different heights.



Figure 4—A typical timber ramp.

Costs

osts associated with the construction of these amps vary greatly depending on the location, site

preparation,

construction materials, and construction method (pri-vate contractor, agency employees, Job Corps, or volunteer groups). Several of the sites MTDC visited were developed with the assistance of organizations such as the Lions Club and the Boy Scouts of America.

Employee Safety

hen agency employees, volunteers, or charitable organizations are helping to develop a site, you should conduct a site inspection and develop a job hazard analysis before construction. Use the job hazard analysis and safety meetings to inform workers of potential dangers. Post the job hazard analysis at the construction site and ensure that workers wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

The Ramp and Boarding Platform

n accessible ramp and boarding platform allow

to get into the boat before it is placed in the water (Figure 5). The boat is pulled alongside the ramp so it is next to the boarding platform. With the boat in

position, the passengers can board. A 114-inch-thick steel plate bolted to the end of the platform and protruding up a minimum of 2 inches will prevent wheelchairs from rolling off (Figure 6). After passengers are on board, safely seated, and secured, the driver can proceed to the boat launch. When unloading, the process works in reverse.



Figure 5—The boarding platform allows passengers to get into a boat while it is still on land, reducing the risks during loading and unloading.

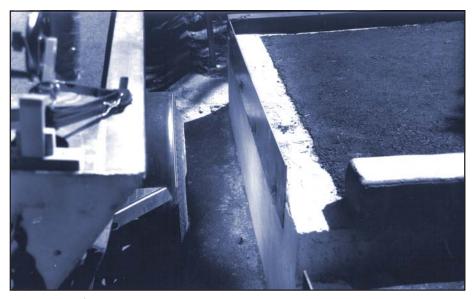


Figure 6—The 1¼-inch-thick steel plate on the end of the platform allows boat trailers to get close to the platform while preventing wheelchairs from rolling off.

Siting Ramps

platforms are generally sited along the perimeter of a parking area near the water (Figure 7).

Ramps should be built on flat ground. This is especially important when building a split-level ramp. Otherwise, the boat will rise or fall as it is pulled alongside the ramp, pre-venting the split levels from working as intended. Straight access to the ramp will allow drivers to align the boat closer to the boarding platform. Drivers need a straight approach 40 feet before and 40 feet after the ramp for the vehicle and trailer to enter and exit. The area should be kept clear of brush and debris that can interfere with the line of sight.

Rubber fenders or bumpers should be placed alongside the front of the ramp and the platform to prevent them from being damaged by boats or vehicles. Bumpers should not be very thick because the boat will not be able to get close enough to the platform for easy loading and unloading.

The platform should be even with the edge of the roadway or parking area. When modifying an existing site for an accessible ramp, be sure curbs do not interfere with access to the platform. For an individual with limited mobility, inches can make a big difference in gaining safe access from the platform to the boat (Figure 8).

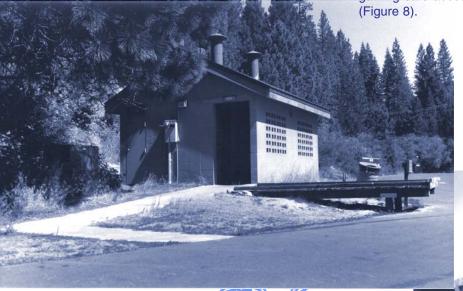


Figure 7—A timber boarding platform built alongside an existing restroom.



Figure 8—A ramp recessed behind curbs makes loading and unloading difficult.

Signs

Stripe the pavement in front of the ramp, 40 feet before the ramp, and 40 feet after the ramp as a no-

zone.

Ramps should be identified with the international symbol of accessibility (Figure 9). These boat ramp signs were not commercially available in early 2000. They must be custom made. A separate sign could

BOATLOADING

Figure 9—The international wheelchair symbol identifies this loading platform as accessible.

explain how the ramp is to be used. Other signs could identify safety concerns like the ramp's abrupt edge, or towing a boat with passengers to and from the water.

In areas of deep snow, poles can help snow plow operators identify the edges of the ramp. The snow poles could be removed each spring or left in place to help drivers line up with the ramp. Reflectors are recommended (Figure 10).

Rules for signs, ramps, handrails, and pathways are in Appendix B.



Figure 10—Reflectors are recommended for loading platforms.

Accessibility Standards

Information on accessibility standards is available from the following sources:

Access Board 1331 F Street NW, Suite 1000 Washington, DC 20004-1111 Phone: 202–272–5434

Fax: 202–272–5447 TDD: 202–272–5449

- Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard, Federal Standard–795. April 1988. Free.
- Americans With Disabilities Act Accessibility Guide-lines, Federal Register-Vol. 56, No.144. July 1991. Free.

