

December 2006



# Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

## Cover Picture

This is Matt's FJ40 Land Cruiser on his personal rock pile at his house during the "Lo-Rangers" Christmas party.

## Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Steve Smith, Ed and Nancy Lyons, Scott Nixon, Matt Parkes, Steve and Linda Graham, Ted Gersztyn, Duane and son Max (guests) and Keith Williams (guests)  
Meeting called to order at 7:03pm, recited the pledge of allegiance, guests were welcomed.  
Treasurer's report was same as last month, \$3877.50.

\*\*\*\*\* DUES ARE DUE AT JANUARY MEETING \*\*\*\*\*

ASA is looking for a new historian.

Cochise trip was canceled due to lack of interest and general wimpiness (it looked too cold???)

Christmas party will be held in Matt's back yard on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, show up any time after 10AM. It will be a potluck. A rock buggy on dry rotted and split 52 inch Michelins running Rockwell axels will be there. Matt handed out maps.

U-Rock is at Firebird this weekend.

We discussed Jack's Government salvage and his acre of tires.

Questions were raised about a New Year's run. Steve and Linda will be camping at Florence Junction; Scott will call Marty to find out if he is running his usual trip.

January trip will be Red Picacho Loop near Wickenburg. Easy trail doable by any stock 4x4 with challenging sections as optional side trips. January 20<sup>th</sup>. Trip should take about 3 hours. Meeting on Castle Hot Springs road near Morristown at 10AM. Trip leader will be Steve Smith.

December 9<sup>th</sup> will be a Christmas tree and (hopefully) snow run near Heber, call Scott for details 602-361-1517.

Steve gave details from ASA Quaterly:

- There will soon be a gate on Martinez canyon; a free permit will be required. This is BLM land?
- They are trying to update address/phone/email list. Make sure Ed has your correct info!
- 2006 (no, NOT a misprint) membership cards are here. Get them while they are still valid!
- Dash plaques are here too; they are at least good for 2006 and 2007.
- BLM meeting Thursday December 7<sup>th</sup> at the Phoenix district office.

- Copper stickers would be required for any unlicensed vehicles. Environmentalists are trying to get on the board of directors to ensure money is used to “fix what we’ve ruined”.
- Western slope no-fee coalition thinks any land that can’t turn a profit will be closed under new Forest Service mandate of “no partner, no potty”. Supposedly, existing camp grounds and facilities will be closed then demolished if corporate sponsors aren’t found.  
Check out [www.westernslopenofee.org](http://www.westernslopenofee.org)

Linda has heard rumors that Sycamore creek, the Rolls OHV area and most of the Four Peaks area is slated to be gated and permitted similar to Bull Dog wash. Permits will supposedly be free.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42; members were instructed to “hang out and B.S. as long as they wanted.”

Respectfully submitted by Scott Nixon

## Calendar of Events

December 2 – Club Christmas party run at Matt’s backyard

No club meeting in December

January 1 – New Years Day Club run TBD

January 20 – Red Picacho Loop Club run call Steve Smith @ 480-838-5394

January 31 – Meeting at 7pm location La Belle Pizza

## Trip Report

No trip report because the people that put forth the effort to write a trip report didn’t attend any trips.



Steve's rigs.



**This is good practice for when you come across fully inflated tires mounted on trucks in the desert blocking your path and there's no way around it.**



**If you don't practice this is what happens, Erik's Cherokee on its side.**



### Items of Interest

Remember the club meeting is the last Wednesday of every month, 7:00pm at La Belle Pizza & Pasta, North West corner of Rural and Ray in Tempe.

#### December run

It was the party at Matt's house.

#### Scott's Christmas tree run

Ok, here's da sit-ye-ation....

Steven has his last baseball game on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup>, its 2-3pm. Not sure how much later it may go, they may do some sort of after party or trophy ceremony. As soon as that's over we're headed north. Will eat dinner along the way (Fountain hills, Payson?) then spend the night in Overgaard. Sunday morning will grab some breakfast and head a little further east. Cutting area is National Forest between Heb/Ovr and Sho-lo. Kill the tree, eat some lunch, play in the snow (hopefully) and then head for home.

