



Trail Tales



February 1, 2025

Official Newsletter
of the
New Mexico 4-Wheelers

www.nm4w.org



Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2025

By Shirley Godfrey

The meeting was held at North Domingo Baca Multi-Generational Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

President Jack Dickey called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm thanking NaDeen Roland for bringing in the refreshments.

MEMBERS ATTENDING: Tracy Bakewell, Jeff Boggs, Glenn Boudreaux, Guy Conway, Cathy Dickey, Jack Dickey, Shirley Godfrey, Jeff Grenier, Kay Grenier, Ric Henry, Cliff Meier, Myron Myers, Jack Nutter, NaDeen Roland, Mary Turpin, Beth Whiston, Frank Whiston, William Zobel.

GUESTS ATTENDING: JP Bowdoin, Susan Bowdoin, Thomas Coston, Jeremy Evans, Karl Leigh, Snow Petersen, Douglas Story II, Anthony Weaver.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Jeff Boggs

Jeff explained the 5 points system to become a club member and explained the transgression fines. Since the Christmas party, eleven people have contacted the club.

Guests JP Bowdoin and Susan Bowdoin have 5 points as of this meeting. A motion was made and seconded to have JP and Susan Bowdoin become club members. Motion was approved by a majority of members present without discussion.

Transgression fines –

Jeff Boggs, tore off/pulled the stem out of a wheel.

Cliff Meier, got stuck, wedged between the rocks. Took 2 Jeeps to pull him out.

Ric Henry, left the Christmas tree run early and got lost.

Frank Whiston, took over a run for Mary and he changed the meet up point from the one listed on the calendar.

SECRETARY'S REPORT - Shirley Godfrey

Meeting minutes - A motion was made and seconded to approve the December minutes as published in the January newsletter. A motion was approved by a majority of members present without discussion.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Jack Dickey for Rich Steele

Current balances for both checking and saving accounts were provided.

The application for the 501C7 has been turned in. Now waiting for approval.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the treasurer's report. Motion was approved by a majority of members present without discussion.

TRIP CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Mary Turpin

December 14, Jemez Mountains Christmas Tree Run, lead by Glenn Vialpando

December 29, Chupadera Mountains Loop, Socorro County, lead by Frank Whiston. Beautiful day with lots of geography and history. Thank you Frank.

January 1, 2025 New Year's Day @ Gordy's Hill 1.0, lead by Frank Whiston. Ride cut off was 10 vehicles. Trails were primarily 4s and 5s. Cathy and Jack Dickey and Rich Steele showed how easy it was in their buggies.

Please check for upcoming rides on the website.

DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPORT - Bill Zobel –

NM Department of Game and Fish OHV grant money for signs @ Grody's - The application draft is done and sent to the board members for review.

BLM Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan is over 500 pages and replaced the 1986 plan. Part of the plan is to make the Cimmaron Mesa into a recreation area. There are 11,000 existing trails.

Blue Ribbon Coalition opposes the Caja del Rio National Monument proposal.

Three of New Mexico's federal lawmakers have signed onto a letter urging the creation of a Caja del Rio national monument but stopped short of opposing a proposed transmission line to power Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The letter to Agriculture Secretary Thomas Vilsack, signed by Sens. Martin Heinrich and Ben Ray Luján and Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández, calls the 107,000-acre region west of Santa Fe "one of the Southwest's most culturally significant landscapes" and a "critical wildlife corridor."

The letter lists several threats to the Caja del Rio, including desecration of petroglyphs, shooting, off-roading and "urban sprawl." Not listed among the threats is a plan, which has angered local activists, to build a power line that would cut through 14 miles of the plateau. The lawmakers' letter asks that current and proposed uses like cattle grazing and power transmission be allowed.

PROGRAM CHAIR'S REPORT - Cathy Dickey – 50/50 tickets available. Hats, license plates and stickers are available and can be purchased with a credit card. 50/50 tickets sales are cash only. The handbook is still in the works. It will also contain land uses and land ownership. It will be published on the web site, no hard copies.