MIG Communications 1802 Fifth Street Berkeley, CA 94710 Phone: 800–790–8444

• Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation. 1994. \$44.95

 A Pocket Guide to Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation. 1994. \$9.95

About the Author...

Bob Beckley received a bachelor's degree in political sci-ence from the University of Montana in 1982. He began his Forest Service career as a timber technician on the Nez Perce National Forest. Bob was a smokejumper when he came to the Missoula Technology and Development Center in 1990 to work as a videographer, photographer, and Project Leader

Appendix A—Plans for Concrete Ramp, Earth Ramp With Retaining Wall, and Timber Ramp

See separate PDF files for architectural drawings 1 through 8.

Copies of these drawings have been distributed for review. Final approval and signature are pending.

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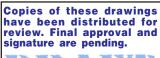
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Appendix B—Accessibility Rules, Definitions, and Handrail Diagrams

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Appendix C—Ramp Diagrams and Tables

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Library Card

Beckley, Bob. 2000. Accessible ramps and boarding platforms for boaters. Tech. Rep. 0023-2837-MTDC. Missoula, MT: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Missoula Technology and Development Center. 22 p.

Describes ways to allow disabled boaters to get into and out of a boat safely. The boat is pulled alongside a wheel-chair-accessible ramp on dry land and the boater is loaded there. Then the boat is driven a short distance to the launch site. Includes plans for three ramp designs (concrete ramp, earth ramp with retaining wall, and timber ramp).

Keywords: Americans With Disabilities Act, disabilities, drawings, physically handicapped persons, recreational facilities

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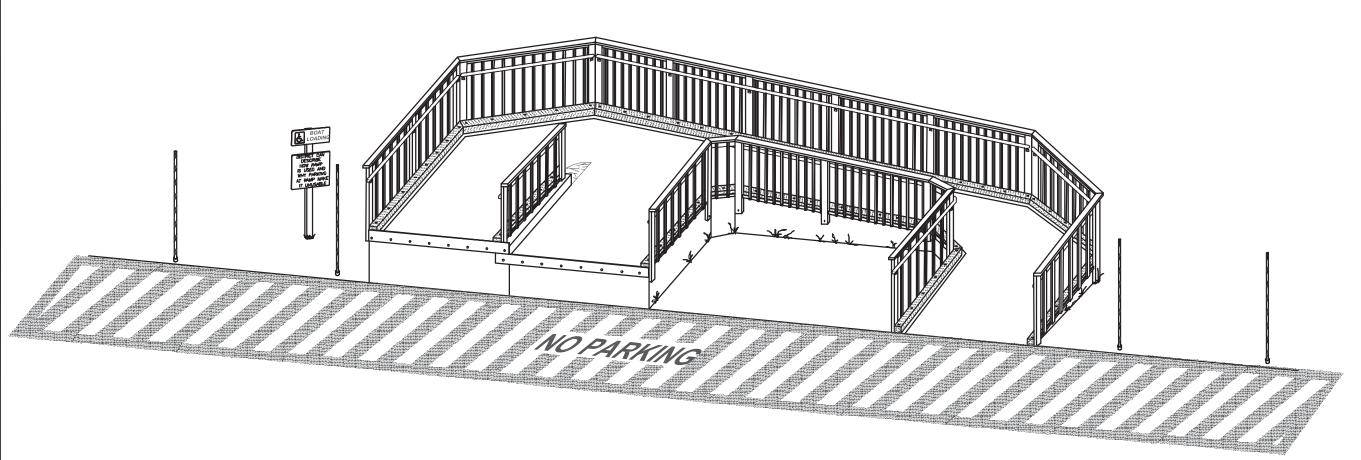
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Internet: wo_mtdc_pubs@fs.fed.us

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http://fsweb.mtdc.wo.fs.fed.us

TYPICAL CONCRETE RAMP ACCESSIBLE BOAT RAMP FOR DRY LAND LOADING & UNLOADING



GENERAL NOTES:

- 1. THERE IS MINIMUM OF 40 FEET EACH WAY OF THE THE RAMP REQUIRED FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING.
- 2. SEE SHEET Z FOR HANDRAIL DETAILS.
- 3. SNOW POLES ARE OPTIONAL AND CAN BE USED TO HELP LOCATE THE EDGE OF RAMP WHILE BACKING AND FOR SNOW REMOVAL.
- 4. RUBBER DOCK FENDERS OR BUMPERS SHOULD BE PLACED ACROSS THE FRONT OF THE LOADING RAMP TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO VEHICLES.
- 5. ALL WOOD SHALL BE PRESSURE TREATED AND SUITABLE FOR HUMAN CONTACT.

