



Newsletter July 2011

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Presidents message

The message is basically that things are going very well indeed, thanks to the phenomenal response by and hard work of our membership !!

We are making huge progress on a number of fronts, especially the on the ground trail projects and we have taken a leap forward in our quest to develop relations and partnerships with other trail user organizations.

The importance of forming alliances with other motorized user groups is key and something we have been working toward for some time. Whilst we hit a milestone last year with the agreement for joint seasonal signage with Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council, HATVA, OFTR and MNR the recent joint trail maintenance work in the Five Points area has taken us to the next level.

I'm sure you have heard by now of the major storm damage that occurred in the Five Points area, north of Bobcaygeon. The blow down was so bad it effectively closed down a good proportion of the trails we use. Whilst in itself this was a bad thing, the nature of the damage and fortunate sequence of events did create an opportunity for us.

The fortunate sequence of events being the fact one of our clubs came across the damage and on the same day came across Kawartha ATV club (KATVA), who were already working to clear the trails. KATVA were apparently very concerned about the extent of the damage. The story was relayed to us by Bill Simeon, which then led me to follow up with KATVA.

In the past we have typically not had a good response from ATV clubs when we have suggested joint projects. This time, however, they welcomed our help. I think in large part that was due to the extent of the damage. Even working with HATVA (Haliburton ATV Assoc.) and TMSC (Twin Mountains Snowmobile Club) KATVA did not expect to get the trails cleared this year. So, whilst they may have been a little surprised by our call, they acknowledged the value of coordinating efforts and welcomed the assistance. At this point, Brian Sibbles stepped forward and as I'm sure the volunteers will agree, did a fantastic job of mobilizing and organizing our volunteer effort. Thanks to the efforts of Brian and the outstanding response and hard work of the volunteers, the project was a huge success. Including Forest Mountain, all the trails were cleared with three weekends work. Please see Brian's article below.

Actually, I think it appropriate at this point I go a little further on our Vice President, Brian Sibbles, contribution to the OF4WD this year.



Some of you may recall that in the past I mentioned that the OF4WD would benefit from a full time Executive Director. Well we have the next best thing with Brian. Even holding down a full time job, Brian finds the time and brings an energy and passion that means stuff gets done and gets done well. He has been a huge help as right hand man on dealing with daily issues. He has done an excellent job in communicating on the forums (a very important job and one I admit I have neglected). He is our CampNL trail guide coordinator and also the driving force behind the Adopt-a-Trail program, another new and successful project. Brian – on behalf of the members of the OF4WD, thank you !

Another shout out here goes to Carol Ann. Most folks know Carol Ann for her contribution through CampNL. She has taken on the lead management role for that over last couple of years and puts her heart and soul into it. Improvements have been made every year. Not only is she planning an even better event this year but she has also spearheaded a lot of the recent OF4WD appearances at member club events, i.e. show'n shines and the like. Whenever I have put request out for some practical assistance she is invariably there with an offer of help. Carol Ann is a key player in the OF4WD and I am very grateful for her significant contribution. On behalf of the members, thank you !

I would also thank the rest of the Board. We have an excellent Board this year who have all made a positive contribution to the work of the OF4WD. Not only have we had excellent attendance at Board meetings but also professional and thoughtful input on decisions as well as active participation on projects.



Trails news

Total Fire ban warning in Ardbeg

Unashamedly pulled from a posting on the JK forum by Jeff from Retreads:

“The weekend of the July 23rd/24th the local Fire Chief was patrolling the North trail informing everybody of a TOTAL FIRE BAN...no fires whatsoever, not even for cooking or warmth (as if that was needed). He informed the group that having a fire during a fire ban would result in at least a \$290 fine”.

If you are planning a camping trip and want to find out ahead of time about fire bans, one web site I came across that seems to provide useful information :

<http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business...ge/268862.html>

For public inquiries on the forest fire situation in Ontario, you can also call 1-800-667-1940.

They also recommend calling local Municipal Office or Fire Department for locally imposed fire bans.

Bolger Lake/Ardbeg

Background : In early 2010 concerns were raised by the local cottage association on Bolger Lake about 4 wheel drive vehicle use in the area. In particular “large tired” vehicles damaging the cottage access roads, vehicles being driven in to Black Lake, plus concerns about behaviour toward local residents.

Members of the cottage association were calling for a closure of the access road to certain types of 4x4 vehicles. Given the importance of the area to the 4x4 community the OF4WD engaged in a very active campaign directed toward the Municipality of Whitestone, Parry Sound MNR and the cottage association.