HISTORIAN'S REPORT - Frank Whiston – If there are pictures from the Christmas party, please post in the gallery. There are also new videos from the current runs.

WEBMASTER'S REPORT and NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S REPORT - Don Roy.

No report. Don unable to make the meeting due to the weather.

OLD BUSINESS:

The drone license for Jacob Rivera was not supported by the board. A motion was made and seconded to decline paying for a drone license for Jacob Rivera. Motion was approved by a majority of members present without discussion.

After the board's discussion and getting Don Roy's input, getting points for submitting articles to the newsletter was not supported by the board. A motion was made and seconded to decline getting points for submitting articles to the newsletter. Motion was approved by a majority of members present without discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Host for the March meeting, Jeff Boggs. Host for the April meeting, Cliff Meier.
Cliff Meier will host the Club's June picnic at Oak Flats.
Hosts are needed for the summer meetings starting in May through September.

50/50 raffle - \$27.50 split, winner, Cliff Meier.

A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. Motion was approved by a majority of members present without discussion. Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.



President's Report

By Jack Dickey

The Hard Way!

It seems that in our off-roading hobby many of us, myself included, learn valuable lessons the hard way. Most times these lessons only result in wasted time, energy, or a bruised ego. Other times there is personal injury or costly rig repair.

Lately, I have been contemplating a few lessons learned:

High-Lift Jacks – This tool is great for specific purposes and situations. Otherwise, they are dangerous. Underload, if not controlled, the handle can snap back, forcibly hit the unwary user, and possibly drop the vehicle. The base has to be placed on a solid, steady surface and the bar should be mostly vertical, otherwise the jack will slip out and drop the vehicle. The lifting pad needs a sturdy, flat purchase on the vehicle. If not positioned correctly, the jack can damage the vehicle body either while lifting or lowering. Even if covered while on the vehicle, these jacks need regular lubrication otherwise the climbing pins will not slide and the jack will be difficult and troublesome to use. Never position your arms, legs, or body under a vehicle supported by a high lift jack. Use a jack stand(s) or at the very least position a wheel such that it will catch a dropped vehicle should the high lift jack come loose. I use mine very carefully in my shop when working on my rigs. I no longer carry one on my rig and think twice about using someone else's on the trail.

Winches – These are another great tool but carry inherent hazards during use. The development and use of synthetic winch ropes has greatly reduced the danger of rope whip should the rope break under load. However, one must still stand clear of the rope when pulling. Be wary of pull angles when winching. Will the angle tip the vehicle over or exert extreme load instead of freeing it? Watch your hands when the hook nears the and fairlead/hawse when respooling the rope. Or better yet, use the little strap provided with the winch. Crushed fingers are no fun! Winches require maintenance. When was the last time you spooled out the rope, cleaned, inspected, and neatly rewound it with a slight load? Have you checked the remote? I try to do this regularly whether or not I have recently used the winch on my rig.

Attitudes – Whether you are a participant, spotter, tail gunner or trailer leader, your attitude will impact you and those around you. Each of us have a different idea of what constitutes fun on the trail. We enjoy being outdoors, comradery, and using our rigs the way they were intended. However, there is occasionally the driver who pushes themselves to the point their skill runs out resulting a broken rig and/or difficult recovery. Sometimes a driver will not follow a spotter’s guidance resulting in a stuck and/or broken rig. Conversely, a spotter may push a driver outside their comfort zone and the driver wanting to try something different to get through an obstacle. A new driver may easily become overwhelmed with a portion of the trail when others drive through without much consternation. Someone on the ride may be an aggressive driver or say something that might be misunderstood or inappropriate. How one responds in these situations could be negatively affected by hunger or tiredness. In these situations, one must guard against becoming angry, frustrated, and losing one’s temper. Being positive and understanding as well as cheerful, helpful, friendly, courteous, and kind as needed by situation, makes for happy memories.