Copies of these drawings have been distributed for review. Final approval and signature are pending.

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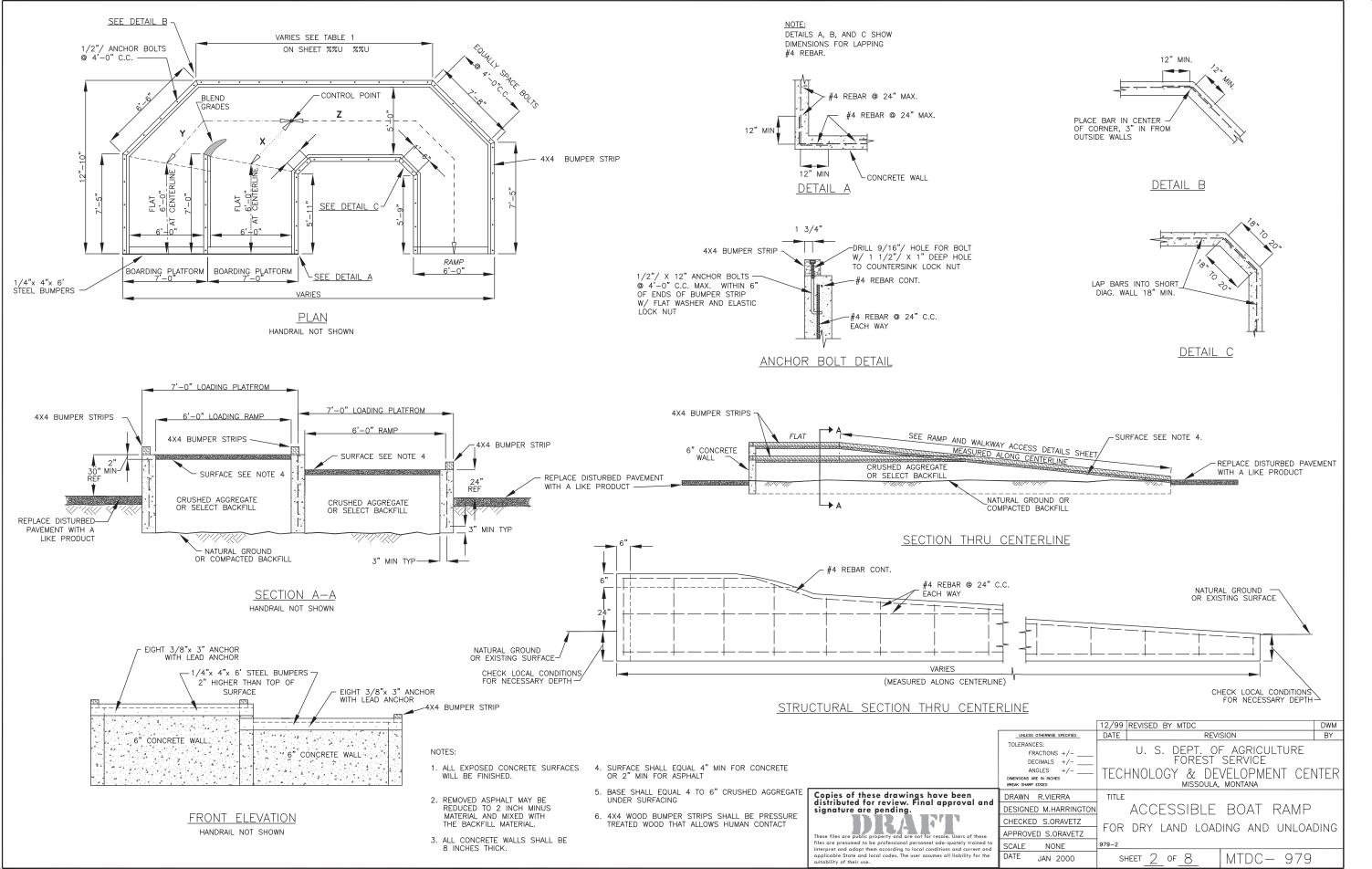
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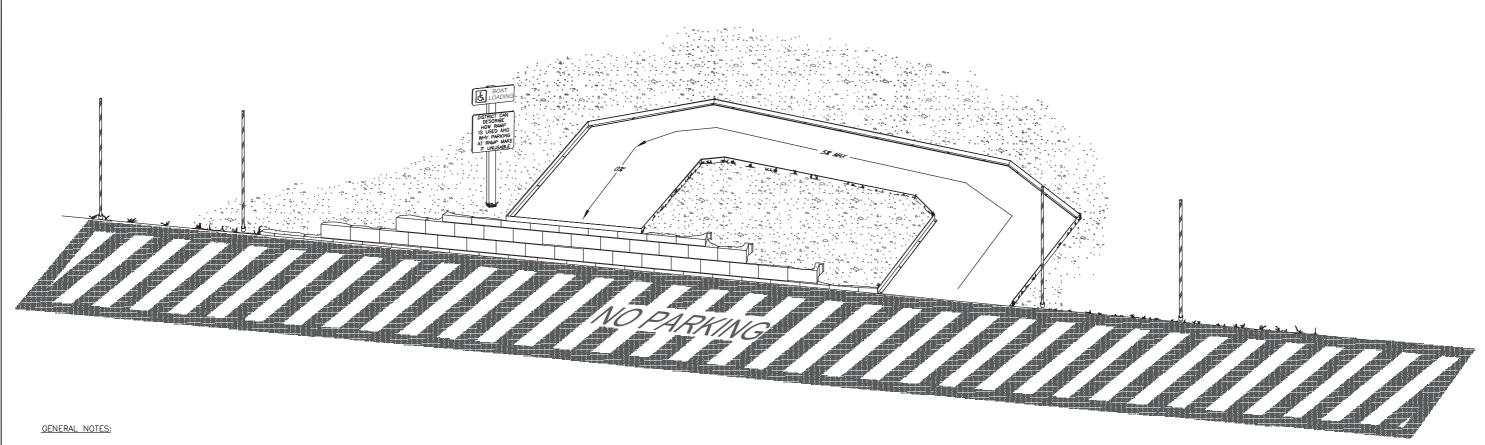
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TYPICAL EARTH RAMP WITH RETAINING WALL ACCESSIBLE BOAT RAMP FOR DRY LAND LOADING & UNLOADING SURFACE WILL BE PAVED OR APPROVED BASE FOR ACCESSIBLE WALKWAYS



