

Wilderness Risk Management Conference Welcomes Three New Steering Committee Members and Appoints New Committee Chair

Burlington, VT – February 5, 2020 – Ahead of the 27th annual [Wilderness Risk Management Conference \(WRMC\)](#) which will be held in Burlington, Vermont, the conference Steering Committee appointed a new chair and welcomed three new members. Joining the committee effective January 2020 are Elyse Rylander, Partnership Manager at Camber Outdoors and founder of OUT There Adventures and LGBTQ Outdoor Summit; Moleek Busby, Field Operations Senior Manager for the Washington Trails Association (WTA); and Michael Davis, YMCA BOLD & GOLD National Program Manager. Additionally, Mike Pigg, Outward Bound USA National Safety Director, was appointed as the new chair of the Steering Committee.

"I'm excited to welcome three new committee members who each bring with them a unique risk management perspective and set of experiences that will help contribute to the WRMC community in many meaningful ways," said incoming Chair Mike Pigg. "As the outdoor industry continues to evolve, the WRMC has the opportunity and responsibility to respond, keep pace with change, and share new ideas in order to promote collaboration, inclusion, and improved risk management practices across the industry. I look forward to working with Elyse, Moleek, and Michael as we continue our critically important work to confront the challenges facing the industry so that we can emerge as a stronger, better community for the people we serve."

The 13-member [WRMC Steering Committee](#) oversees the educational content of the conference and provides collaborative direction and leadership. The committee is comprised of representatives from organizations that aim to represent WRMC attendee demographics and industry sectors, in support of the WRMC's purpose and shared risk management philosophy. Individual committee members are selected for their varied expertise and experience in wilderness risk management. The new committee member designations are as follows:



Photo by Brad Christensen

Incoming Chair Mike Pigg (he, him, his) has served on the WRMC Steering Committee since 2015. He has been involved in the experiential education industry for over 15 years as an educator, trainer, and administrator. He has a long history with Outward Bound (OB) Australia where he served for several years as the safety director, and then general manager. He joined OB in the US in 2015, first as OBUSA associate safety director and then director of operations at OB Colorado. Today he is the OBUSA national safety director, a member of the OB International Risk Management Committee, and a member of the AEE Accreditation Council.



Photo by Clayton Boyd/The North Face

Elyse Rylander (she, her, hers) is the partnership manager at Camber Outdoors and founder of OUT There Adventures and LGBTQ Outdoor Summit. Rylander has worn many hats in the outdoor industry and education worlds. Since 2006 she has taken thousands of youth and adults on outdoor adventures all over North America. In 2011 she founded OUT There Adventures, a nonprofit dedicated to further bridging the gap between the LGBTQ community and the natural world. This mission resulted in dozens of publications, presentations, interviews, trainings, and program partnerships aimed at increasing queer visibility and further complicating the narrative of who goes outside and how. Rylander's work has appeared in countless publications and in 2018 she was named a "Top Woman in Conservation and Environmental Justice" by ECODiversity Magazine. She is also the co-organizer of the annual LGBTQ Outdoor Summit and a former partner with The Avarna Group. Rylander has been a frequent attendee and speaker at the WRMC since 2015.



Photo courtesy of Moleek Busby

Moleek Busby (he, him, his) is the field operations senior manager for the Washington Trails Association. He started his career in trail work with the California Conservation Corps and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) where he worked for nine years in many roles. During his time at SCA, Busby handled strategic recruitment and managed and created programs for SCA youth teams. Busby has also volunteered for Outdoor Afro where he aided in organizing meet-ups for hiking and various outdoor adventures in the San Francisco Bay area. Busby is passionate about advocating for marginalized people to have ownership in their space, and to feel safe while volunteering and recreating on public lands.



Photo by Chris Hagen

Michael Davis (he, him, his) is the national program manager for YMCA BOLD & GOLD, working with sites across the country to provide resources and tools to run BOLD & GOLD programs. After graduating with a degree in business, Davis became an investment banker in Philadelphia. However, he realized that money is not his prime motivator and began seeking out

a more inspiring career. He is inspired by the great conversations that happen on the trail and around the campfire, how participants learn to care for each other, and creating programs that offer opportunities to try new things without judgment. He has worked as a field instructor for BOLD & GOLD as well as NOLS. Davis is a relative newcomer to the WRMC but is passionate about wilderness risk management, and wants to support anyone interested in learning to manage risk more effectively.

“It’s exciting for the WRMC to have new leadership and an infusion of new ideas,” said former chair and current Steering Committee member Katie Baum Mettenbrink of NOLS. “Mike Pigg and OBUSA taking on the Steering Committee Chair role highlights the collaborative nature of the WRMC. This conference has been a joint venture from the start, and rotating conference leadership is one way of building on that legacy. Mike has demonstrated dedication to the WRMC’s core purpose and a commitment to exploring new ideas, and I’m looking forward to our next chapter.”

To learn more about the WRMC Steering Committee’s responsibilities and benefits, or to apply to serve on the committee, click [here](#).

About the WRMC

The [Wilderness Risk Management Conference \(WRMC\)](#) unites hundreds of organizations annually to share ideas and educate wilderness practitioners on practical risk management skills. The WRMC is a collaboration between Outward Bound USA, the Student Conservation Association, and NOLS, in partnership with the WRMC Steering Committee. Its core objective is to offer an outstanding educational experience that helps attending programs mitigate the risks inherent in exploring, working, teaching, and recreating in wild places.