Hopefully, your lessons learned the hard way are few and far between.

Happy Trails,

Jack Dickey



Director of Environmental Affairs

By William Zobel

BLM Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan

As reported during the January meeting, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released their approved Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan on January 2, 2025. The 579-page plan is a playbook for the goals that BLM will have for managing the district for the next 20+ years. The work on this plan goes back to 2008 as a revision to their 1986 plan. New Mexico 4 Wheelers (NM4W) provided comments in 2008 in response to the BLM’s Scoping Request for Comments and, again in 2012, to their Draft Resource Plan. The BLM released their final Resource Plan and Environmental Impact Statement in August 2024. This was followed by a 30-day review and protest period before releasing the final Resource Management Plan.

A highlight for NM4W is the designation of the Cimarron Mesa Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) located west of Albuquerque. The SRMA is a bit over 18,000 acres and includes over 4,000 acres of Open OHV area along with another 3,400 acres that will be closed due to wilderness characteristics. Travel in the remaining area will be limited to designated primitive roads and trails. The next step will be for the BLM to complete a formal Travel Management Plan for the SRMA designating roads and trails for motorized use. Note that until the final boundaries within the SRMA have been established we need to stay on the designated primitive roads and trails.



Christmas Tree Ride – Dec 14th

By Glenn Vialpando



It was a cold frosty morning meet up at Walatowa Visitor Center, We started the Christmas tree hunting off FS376, making our way around on some slick ice packed roads to find two good looking trees. We also found places to stop and get in some fun sledding!

Lunch was a big warm sunny meadow, after lunch we continued onward, making a big loop and eventually ending the run at the air up spot about 1330.





Gordy's Hill Winter Ride 2025

By Jeff Boggs

We gathered up at the Lemitar, NM Truck Stop, It was cold. Aired down and drove over to Gordy's Hill, and it had some snow on the hills.

We drove into Coyote Canyon, Shifted into Low range and slowly weaved our way through this tight and twisty canyon. I stopped a few times to trim back the mesquite limbs. Thorns were coming in the open windows. Much better now. That is a fun canyon, IMHO. So much is happening, tight turns, rocks, trees, twisty. You can't put it on Auto Pilot!!

We worked our way out and headed over to Upper Amado, following a rugged two track road. We met another 4x4 group of about 12 rigs going the other way. They had just exited Upper Amado. We had lunch in Upper Amado.



Figure 1: When the Sheriff has to fine himself, tee hee! :-)

We took off and some of us took the bypasses and others dropped off some big ledges,

Jeff tried a tight turn around a big rock and tree. Couldn't make the long truck turn sharp enough, tried to climb out, but high centered. Stuck. Dan brought his truck around and Jeff hooked his winch to Dan's front bumper and out came the Gladiator.
Several other rigs made the turn with some skill and shorter wheelbases.

Grant came around the corner but took off his DS tire valve stem. Jeff had a tire stem tool and since Grant doesn't have TPMS in his buggy tires, this was a quick fix. We finished up at the bottom of Upper Amado. We climbed out the steep road, and Dan needed a strap hooked to Ric's rear bumper to get up this part.

We finished doing a short hike into Hidden Valley, to look over the waterfall entrance. Maybe next time.

A fun day, Cold, but down in the canyons, not so bad. Thanks to all for a great day, everyone. And Yes, the Sheriff will be paying his fine!!

Jeff Boggs, Trail Leader





Gordy's New Year's Day 2025

By Frank Whiston



Our Club has a long tradition for going to Gordy's Hill on the New Year's holiday. In fact, it dates back 20 nearly years! On December 31, 2005, Mark Werkmeister dubbed it "NM4W's 1st Annual Rock 'n Roll New Year's Eve Run" while sitting around the campfire. 2005 started on a Sunday and several folks camped out Saturday night. Since then, the weather does not always cooperate, so it is not a religiously annual thing for the club. This combined with turnover with the membership, we had begun to lose sight of this tradition and Mary Turpin set to recommence our first run of the year at Gordy's Hill.



