

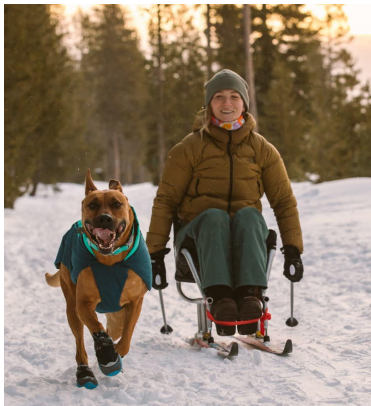
# Accessibility Work With Community



**Great Hall - Heritage**

**Sunday, 11/6/22**

**11:15AM - 12:15PM**



**Ashley Schahfer (she/her)**

Principal, Empowering Access

Disability Equity & Inclusion  
Consulting



**Will Cortez (he/him/siya)**

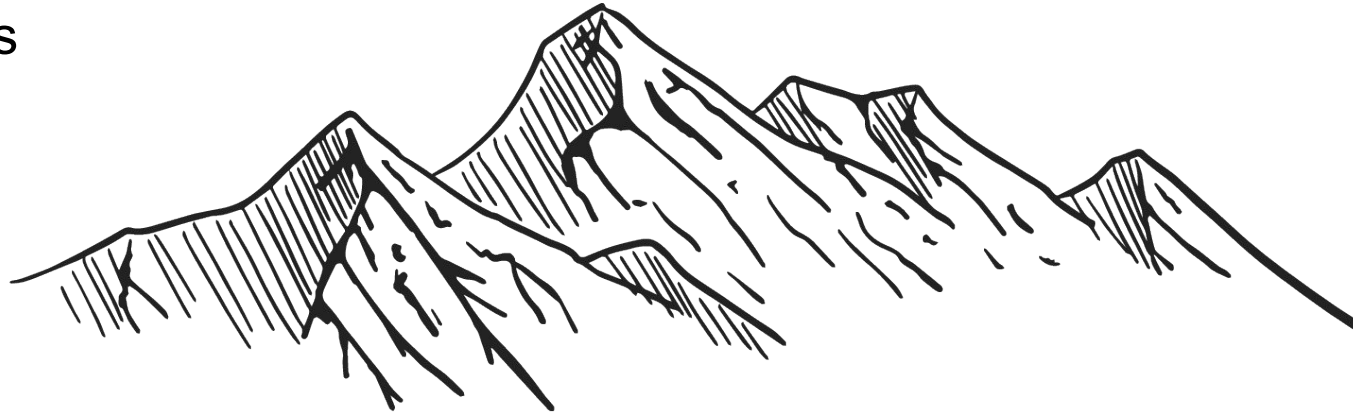
Accessibility Project Manager

Metro Parks & Nature



# AGENDA

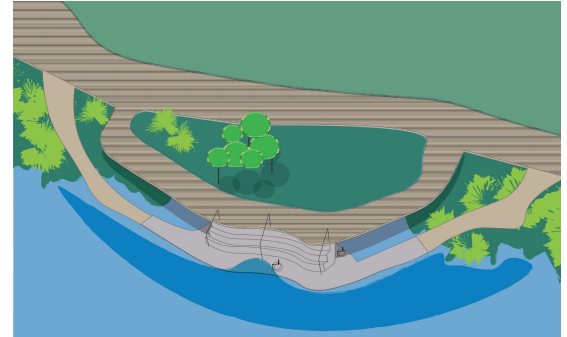
- Current Efforts & Lessons Learned
- Examples of Self Assessment
- Best Practices
- Resources



# CURRENT EFFORTS

## Bend Parks and Recreation Water Access Project

- Consulting with Environmental Science Associates - Landscape Architects
- 3 parks along the Deschutes in the heart of town- MMC
- Precedent exploration and research
- Conversations about big “A” vs. little “a” Site visits, design charrettes, community stakeholder engagement
- Assessing together