The MNR and Municipality have taken a very reasonable approach in dealing with this matter. No additional restrictions have been imposed by the MNR or municipality. Both the MNR and OPP have reported that they do not see sufficient problems to justify increased patrols in the area at this time.



Update for 2011 :

The cottage association have continued their campaign. The MNR have responded by posting the following sign on the road in to Black lake :

NOTICE

This Site is Not Maintained

Respect the Environment – Practice Low Impact Use

Avoid Wetlands	Keep Fires Small
Minimize Wheel Spin	Keep Vehicles Out of Lakes
Stay on Existing Trails	Leave Sites Clean
Use Existing Campsites	Take Garbage with You

This area is patrolled by MNR/OPP

Be Considerate of Others

Help Ensure Future Use of this Site

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

 Ontario

I'm sure all of you understand and have no problem complying with the requests in the notice.

OF4WD will continue to stay in active communication with the MNR on this.



Greens Mountain



Initial concerns were raised back in 2005 and the OF4WD have been in communications with MNR since that time.

The MNR have spent significant time on reviewing this area and 4WD use in general. Whilst there have been no changes for this area so far, this will likely be one of the main topics at our next meeting with the MNR, Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council and other motorized user groups in September.

Whilst it is dangerous to make assumptions, my expectation is that the direction that meeting will take will likely be towards further stewardship initiatives.

Forest Mountain

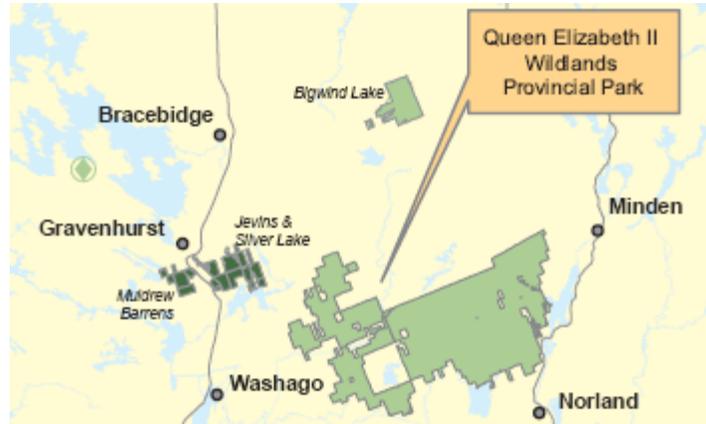
As mentioned in the last newsletter, it seems the MNR have concerns with Forest Mountain trail. No further information or update beyond what I said in the last newsletter.



QEII Wildlands Provincial Park

Trails : Coopers Falls/Victoria Falls, Anson Mountain, Minden Hydro Line to Snake Lake.

The Management Planning process for a park can be quite long. We have been working on this since 2006.



The process started by us offering to do a clean up of the area around Victoria Falls. Our campaign has included applying for a seat on the Public Advisory Committee and going through appeals process with that. We also met multiple times with Parks staff, many phone calls and emails including a meeting with Minister of Natural Resources at Queens Park. Since that meeting we did get to pitch our case directly to the Public Advisory Committee which has two of the HATVA members on it. Unfortunately, they did not change their minds and still chose not to support our request for continued access to trails in the Park.

In recent negotiations with Ontario Parks planner, I did get agreement that he would review a revised proposal. That is next on my 'to do' list.

Chertsey Quebec

Chertsey is a popular 4x4 area for the Ottawa and Quebec crowd. Apparently there are *“some really nice challenging rock trails, some at least nicer than anything I have wheeled in the Kawarthas”*.

Anyway, it seems the area has been closed down.



What are the Ontario Federation doing in Quebec, I hear you ask... Besides the fact EOTB, OVO go there, we do have member clubs from Quebec and our mandate is to do everything we can to keep trails open. Quebec is not far away and policies/practices introduced in one jurisdiction have a habit of being copied by others.

This first came to my attention via Sean Kozar who noticed this on the OVO forums. Following up with Off Roder Anonymous (ORA) and one of my fellow LRAA club members who lives in Montreal and who is very active on this issue, it seems they are in the process of setting up a Quebec Federation. I have committed that OF4WD will help as required with that and with the campaign.

See Youtube – chertsey 4x4

<http://ovo.ca/forums/showthread.php?4778-Chertsey-was-a-nice-place-to-do-trails.....&p=37308#post37308>



Adopt-Trail Program

Launched this year the Adopt-a-trail program is basically a monitoring and maintenance program for trails. A club or group of members would take on a specific area or trail. They are required to run the trail a couple of times a year and submit a report detailing trail conditions and identify any possible problem areas. Please see the “Adopt a Trail program” link on the home page of the OF4WD members web site for more details.

