



Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:05

Members in attendance: Marty Boetel, Rick King, Ron & Brenda Couch, Tim Kennedy, Dan & Jennifer Egge, Scott Nixon, John Tash, Bruce Browell, Ted, Loran & Jake Gersztyn, Ed & Nancy Lyons, Glenn McConnell
First item was listing some of the closures due to fire dangers, (more details later in this issue). State Trust land is closed, most Forest Service land is closed. In the Florence are BLM land is open, as are some of the "county roads" but not the State Trust Land.

Ron talked about the Mud Springs trip. He was disappointed by the low turnout, three trucks. Our Adopt-A-Road is pretty clean and in fair shape. The one problem hill is better now, but the one just past it is now the worst one. The kids that were along for the ride did a lot of walking and most of the cleanup.

See the trip reports from Scott and Linda about the Cinders trip and FR 212.

Marty mentioned a very nice established campground at Wet Beaver Creek. Near Sedona, but rarely used. No four wheeling, but a pretty place to camp.

Glen mentioned a new trail the Ajax mine trails named overdose. There are only three major obstacles and the trail is only ¼ mile long, but it took 5 ½ hours for 4 trucks to make it. There is a wide notch with lots of shale and the last obstacle is a 9-ft waterfall. The trail end at a cross tie bridge. Good trip, but lots of gnats.

The June run will be a night run at the coves of Saguaro Lake on Saturday June 22. Meet at Butcher Jones Beach just past the gate into the off highway access area around 7:00 PM. Contact Ron Couch for details.

Recently there was a BLM meeting about the Middle Gila area. This was an open forum to determine what is important to the surrounding communities. Good showing by OHV, but not much community interest.

The Gersztyn's are once again heading south for Independence Day. They are inviting the club to join them (see details in this issue). In addition to a parade, fireworks and down home fun, they may be able to talk some of the local's to find some 4 wheeling.

Meeting closed around 7:50

Minutes cobbled together by Editor.

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Calendar of Events

June 15 –16	Truck Show at Rawhide (inside)	4 – 7 PM
June 22	Night run coves of Saguaro Lake	Ron Couch
June 26	Monthly meeting	Peter Piper Pizza
July 3-7	Bisbee Independence Day and run	Ted Gersztyn
July 20	Run to be determined	
July 31	Monthly Meeting	Peter Piper Pizza

Items of Interest

Trip Report

San Francisco River Rd (FR212)
May 25-26, 2002

San_Francisco_River_Rd = Red_Creek * 10! With a zillion water crossings! The deepest crossing was about 32". The water came over the front bumper on Steve' s truck. The river' s water levels are probably at their lowest at this time of year.



Steve and I took off at 6am Saturday morning. We got to FR212 at 10:30 and then it took another 2 hours to make it down to the river. Hwy 78 and FR212 are spectacular by themselves. FR212 winds down in Dix Canyon and the road dead ends at Martinez Ranch. From there you take a left turn and head down to the river. The SF River has very lush vegetation, lots of swimming holes and huge cottonwood trees. There are river crossings at practically every turn in the trail -- for about 20 miles. Then FR212 takes you into Clifton with an awesome view of the Canyon as you climb out of it.

We ran into the Bisbee group about 1/3 of the way into the trail. It turned out that they had problems just getting to the Clifton area and decided to camp on the west end of the trail instead. We chitchatted for a couple of minutes and then we never saw them again. We saw a few VW rails and ATVs but that was about it. The toughest part of the trail was watching it instead of looking at the scenery. The trail is mostly large round river rock and deep sand but there were some piles of loose rock that were very slippery. It is easy to take the wrong route. The trail is occasionally hard to locate.



We camped out at about the 1/2-way mark when we decided that we were too tired to drive further. Our campsite had a huge cottonwood and several other trees than provided an almost solid canopy about 40 ft over our heads. We stopped next to a river crossing that looked like deep mud. Steve was leery about taking the Dodge into it and getting stuck so we decided to turn back on Sunday morning. We stayed in camp as long as

we could, but we ended packing up around 10:00am. We had a long drive home.