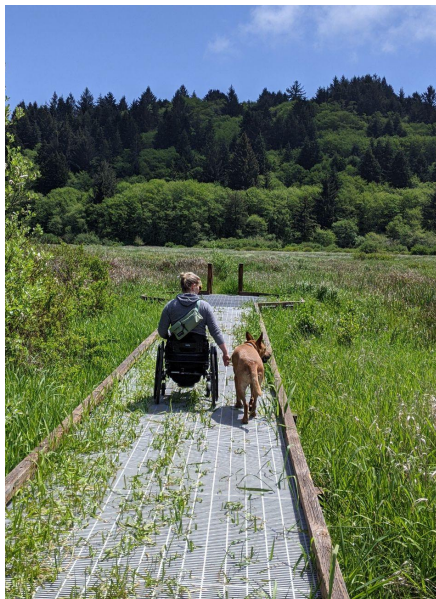




# CURRENT EFFORTS

## Beaver Creek State Park expansion

- Wetland experience by boardwalk, how to increase access
- Small efforts that would improve access, shift in mindset
- Connecting trails
- Signage
- Availability, contacts
- User experiences
- Lesson: Include as much staff as possible



# CURRENT EFFORTS

## Community partnerships and coalition building

### Water access coalition and toolkit partnership

- Empowering Access, Adventures Without Limits, Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection, USD Fish and Wildlife.
- Goals: community engagement, coalition building, resource development.

### 100 mile aMTB trail assessment - COTA

- Grant to assess and document trails
- Discuss trail standards and signage
- Creating a resource to build adaptive riding potential
- Collaboration among stakeholders, Quinn Brett, Joe Stone, Oregon Adaptive Sports, COTA



# CURRENT EFFORTS



## Spend That Money!

2019 Metro Parks Bond ~\$475 million

- Taking Care of Metro Parks (TCMP) \$12 million
- Local Share \$92 million to 27 park providers
- Trails package \$20 million

Agency ADA Coordinator & ADA Analyst

Non-Extractive Community Outreach

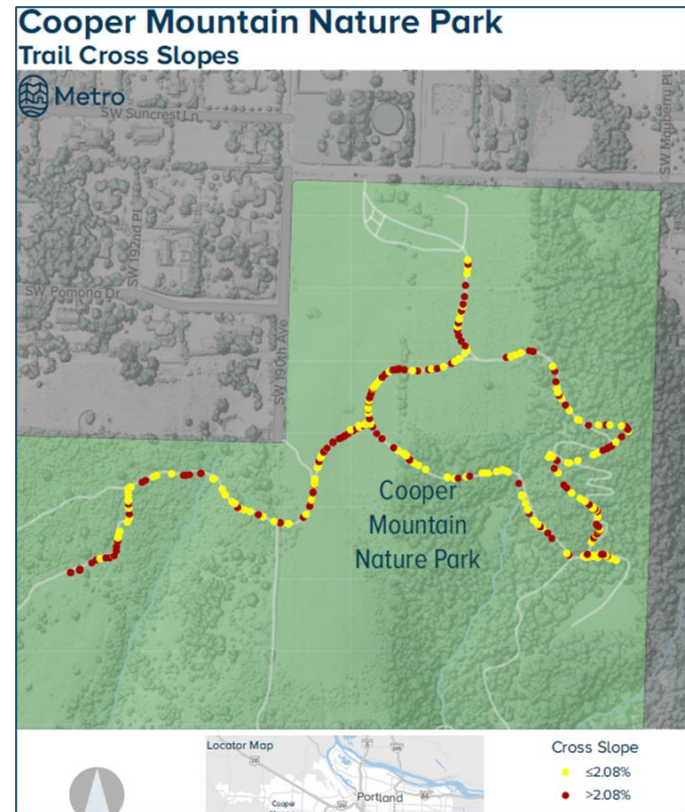




# CURRENT EFFORTS



High Efficiency Trail  
Assessment Process (HETAP)