In the short time since the program has started Brian’s girlfriend, Kim, has created a database system for recording and managing the trails data submitted. This is a wonderful tool that allows for useful reporting on the data and complements the existing trails mapping web front end that Evan Croskery did for us a couple of years ago.

So far we have had the following six clubs sign up :

- BAJA - Rocky Ridge, Old Logging Trail, Concession Lake, Beginners Loop, Bass Lake
- CNTC (Nissan) - Minden-Anson Hydro Line
- Tri-City - Crystal Lake, Beaver Dam
- Durham 4x4 - Shoe Lace, Forest Mountain
- Retreads - The Rock
- SSO - Lasso Loop

Trail submissions are not limited to clubs who have adopted trails. We encourage trail submissions from anyone for any trail you run. Simply click on the link for the “Adopt a Trail program” on the home page of the OF4WD members web site. That will take you to the web page below. Simply, either click on the “Online Trail Report” to enter data real time via web form or click “Printable Trail Report” to enter date off line and then email it to trailconditions@of4wd.com.

I recommend you print off or load a copy on your handheld of the Printable Trail Report and take it with you when you go on a run. You will know then what we are recording and what to look out for.



Online Trail Report
Printable Trail Report
Participant Guide
Brochure

Get Involved
adoptatrail@of4wd.com

Email your name, and the area in which you'd like to volunteer.

If you belong to a club please stat which club.

All members welcome, individuals, groups, clubs, and families.

Adopt-a-Trail Program

The Crown Land trails that we enjoy are a very precious resource. In keeping with the OF4WD primary mandate of ensuring the sustainability of 4-wheel drive-based recreational activities in Ontario, we are launching the "Adopt-a-trail" program.

With the variety of users that access these trails, the conditions are subject to change with regards to surface type and environmental impact.

OF4WD's adopt-a-trail initiative is designed to allow members to become involved and take part in activities improving the longevity of the trails we all enjoy.

Members involved with the program will work in cooperation with other trail user groups to provide trail maintenance, while ensuring minimal environmental impact so that all users have an enjoyable experience while using the trail system.

How it Works

Individuals, groups, or clubs can volunteer to adopt a trail and take care of it as if it were their own. Much like the Adopt-A-Road program with the province of Ontario adoptees will ride the trail a minimum of twice a year, at the beginning and end of the season. Participants will gather and record information, in a simple form reporting pictures, trail conditions and possible problem areas with concerns to the environment or other user group needs.

Information will be submitted to a Trail Coordinator within the OF4WD organization where statistics and issues will be recorded. This information will assist the board and volunteers in organizing trail clean-ups and maintenance from cleaning up brush to fixing culverts and water crossings.

As of 22nd July we have received 41 Trail Reports :

- # of different Trails Reported on - 17
- # of different users who have submitted reports - 27
- # of reports with Tracks submitted - 3
- # of reports with Photos submitted – 15
- Total # of Photos submitted - 84

Thanks to the clubs who have signed up for the program and the people who took the time to submit trail reports. Please keep 'em coming.



The Five Points Trail System Clean Up Project

Submitted by Brian Sibbles.

On behalf of the OF4WD board of directors (BOD) I would like to commend all of the volunteers who were involved in the Five Points Trail System Clean Up Project. As many of you are aware the Bobcaygeon area was hit by a major storm in early June which caused extensive damage to the forests. Many roads and trails were blocked preventing access to cottages and homes.

Through information received from our members via the On-line Trail Reporting system, the OF4WD was quickly able to assess the situation and put a plan into action. Our president, Peter Wood, spoke with the area MNR office and local ATV clubs offering our help. The OF4WD partnered with Kawartha ATV association, Halliburton ATV Association (HATVA) and the Twin Mountain Snow Mobile Club (TMSC) in a combined effort to restore our trail system.



After the first day of coordinated efforts reports came in from all user groups stating that the OF4WD volunteers were well organized hard working individuals with the right equipment and vehicles to do the job. After the second day we had almost cleared one trail completely and all others were well under way. The local clubs had not expected to have the trails cleared for this season. The Snowmobile association thought it could take up to two years. With a combined effort it took two weekends to clear all the trails back to 14 feet across and remove all hanging debris.