On our way out we ran into a family whose 14-year old boy had slid their truck (with all their camping gear and food) into a deep marshy pit with steep, really soft sand walls and about 3 ft of water (muck) in the bottom. They were able to call out with their cell phone (that must have been a miracle) and a couple of friends showed up to help them out, but they came out with stock (open diffs) trucks and chains. The stuck truck had lockers front and rear. They were trying to pull it sideways and they had the truck at almost 45-deg in to marsh, buried up to the frame. A little more tugging like they were doing and the truck would have been all the way in the water. We came along just in time. We hooked up two tow straps to Steve's truck and yanked it out. It's nice to have the tow truck along!!

Since the folks that came out were locals and knew the trail we decided to follow them out to Clifton, instead of back toward the Martinez Ranch, so we could see how deep the crossings were. The one we thought was really muddy had a good rock bottom. Eventually we came to the deep crossing (the Chevy trucks' headlights were under water). we stopped and Steve modified the air intake on the Dodge so it was above the fender well. There was only one really muddy crossing on the trail. It took us about 5 hours driving to reach the end of the trail at Clifton. Total off-pavement was about 40 miles. I filled up in Safford and topped off again for the drive home at the same gas station. The old ZJ got 10mpg. Steve's truck got 12mpg. Total driving on and off pavement was about 430 miles.



The trail itself is 2.5-3.0 trail. Some of the river crossings are very steep. The deep soft sand and loose rock piles aren't dangerous, but you don't want to lose momentum! You really need 3 days to do this trip. Driving on river rock all day really beats you up! One of the gentlemen that came out to help the family said that there was about 220 bighorn sheep in the canyon and they are not afraid of humans and motor vehicles (kind of like the herd out at Canyon Lake), but the greenies are trying their best to find a way to close this stretch of river

to OHV and 4x4 traffic. There is also some pretty good-sized catfish in the pools along the river. The Blue River (where it joins the SF River) has been fenced off the motor traffic. The sign and fence looked pretty new.

This is one of the prettiest trails we have ever driven and well worth the 200-mile drive to the trailhead. We hope to go back there again this year. FWIW: The Apache Sitgreaves NF had no fire or camping restrictions in this area.

Linda

Trip Report

Cinders May 17-19, 2002

Participants: Nixon family - Dodge Ram, Babcock family - Blazer, Brown family - Bronco, Candy Nienstedt - Jeep TJ

Pulling out onto I-17 Friday afternoon, it was soon apparent this was not a good time to be on the highway. As the altimeter on my GPS ticked upwards, so did the temperature gauge in my truck. By the time we hit the big hill the A/C was off, the blinkers were on, and the tranny was in second gear. Lynn was radioing back discouraging reports from the motorhome:

"The A/C quit blowing"

"I smell gas!"

"It sounds like gunshots from under the hood."

Despite the ominous sounds and smells (and all the sweating), we kept rolling. The Babcock's weren't so lucky. We passed them while they were on the side of the highway spraying water onto their overheated fuel pump. A DPS officer had stopped to ask if they needed assistance. Becky radioed that we should keep going. They eventually passed us during a diaper stop and we all grouped back together just outside of Flagstaff. A few more miles led us to the last gas station before the forest road turnoff. After gassing up we headed up 89 and turned onto the signed road for Cinder Lake.

Lynn fell back in an attempt to keep the RV in one piece on the bumpy, rutted road. Charlie and I raced ahead looking for the signs Mike Brown had promised would be out. After squinting at every carsonite sign on the way in looking for a small piece of paper or the usual paper plate, we were pleasantly surprised by the large, neon orange sign Mike had left for us. Any self-respecting "work from home while loosing weight" outfit would have been proud to have such fine advertising.

After looking at the road to our chosen campsite, I decided the RV didn't stand a chance. Mike responded by calling me a domesticated feline (you figure it out). Succumbing to peer pressure, I left the decision up to Lynn. She took one look at the road and laughed while mashing the accelerator. She stopped laughing after the seasickness set in, but other than a loose speaker that came crashing down she made it in no problem.



