

NEWSLETTER

<http://www.wi4wda.org>

August 15, 2000

From the Editor...

I'm starting out this newsletter with some information about what you can expect. First off, as all club editors know, I don't expect much as far as contributions from the membership. Expecting a quarterly report from someone only sets me up for failures. So, unless credited otherwise, assume that 100% of what's in here was either collected from the internet by me or is somehow squeezed from the depths of my incredibly thick skull.

If by rare chance you do have something to put in, send it. I will begin compiling information for the newsletter on/about the 10th of each month, tho realistically, it's probably already mostly done by then. If you regularly post to the net and come across something interesting, send it to me. I WILL NOT repeat information that is already circulating the internet, unless it is of particular importance or I specifically haven't seen it posted on the W4WDA list. If you're gonna put it on the list, don't expect to see it in print. Oh yeah, and it should go to print on/about the 15th...

Since you were so excited to find a real Wisconsin newsletter in your mailbox, you better dig out the return address from the envelope 'cause I'm not printing it again. If you want to submit something, I take it digital...period. I own Office 2000, so whatever you send should be something I can open from there. Photos and such can be emailed to me, sent on diskette, or I'll consider scanning 1-2 per month. Scans should be at the highest quality your scanner can do...I'll convert them into B/W once I get them...format shouldn't matter on these, since Paint Shop Pro seems to open everything.

That's it...you as a member will get out of this newsletter exactly what you put in...like a computer, garbage in = garbage out. Happy trails!! Brian Swearingen - woody@vbe.com

From the local Hummer dealership...



Pipeline Rehab Report - by Brian Swearingen

After a very successful kickoff weekend on June 3rd, I've been getting continued reports from individuals that things seem to be holding up quite well. The project has it's feet off the ground!!

One particularly successful portion is located just South of the top of the Rock Hill. Originally the plans from the Forest Service called for a culvert at this location, much like what was done in other areas. However, we were instead able to install a rock wash, allowing vehicles to travel over the main trail while allowing any runoff to pass thru the rocks. The rocks also serve to filter sediment. The design includes smaller rocks at the lower end for essentially stock vehicles and large rocks at the higher end for more capable trucks and drivers. Thus far it seems to be a success, with positive comments received from both the 4x4 owners and the Forest Service staff.

At present another work weekend has not been scheduled. Unfortunately, many of our committee have work committments which have prevented setting another date. However, ANR Pipeline is continuing to work on the area. Hopefully we will schedule another weekend sometime late this Fall!

And a special thanks to all those who attended the first work weekend!! We had a great turnout of volunteers!

Fall Convention 2000 is being held October 20th, 21st, and 22nd!

Held at the Americinn in Owatonna, MN and hosted by the Southern MN 4 Wheelers. Hotel reservations can be made by calling 800-634-3444 - cost \$71 per night.

Directions: from Interstate 35, take exit 41 (Bridge Street) east to Florence Avenue. Turn north - hotel is behind Applebees.

Package #1 includes hospitality and meetings for \$5.00

Package #2 includes hospitality, meetings and dinner for \$15.00

Make checks payable to Southern MN 4 Wheelers and mail to:

Victor Wegner

7827 NW 66th Street

Medford, MN 5049

call Victor at 507-225-2511 for questions



'Roadless Lands' Setting the Woodsmen on Fire

A web-only essay by Lance Morrow

North of Boise a few days ago, I drove through high mountain desert - bald, sere, dun country with the look of the Middle East about it. The sky glared nearly white, hazed but cloudless, and the air was a breath of blast furnace, the temperature at 104 F. Military trucks passed, carrying more firefighters north to the Burgdorf fire. A few miles above Horseshoe Bend, Idaho, the country changed so abruptly I might have drifted off at the wheel and awakened on a different continent. I was in steep, sharp geography, beside the tumbly Payette River, rising into mountains thick with ponderosa pine and Douglas fir. The air should have been pristine and crystal-cool in that setting; it remained as ominously hot and dry as desert.