The OF4WD with all of its clubs and individual members were able to put in over 1250 hours through over 80 volunteers, a proud moment for all of us. Any one of our volunteers can attest to the gratitude we received working along side the ATV, OFSC groups, local property and business owners. We cleared roads to cottages for people waiting at the back of our crews and effectively helped to restore business and tourism back into the area. Local business owners came to us with



discounts for OF4WD members in appreciation of our support to the area. (to be posted on the website soon).

This on the ground contribution has proven valuable on many fronts :

- Five Points Trail System is now OPEN for all to use.
- Demonstrated the capability and willingness of the 4x4 community to contribute to maintaining the trail system.
- Allowed us to open up a strong relationship with KATVA, so strong in fact we are on their website
- OF4WD, HATVA, KATVA, TMSC have entered into an agreement to help fix the Old Logging Trail. This is an extremely important milestone and paves the way for future joint projects.
- In recognition of all the hard work, TMSC are hosting a "Thank You BBQ" in October for all the volunteers involved
- Proves the value of the user groups working together. Coordinating and pooling resources allows projects to be completed efficiently and effectively.
- Working together is the best way to ensure a sustainable trail system remains open for all.

So once again, if you see one of the volunteers listed take a moment to thank them for their contribution, if it wasn't for them we wouldn't have this amazing trail system to use and enjoy.

To all members; Please continue to submit trail reports via the "adopt a trail link", and continue to build lasting relationships with all users when you see them on the trail.

If you were a volunteer at Five Points please send a confirmation email to brian.sibbles@of4wd.com stating your name and the dates you attended. I will send you the information for the BBQ being held on October 15th, 2011.

Aaron Darling
Adam Holland
Adam Hurst
Adam Macneil
Adam Sinclair
Angel Catalan
Barry Poljanowski
Bill Craig
Bob Redshaw
Branden Jones
Brenda Scheffel
Brett Hull
Brian Baresi
Brian Sibbles
Bruce Horath (Bronco)
Carolann Darling
Charlene Stacy
Chris Niles
Chris Svirkllys
Christine Lewis
Craig Battan
Crystal Topp

Ian Clarke
Ian Stillman
Jackie Wettlaufer
James Sheppard
Jason Scott
John Paretta
Judy McGrath
Kat Niles
Kevin Whelan
Kim LeRoy
Kris Kochanowski
Les Stacy
Linda Redshaw
Lisa Weber
Lisa Matchim
Mark Bachman
Mary Paretta
Mathias Steinbock
Morgan Buschlen
Nancy (BAJA)
Paul Hamilton
Paul Tomlin

Gregg Macneil
Guy Pardis
Heine Grunther
Vince Hodgson
William Hawksworth
Lee Spicer

People I have on a sign in sheet but are not sure which days they came, or the writing is hard to read, please confirm

Mike Vail
Mitka Kramer
Neil Bullock
Nick Walker
Read Gibson
Robert Bullock
Rod Nixon
Bryan Barnes
Con Gabriel
E. Murray
Glenn Williams

OF4WD Newsletter



Dan Pletch
Dave Petherick
Dave Tyler
David A Cole
Don Andrews
Elana Bachman
Garrin Topp
Glenn Wettlaufer
Graham Bunting
Graham Little
Grant Boadway

Peter Wood
Rachel Atkinson
Raymond Prince
Rob Rea
Ron Gabriel
Sebastian Panczyszyn
Shawn Bennett
Shawn Drew
Stirling McLeister
Tami Hamilton
Uwe Weber





Other Trail clean up projects

Ardbeg

“BAJA members and a few Retreads made a venture up the north trail to see what they could do to help out the effort of keeping the trail system open to all users.”

I'm sure many of you have driven the North trail from Black lake. If you have you will have seen the two rusted out Suzukis just off the trail. They have been there for many years. Well, thanks to members of BAJA and Retreads you won't be seeing the one up near the tracks any more. Not only did they manage to remove the vehicle but also quite the load of scrap.



Here is the account of that weekend as told by Jeff from the Retreads club (posted on JK) ...

....The goal was to remove as much abandoned material/vehicles from the trail as possible, with Friday being spent as a recon day to locate and assess the vehicles and other items that had been mentioned in the past, that left Saturday as the day



to get the task done.

The group started out Saturday morning heading north for a 2 hour run to go about 10 KM up the trail to the first target, the Suzuki that was furthest up the trail. Once they got there, it was almost 2 hours of recovering the Suzuki from where it was (about 15 feet off the trail) to getting it onto the trailer that was towed in for the task. Not only did the vehicle itself get pulled out, but many smaller pieces including broken glass were taken out as well. The site of the recovery was left in a condition that would have been similar to what it was prior to the Suzuki being abandoned there.