While the Babcock's set up camp and Mike grilled bratwursts, I set about learning how RV electrical systems work with a borrowed multi-meter. With a bit of profanity and a few sparks, a sticky relay and a reset overload fuse yielded lights and water pressure. After dinner, Mike led Charlie on a quick night run with me riding shotgun. We didn't get far though, as the K5 wasn't running quite right. Back at camp, I turned in and tried to sleep as our noisy neighbors partied late into the night. The only thing more annoying than their thumping bass stereo was when they went for a night run at 2AM that mostly involved circling our camp at full throttle on their ATV's. Mike was even less fortunate, he had to set out in the dark to locate Candy who was stranded on a steep hill. Wishing it was daylight (or maybe not), Mike located the stranded TJ, pushed in the clutch, and got to the bottom in one piece.



The next morning I woke up to an insistent child who wanted to go outside and play. I bundled up in my sweatshirt and pants, pulled on my boots, and emerged to find Charlie sitting in the sun in shorts and a T-shirt. I went back in and changed. After a leisurely breakfast, I headed over to the small bowl for some playtime. One or two laps and I was ready for a bigger challenge. Heading for the big hill, I made a wrong turn

that degenerated into an ATV path. Back at the bowl, I chose the correct path and headed up at 2200RPM. About half way up I was feeling rather smug about how well my new tires were working. The feeling didn't last as I began to slow down and sink. Slapping it into 1st gear I floored it, bringing the engine up to 4500RPM. I crested the top with the temperature gauge headed for the red and the oil light blinking. Down went much smoother.

Mike came back from a gas run with a couple of bottles of fuel injector cleaner for Charlie. He dumped them in and we all loaded up for a run. Heading west we began winding our way through the trees. After a gradual down hill we started climbing. And climbing. And climbing. I gave up asking Mike where we were; it had been so long since I had been up here that I didn't remember any of the trails. We stopped to enjoy a scenic overlook and again to talk to another group of Lo-Rangers that were just up for a day run. No one wanted to brave the big crater, so we headed back towards camp. Candy wanted to avoid a big hill she had previously gotten sideways on, so Mike pointed her towards a go-around. After a few confused radio calls, Mike headed out to find her. Charlie and I headed towards camp after assuring Mike we understood his directions to get back. We lied. Two turns and a few hundred yards later we were lost. My GPS showed camp was just the other side of a big hill, but neither of our vehicles could climb it despite several full throttle assaults. Giving up, we followed the GPS bread crumbs till we could see the tents.



Back at camp we sat around and talked. Once and a while someone would go play in the bowl or attempt the big hill. Lynn tried the big hill in my truck but couldn't quite make it, even with Charlie as co-pilot. Charlie finally had the K5 running right, and took Lynn and Sydney up. Mike climbed it several times, stretching out his brand new 302. I took Sydney for a spin in the bowl, but she was more interested in the walkie-talkie we borrowed from Mike. Trying a loose path up out of the bowl, I crested the top only to get stuck. Looking to the left I could see the hard packed path, so I cranked the

wheel and floored it. The new swamper's chewed up and spit out cinders till I was pointed the right way and off we went.

As the sun began to set the adults drifted toward lawn chairs while the kids enjoyed the giant sand (er, cinder) box we were camped in. After dinner and some birthday cake (thanks Lynn!), Becky gave the girls a cold shower in the RV. The rest of us sat outside and enjoyed the screaming. An hour or so later we all turned in. Fortunately the noisy neighbors had worn themselves out, and were quite as well.



The next morning we ate another slow breakfast and started packing up. With a bit of fiddling and some more profanity I got the reluctant RV to fire up and idle. Slowly crawling our way to the highway, Lynn laughed at the less adventurous motorhomes parked out on the level road. After a brief stop for gas and air we headed home down I17.

I'd like to thank everyone for coming up; especially Mike Brown without whose assistance I would not have been able to find camp, let alone any of the trails. Hope everyone had as much fun as I did!