It is this air, crackling with arsonist summer lightning, that is burning up huge patches of forest in the American West. It is the worst fire season in 50 years, or maybe 65. Almost 4 million acres are on fire in California, Idaho, Montana, Utah and other states, and even with so many firefighters working them, the fires will not be extinguished until the fall, when rain and snow will do the job.

I met a fourth-generation Idaho logger named Galen Hamilton, who is 43, and for the better part of a day we rode in his pickup truck (its bumper sticker: ARE YOU AN ENVIRONMENTALIST, OR DO YOU WORK FOR A LIVING?) along remote logging roads.

Much of this country is scheduled to come under Bill Clinton's roadless lands plan, an initiative that will bar future roadbuilding on 43 million acres of national forest land, 9 million of them in Idaho.

Here is one side of the controversy that plan has generated: Loggers like Galen Hamilton are outraged. They think that the forest fires now burning up the West are connected to policies like the roadless initiative, to what might be called the sentimental neglect of forests - the failure to manage them properly, to thin the woods, clear the deadfall, and diminish the dense fuel that burns apocalyptically hot when fire does come.

"This is the worst time NOT to manage our forests," says Galen Hamilton. "Management" (according to the loggers, anyway) means intelligent logging, culling out dead and dying trees and always regenerating the forest, a process that can be accomplished within 12 or 15 years. It means, they say, attacking bark beetle and spruce budworm and other diseases. It means prescribed - that is, carefully controlled - burns to clear off choking, potentially hot-burning undergrowth.

Foresters at Boise Cascade in Horseshoe Bend state the case with scientific elaboration. The argument is self-serving, but not necessarily wrong. Dave Van De Graaff, who oversees 195,000 acres as region timberlands manager for Boise Cascade, gives an hour's dissertation on the hazards of mismanaged forest, and argues, "By saying you cannot build roads, they are saying, Let it burn. A lot of the West has too much fuel. It'll burn. We believe the industry is not the problem but a big part of the solution."

But, Van De Graaff sighs, "We live in a sound-bite culture. 'Logging is bad.'" To the contrary, Van De Graaff believes, logging is forestry.

Galen Hamilton and others think that the Clinton roadless plan emanates from a mentality of simple-minded authoritarianism. Washington, they say, is dismissive of the informed views of the people who actually live on the land, and whose lives are most directly affected: whose school budgets are devastated and whose towns are likely to be closed down by the romantic, clueless environmentalism of elitist urbanites and ignorant pantheists.

The author Wallace Stegner wrote: "The remaining Western wilderness is the geography of hope." Right now, it is the geography of tinder. What's the best way to save it?

Galen Hamilton has his own, highly argumentative idea. Next time, I will offer the other side, the conservationist case in favor of the roadless lands.

March of Dimes - September 9-10 in Antigo - Langlade County Fairgrounds

Online info at http://pyt.org/trails/marchofdimes_flyer.html (Thanks PYT!)

or call 800-747-3463 fax 608-838-6661

Rally take-off times from 8am until 1pm Sat.- should take about 4-6 hours

DON'T FORGET TO PACK LUNCH!!

Trophies at 7pm, dance at 8:30pm, raffle at 10pm

BE THERE!!!

Net-Speak...

Mailing lists: A mailing list is a method of internet communications. You can broadcast your own message to all members of a mailing list by sending your letter to the computer known as the list server. Wisconsin 4WD Association has a mailing list, as does the Minnesota 4WD Assoc, the Illinois 4WD Assoc, as well as 1000's of other 4x4-related groups. Simply put, every message I send to the list address is automatically emailed to everyone subscribed to the list. This a very simple and quick way to communicate with a large number of individuals. The W4WDA mailing list presently has 88 members subscribed.

Real-Time Mode: A mailing list subscription method in which each individual message gets sent to you directly from the server. On a very busy list, like my Land Cruiser Mailing List, this may equal 200+ messages per day.