- 1. THERE IS MINIMUM OF 40 FEET EACH WAY OF THE THE RAMP REQUIRED FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING.
- 2. MAXIMUM RAMP SLOPE = 5%
- 3. SNOW POLES ARE OPTIONAL AND CAN BE USED TO HELP LOCATE THE EDGE OF RAMP WHILE BACKING AND FOR SNOW REMOVAL.
- 4. RUBBER DOCK FENDERS OR BUMPERS SHOULD BE PLACED ACROSS THE FRONT OF THE LOADING RAMP TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO VEHICLES
- 5. FOR APPROVED BASES SEE PUBLICATION: 2300 RECREATION OCT 1995 9523 1804—SDTDC SOIL STABILIZER FOR USE ON UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE TRAILS.

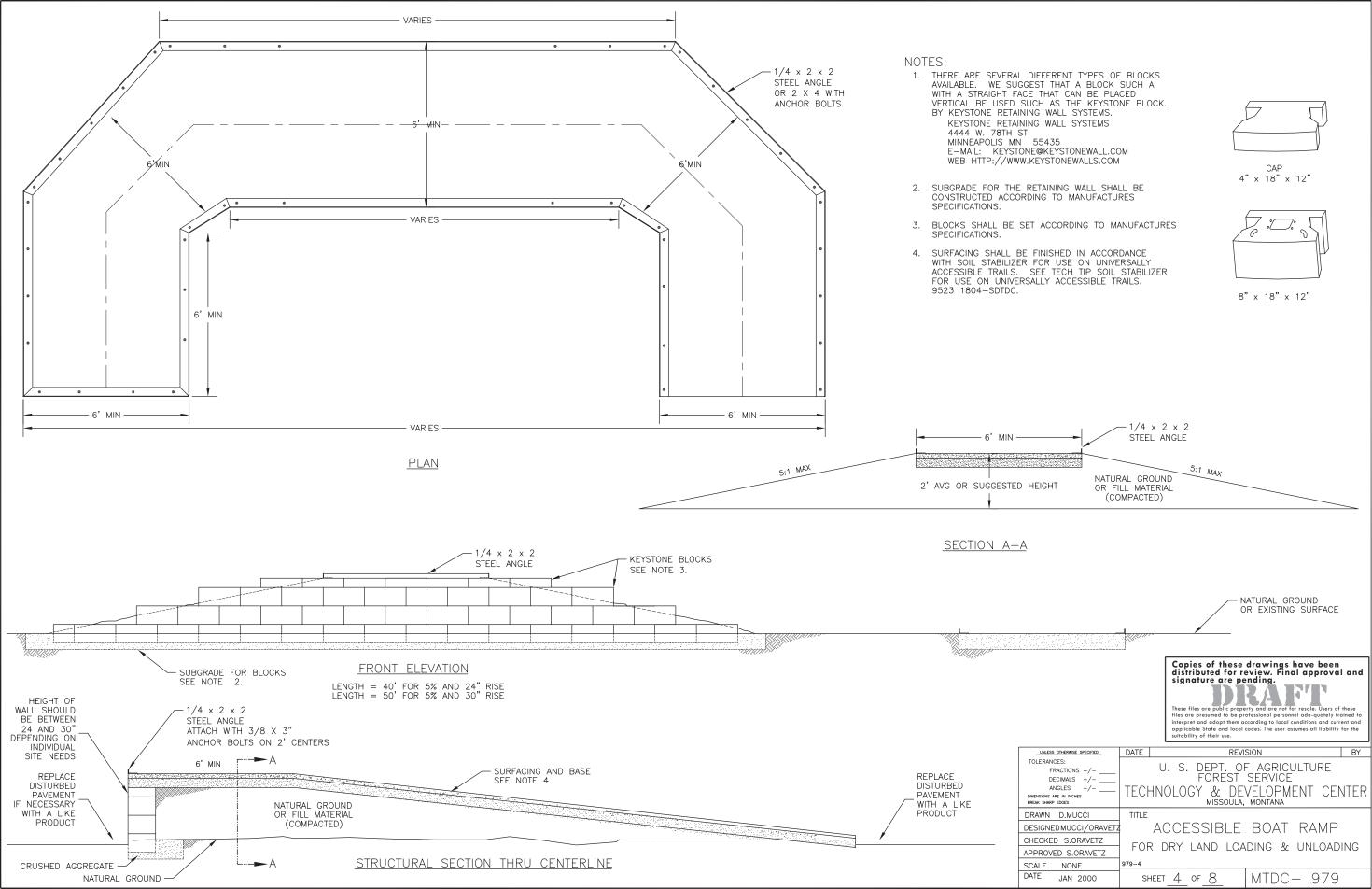
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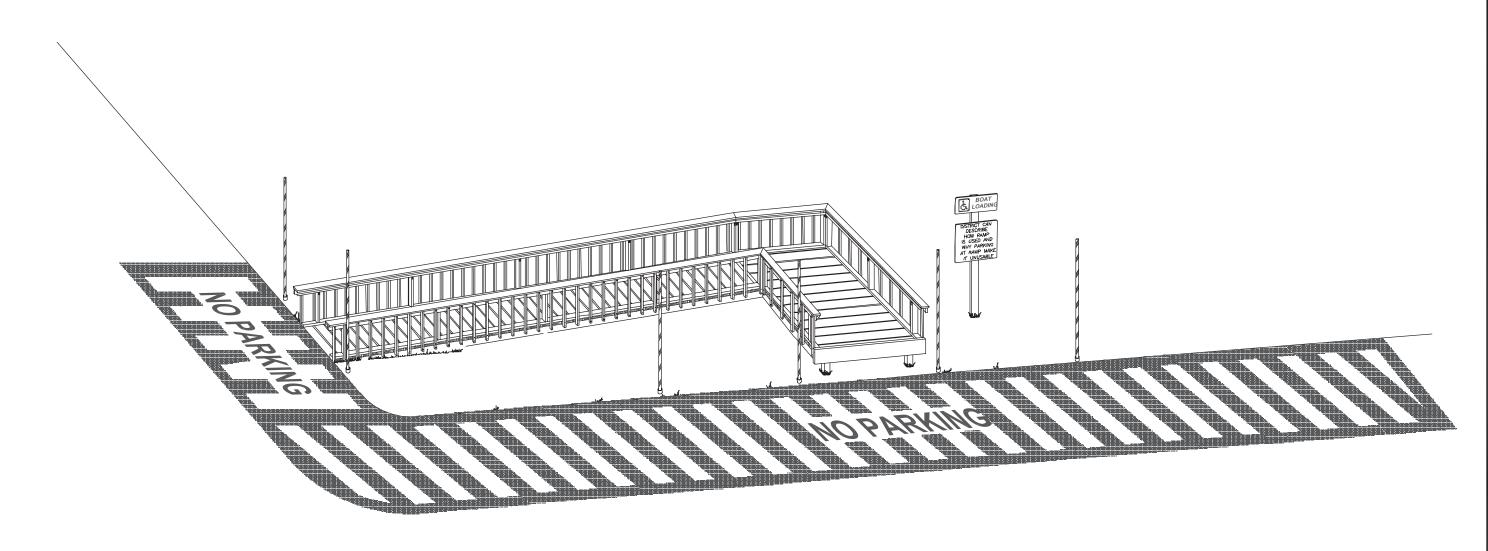
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TYPICAL TIMBER RAMP ACCESSIBLE BOAT RAMP FOR DRY LAND LOADING & UNLOADING



