



## ***Strategic Plan for Accessibility - November 2004***

The Department's Strategic Plan for Accessibility (Plan) was envisioned in 2002. The Plan was intended to present a broad overview to the Michigan DNR Management Team of the work required in order for Department programs, facilities, and services to be inclusive and to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Plan development began in January of 2002 and continued into November 2004. The following represents the completed Michigan DNR Strategic Plan for Accessibility. The major components include:

- accessibility training for Michigan DNR staff;
- an accessibility assessment of all existing Michigan DNR programs, services and facilities;
- involvement by public disability advocacy groups in Michigan DNR's planning process;
- development of an action plan to correct existing accessibility deficiencies;
- development of inclusive new facilities, programs and services;
- a means to evaluate and document Departmental efforts and progress toward accessibility;
- A proposed timeline for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Accessibility.

The Strategic Plan for Accessibility is an evolving process. Information gathered in the initial phases of the Plan will direct the activities to be accomplished in the later phases.

The final goal is for the Michigan DNR to offer a comprehensive and consistent approach to inclusiveness in the Department's recreational programs, facilities and services.

Available funding, human resources, and support of this Plan by the Michigan DNR Management Team are all critical to its success.

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural resources for current and future generations.*

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES ACCESSIBILITY VISION**

*The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (Department) commits its human and financial resources to ensure that: 1) all programs, facilities and services comply with the State and Federal accessibility guidelines and standards, and 2) DNR employees and the public are aware that the Department's programs, facilities and services comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.*

**GOAL 1**      ***Ensure that decisions affecting Departmental programs, facilities, and services are inclusive, incorporating accessibility guidelines and standards.***

**Objective A:** Educate DNR employees and public advisory groups about the legal rights of persons with disabilities.

**Action items:**

- 1) Provide consistent training:
  - a) Identify training needs within each Bureau, Division, Office (B/D/O)
  - b) Assess current training opportunities
  - c) Develop training programs, pertinent to staff job responsibilities
  - d) Arrange training sessions
  - e) Track the training accomplishments within each B/D/O;
- 2) Disseminate information to employees and public user groups regarding current standards, proposed changes to the standards, statutes, case law and Department procedures, in a routine and consistent manner.
  - a) Assess available information and resources
  - b) Determine the applicability of the information to the employees within each B/D/O
  - c) Develop information manuals for staff
  - d) Develop and update Department accessibility procedures;
    - Printed materials  
<http://dnrintranet/pdfs/divisions/fosb/asdproc/22.00.01.htm>
    - Accommodations for meetings and events (must develop)
    - Complaints Processing  
<http://dnrintranet/pdfs/divisions/fosb/asdproc/22.00.03.htm>
    - Effective Communication (must develop)
    - Web-based information (must develop)
    - ADA – Facility Accessibility Exemption  
<http://dnrintranet/pdfs/divisions/fosb/asdproc/22.02.01.htm>

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- e) Develop strategy for sharing information with staff and the public.
  - f) Prepare DNR response to proposed changes of standards, coordinating the response through the State of Michigan's ADA Coordinator.
- 3) Address and incorporate accessibility issues early on in the planning/ visioning aspects of all new construction projects and program development.

**Objective B:** Assist B/D/Os with program development and implementation.

**Action items:**

- 1) Provide guidance and consultation regarding:
    - a) Accessibility reference materials and resources;
    - b) Department policies and procedures;
    - c) Interpretation of the guidelines;
    - d) Intranet Q&A.
  - 2) Assist B/D/O's outreach efforts:
    - a) Establish points of contact with disability resources, including the State of Michigan ADA Coordinator; the Great Lakes Disability and Technical Assistance Center, (GLDBTAC), the National Center on Accessibility (NCA), the U. S. Access Board, the U.S. Department of Justice, (DOJ);
    - b) Establish a point of contact and maintain a current list of public user groups, including Disabilities Today, Paralyzed Vets, and Centers for Independent Living, etc.
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**GOAL 2**

***The Department shall have a detailed plan to bring non-compliant programs, facilities and services into compliance with state and federal accessibility requirements.***

**Objective A:** Inventory the Department's programs, facilities and services.

**Action items:**

- 1) Define Department programs
  - a) What are the program elements
  - b) What is needed by individuals with disabilities to participate in each program;
- 2) Identify all Department Services
  - a) What are the service elements
  - b) What is needed by individuals with disabilities to use each service;
- 3) Identify all existing facilities;
- 4) Identify any new or proposed facilities, programs, and services and the timeframe for development;
- 5) Develop an effective, uniform accessibility compliance checklist for all Departmental facilities, programs, and services;

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- 6) Develop an efficient and user-friendly inventory database to track and monitor all programs, facilities, and services.
- 7) Update the overall "master list" of accessible elements, including all new construction and additions to services or programs, on an annual basis.