We're staying at a really fun and relatively cheap place that has log cabins:

<http://www.elkslanding.com/>

A few years ago I stayed at the Best Western Sawmill inn that is in Heber, also a nice place. Call Scott if you want to go @ 602-361-1517.

Scott Nixon

### X-TREME Jack

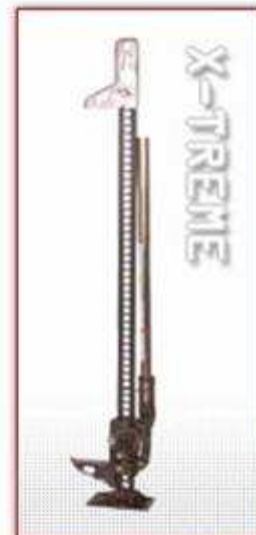
The Hi-Lift® X-TREME is for the serious Hi-Lift® user, offering the "top of the line" all-cast version (48" or 60" sizes) with special features that include, charcoal metallic powder-coat finish, gold zinc-coated hardware and handle, and a special top winch-clamp-spreader attachment.

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- One position for all winching, clamping, and spreading positions.



### Land Use Issues

UPDATE

More articles and editorials about the Forest Service policy of Recreation Site Facility Master Planning (RSFMP) have appeared in major newspapers. Some of the most prominent ones are pasted below.

The WSNFC report on RSFMP can be read

at <http://www.westernslopenofee.org/NoFee/RSMFP.pdf>

As you read these articles, you will see claims by the Forest Service that their budget has been cut by 2.5% and that their maintenance backlog is \$346 million. For the record, we have reason to question both of those figures.

Robert Funkhouser

1. Denver Post Editorial 12/3/06
2. Pueblo Chieftain Editorial 12/3/06
3. Helena Independent Record article 11/29/06

1. Denver Post Editorial

### **Forest plans need close look**

Published 12/3/06

Your favorite campground could be on a U.S. Forest Service hit list.

The agency, which manages about 15,000 camping areas and other recreational sites on 193 million acres of public lands, is surveying each site to weigh its value against the cost of upkeep. We urge Congress to review the process and properly finance the maintenance of these sites.

Forty-four national forests have been examined, and 10 percent of their facilities are marked for decommissioning or closure, Jeremy P. Meyer reported in last Sunday's Denver Post. Another 175 forests and national grasslands are to complete their reviews by the end of 2007. The Forest Service says it launched the survey because of a generally tight budget, increasing fire-fighting costs and a \$346 million backlog in maintenance work. Officials say that most campgrounds were built in the 1960s, and many are outdated or deteriorating.

But the review has raised suspicions among agency critics. The Western Slope No-Fee Coalition, a Colorado group that has opposed service efforts to charge for some facilities and services, believes the agency wants to impose a "for-profit" model on the forests and turn operation of many sites over to contractors.

The group says the Forest Service has ineffectively used the recreation-management funds that it already has. Beyond that, the agency has run the project without adequate public input, even though spokeswoman Lee Ann Loupe told Meyer that the public will be able to comment and that "nothing is set in stone yet."

We don't object to the inventory, and we're quite certain that there are facilities that can be closed or downgraded because of their light use and ongoing costs. And it may be reasonable to institute some moderate fees for the use of some recreational facilities.

But the Forest Service needs to remember these are public lands. The agency should make sure all survey documents available and schedule hearings on the plans for each forest. Congress should review the project and the agency's motives. That would be a good 2007 project for John Salazar, Mark Udall and Doug Lamborn, three representatives whose districts include most of the national forest land in our state.

2. The Pueblo Chieftain Online

EDITORIAL

Published: Sunday December 03, 2006

**Colorado should lead nation's fight to save campsites**

This story didn't make the radio talk shows or the Sunday morning TV programs, but it should have. For a lot of American families it is more important than many of the topics that got the attention.

