

## Montana Back Roads 4x4 Club meeting

March 2, 2017

Perkins Restaurant, Missoula, MT

Members present: Bruce Erickson, Jim and Lorna Younkin, Dick Riebe, Willie and Jeanne Worthy, Jeremy Hitchcock, Owen Hood, Jay Schweitzer, Maurice Austin, Bob Biggens, and guest Mike Jannell.

The meeting was called to order by President Willie Worthy at 6:35 pm.

The club had put out an email asking if anyone was interested in participating in the car show at the Southgate Mall on April 22....only got two responses! If you want to display your own vehicle, get in touch with Jeremy at J & K as he has the details.

SWAP MEET: Montana Toyota Off Road and J & K are planning a 4x4 swap meet, Sunday, March 26, 11 to 3 pm, at J & K's new location on Broadway in Missoula. If you are on face book, do a search for both. Notify them and post pix of items you have to sell. Items can include camping gear, adventure bikes, vehicle accessories, and whatever. Anything you leave after about 4 pm on Sunday becomes Jeremy's.

CAMP OUT: Bigsky Overlanding, also on face book, is planning a winter campout at Rock Creek campground on March 17, 18, 19.

SPRING FLING: Bigsky Overlanding is also planning a Spring Fling, also at Rock Creek Campground, April 21, 22, 23. They already have several sponsors (including Onyx Maps, Big Sky Brewery, J & K Customs...) and will be offering various demonstrations. Willie will present info on using your winch, especially what not to do; someone will present info on amateur radios, another on backcountry first aid, another on using drones in the back country, and on using various navigation devices. Do bring your mapping device, whether it's a tablet, smart phone, or gps and we'll share what we know. Thoughts are to do a Saturday night spaghetti feed, where you throw a few dollars in the pot, and make a huge serving of spaghetti. Bring pot luck type dishes to share. There will also be a raffle Saturday night.

Bruce had brought several "Outdoor 4X" Magazines to share....he commented that the stories were "easy to write".

J & K has hired two new people, including a part time welder. The other is a student attending diesel tech. His employee Jared Walters and wife had a baby girl.

Dick Riebe reported that he, Steve Slagle, and Steve's daughter Jennifer Clark travelled to Helena to comment on the Wilderness Study areas. The comments were left until the end of the day, and they ran out of time for everyone who wished to comment. Although the bill claimed "almost one million acres" were left in "legal limbo" since Congress passed its measure, its own enumeration of the seven areas totaled 663,000 acres. The House Natural Resources Committee heard about two hours of testimony and questions Monday on the measure. Opponents significantly outnumbered proponents at the podium.

The recommendations were to the state legislature to be recommended to the federal legislature. The study areas were supposed to end after five years, it's been 35!! Steve was quoted in article from the Missoulian: "I expect you're going to hear the standard hoopla from the obstructionists and the Chicken Littles, about how this will destroy the environment and animals are going to die," bill proponent Steve Slagle said, before being warned to be more respectful. "But the issue here is the law of the land."

Slagle called the creation of wilderness study areas “an end-run around the Wilderness Act,” and approved of having the Legislature tell Congress to include sunset provisions on laws that don’t complete their purpose in a timely manner. Jennifer made comment that she’d grown up in the front seat of a Jeep. Dick has been fighting similar things since 1974, and this was the latest. Willie and Dick both attended forest planning sessions with no definite conclusions. Link to the article in the Missoulian: [http://helenair.com/news/state-and-regional/wilderness-study-areas-stir-lively-debate/article\\_285752e8-041f-5a94-bddb-4495df3e885b.html](http://helenair.com/news/state-and-regional/wilderness-study-areas-stir-lively-debate/article_285752e8-041f-5a94-bddb-4495df3e885b.html)

These are some of the areas that would be affected:

Axolotl Lakes Wilderness Study Area  
Bell and Limekiln Canyons Wilderness Study Area  
Henneberry Ridge Wilderness Study Area  
Hidden Pasture Wilderness Study Area

Senator Tester’s FJRA also would have RELEASED A PORTION of the following Wilderness Study Areas in Montana for logging, motorized recreation and/or development:

Blacktail Mountains Wilderness Study Area  
Centennial Mountains Wilderness Study Area  
Farlin Creek Wilderness Study Area  
Humbug Spires Wilderness Study Area  
Ruby Mountains Wilderness Study Area  
Sapphire Wilderness Study Area  
West Pioneer Wilderness Study Area

Jeremy brought several items for “show and tell”....or an “infomercial”! Factor55.com has a new “ultra hook” for \$250, it fits flat up against your winch, and has finger grips so you hook it up rather than down. They’re also going to have a splicing tool/fib for winch rope. All info is on the tool itself. Their tools are made from aluminum. They have several You Tube videos.

Jeremy also had some info on Gladiator Tires, sold through Discount Tire direct.com. They make ATV tires, trailer tires, and this new XComp Gladiator. They are cheaper than some other brands. He has to buy 40 tires to be a warehouse dealer, so if you’re interested, let him know. IPT is the parent company and they’re made in AZ. They are DOT approved and were used at King of the Hammers this year and did well. He does not yet have pricing on them, nor their weights. BFGs are \$600, MTs \$450-470; MTs are one of the heaviest at 92 pounds, while Hankook is 72, while Goodrich is 66 pounds.

Mike shared that he is a mechanical engineer, who builds pressurized vessels. He has an 1988 “cookie cutter” Toyota pickup, which goes most of the places most of the time. It has 37 inch MTR tires, and is his daily driver.

Jeremy shared funny story about a customer with a Mustang who wanted new shocks. Jeremy called the Ford Performance Vehicle Tech phone line and talked to someone about Mustang shocks, especially monotube versus twin tube...the “tech” said he’d have to check with engineering (he had no idea what Jeremy was talking about!). Then the really funny part was that the customer’s decision was based on liking the blue ones better that said “Ford Racing”!