Digest Mode: This subscription method condenses messages into either one daily posting or into a periodic posting, ie: 35k per digest. The W4WDA list uses a daily digest method.

Bridgestone to Recall Millions of Tires

August 9, 2000 11:53 am EST - By Tim Dobbyn

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Bridgestone Corp. said on Wednesday it would recall millions of tires fitted to sport utility vehicles and light trucks as U.S. regulators probe dozens of fatal crashes that may be linked to the tires.

At a news conference, the Japanese company's Firestone division said it would recall certain sized ATX, ATX II and Wilderness tires and replace them. The recall applied to all tires produced at its U.S. plants. "No matter how old the tires, no matter how many miles they have on them, we will replace them with new tires at no charge," said Firestone Executive Vice President Gary Crigger.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in May opened an inquiry into the treads peeling off Firestone ATX, ATX II and Wilderness tires with data that included just four deaths. Publicity surrounding the probe caused complaints to soar and NHTSA said this week at least 46 fatalities were now under investigation. "The vast majority of the incidents are in the southern most states of Arizona, California, Florida and Texas, which suggests there may be a direct correlation between heat and tire performance," Crigger added.

In its statement, Firestone said it had sold 14.4 million of the certain-sized tires affected by the recall -- the P235/75R15. Of this number, it estimated that 6.5 million were still in use. Crigger said this particular size was strongly represented in the incidents and accidents reported. Firestone's Decatur, Ill., plant was over-represented in the claims.

Ford Motor Co.'s Explorer, the top-selling SUV in the United States with 3.5 million built, was fitted with the tires as standard equipment at the factory. Ford's decision to offer customers in six other countries free replacement tires starting last August in Saudi Arabia has raised questions about why U.S. customers weren't offered a recall sooner. Bridgestone, which bought U.S. tire maker Firestone in 1988, had previously said the tires are safe when properly inflated and maintained. The recall was developed after a meeting Tuesday between officials of Bridgestone, Ford and NHTSA.

Firestone was previously involved in a huge tire recall that began in the 1970s.

Millions of its Firestone 500 steel-belted radials were recalled after NHTSA found the tire had a defect. The company paid a \$500,000 fine for knowingly selling tires that would fail government tests but admitted no wrongdoing.

Shares in Bridgestone fell 8 percent in Tokyo to 2,075 yen Wednesday on reports it was set to announce the recall. Bridgestone's stock had suffered earlier in the week as major U.S. tire retailers, including Sears, Roebuck and Co and Discount Tire Co. said they had stopped selling the tires under review.

"They can survive a one-off recall. What can't be survived is a five- or 10-year slump in the tire replacement market as that is where they make all their profits," said analyst Howard Smith at ING Baring Securities. "

(\$1-108.10 Yen)

FYI: Per the decisions made at the Spring 2000 convention, this newsletter is being sent to only 2 addresses within each W4WDA member club...these are per the two contact addresses provided on the club information sheet. Additionally, individual memberships receive a copy, as does each elected Board member. I'm quite sure this will be up for discussion during the Fall 2000 and Spring 2001 conventions, so be sure to let your delegates know your feelings on this!



On the Trail with the VP-Region C...

by Brian Swearingen

Hey there Everyone!! Hopefully, as each newsletter nears completion, I'll get a chance to get some thinking going with some thoughts and comments...so here goes - first a quick introduction of me...

My summer thus far has been a different one....most years, I get in one or two long distance trail rides combined with quite a few local rides to places like the Pipeline. This year, I've only been on the Pipeline once and that was for Trails Day!! We opted instead to do more long-distance exploring - Dresser for Memorial Day weekend, Attica in mid-June, Tellico in July in conjunction with the United convention, and another trip is planned for Attica in October. It's been a great time, exploring new places and meeting new people. And I've really enjoyed the challenge that these places provide, despite the breakage they seem to create!