Upcoming Trip invitation

The Gersztyn's are once again heading south for the forth of July holiday. You are invited to come with us and enjoy a down home Independence Day celebration. Loran's family has graciously offered room on their property for all guests. They have forty acres of former farmland in the scenic Sulfur Springs Valley. There is running water, inside toilets, shade trees and mostly completed house with a swamp cooler.

We will be leaving on Wednesday morning July 3rd, exact time to be determined and returning Sunday evening.

The town of Bisbee puts on a fun event for the 4th. There are foot races, coaster races, a parade, mining competition and a beautiful fireworks display. There are a lot of interesting canyons, mountains and valleys in the area. We may be able to convince Oran or Jesse to guide us on some four-wheel drive trails. If you want to play

tourist there are mine tours, shopping and Tombstone is just a short drive away.

If you would like to join us for this fun filled weekend give us a call at 480 838 1281 or send an email to tedg1@mindspring.com. We can provide directions, maps and phone numbers to call if you get lost. It should be a great time. Depending on the size of the crowd we may even do some community meals, this alone is worth the drive!!! Let us know if you are interested and we can begin planning the details.

Land Use Issues

Off Highway access as of 5/27

I've got the list of closed County Roads and it is extensive. Rather than bore you with that allow me to point out the few areas that are open, but your OHV better have a license and insurance. Off-Road plates won't protect you from ticketing on these routes...

Dewey-Humboldt on both sides of the highway are BLM and you can ride legally (subject to the above conditions) down to Poland Junction Road. We scouted this area recently and the best place to go in is at the powerline between Humboldt and Poland Junction. Beware of gates with the Forest Service insignia that indicates the Forest Boundary and it is closed to all of us.

Other areas: Badger Springs Rd. off I-17. Plenty of places to park your trailer and a nice three-mile wash. Plus a climb to the former road, now parking area for hikers. This is BLM/National Monument and is open. Good for kids and beginners.

Table Mesa West of I-17. It is a combination of BLM, Maricopa County Parks and Bureau of Reclamation. Probably the widest area for riding in our neck of the woods, but it is HOT!!!! The first mile north of Table Mesa Road is State Trust Lands so continue approx. 1 - 1 1/2 North of Table Mesa Road to the first "Y" before you stop, camp, unload, or park.

The Bloody Basin Road from I-17 to Crown King is OPEN, so a day trip culminating with a visit to the Mill Restaurant and staying overnight is one of their Bed and Breakfast's is still okay! The folks in CK would appreciate your patronage.

The Antelope Creek Rd. from Mayer to Old Cordes to Bumble Bee to Black Canyon City is open. All dirt, but you can only go "there and back" Once you get down past Bumble Bee, you are on BLM land and you can actually find a trail or two, but beware of those forest gates...

The Big Chino Rd. is open out to it's hookup with the county road and that takes you up to I-40. The road is County and most of the land is either private or State, so watch where you stop. All state lands are closed to recreation.

All other County roads are closed except to local traffic only. If you're asking about exceptions, there aren't any. Camp Wood Rd. to Bagdad, Perkinsville Rd., Drake Rd., Iron Springs, Williamson Valley, Tonto Rd., Contreras Rd., Orme Rd, Cherry Rd., Poland Jct Rd., Thumb Butte Rd., Copper Basin Rd., Walker Rd. , Verde Ranch Rd., Senator Hwy to the end of the Pavement South of Groom Creek is open, but so what? All other roads, even ones I haven't mentioned specifically, are closed, so there you have it.

Florence Junction BLM lands are open but you have to cross State Trust Lands to get there. Pinal County claim both Cottonwood Canyon Road and Mineral Mtn Road as "county" roads so if you continue through to BLM lands (Cottonwood Canyon: BLM is approx. 5 miles east of Hwy 79... at the cattleguard) (Mineral Mtn: BLM land is approx. 3 - 3 1/2 miles south of Hwy 60... at the gate/ fenceline) **DO NOT STOP, CAMP, PARK OR UNLOAD BEFORE ENTERING BLM LANDS...** ALL State Trust Lands are CLOSED except La Paz

County, Yuma County and Mohave County along the Colorado River. NO parking, unloading, camping, biking, hiking or recreation is allowed on State Trust Lands. The Land Dept are not "advertising" the closures except to publish in the local paper... that's the best we can expect.