**Information is power!**



# CURRENT EFFORTS

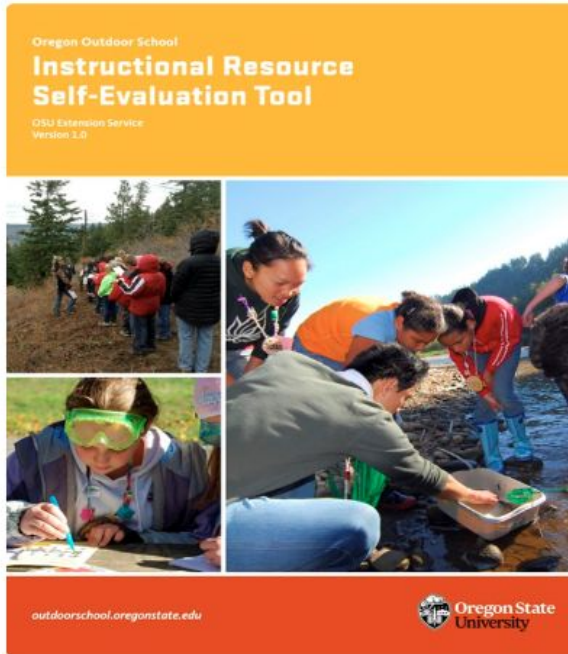


**Universal Design has  
its limitations!**

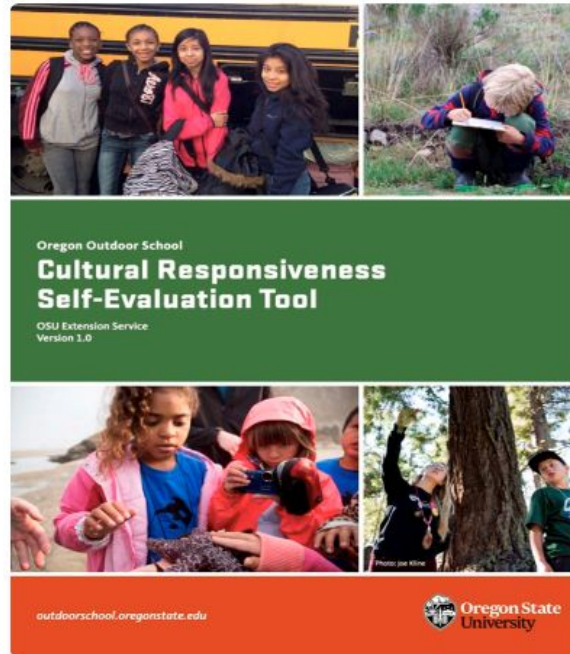


# ASSESSING

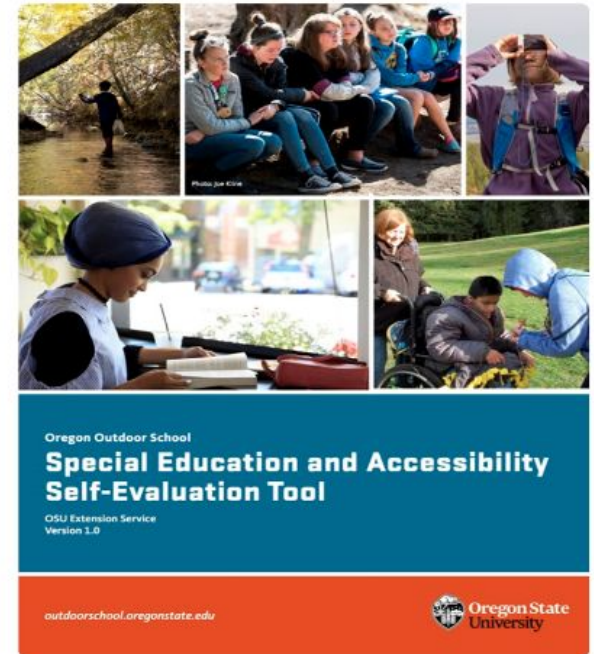
## OSU Self-Evaluation Tools



**Instructional Resource Self-Evaluation Tool**



**Cultural Responsiveness Self-Evaluation Tool**



**Special Education and Accessibility Self-Evaluation Tool**

# ASSESSING

## Empowering Access



### Perspective building together

- Lived experience
- Intersectionality
- Open communication
  - Exploring barriers and solutions
    - Physical and social
- Learning together
- Collaboration, brainstorming
  - Programmatic exploration