**Objective B:** Evaluate programs, facilities and services for compliance with State and Federal accessibility guidelines.

**Action items:**

- 1) Train internal audit teams to evaluate programs, facilities and services OR hire the services of an outside agency to conduct the evaluations;
- 2) Identify existing program, facilities and services that comply and those that have deficiencies. Enter this information into the database;
- 3) Analyze and summarize the compliance status of each facility and program.

**Objective C:** Prioritize noncompliant programs, facilities, and services that require action to become compliant.

**Action items:**

- 1) Present compliance status report to B/D/Os and request their priorities for action, including a suggested schedule of implementation to improve each program, facility, and service;
- 2) Compile the B/D/Os prioritized list into a Department prioritized list, considering:
  - a) Target dates for completion;
  - b) Percentage of each type of facility or program to be updated;
  - c) Geographic distribution of types of facilities that are to be updated.
- 3) Present the Department's priorities to focus groups, advisory groups and the general public and request input;
- 4) Revise priorities for action, as needed;
- 5) Present revised priorities and compliance status report to DNR Management Team for endorsement.

**Objective D:** Implement the Department compliance plan.

**Action items:**

- 1) Convey the Department compliance plan to the B/D/Os and staff for implementation;
- 2) Convey the compliance plan to the general public, focus groups and & advisory groups for information;

**Objective E:** Monitor progress of the plan.

**Action items:**

- 1) Annual progress report of accessibility activity within each B/D/O;
  - 2) Update Database to reflect activity on annual basis;
  - 3) Submit Department progress report to DNR management team.
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**GOAL 3**      ***Ensure that financial and human resources are available to implement the Strategic Plan for Accessibility.***

**Objective A:** Identify operational costs and personnel needs for:

- 1) Inventory and training;
- 2) Database development and management;
- 3) Materials and outreach.

**Objective B:** B/D/Os identify additional funding needs for program and facility upgrades.

**Action items:**

Each B/D/O identifies the costs associated with updating the facilities and programs for which they have management responsibility.

**Objective C:** Pursue grants and other outside funding sources and resources.

**Action items:**

- 1) Each B/D/O identifies potential funding sources to upgrade facilities, programs, and services within their B/D/O;
  - 2) Pursue partnerships with municipalities and local governmental agencies, private organizations, federal agencies, and other state agencies;
  - 3) Set aside or establish a lump sum of annual Department or B/D/O budget to improve and upgrade existing identified facilities, programs, or services.
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**GOAL 4**      ***Effectively convey information regarding accessible programs and facilities to the public and Department employees.***

**Objective A:** Maximize effectiveness of current communication methods.

**Action items:**

- 1) Review, evaluate, and improve written materials, DNR web-based information, video, press releases;
- 2) Collaborate with the DNR Office of Communication;
- 3) Respond to public complaints and improve our facilities and programs accordingly;
- 4) Ensure that posters listing the rights of the public to file an accessibility complaint and the complaint procedures are evident at all DNR-operated and managed facilities.

**Objective B:** Devise additional means to communicate news of DNR's accessible facilities and programs.

**Action items:**

- 1) Utilize radio, television, National Center on Accessibility showcase, magazines, E-mail list services, special interest groups;
  - 2) Showcase DNR accessible facilities and programs through special events;
  - 3) Develop an area of the DNR websites (intranet and internet) to:
    - a) Communicate accessibility successes and initiatives to employees and the public.
    - b) Search engine feature to highlight accessible elements for each B/D/O.
  - 4) Submit completed projects, programs, or services to national institutes for publication, recognition, and greater exposure.
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**GOAL 5**     ***Evaluate the Department's performance in achieving the DNR Accessibility Vision. Evaluations shall be used to modify the goals and objectives of the Accessibility Plan, as needed.***

**Objective A:** Identify the best means to monitor the Department's compliance with accessibility requirements, which are dynamic.

**Action items:**

- 1) Consult with other state and federal agencies for guidance and examples of effective compliance monitoring instruments;
- 2) Determine the most efficient and most cost effective compliance monitoring methods;
- 3) Develop DNR compliance monitoring process to be used.

**Objective B:** Implement compliance monitoring.

**Action items:**

- 1) Locate (by B/D/O) the program areas and establish geographic boundaries for monitoring;
- 2) Conduct monitoring of the geographic areas on a rotating basis;
- 3) Establish specific review periods for internal assessment annually or bi-annually;
- 4) Compile the results of the compliance monitoring and report results to the DNR Management Team and to the State ADA Coordinator.