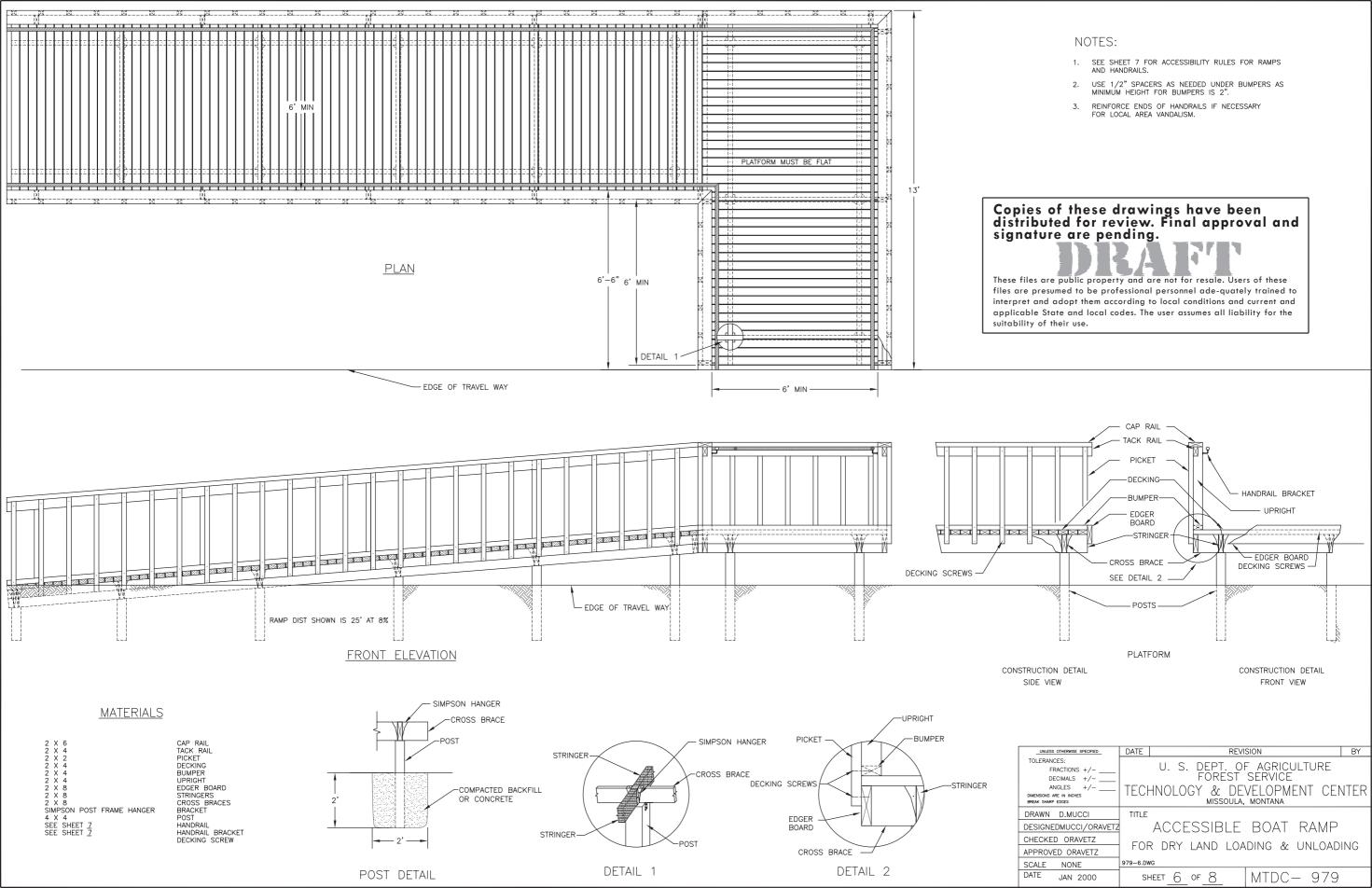
GENERAL NOTES:

- 1. THERE IS MINIMUM OF 40 FEET EACH WAY OF THE THE RAMP REQUIRED FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING.
- 2. SEE SHEET Z FOR HANDRAIL DETAILS.
- 3. SNOW POLES ARE OPTIONAL AND CAN BE USED TO HELP LOCATE THE EDGE OF RAMP WHILE BACKING AND FOR SNOW REMOVAL.
- 4. RUBBER DOCK FENDERS OR BUMPERS SHOULD BE PLACED ACROSS THE FRONT OF THE LOADING RAMP TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO VEHICLES.
- 5. ALL WOOD SHALL BE PRESSURE TREATED AND SUITABLE FOR HUMAN CONTACT.