# ASSESSING

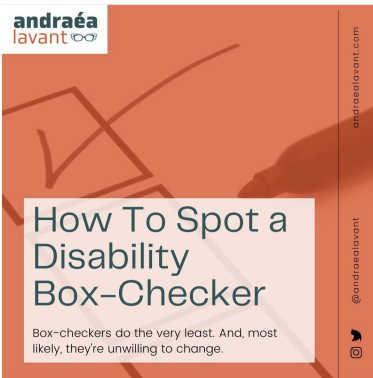
## Empowering Access

### Experience based assessing

- Multiple mobility devices
- Access beyond the physical
  - Sensory
  - Trauma
  - Neuro
- Documenting
  - Barrier
  - Experience
  - Solution
- Learning together



# DON'T BE A BOX-CHECKER?

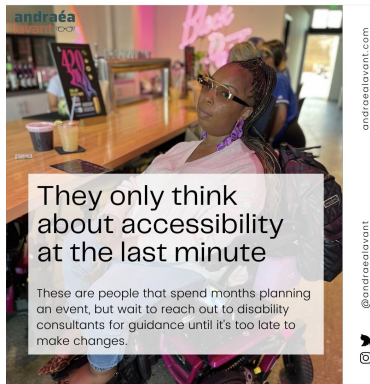


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## How To Spot a Disability Box-Checker

Box-checkers do the very least. And, most likely, they're unwilling to change.

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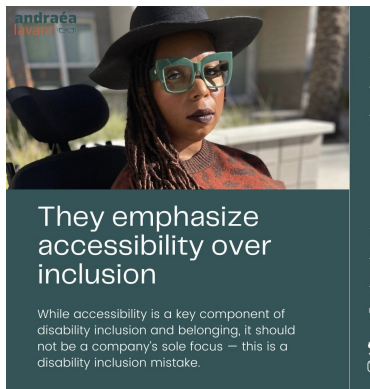


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### They only think about accessibility at the last minute

These are people that spend months planning an event, but wait to reach out to disability consultants for guidance until it's too late to make changes.

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### They emphasize accessibility over inclusion

While accessibility is a key component of disability inclusion and belonging, it should not be a company's sole focus – this is a disability inclusion mistake.

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**They focus on ADA compliance**

Many box-checking companies' sole reason for addressing disability in the workplace is to ensure they don't get sued.

This often includes providing the bare minimum when it comes to workplace accommodations or focusing on simply meeting, not exceeding, corporate or federal disability hiring requirements.

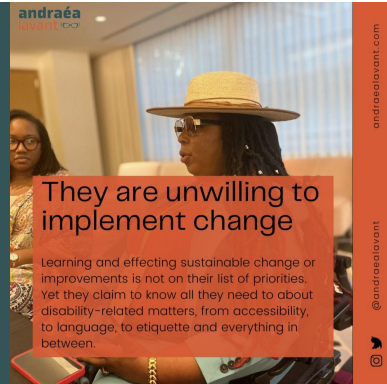
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**They value non-disabled "experts" more than the community**

Box-checkers typically don't prioritize ensuring the guidance or support they implement is provided in partnership with or led by disabled people.

Rather, they bring people to decision making tables that either have no direct experience engaging with disabled people or are "allies" in some way.

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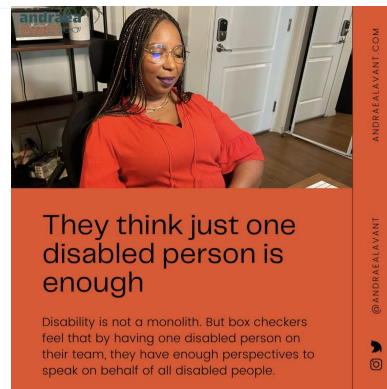


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### They are unwilling to implement change

Learning and effecting sustainable change or improvements is not on their list of priorities. Yet they claim to know all they need to about disability-related matters, from accessibility, to language, to etiquette and everything in between.

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### They think just one disabled person is enough

Disability is not a monolith. But box checkers feel that by having one disabled person on their team, they have enough perspectives to speak on behalf of all disabled people.