Our Trip Chair put this run on the calendar back at the end of October marking herself as the leader without knowing the incident that was ahead of her in just a few days. As I realized that she would not be able to follow through with leading this effort, I volunteered to take over and ensure that the run would happen.

Mary had done an excellent job writing up the calendar announcement and I attempted to change a few things last minute which made for a cat herding exercise in the beginning (I self-reported and paid my fine at the January meeting), but we all made it to the Kiosk for an on-time trail departure. We ended up with 10 vehicles, which was where I had set the vehicle limit ending up being a great size group for the 5-6 rated trails that were chosen for the day.



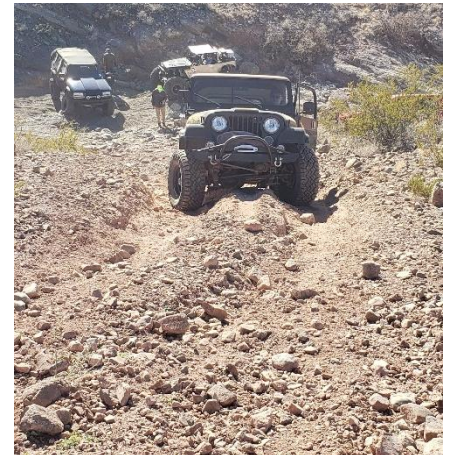
With a very short jaunt up the Quebadras Road, the group turned south and dropped into Arroyo De Los Pinos to access the Lower Amado trail. The trail offers a great assortment of challenges and optional lines to try as it traverses sand, boulders, pilings of sedimentary rock, and intimidating vertical rock escarpments. The arroyo bottom starts out smooth but as soon as the drainage narrows we began to encounter 12"+ boulders. Just after our tail gunner, Jeff Boggs, got into these boulders, he managed to catch the driver rear valve stem on a rock and quickly ended up with a flat tire. We all stopped and lent him a hand making quick work of a tire change. On to the piles, a field of sedimentary rock mounds that span the width of the trail. There are multiple lines here that vary in difficulty. Choosing the right one will help avoid bottom scrapes and snags. Just past the piles lies an obstacle known as the Triple Threat. There are multiple lines to choose from at this point in the trail, with the leftmost, along the sidehill being the most moderate serving as a bypass. When you choose to stay in the main drainage, there's a 3-4' high

boulder in the middle. The route to the left is relatively smooth but will pitch your vehicle body into that big boulder. Of to the right, there's a bunch of large boulders that require careful tire placement to avoid getting hung up. Everyone came though without issue once the correct line was chosen. I did have to stack one rock for Ian's CJ-7 on 33s for him to get his axle tube over the boulders.

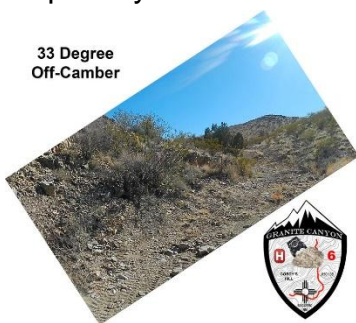


On to Cascada de Amado. The arroyo opens and becomes very broad here. This area is a like a playground, with lines and levels of difficulty for every taste. Like a good little group of ducklings, everyone seemed to follow the same general line as I did through this section. This is the last obstacle that we did on this trail. The next obstacle is Pucker Falls, the most extreme waterfall in the OHV area. In fact, I have not seen anyone attempt this obstacle since 2009.