For those who don't yet know me, I'm mainly into the Rockcrawling scene. I love places where articulation and clearance is king, granny gears are required, and your odds of major body and drivetrain damage are high. Attica is one of my favorites for this, Dresser and Tellico are close seconds. My Land Cruiser is under a constant change to make it better, whether it's my new Spring-Over-Axle setup, my search for 36-38" tires, my SM465 granny, or the 3x3 angle rock sliders. I'm proud of my truck and what it can do, and what makes it even better is it's 100% built by me...good or bad as that may be!

And now it sports a new paint job...amazing what a few cans of Rustoleum can accomplish! See you on the trails!

A couple of late editor comments: the USPS allow us to stuff as many as 7 sheets of paper in each envelope and still maintain the current \$0.33 postage rate...last second information is EASY to add, and as you can see, I've got room for another 3 complete pages of information this month....so get your info to me!! Club news, trail ride reports, whatever....it all prints!!

Also, I am NOT going to do a newsletter on months that the Midwest paper is distributed....this means you outta be getting between six and eight W4WDA newsletters per year. Just so ya know....

"I can't see it, but it feels good!"

Some Wisconsin 4WD Clubs take on Attica! (Or at least try and GET there...)

by Brian Swearingen, 4x4 Forever & Land Cruiser Legends

My trip began on Thursday evening about 5pm...Chris and I loaded the motorhome with the last of the food and hit the road, expecting a smooth 6 hour drive to Attica. We hooked up with Mike and Gail Wargula and Tom and Michelle Voight at the rest stop south of Lomira and were on the road again by 6:30. Woohoo!

Reuben Gosewisch calls Chris on the cell as we gassed up near Slinger...he was supposed to meet us at the first toll stop in Illinois between 8 and 8:30...he's only 45 minutes early!! Guess he was a bit too wound about the trip. He said he'd head on out and take it easy, expecting us to catch up with him...sounded like a good idea at the time...

First we discover that Mike's CB mic has an attitude, so he's in listen mode only. Not a big deal, so we thought. However, we discovered otherwise at the second Illinois toll. Tom had a trailer tire separating. We tried Mike on the CB to tell him we had stopped for a change, but he had turned it down and forgotten to up the volume again. So, here we are...in the dark changing a trailer tire and Mike is now "lost." The tire change was no big deal and while we aren't as good as NASCAR, we were as quick as you can be with semi trucks breezing by. Back in the motorhome and click....nuts...click....double nuts...dead motorhome battery! So up goes the hood on the FJ40 and we swap batteries for the trip down. Not a big deal but irritating anyways.

Mike had held up the Wendys overpass and caught up with us at the next toll. Cool! The group is back together. But wait...Tom switches tanks and the sending unit doesn't want to feed. So we hit the next exit and Tom fills up with some of the spare fuel that we all carried. (hey, I wasn't paying Chicago gas prices!) After that quick break, were back on the road again.

But Tom's luck for the weekend wasn't over yet...another trailer tire separated...now it's 11:30 and we are not quite out of Illinois yet. And he only has one spare and it's already on the ground! A couple calls to some tow services provided no luck, so we went with plan B. Out comes the high lift, off the rim goes one tire. Mike air's down one of his 2 spares and we remove that too. (Tom run's 6-bolt trailer tires and Mike and I both run 5 bolt, and we each have different bolt circles too!) Again, we didn't break any NASCAR records, but our budget is a bit smaller too!

Reuben calls again....now he's almost into Attica..."where are you guys?" After hearing the story, we promised him we'd be there before daylight...by this time we had no idea what else to expect.

(oh, and the title for this report was Michelle's comment when we asked her 10 miles later how the tire felt on the trailer!)

[For the trail ride portion of this report, check out the link at <http://4x4-forever.black-knight.com>]



LEFT: Mike Wargula makes his way slowly up one of the rock ledges in the quarry.



RIGHT: Mike Riley takes on a portion of the Pink trail.