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# BEST PRACTICES

Look at access holistically, from internal policy making to physical site design. **Access isn't just physical.**

1. Education, training, commitment
  - Seek out training by people with **lived experience**
2. **Assessment**, data collection
  - Hire consultants, **Don't make assumptions**
3. Engage community equitably, **before projects**
4. **Collaborate** with consultants on design, policy, and best practices development.

# OPEN TO ALL

A disability inclusion guide for  
land trusts



Members of the Disability Network Northern Michigan make their way to the overlook at Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy's Arcadia Dunes: The C.S. Mott Nature Preserve.

Credit: Art Bukowski

## PATH TO A MORE EQUITABLE FUTURE

Thank you to the Conservation Trust for North Carolina, an organization dedicated to making conservation more inclusive, supportive and meaningful for all communities they serve. With their permission we have adapted this diagram from one they share to address racial equity within their own culture and practice.

### KEEP GROWING

The journey is never done. Plan how your staff and board will continue to increase internal knowledge and awareness.

### EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Create a written agreement with executive leaders to reshape the organization to be more equitable. Write a DEI statement.

### BOARD MEMBERS

Gain agreement and support from your board for a path to a more equitable organization.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Evaluate organizational communications, messaging and content by establishing shared language and a plan for disability inclusion.

### COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Seek partnership opportunities with agencies, organizations and businesses that support disability inclusion.

## Path to a more equitable future

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Have staff and board participate in DEI training that includes disability and addresses implicit bias.

### TEAM WORK

Get internal commitments to implementing inclusion from every member of your team. Support these efforts.

### ACCESS

Conduct an accessibility audit that addresses different types of disabilities and develop an accessibility improvement plan.

### PROGRAMS

Involve people from the disability community in program planning and evaluation to ensure your work is meeting your new commitment to inclusion.

### INTERNAL DIVERSITY

Add diversity to your staff and board with transformative and purposeful recruitment and retention techniques and policies.





# ACCESSIBILITY MEANS MORE THAN ADA

***What makes you feel welcome in outdoor spaces? When you visit a new park, how do you know that people want you to be there, that you belong?***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed to make public spaces more accessible to people with disabilities at a time when people were barely getting out of their houses. Through the protection afforded by the ADA, people are more empowered than ever to get out and participate in all the same activities non-disabled people do.

As important as it is though, the ADA is really just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to making the outdoors inclusive for the full spectrum of people within the disabilities communities. People of all abilities mountain bike, road bike, climb, hike, kayak, hunt, fish, and explore like a majority of outdoor lovers. They too seek a variety of outdoor challenges, with opportunities to leisurely move through old growth forests or completely exhaust themselves after a strenuous hike or bike ride.

We all seek the same adventure, freedom, and thrill of the outdoors.

By thinking creatively and experientially, land managers can move past ADA compliance and into an equity-centered approach that provides a truly diverse range of access for all sorts of people. Inclusion is more than a short paved trail in a park—it's about creating options for diverse experiences that people of all abilities can enjoy.

**This Toolkit** is designed to help land managers understand how people with disabilities engage with the outdoors and what they want out of those experiences. It offers recommendations and best practices for how to transform public lands in ways that are truly inclusive.

By developing an inclusive equity lens that takes into account all shades and forms of disability, making commitments to center equity in planning and programming, and thinking about someone's holistic experience on your land, you can help open up your spaces to your entire community in ways that honor and celebrate diversity.

## OUR VISION:

Is that every person has equitable access to incredible outdoor recreation opportunities, regardless of their ability level. By focusing on social barriers to access as much as physical barriers, we envision a future where land managers proactively create spaces that are truly inclusive and welcoming for their communities.

Photos courtesy of Oregon Adaptive Sports, Adventures Without Limits, and Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection

## PHYSICAL BARRIERS:

Physical barriers include any object or infrastructure that can physically prevent someone from accessing a space. These could be anything, from the size of gravel used in a parking lot to motor vehicle barriers at a trailhead.

Developing an equity lens for projects can look like imagining yourself in someone else's physical space. What would a viewpoint look like from a seated position? Will one single step on this trail prevent people in manual wheelchairs from being able to access the whole space?

