



FLORIDA FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

FALL 2005 NEWSLETTER



**The impression you leave
lasts a lifetime.**

Who Are We?

Let's start first with the Board of Directors, who they are, and who they are affiliated with.

Jason Kawaja is your new President of the Florida Four Wheel Drive Association. Most of you know him as one of the administrators of the Florida Jeeps Forum. Jason has contacts within the Forest Service and has been participating in the volunteer ranger program in the Ocala National Forest as well as keeping tabs on the upcoming decision for the Access Designation. jason@fl4wda.com

Jennifer Hawkins is now the Vice President of FL4WDA. Jennifer and Russ (membership director) are members of the Ocala Jeep Club. Jennifer has extensive experience with Florida non-profit groups, serving as Treasurer of her local baseball league for three years as well as being a licensed community association manager for five years (that's the person that is the whipping boy/girl for Florida's oceanfront condominiums). Jennifer and Russ are members of the Nassau County CERT. hawkfdc@bellsouth.net

Bryan Small is our secretary and is a member of Mosquito County 4X4. Bryan drives a Suzuki Samuri and participates in four wheeling any chance he gets.

Bik3r@yahoo.com

Monica Monroe is our new Treasurer. Monica became a member of Florida Four Wheel Drive Association by creating a new club, Capital City Jeeps in Tallahassee. Monica will prove to be an invaluable source as more and more issues arise in Florida.

monicamonroe@gmail.com

Russ Hawkins is our membership director. Russ along with his wife and fellow board member Jennifer are members of Ocala Jeep Club. After being stuck up to the doors in a slightly lifted Cherokee in a mudhole during an infamous Ocala Jeep Club night ride, he decided to put away his muscle car in exchange for an 8" Rusty's lift and 36" tires. Russ can help new clubs get established and point them in the right direction.

rushawkins@coastalassociation.com

Lisa Pardus is our Environmental Affairs chairperson. Lisa is very diligent when it comes to monitoring the entire state of Florida

for land use issues. While she does keep tabs on the issues that affect our sport, she's also watching the environmental groups for any suspicious activity (who's to say the enviro's can't initiate some legislation as well) and reports them on her website, www.floridaequalaccess.org .

We also have five regional representatives; Bruce Buell, Northeast Florida (Extreme Jeeps of North Florida), Keith Gorsuch, Northwest Florida (Panama City Jeep Club), Steve Tyler, Central Florida (Ocala Jeep Club), Mike Cannady, Southeast Florida (Palm Beach Off Road), and Dan Stewart, Southwest Florida (Caloosa Jeepers). You can get in touch with any of them through the redesigned website, www.fl4wda.com.

Jeffrey Fogel of Mosquito County 4X4 is our webmaster. He is constantly working to keep our website up to date with all the latest information pertinent to our efforts to keep public lands public.

[What Have We Done?](#)

The website has been redesigned to update the look and provide an active form of dialog between the association and it's members. Some links were added for ease of navigation to any of the National Forests in Florida as well as Big Cypress Preserve. There are also links to most clubs in the state, as well as different land use editorials. A new forum was added where you can check out the latest news and issues. The Florida Four Wheel Drive Association is a member of United Four Wheel Drive Association and Tread Lightly.



[What Are We Doing?](#)

One of the long term goals of the Florida Four Wheel Drive Association is to open up recreational access in all areas in the State. While central and north Florida have a reasonable amount of area to ride in, the folks in all of south Florida and the far reaches of the panhandle have to make long trips in order to have any real trails. We hope that changes in the near future-Lee and Collier counties have recently applied for a grant to create an ORV park in that area. The Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc., was asked to provide a letter of support for this endeavor, which we were more than happy to do.

There are other land use efforts in the works and we'll get them out to you as soon as more information is available (in the very early stages right now, changes to the T. Mark Schmidt Act). The one BIG issue that is looming in our recreational future is the release of the access designation for Ocala National Forest. This is the first access designation plan for Florida and it's a learning process for all involved. However, once this ADP is implemented, look for the remaining forests (Osceola and Apalachicola) to pick up and run with their own Access Designation Process. Changes have been mandated on a federal level (closed unless posted open) and there are indications that a legal battle looms on the horizon as some environmental groups walked away from the ADP process for Ocala early on.

IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE OUR RECREATION AREAS AND ESTABLISH A GOOD STANDING RELATIONSHIP WITH LAND USE MANAGERS AND OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY, A CLEAN UP EFFORT IS UNDERWAY IN THE OCALA NATIONAL FOREST. THIS EFFORT IS TO BE THE FIRST OF MANY WITHIN THE FOREST AND WE HOPE IT WILL BE DUPLICATED IN OTHER AREAS UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE FL4WDA. THIS FIRST CLEANUP IS SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 5, 2005, FROM 8:00 AM TO 3:00 PM AND WILL TARGET SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE FOREST AS DIRECTED BY THE FOREST SERVICE. WE ARE WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FOREST SERVICE AND KEEP MARION BEAUTIFUL FOR ASSISTANCE IN WHERE TO CLEANUP AND DUMPSTERS BEING DONATED FOR THE DAY. MEMBERS OF JEEP, 4X4, MOTORCYCLE AND ATV CLUBS ARE LENDING A HAND IN THIS EFFORT.



About Your Membership...

Some clubs have resisted paying membership fees for Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc. The Board of Directors has heard several times, "what is my \$5.00 going towards, or what are you doing with all that money?" Well, what do you want us to do? The Board of Directors and Regional Directors of Florida Four Wheel Drive Association are volunteers. Volunteers who are committed to preserving the future of four wheel drive recreation. Some of the things that have been

accomplished in the last 6 months are; a new website, t-shirts for sale, contacts made within the US Forest Service, contacts with State leaders, and identifying goals for the association. The Board of Directors is being vigilant, watching out on federal, state, and local levels. It is important to understand that there is no great war chest of money, right now we have approximately \$2500.00. In the world of environmental litigation, that won't get us too far. In other words, if you belong to a club in Florida that did not plan to pay dues to Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, we urge you to reconsider. What we do is important and we do as much as we can at this time. When the time comes to be fully involved, rest assure your Board of Directors will be on the front lines.

What Can You Do?

One of the issues that participants in four wheel drive recreation continue to face is the image that is perceived by those on the outside. A majority of folks believe that all we do is play in mud bogs in the backwoods all weekend long. Club members throughout the state know better. Several clubs throughout the state provide a number of community services by being members of CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Teams), SWAT (Severe Weather Assistance Teams) and by donating their time and talents to help those less fortunate. One organization, Florida Jeepers Forum actually pooled their talents and money to build a vehicle for a member who lost his Jeep in a terrible roll over accident. When you are out in your four wheel drive vehicle, remember that you are an ambassador of your sport and what you do reflects on all of us with a club sticker, Florida Four Wheel Drive sticker, or United Four Wheel Drive sticker. In the woods or on the beach, remember to TREAD LIGHTLY.

Changes Coming to the Membership Structure

United Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc., recently changed its membership structure which pertains to all of us. The new rate for associations (Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc.) will be \$1000.00. The old rate was \$100. An extra zero is quite an expense for an organization such as ours. However, if 100% of the membership of our member clubs join United Four Wheel Drive Association, our \$1000 will be waived for this year. Unlike most regional associations, United has a paid staff, including a land use attorney, that would be at our disposal when and if we need to pursue litigation within the state. There will be some discussion amongst the Board members in the coming weeks to determine the best course of action for Florida Four Wheel Drive as well as our member clubs.

Upcoming Events

FOREST CLEANUP NOVEMBER 5, 2005 MEET AT THE LAKE GEORGE RANGER STATION AT 8:00 A.M.

The January campout is in the preliminary planning stages. The dates are January 13, 14, 15, 16, 2006. The campground has been reserved so clubs need to start making reservations for your members. Call Barbara at Lake Oklawaha RV Resort and Campground, 1-800-622-5550. Make sure you tell her you're with the Florida Four Wheel Drive Association so you will be placed in the appropriate location (don't want you mixed up with the square dancers). Ocala Jeep Club has graciously agreed to cook the meat on Saturday night and we ask that everyone bring a covered dish to share. If you're not set up to be able to cook, there is a Sonny's BBQ and several other restaurants 20 minutes away in Palatka. Check

our website for more detailed information as it gets closer. Everyone make plans to be there!