We opted for The Great Escape. This connecting trail is a steep (> 40-degree) ascent up a loose dirt and gravel hillside that takes you to the north ridge above Amado Canyon terminating in the middle of the Causeway Trail. The first section of the climb is an immediate 60-foot elevation change that is loose and rutted, followed by a right turn onto a longer section that takes you up another 60 feet in elevation. In all, you rise approximately 12 stories in 0.1 miles. The ruts on this first section will even cause differential dragging for those on 35s. Ian on 33s was able to make it up under his own power after a couple attempts and some spotting.



A right turn and a steep descent off the Causeway made way for our group to reach Upper Amado where we found a nice lunch stop away from the cold breeze up on the ridge lines. Immediately after lunch, another



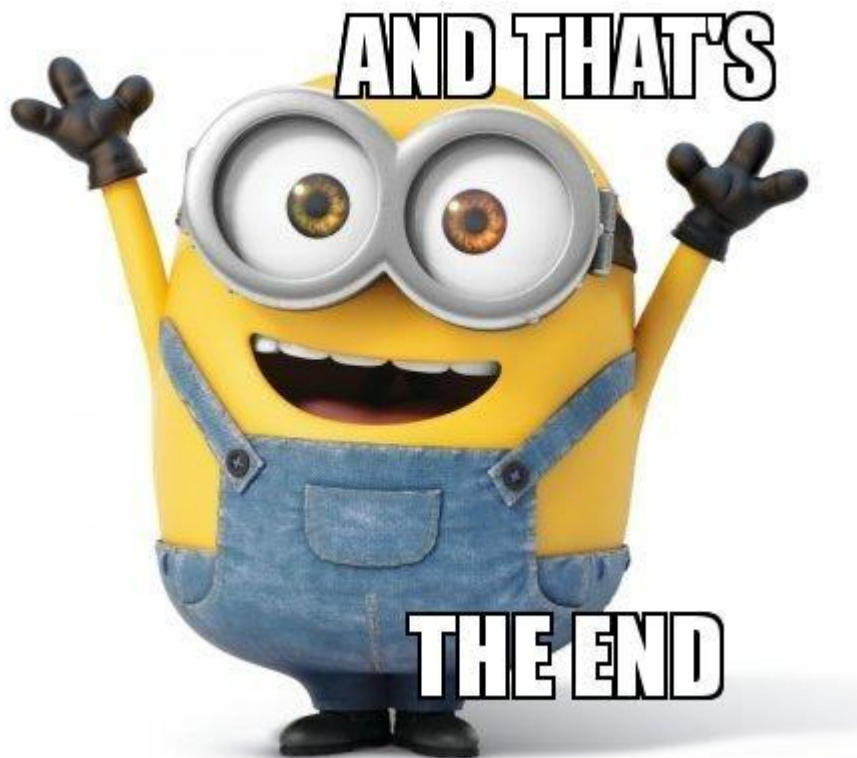
right turn had us climbing out of the Amado valley on Granite Canyon. the Granite Canyon trail is a relatively quick and challenging way to get from Upper Amado to Squeeze Canyon. I had never been on this before, but Bill Bonahoom and Jack Dickey had recently traversed this trail in reverse in their buggies. Bill told me it is a solid 5 (moderate), but I went ahead and rated it a 6 (Hard) due to an off-camber section that up's the pucker factor. About halfway up there is a rock notch with a twist and a climb - really a short waterfall - that must be traversed. It

will get you pretty flexed out and without proper tire placement, you could get hung up. Nobody in our group had any issues here and made it to the summit easily.

On the descent into Squeeze Canyon, there's a short waterfall coupled with a left turn that got Cliff in a hard place between two rocks. This gave us the opportunity to use some of our recovery gear to aid in getting him pointed in the right direction to continue down the trail.

A short and easy climb out to Squeeze Canyon gave access to the South Boundary Road which we traveled to exit and head home for the day. We were airing up at 3PM just as I had planned.

Another great NM4W New Year's adventure is in the books kicking things off for 2025!



Keep PUBLIC lands open to the PUBLIC

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