## COMMON PHYSICAL BARRIERS INCLUDE:

- TRAILS AROUND GATES
- LOOSE-PACKED GROUND COVER
- BALLARDS & BOULDERS
- INACCESSIBLE OR INCOMPLETE SIGNAGE
- ROOTS & ROCKS ON A TRAIL
- RAILINGS AT EYE-LEVEL
- STEPS & CURB CUTS
- DROP OFFS
- LACK OF TRANSPORTATION
- BUSY STREETS
- TRAIL AND SURFACE DEGRADATION
- BATHROOM PARTITIONS



**NUKE - Off Road Recumbent handcycle**

• \$8,250

## \* TEST IT OUT:

If you're wondering how a certain surface feels to navigate, or if you're wondering whether or not a railing is preventing someone from seeing a viewpoint in a seated position, bring a chair with you to test it out. This doesn't automatically mean that a space that's accessible for you is accessible for everyone else, but it can help you better understand other perspectives and make more informed decisions.

49"

TYPICAL SINGLE-TRACK TRAIL WIDTH

18"



# Birdability Site Review Checklist

Thank you for completing a Birdability Site Review to submit to the Birdability Map. Documenting the physical accessibility of birding locations helps ensure that birding truly is for everybody and every body! **Once complete, please visit [birdability.org/map](https://birdability.org/map) to submit.**

Question numbers on this checklist correspond to the question numbers in the online Birdability Site Review; not all questions in Part 1 are included on this printable checklist.

## Part 1: General Information



1. a) Trail/bird blind name:
1. b) Location name (park or area):
- 4) Good car birding site? Describe if so:
- 6) Length of trail:
- 7) Type of trail:
- ☐ Loop
  - ☐ Out-and-back
  - ☐ Lollipop (out-and-back with a loop attached)
8. a) Entrance fee?
8. b) Parking fee?
- 9) Nearby public transit information, including route numbers, stop names:
- 10) Walking or biking access from residential areas:



## Part 2: Birding Location Accessibility Criteria

### 1. Parking



- ☐ No parking area
- ☐ Pull-off areas (for car birding)
- ☐ Signed accessible parking spaces. Number:
- ☐ Van accessible parking spaces. Parking space is 132 in. (3.3m) wide, with extra 60 in. (1.5m) wide aisle/side space for a ramp. Number:
- ☐ Curb cuts present from parking lot to sidewalk/trail
- ☐ Surface is paved
- ☐ Surface is gravel
- ☐ Surface has many potholes/bumps
- ☐ Parking on unmanageable slope

Comments:

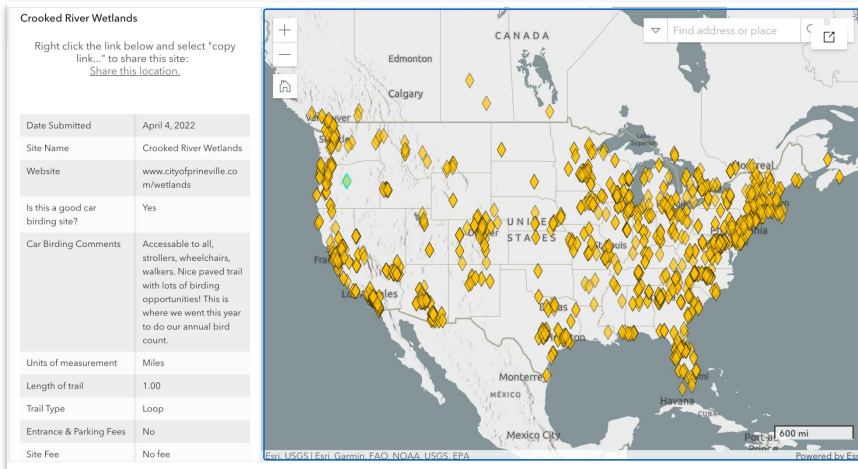
### 2. Services available at this location