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ACCESSIBILITY RULES FOR RAMPS

- ANY PART OF AN ACCESSIBLE ROUTE WITH A SLOPE GREATER THAN 1:20 WILL BE CONSIDERED A RAMP.
- THE MAXIMUM SLOPE OF A RAMP IN NEW CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BE 1:12 OR LESS.
- THE MAXIMUM RISE OF ANY RUN SHOULD BE 30 INCHES OR
- THE CROSS SLOPE OF THE RAMP SHOULD BE NO GREATER THAN 1:50.
- THE RAMP SURFACE MUST BE NON-SLIP.
- ALL GRATING OPENINGS MUST BE 1/2 INCH OR SMALLER AND MUST BE PLACED PERPENDICULAR TO THE USUAL DIRECTION OF TRAVEL.
- THE CLEAR WIDTH OF THE RAMP MUST BE AT LEAST 36 INCHES
- A LEVEL LANDING MUST BE PROVIDED AT THE TOP AND BOTTOM OF EACH RUN.
- THE LANDING MUST BE AT LEAST AS WIDE AS THE RAMP AND AT LEAST 60 INCHES LONG.
- WHERE RAMPS CHANGE DIRECTION, THE LANDING MUST BE AT LEAST 60 BY 60 INCHES.
- DESIGN RAMPS WITH PROPER DRAINAGE SO THAT WATER 11. WILL NOT ACCUMULATE ON SURFACES.

SIGNS

- THE CHARACTER PROPORTION OF THE LETTERS AND NUMBERS ON SIGNS MUST HAVE A WIDTH TO HEIGHT RATIO BETWEEN 3:5 AND 1:1 AND A STROKE WIDTH TO HEIGHT RATIO BETWEEN 1:5 AND 1:10.
- CHARACTERS AND SYMBOLS MUST CONTRAST WITH THEIR BACKGROUND (LIGHT CHARACTERS ON A DARK BACKGROUND OR DARK CHARACTERS ON A LIGHT BACKGROUND) AND BE A NON-GLARE FINISH.
- RAISED OR INDENTED CHARACTERS OR SYMBOLS ON SIGNS MUST BE RAISED OR INCISED 1/32 INCH MINIMUM AND SHOULD BE SANS SERIF CHARACTERS. RAISED CHARACTERS OR SYMBOLS MUST BE AT LEAST 5/8 INCH HIGH, BUT NO HIGHER THAN 2 INCHES. INDENTED CHARACTERS OR SYMBOLS MUST HAVE A STROKE WIDTH OF AT LEAST 1/4 INCH.
- SYMBOLS OF ACCESSIBILITY MUST BE THE INTERNATIONAL SYMBOL OF ACCESSIBILITY.

ACCESSIBILITY RULES FOR HANDRAILS

- A HANDRAIL ON EITHER SIDE MUST BE PROVIDED IF THE RAMP RISES MORE THAN 6 INCHES OR IS LONGER THAN
- THE HANDRAILS MUST BE CONTINUOUS AND FIXED SO THEY DO NOT ROTATE OR RACK.
- THE TOP OF THE HANDRAILS MUST BE BETWEEN 34 AND 38 INCHES ABOVE THE RAMP SURFACE. SEE DIAGRAM 1.
- AT THE END OF THE HANDRAILS THERE MUST BE AT LEAST 12 INCHES OF LEVEL HANDRAIL BEYOND THE TOP AND BOTTOM OF THE RAMP SEGMENT.
- ALL HANDRAIL ENDS MUST BE ROUNDED AND RETURNED SMOOTHLY TO THE FLOOR, WALL OR POST.
- THE DIAMETER OF THE HANDRAIL MUST BE BETWEEN 1 1/4 AND 1 1/2 INCHES, SEE DIAGRAM 2.
- ALL WALL-MOUNTED HANDRAILS MUST BE MOUNTED WITH EXACTLY 1 1/2 INCHES BETWEEN HANDRAIL AND WALL SEE DIAGRAM 2.
- WHERE RAMPS OR LANDINGS HAVE DROP OFFS, PROVIDE A 2 INCH CURB, WALL, RAILING OR PROJECTING SURFACE TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM FALLING OFF THE RAMP.