White Tanks are CLOSED to all use. There are no "county" roads in this area. all recreational trails thusly **EVERYTHING IS CLOSED** for the time being. Alto Pit and Hayfield Draw OHV areas are closed until further notice.

Forest Service Lands: If in question I suggest calling the local forest or ranger district for accurate, up to date information.

It's a great time to consider a trip to the Paiute Trail in south central Utah. If you never done it, it's a little warm in the low points during the summer, but the high points are over 10,000 feet!!

Let me know if you want more contact information on the Paiute...

Slowed but never grounded.

Sandee McCullen

Land Closures

BLM Lands are OPEN

State Trust Lands are CLOSED with the EXCEPTION OF: LaPaz, Mohave & Yuma Counties along the Colorado River.

National Forests:

Prescott National Forest lands are CLOSED.

Coronado National Forest lands are CLOSED.

CALL TO CHECK STATUS OF LAND CLOSURES IN:

Tonto National Forest.	602.225.5200
Coconino National Forest:	520.527.3600
Kaibab National Forest:	520.635.8200
Apache-Sitgraves Forest:	928.333.4301

Important Land Issue

OHV Recreationists.

HERE'S ANOTHER ONE.....

Write your letters TODAY It's MORE recreational lands we ALL lose if we don't take the stand and be heard!

Just a few words are needed Keep recreational areas open for recreation. Don't turn what's left of "recreational areas" over to developers... etc.

Sandee

Subject: Opposition to the BLM Land Exchange

I have written a letter of formal opposition to the proposed BLM Land Exchange that will take out a number of acres between Dewey and Humboldt out of the BLM OHV inventory and trade them to a private developer.

The three County Supervisors have unanimously joined in the opposition as well.

There's no e-mail on this round, so if you're inclined to comment, you have to send it in and the deadline is June 15th, 2002.

Send your opposing comments to Gene Dahlem, BLM Phoenix Field Office, 21605

N. 7th Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85027

Be sure your comments reference "Proposed NLCS Land Exchange Environmental Assessment"

These lands represent tremendous OHV opportunities and should not be exchanged. We can stop it, with your help!

I know it sucks, but we've got to be vigilant!!!!!!

Sanford

Effective Future Talking Point

Last Wednesday evening I sat on the couch, staring at the TV watching a forest fire threaten the outskirts of Prescott, my beloved hometown. TV3 had some of the best coverage, including interviews with various people in Prescott along with showing aerial footage.

One of the people they interviewed was an announcer from one of the local radio stations (don't recall his name). This gentleman, bless his heart, took

control of his interview from Patti Kirkpatrick, and launched into a minute or more of explanation about the controversy over trail closures in the Prescott basin. He explained how multiple forces have tried, and succeeded, in numerous instances to close 4WD trails in the Prescott area.

He went on to point out, with a large fire on the screen to prove his point, that a network of trails is not only good for 4WD recreation, but also very useful in circumstances like a forest fire when fire personnel are trying to get to remote areas to effectively extinguish blazes.

Surprisingly, Kirkpatrick let him speak his piece and even ended it with a positive comment. I almost stood up and cheered when he finished speaking. Effective fire suppression will be a "talking point" in all future letters to my congressmen.

Todd Zuercher
AZ Classic Bronco

Vanishing Freedoms

From an Email message sent May 19

From: Gary MacLaren

[mailto:gmaclaren@cybertrails.com]

Subject: Vanishing Freedoms II

Importance: High

I guess maybe some of you watched the Fox NEWS Special this evening. If not, I would urge you to watch Sun. at 5pm, or obtain a tape.

This has got to stop! When the UN can come in and tell the American people how to live, and what they can, and cannot do, this has to stop. When the Federal Gov't can shut down millions of acres of public land, because some wacko green group says the Sage Grouse is endangered, there is something radically screwed up. When 100s of farms dry up and blow away, because they can't irrigate the land, that was deeded to veterans after W.W.II, and that were guaranteed water, the system has really gone awry.

