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Expectations of OF4WD Individual Members and Member Clubs

This list of "expectations" has been created for your reference, however the list is not exhaustive. When you are in your 4WD vehicle, you are an ambassador for your club, the OF4WD, and the 4WD community as a whole. Many of the difficulties we face as a sport are due to a stereotypical reputation 4WD enthusiasts have acquired over the years.

One of the primary goals of the OF4WD is to rebuild our reputation in the eyes of other user groups, government offices, and the general public. The only way we can accomplish that goal is with the cooperation and support of all 4WD users in this rebuilding. We are not asking that you change everything about the way you enjoy your 4WD vehicle, but rather we are asking that you consider how you are perceived by those with another point of view.

When Trailriding:

- ***Be courteous to all other trail user groups you may encounter on the trail.*** These individuals have just as much "right" to be on the trails as you do. Pull over and let them pass, be friendly and wave.
- ***Maintain reasonable speeds on the trails at all times.*** There are often many blind corners and narrow passages on trails, proceed with caution through these sections as you may encounter other users.
- ***Ensure that everything you brought out on the trail returns with you.*** Secure items and be proactive in removing litter left by other users. Just because others are irresponsible does not give you the right to be also.
- ***Stay on the trail.*** Do not, under any circumstances, deviate from the trail or construct new trails, this is illegal.
- ***Do not cut down any standing trees on or off the trail.*** You may only remove deadfall that blocks your path on an existing trail, if you cannot pass without deviating from the trail, turn back.
- ***Always attempt to avoid areas which are environmentally sensitive (river crossings, marsh lands, etc…).*** These ecosystems are fragile and can be damaged by traffic through them. Choose trails that are elevated and rock-based during wet times of the season.
- ***Respect "multi-use" trails.*** Consider the other uses which may occur on trails and conduct yourself accordingly. Avoid damaging bridges or other trail features which are required by other user groups.
- ***Stay off private land and obey "No Trespassing" signs and other signage that may appear on the trail.*** Although we do not know whether all the signage we encounter on the trail was placed there by individuals who have a right to do so, we must assume that it has been.
- ***Do not abuse alcohol or any other substance when on the trail.*** Many of the same laws and penalties regarding drinking under the influence apply whether you are on or off-road. In fact, being in possession of open alcohol on public land (aside from a campsite) constitutes a fine.

- ***Promote "Organized" 4-wheeling to others.*** Encourage other 4WD enthusiasts you may meet to become involved in a 4WD club. The more people that become educated as to appropriate use of a 4WD vehicle, the better our chances of eliminating the negative stereotypes that surround our sport.

When Camping:

- ***Leave all campsites and lunch-spots cleaner than when you found them.*** It is for the benefit of all trail users that we do everything possible to maintain clean campsites and rest areas.
- ***Make sure that human waste is disposed of properly.*** If there are facilities at your campsite, use them. Otherwise, bury all human waste far from any bodies of water or environmentally sensitive areas.
- ***Use biodegradable soaps and cleaners only.*** Cleansers which are not approved for camping use contain phosphates, amongst other chemicals, which may disrupt the ecosystem in which you are using them.
- ***Always ensure that fires are contained and properly extinguished.*** Also, adhere to posted fire bans and warnings when having a fire. Do not burn items which release harmful chemicals upon combustion.
- ***Always ensure that all food & food waste is properly stored and disposed of.*** Food attracts animals which can make camping dangerous for you or others.
- ***Do not cut standing wood for use in fires.*** Only use deadfall when collecting wood for campfires.
- ***Try to avoid glass food containers.*** Glass containers can break which can lead to dangerous conditions for yourself and future campers.
- ***Be courteous to others who may pass by or be camped in the vicinity (noise, language, etc…).*** Promote a positive image for our sport and respect others around you.

When On Road:

- ***Maintain legal speeds and responsible driving habits on all roads.*** Your conduct on-road is as important as it is off-road. Modified vehicles attract attention by their appearance alone, attention attracted through irresponsible driving habits feeds negative stereotypes about our sport and those that partake in it.
- ***Try to maintain reasonable noise levels (i.e. engine & exhaust noise) when traveling through towns or other populated areas.*** "Noise" is perceived as "speed" by onlookers and feeds an image of immaturity and recklessness for 4WD enthusiasts.
- ***Try to avoid being seen with your truck "covered in mud".*** Although it may be a testament to an adventurous weekend, seeing a truck covered in mud implies damage done to the trails by onlookers. While we know that this is not necessarily so, cleaning your vehicle prior to venturing home is safer and improves the image others have of our sport.

When Planning Trail Runs & Small-Scale Events:

- ***Check the OF4WD Forums & Website.*** These locations will have posted information concerning trail conditions/restrictions which could impact your trip. Posted restrictions are due to sensitivities concerning particular trails and should be adhered to by all membership.
- ***Contact the OF4WD if the are further Questions.*** Contact the OF4WD with your questions rather than local officials, they don't need many different groups calling for the same information. Use the OF4WD as a gateway to interact with officials at this level.
- ***Chose locations which are less traveled and environmentally robust.*** Lots of traffic places stress on trails, try to use a variety of trails and trail systems to lessen the impact on all trails. Make trail choices that avoid potentially sensitive areas.
- ***Notify the OF4WD of your trip in advance.*** Email insurance@of4wd.com regarding all club trail rides and include; location, dates, and expected number of vehicles.

When Planning Large-Scale Events:

- ***Contact the OF4WD well in advance.*** Consult with the OF4WD to ensure that your event is being run under the conditions outlined by the local Ministry of Natural Resources office. The OF4WD can provide aid to clubs intending to stage large-scale events and help ensure that they are conducted in a manner that benefits the 4WD community.
- ***Ensure that the event size and risks are manageable.*** Completing a large-scale event with a positive outcome helps build a positive image for 4WD enthusiasts. Incidents or damage during such events can be disastrous to our relationships in that region.
- ***Start early!*** The worst situation is one where a club is not adequately prepared for a large event or has not complied with all the conditions required for the staging of that event. Our relationships and our future depend on your professionalism and adherence to proper procedure.

Administrative & Other:

- ***Post our link***. Member clubs are encouraged to place an OF4WD logo and a link to the OF4WD website on the front page of their home club websites. This allows individuals interested in your club to see your affiliation and seek information about the community as a whole.
- ***Post your calendar of events with the OF4WD***. This not only saves you having to email the insurance address every time you have a trail run, but it also shows the community that our members are active in the 4-wheeling community.
- ***Support other OF4WD Member Clubs***. Make an effort to support the efforts of other OF4WD member clubs. Attend trail clean-ups, help out at their events, and be active in offering your help. It's hard for every club to find the people to accomplish their projects, offer your help.
- ***Present yourself in the best way***. Represent the sport in the best possible light when you are out. Remember that the way you perceive yourself is not necessarily the way people perceive you and that ones perception is their version of the truth.
- ***Promote education and the OF4WD***. Whenever possible, try to educate your fellow 4-wheelers on responsible 4-wheeling practices. Actively promote support of the OF4WD and a unified community, it's the only way to build a better system for all of us.