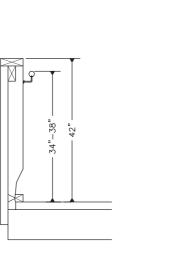


DIAGRAM 1

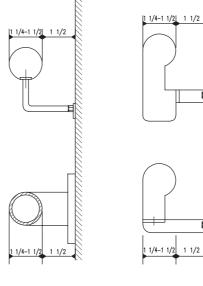


DIAGRAM 2 HANDRAIL TYPES

1 1/2

ACCESSIBILITY RULES FOR PATHWAYS

- THERE MUST BE AN ACCESSIBLE ROUTE LINKING ACCESSIBLE PARKING AND PASSENGER LOADING ZONES WITH THE ACCESSIBLE BUILDING ENTRANCE.
- THE ACCESSIBLE PATHWAY MUST BE FREE OF STEPS AND
- THE ACCESSIBLE PATHWAY MUST BE AT LEAST 36 INCHES WIDF.
- IF THE PATHWAY IS LESS THAN 60 INCHES WIDE, PROVIDE PASSING SPACES AT LEAST 60 INCHES WIDE AND 60 INCHES LONG AT INTERVALS NOT EXCEEDING 200 FEET.
- 5. PROVIDE AT LEAST 80 INCHES OF CLEAR HEAD ROOM ALONG
- ACCESSIBLE PATHWAYS MUST BE FIRM AND SLIP RESISTANT.
- THE SLOPE OF THE ACCESSIBLE PATHWAY MUST BE NO GREATER THAN 1:20.
- WHERE WALKWAY LEVELS CHANGE, THE VERTICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM MUST BE LESS THAN 1/4 INCH. 8.
- CHANGES IN LEVEL BETWEEN 1/4 INCH AND 1/2 INCH ANYWHERE ON THE ACCESSIBLE ROUTE MUST BE BEVELED WITH A SLOPE OF 1:2.
- CHANGES GREATER THAN 1/2 MUST BE RAMPED.
- THE TRANSITION FROM THE CURB RAMP TO THE WALKWAY, ROAD AND GUTTER MUST BE FLUSH AND FREE TO ABRUPT

DEFINITIONS

RAMP:

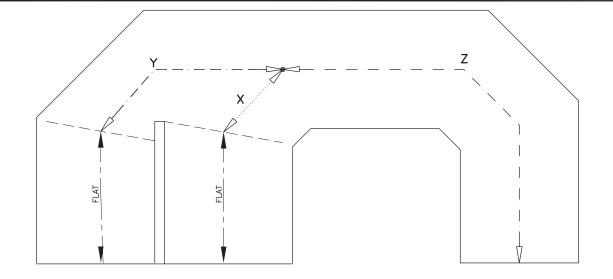
A WALKING SURFACE IN AN ACCESSIBLE SPACE THAT HAS A RUNNING SLOPE GREATER THAN 1:20.

 $\ensuremath{\overline{\mathsf{RAMP}}}$ SLOPE: THE RATIO OF THE RISE TO THE RUN OF THE RAMP (Y:X). SEE SHEET 8.

AN EXTERIOR PATHWAY WITH A PREPARED SURFACE INTENDED FOR PEDESTRIAN USE, INCLUDING GENERAL PEDESTRIAN AREAS SUCH AS PLAZAS AND COURTS.

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- h ₂	FLAT	FLAT	GMENT Y SLOPE $h_3 = 0$	CONTROL	SEG. POINT	MENT Z SLOPE	
		•	Y	-		z	
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	SLOPE IN %	SEGMENT Z	(h ₁)	SEGMENT Y	(h ₂)
WALK WHEN SLOPE IS LESS	4.0	50	(2.0)	12.5'	(.5)*
THAN 5% (PATH IS CONSIDERED A WALK)	5.0	40	(2.0)	10.5'	(.5)**
RAMP ANY SLOPE OVER	6.0	33	(2.0)	10.5'	(.5)
5% (THE WALKWAY S CONSIDERED A RAMP	7.0	29	(2.0)	10.5'	(.5)
AND NEEDS TO MEET GUIDELINES)	8.0	25	(2.0)	10.5'	(.5)

TABLE 2

SLOPE IN %	SEGMENT X	(h ₃)	SLOPE
4.0	4'6"	0	0***
5.0	4'6"	0	0
6.0	4'6"	0	0
7.0	4'6"	0	0
8.0	4'6"	0	0

* MIN LENGTH - NOT SHOWN ON DRAWING

** LENGTH SET BY DESIGN

*** SLOPE IS SET AT ZERO FOR SIMPLICITY

h₁ CORRESPONDS TO SEGMENT Z
h₂ CORRESPONDS TO SEGMENT Y
h₃ CORRESPONDS TO SEGMENT X

$$\frac{h}{L} = SLOPE \%$$

$$Y + Z = \frac{2.5}{SLOPE}$$

$$X + Z = L$$

$$\frac{2.5}{SLOPE} = L$$

$$SLOPE$$

$$h_1 + h_2 = 2.5$$
' $h_2 = 0.5$ ' $h_3 = 0$

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