It was then time for the trek back down the trail. Having nowhere near enough room to get the second Suzuki, it was bypassed, but the group continued to pick up other items, including a fender from a Scout II and a large culvert (4 feet diameter x 20 feet long) that had been dumped in the bush during bridge repairs.

In all, the group of 8 Jeeps spent 9 hours removing these items, including towing it all down to Logger's Station House where Rob, the owner, had given permission to drop the items overnight until a local scrap dealer by the name of Kirby was able to pick it all up for proper disposal.



I would like to acknowledge those who had a hand in this effort.

BAJA

Rob Rea
Barry Poljanowski
Nancy McGowan
Dave Cole
Chris McDonald
and of course, Monty!

Retreads

Tony Grigaitis
Brian Lee
Adam Hayward
Jeff Sicard
Tim Quinlan

Also in attendance was Sam Mercel.



To see the full post, photos and a great video :

<http://www.jeepkings.ca/forums/showthread.php?117602-BAJA-Retreads-Ardbeg-North-Trail-Clean-up>

BAJA Pre-Season Adopt-a-Trail Run

The BAJA club are a comparatively new club, but in the short time since they formed they have made a major contribution to furthering the 4x4 cause through their work on the trails.

Below is an article submitted by Richard from BAJA :

Date: May 7th

Location: Bass Lake, Rocky Ridge, Beginner's loop



Getting up at 6am on a Saturday morning is not a regular occurrence, especially when the kids left to spend the weekend with their grand-parents the night before. My wife looks at me when I wake her and says “You're crazy and so am I for letting you set the alarm on a Saturday”. I reply with “C'mon, I'll put coffee on. The convoy leaves at 7 to go do some good”.

6:30am – The phone rings.....Scratch one driver with a lifted TJ and trailer suitable for Concession.



6:45am – The phone rings.....It's the club president...."I'm running late! I had to double back to pick up some gear I forgot."

7:15am – The 5 rig convoy rolls out of Shoppers World and heads for the 401. We meet up with the club President on the way to make it an even 6.

~~~On the Road Again~~~

Our ETA is 10am at the Timmies in Bob Caygeon. The convoy up north is well entertained with some idle chatter on the CB's and some quiet time cruising to music. Just before 9am we start to come up on Peterborough and everyone chimes in on the CB. We've got two rigs with check engine lights on and a possible overheating engine in a third rig. An executive decision is made to make a quick stop at Canadian Tire, refuel on caffeine and have a bio-break. Some supplies and small spare parts are acquired from CT and we hit the road.

~~~On the Road Again~~~

At 10:30am we arrive at the staging area in Bob Caygeon. Much to our surprise there's at least 6 more rigs waiting for us, one of which is a solid axle Liberty towing an 8'x10' flat trailer on 35's. After some friendly ribbing about not being quite on time, we head for the trails.

When we got to the trail head we split the group up into two teams. We sent the better equipped vehicles ahead on Bass Lake with the intentions of going down the southern leg of Rocky Ridge, while the rest of the us start cleaning Bass Lake. It turns out, we would have never made it up Bass Lake if we hadn't sent the other team ahead with chainsaws. So while the first team was clearing trees, we took our sweet time finding treasures most likely dating back to the 70's. By that I mean, plenty of Pepsi and A&W pop cans with the two buttons on top. The first team did such a good job of clearing trees, we had no idea it was even done.

We met a few people out on ATVs and dirt bikes enjoying the day just as we were. Everyone stopped to say hello and spark up some idle conversation. When both teams reached the northern end of Rocky Ridge, the club stopped to regroup and reorganize the garbage collected onto the trailer. Making this stop could not have come at a better time. While getting ourselves reorganized, some local cottage owners drove by and stopped to enquire about what we were doing. They were surprised and more importantly thankful for our efforts. Understanding that all the BAJA members who contributed on this day, volunteered their time and donated their own money in fuel to make the 5 points area visually more appealing.



In conclusion

The job of keeping trails open for 4x4 recreation will only get harder over time. We will be faced with new challenges. The Endangered Species act is already beginning to impact the trails community. There are changes planned to the Public Lands Act.

With phenomenal support and effort from our members and the contribution of members of the Board we have achieved a lot so far in 2011. I hope we can continue to build on that success.

Hope you enjoy the rest of the season.

Cheers,
Peter Wood.