OHV park in Gilbert has groundbreaking - Facility expected to open in mid-2001

Angie Riebe - Mesabi Daily News

GILBERT – It was a contentious four-year struggle to cement the Iron Range Off Highway Vehicle Recreation Area east of Gilbert.

But the only storm at the OHVRA groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday afternoon was the rain that pounded the dark red mud of an abandoned mine pit at the site of the new park – the first off-highway vehicle park in the state.

"I was going to wear a bullet-proof vest," said Rep. Tom Rukavina, DFL-Virginia, who introduced a funding proposal for the park to the Legislature in 1996 and received a lot of verbal shots since. But "no shots were fired" at the groundbreaking, he joked.

"This project has had its challenges," said Dennis Asmussen, director of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Trail and Waterways Division.

Area protesters of the park were concerned it would create increased noise, dust, air and water pollution, enforcement problems, and devalue nearby property and raise taxes. In 1998, protesters filed a lawsuit, but a district court judge ruled against it, and an appeal was dismissed.

But the park – which will accommodate off-road motorcycles and four-wheel-drive Jeeps and trucks and all-terrain vehicles -- has also had many supporters. There has been a partnership between Gilbert, the DNR and off-highway vehicle user groups to create what will be "a world class facility ... a quality facility," Asmussen said.

And last Saturday, more than 100 people braved heavy rain to clean up the Gilbert site. They removed 60 tons of garbage, 200 tires and 30 cubic yards of appliances from the old mine dump, said Ron Potter, OHV coordinator for the DNR. Three cars still have to be removed. "The volunteer efforts were incredible," he said.

The OHVRA is expected to attract thousands of riders when it opens mid- to late-2001. It will be a 1,200-acre park, consisting of land owned by St. Louis County, Gilbert and the state. The DNR purchased the county sections and the city lands will be leased long-term for \$1 per year.

Another 3,500-acre site east of Virginia, which was authorized by the Minnesota Legislature last year, is expected to open in 2002. But the Gilbert site will be the "headquarters," Rukavina said.

The two sites will be linked and feature recreational trails, rider safety training, and competitive event areas for all-terrain and four-wheel vehicles.

There were legitimate concerns about the \$2.23 million project, and too much money was spent by the DNR defending it in court, Rukavina said to a crowd of about 40 gathered under a tent at the groundbreaking. But concerns were addressed, he said.

"I never thought this day would come," said Lois Campbell of the Minnesota Four-Wheel Drive Association.

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The Gilbert City Council had also rejected two citizens' petitions to keep the park at least a mile away from residences. "We took a lot of hits," said Councilor Bob Perpich.

But the OHVRA will not be "an intrusion, but an asset" to the area, Asmussen said.

"This is a fruition of over four years of trial and tribulation" and will be a source of the "economic development we are desperately in need of," said Ed Schneider, former Gilbert mayor.

He and current Gilbert Mayor Karl Oberstar Jr. thanked Rukavina and others for their hard work toward the project.

"This is economic development," Rukavina said. Aurora and Hoyt Lakes took the hardest hit in the loss of jobs when LTV Mining announced in May that it would close its Hoyt Lakes taconite plant in mid-year 2001. Of LTV's 1,375 employees, 474 live in Hoyt Lakes and Aurora. But Gilbert came in third, losing "131 of the highest-paying jobs," he said.

And Rukavina said he is glad that an abandoned mine pit is being put to good use.

The park will be "unique to Gilbert and the surrounding area," Schneider said. The park's site is surrounded by "beautiful foliage."

"This is God's country. May I repeat, this is God's country," Schneider said, followed by a few cheers from the audience.

Scott Kelling, who will manage the park for the DNR, said he is happy the recreation area has moved from a concept to a groundbreaking stage. "I look forward to working with you," he said.

"When they unload the first ATV and I see (the vehicle) go down, I think I'll really be happy," Perpich said.