The U.S. Forest Service is conducting a comprehensive inventory of campgrounds and picnic areas in the national forests and grasslands. That would be good news if the aim of the survey was to catalogue the sorry state of many facilities and launch a program to improve them. Many have been neglected for years.

But that's not the goal. The purpose is to identify opportunities to further diminish these accommodations.

Of course Forest Service administrators won't say that directly. What they will say is that they are looking for "economies" - ways to cut the budget. Already the annual budget for next year was cut by 2.5 percent, and that's only the beginning. The survey is intended to provide evidence that it should be cut substantially more between now and 2010.

It's not the Forest Service's fault; the agency's budget is set by Congress. Colorado's congressional delegation ought to lead a crusade in Congress, forming a coalition of states with large Forest Service holdings, to put more money into the Forest Service budget, not less. We'll see where the Democrats stand on this now that they control both houses.

Colorado's forests are a huge tourist attraction and economic force. They are a wonderful model of the "multi-use" program of the Forest Service, offering such wide-ranging activities as skiing, hunting and fishing, camping, hiking, scientific research and logging. You might notice that most of those activities are big revenue generators - especially skiing and hunting. But camping doesn't pay its own way through daily user fees and other minimal services. And so it is the orphan in the network.

The Forest Service says there already is a \$346 million backlog of maintenance needs, and fire-fighting expenses are skyrocketing. Who in Congress cares much about the condition of toilets at a forest campground in Maine or Michigan or Colorado? Families that use campgrounds don't ask much - just a sanitary site with basic, decent accommodations. For many families this is the alternative to a Holiday Inn-style hotel with playgrounds, swimming pools and exercise facilities. It is their choice for where to spend precious family time together, rather than at theme parks and monster-truck shows. It also is the most economical vacation a family can afford these days.

The plan to cut services - possibly closing 10 percent of the nation's 15,000 campsites and trailheads with sanitary facilities - isn't without opposition, but so far the survey is charging forth.

"This is an enormous change for the Forest Service," according to the president of the Western Slope No-Fee Coalition. Robert Funkhouser told The Denver Post, "What you have here is a policy that mandates all sites are self-sustaining or profitable or they must be closed."

Like a fresh breeze blowing through the wilderness, he insists, "That's not OK."

In some areas, the survey already has been completed. More than one-third of the sites in three Colorado forests - Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison - have been tagged for closure or modification.

Colorado's junior senator, Ken Salazar, ought to call the state's congressional delegation together to settle on a coordinated response to this movement. They should launch a Congress-wide campaign to help the Forest Service meet its agenda of serving the public, not just collecting revenues from it.

If the Democratic Party really believes in the outdoor experience, it should challenge "family values" Republicans to join in enhancing - not diminishing - the assets of our National Forests.

Chuck Green, veteran Colorado journalist and former editor-in-chief of The Denver Post, syndicates a statewide column and is at [chuckgreencolo@msn.com](mailto:chuckgreencolo@msn.com).

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3. Helena, Montana Independent Record

### **Baucus wants public input before Forest Service makes any decisions**

By [EVE BYRON](#) - IR Staff Writer - 11/29/06

Sen. Max Baucus is asking the Forest Service to hold public meetings in Montana before the federal agency decides what campgrounds, picnic sites or other recreation facilities to close - something the federal agency said it will do.

In a letter to Regional Forester Gail Kimbell, Baucus requested that Montanans' opinions be gathered before cutbacks are made at any facilities in the state, through a series of public meetings on each of the nine national forests in Montana.

"I'm not going to let the Forest Service make decisions about our campgrounds without full public input and scrutiny," Baucus said. "Limiting access to our public lands for hunting, fishing and camping is something Montanans don't take lightly."

The Forest Service is in the process of evaluating its 15,000 campgrounds, trailheads with bathrooms and other developed recreational sites on 193 million acres throughout the nation, with an eye on discontinuing some services due to shrinking budgets and a backlog of maintenance.

Montana has around 1,500 developed recreation facilities on national forests.