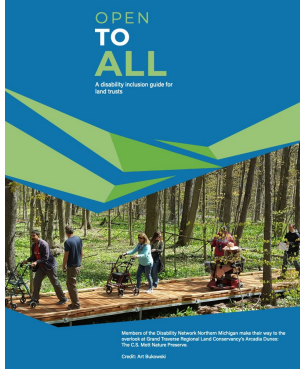
- ☐ Visitor center
- ☐ Staff or volunteers
- ☐ Interpretive programs
- ☐ Accessible tram or motorized tour
- ☐ Gated areas (for example, drive-up bird blinds) accessible if arranged ahead of time
- ☐ Meals available
- ☐ Water fountains outside buildings
- ☐ Accessible water fountains, no higher than 36 in. (91 cm) from the ground, outside buildings

Comments, including visitor center hours:

The Birdability Map is a crowdsourced map that describes in detail the accessibility features of birding locations all over the world. It is a work-in-progress, and anyone can contribute to it by submitting a Birdability Site Review.







**Birdability Site Review Checklist**

Thank you for completing a Birdability Site Review to submit to the Birdability Map. Documenting the physical accessibility of trails, locations, and events that Birdability Map is for everybody and every body! Once complete, please visit [birdability.org/map](https://www.birdability.org/map) to submit.

Question numbers on this checklist correspond to the question numbers in the online Birdability Site Review, not all questions in Part 1 are included on this printable checklist.

Part 1: General Information	Part 2: Birding Location Accessibility Criteria
1. a) Trail/bird name:	1. Parking
1. b) Location name (park or area):	<input type="checkbox"/> No parking area
4) Good car/birding site? Describe if so:	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially accessible (car/birding)
6) Length of trail:	<input type="checkbox"/> Signed accessible parking spaces. Number:
7) Type of trail:	<input type="checkbox"/> Trail accessible parking spaces (20'x30' or larger)
<input type="checkbox"/> Out and back	<input type="checkbox"/> Trail accessible parking spaces (20'x30' or larger)
<input type="checkbox"/> Lollipop (out and back with a loop attached)	<input type="checkbox"/> Curb cuts present from parking lot to viewpoint
8. a) Entrance fee?	<input type="checkbox"/> Surface is paved
8. b) Parking fee?	<input type="checkbox"/> Surface is gravel
9) Nearby public transit information, including route numbers, stop names:	<input type="checkbox"/> Surface has many potholes/lumps
10) Walking or biking access from residential areas:	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking on unmanageable slope
	Comments:
	2. Services available at this location:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Water center
	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff or volunteers
	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive programs
	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible tram or motorized tour
	<input type="checkbox"/> Guided areas (for example, drive-up bird levels) accessible if arranged ahead of time
	<input type="checkbox"/> Maps available
	<input type="checkbox"/> Water fountains outside buildings
	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible water fountains, no higher than 36" in 30" and from the ground, outside buildings
	Comments, including water center hours:

Page 1 of 2  
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Birdability Site Review Checklist  
To learn more about access considerations and our work, visit [birdability.org](https://www.birdability.org)



# RESOURCES

## Birdability Access considerations and Site Review Checklist

<https://www.birdability.org/access-considerations>

## Accessibility Toolkit for Land Managers

[https://willamettepartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/AccessibilityToolkit\\_forLM\\_2020\\_Reduced.pdf](https://willamettepartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/AccessibilityToolkit_forLM_2020_Reduced.pdf)

## Open to All: A Disability Inclusion Guide for Land Trusts

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/landtrustalliance.org/Open%20to%20All\\_DisabilityInclusion%20guide.LTA-NCHPAD.12-21.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/landtrustalliance.org/Open%20to%20All_DisabilityInclusion%20guide.LTA-NCHPAD.12-21.pdf)

## Disability Consulting - [EmpoweringAccess.com](https://www.empoweringaccess.com)

Google keywords: Adaptive recreation, Accessible trail signage, trail accessibility (standards)... etc.

## OSU Outdoor School Self Evaluation Tools:

<https://outdoorschool.oregonstate.edu/educator-resources/self-evaluation-tools/>

# LET'S CONNECT!

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Will Cortez - [Will.Cortez@OregonMetro.gov](mailto:Will.Cortez@OregonMetro.gov)