If you think they aren't going to take away our right to recreate on our land, wake up, and look around. Each one of us has to get involved, we have to fight and keep on fighting. As I write this, the forces to be, are trying to declare a wildlife corridor of some kind [a stay out zone, if you will] that will sweep through some of the best area we have, [Flo. Jct., Jawbreaker, Martinez Canyon, The Woodpeckers, The Ajax trails, ETC, will probably all be affected.]

Our idea of our fun, is just a small part of the big picture. There are people losing their homes, jobs, and their way of life. We need to stick together, and fight not

only for our right to recreate as we see fit, we need to start sticking up for everyone else's rights also.

Maybe I've ranted and raved long enough, let's see what some of the others have to say. If you want to FLAME me, do it on list or off, it doesn't matter to me.

Letter to Senator Boxter

May 14, 2002

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-0505

Dear Senator Boxer,

After reading an article about your "California Wild Heritage Wilderness Act" to be unveiled in Washington this week, I am compelled to make my views known. While I appreciate your desire to protect scenic lands, I believe that your bill falls way outside the will of the people and will have a devastating affect on the citizens of California who, like you, love nature and desire a decent place to live.

Government at one level or another already owns 51 % of the country's land, not counting waterways or easements. This bill will continue to take away areas of recreation for our citizens. The San Diego Union Tribune quoted you as saying that the process will take time as there is no support among California's 20 Republicans in the GOP controlled House of Representatives, and that you also commented, "This bill will be put into law bit by bit, year by year". That is a rather audacious attitude to force on hardworking citizens, while California, especially San Diego, is experiencing a serious housing crisis. Your extremist attitudes will ensure that our grandchildren and great grandchildren will no longer be able to afford the American dream of homeownership as more and more land grabs by the government will make existing real estate values inflate to staggering heights.

I see no logical reason to take 2.5 million acres of public land from the taxpayers, which includes the national forest areas that President Bush has proposed for oil drilling. As national security and the need for domestic oil production has been painfully brought to the forefront of the American conscience, it is incredulous that you would knowingly call for "protection" of remote wilderness that our President has ear-marked for oil exploration. You said that you and the environmentalists "have picked the most precious and spectacular lands we have." For whom? Unless people hike, bicycle in, or participate in other off-road activities on already existing dirt trails, they will never be able to appreciate the scenic beauty. I hear constantly from residents of San Diego County, who are worried about affordable housing, energy prices and freedom to enjoy recreational activities in and around our beautiful rivers and forests. I've yet to

hear from constituents who are concerned about the protection of endangered plants and species in remote wildlife areas. I see nothing in your bill that truly addresses the needs of the American people, but rather an appeasement of environmental extremists who value plant life and animals more than the well being of humans.

I realize that a person of your financial means and political privilege may have never known what it is like to live paycheck to paycheck in our expensive state, or to work two or three jobs just to pay your taxes and put food on the table. Were you not one of the U.S. Senators who spoke so eloquently in favor of the minimum wage hike? How do your policies square with your avowed defense of the working poor who can ill afford housing in California? It may seem like a noble thing to stand for the rights of striped lizards and spotted moths, but I'll stand with the hardworking moms and dads who are trying to make a decent life for their kids.

It's time to consider the citizens we represent. As such, I suggest you complete an in-depth, thorough study of the potential economic damage, both present and future that this continuous land grabbing by government will

Likely cause. It is little wonder that American public opinion of elected officials continues to be distrustful as their pleas for due and just consideration fall on deaf ears. Due to the enormous public outcry I have received, it seems necessary to reiterate their strong opinions. Americans are enraged that their individual freedoms continue to be taken away at the hands of government. It is not the role of elected officials to decide how Americans ought to pursue happiness, yet your "California Wild Heritage Wilderness Act" presumes to make that decision. The hard working people of my district and the State of California are awaiting a reasonable discussion of needs, rather than more of the same arbitrary bureaucrat decision-making and land seizures.

Sincerely,
JAY LA SUER
Assemblyman, 77th District
FWD by:
Scott Riebel
Director of Environmental Affairs
United Four Wheel Drive Associations
www.ufwda.org