Baucus is concerned because the Forest Service is not required by law to gather public input into these decisions, and he wants to give Montanans a chance to weigh in on the proposal.

A spokesperson for Kimbell said they plan to involve the public in the recreation site facility master plan process as soon as they come up with five-year proposals, with meetings slated as early as next January.

"(Each forest) is coming up with a product - what recreation facilities we have, how they are being managed and how to proceed with them," Christine Romero, a public affairs specialist for Region 1, said on Tuesday. "We'll present the list to the public and ask them if we're on the right track."

Thirteen national forests are in the Forest Service's Region 1, which includes all of Montana and a portion of Idaho. While all are going through the self-evaluation, five out of the 13 forests - the Helena, Lewis and Clark, Lolo, Bitterroot and Flathead - are further along than others, Romero said.

At this point, the Forest Service's schedule calls for meetings on those forests, as well as in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Kootenai forests, next January. A public meeting on the Custer National Forest is slated for February, with the Gallatin National Forest to follow in March.

Each of the 155 national forests and 20 grasslands are putting together recreation master plans that evaluate the condition and frequency of use of sites, as well as how they fit into the forest's recreation "niche," by the end of 2007. The master plans will determine which facilities to keep, close, or upgrade, as well as look at instituting or increasing user fees at certain sites.

One of the largest budget problems for the Forest Service is its \$346 million backlog for maintenance, and the growing costs for fire suppression, which makes up about 42 percent of the Forest Service's expenditures. Exacerbating the problem are dwindling funds - the federal agency's budget for 2007 was cut 2.5 percent, to \$4.9 billion.

Barrett Kaiser, a spokesman for Baucus, said the senator is working on a long-term funding plan to deal with the cost of fighting wildfires without having to pull money from other forest programs.

"He's committed to getting additional funds for the Forest Service," Kaiser said. "The biggest chunk of their money goes to fighting wildfires, and Max wants to create some type of stable trust fund so they don't have to take from their other budgets to fight forest fires.

"It's safe to say Max is committed to finding a solution to this backlog, but he wants to ensure Montanans don't lose any hunting, fishing or camping opportunities."

Submitted by Steve Smith

### Editors Stuff

Scott Nixon's done an excellent job of putting pictures up from our previous runs. Check out the webpage at: <http://www.azlorangers.org/images/index.htm>

### Things you need but didn't know it

Free for the taking:

\* Non-tilt steering column from a 1980 J20. It has the ignition key and GM-style wiring. The steering wheel is pretty generic. It doesn't say "Jeep" or AMG so it won't be embarrassing to put in any vehicle.

\* A flywheel for an AMC 360 engine. Weld some legs on it to make a nice little patio or accent table. Just kidding! It's in good shape. Call Steve or Linda Graham @ 480-834-1171

For Sale 800w generator call Steve Graham @ 480-834-1171

I'm posting this for a friend

It is a 1984 series. ¾ ton axles, 5K on a new big block, not sure if it's a 396 or a 454, trans and transfer case were gone through the same time as the motor. I want to think the transfer case is a 208, but not sure what 84's came with stock. I don't think it has lockers, but I do know it is posi front and rear.

It does have a good 6" lift, all springs, no blocks. Probably 35" or 37" tires on 15" rims. No AC, No power windows or doors. Just basic setup. I do think the dash is plumbed for AC, but I haven't looked inside. I'm thinking it has a T400 automatic. Worst case is it could have a T350, but I doubt it since it's an 84.

Body is in really great shape considering the year. Not show room quality, a small amount of TLC and some paint and you'd have a real looker. No big body damage or rust, small dings here and there, as expected for a 1984. It does have buckets front and rear bench seat. Not sure if it has the console in the middle. Clear Title

Location: Gilbert (closest cross streets are Higley and Queen Creek)

Call Chad Berry @ 480-279-9838 HM Number.

### Quote



Don't be afraid to do things yourself, sometimes the people you send your parts and money to know less than you do.

Rusty (Pirate4x4)

**Created by Charlie Babcock**