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## Policy Document – Code of Conduct

### **Disclaimer**

OF4WD policy documents are not by-laws. They are documents that explain some of the procedures and stances the OF4WD takes on certain issues. They outline procedure and clarify the process involved in interacting with the OF4WD. Policy documents are updated periodically and thus should be revisited regularly if in question. The OF4WD makes no claims as to the completeness of the information herein. The comments below are based on the opinion and judgment of the Board of Directors for guidance purposes only and should not be considered legally binding.

### **OF4WD Membership Code of Conduct**

The following are a series of guidelines, developed by the OF4WD, for the purpose of creating a more pleasant environment in which to 4-wheel. Within the recommendations are guidelines that promote consideration for other 4WD enthusiasts, consideration for government representatives, and consideration for other user groups. Following these guidelines will improve the public image of 4WD enthusiasts and aid fostering new and improved relationships with other user groups.

#### *When interacting with other 4WD Enthusiasts*

- Be civil and respectful to other 4WD enthusiasts independent of their opinions, relationships, or associations.
- Promote proper education and practices to all 4WD enthusiasts you encounter.
- Offer your assistance to other 4WD enthusiasts whenever it is safe and prudent to do so.

#### *When interaction with other trail user groups*

- Be courteous to all other trail users and offer assistance when safe and prudent to do so.
- Always yield the right of way to other users, especially if they are on non-motorized vehicles or on horseback.
- Make yourself available to authorities who require your assistance in search & rescue operations.

- Avoid following too closely and sudden vehicle motions that may require emergency maneuvering by others on the trail. Keep your vehicle within your control at all times.
- When encountering equestrian groups, pull over to the shoulder and turn off engines until all of those in the equestrian group have passed a safe distance.

#### *When interacting with the public*

- Be courteous of all individuals you interact with heading to and returning from the trail.
- Be aware that the perceptions formed regarding the 4WD community are largely from those who you interact with before and after trailriding.
- Plan staging areas that will not interfere with local business or people.
- Try to support local businesses whenever possible on 4WD trips.

#### *When Trail Riding*

- Stick to the Trail. Do not drive off trail to avoid obstacles or take short cuts. Do not cut new paths, switchbacks, or trails unless you have express written permission from the landowner or appropriate office to do so.
- Never go 4-wheeling alone but keep the number of vehicles manageable. Two to five vehicles would be preferred range. Ten should be considered the absolute maximum.
- Recognize that the reputation and image of all 4WD enthusiasts will be judged based on your actions and image.
- Do not drive on private land unless you have specific permission to do so from the landowner.
- Do not drive on trails that are gated, marked "closed", marked "private", or have other signage, which implies the state of the trail is in question.
- Avoid environmentally sensitive areas at all times.
- "Pack it in Pack out" - Do not litter in or pollute the environment in any way. Clean up spills and human waste appropriately. Leave the environment in better condition than when you found it.
- Do not damage or remove any standing trees or natural features of the trail.
- Do not cross bridges that are not suitable or safe for the size of your vehicle.
- Comply with all laws and by-laws that apply when using public or private lands.
- Park and walk to sensitive scenic, historical or cultural destinations especially if no trail exists for their access.
- Restrict interaction with wildlife to viewing, do not feed the animals and practice safe camping practices.
- Avoid low-lying trails during the spring; choose rock-based trails early in the season.
- Ensure that your vehicle is in safe working condition and that all safety equipment is functional and properly used.
- Do not carry more passengers than you have appropriate safety equipment for.
- No alcohol on the trails please. Drinking and driving is illegal and irresponsible.
- Do not let individuals who are uninsured or unqualified operate your 4WD vehicle at any time.
- During winter use, do not use any trail that is groomed or signed by a season-specific user group (i.e. snowmobiles, skiers).

#### *When Camping*

- Respect fire bans and keep campfires under control. Always ensure extinguishing materials are at hand at all times.
- Respect other camping in your vicinity.
- Use biodegradable soaps and cleansing products.
- Bury human waste a safe distance from any water source and at a sufficient depth.
- Maintain a clean campsite, respect the rights of other users to use that campsite also.
- Do not cut standing wood for use in fires, if possible purchase firewood at the nearest town.