



Newsletter

Spring 2002 Issue 21



Club Information

Correspondence

Any correspondence should be addressed to our **NEW** PO Box:

Northern California Rover Club
3020 El Cerrito Plaza, #269
El Cerrito, CA 94530

NEW

Our web page is www.norcalrover.org

Members are strongly encourage to submit articles, notes or letters for publication.

Club Decals

Additional club decals are currently available for \$4 each. The decals are approximately 2 inches by 4 inches and bear the club logo as it appears on the newsletter cover. To obtain additional decals please forward a letter with a mailing address, number of decals desired and a check for the appropriate sum to the club address.

Newsletter Back Issues

Newsletter back issues may be obtained on an as available basis for \$2 each. The \$2 includes postage.

Membership Application

A membership application Can be downloaded from our website at <http://www.norcalrover.org>

Officers

President : Jeff Rogers, (408) 867-3419

Vice President: Rick Larson

Treasurer : Jeremy Bartlett (510) 233-3167

Secretary: Ben Mitchell

Public Affairs Officer : Bruce Bonar, (415) 468-5000
x3009

Newsletter Editor: Rob Kerner,

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A few notes remembered from NCRC's last meeting:

Incorporation Status--We are still trying to figure out what we are going to do. At this point it seems as though we will need to incorporate as a non-profit.

Elections--Jeremy has expressed an interest in not being the treasurer. At the time of the meeting, he had not sent Jeff the list of nominations for club officer. We discussed the possibility of either forwarding the PO Box or moving it. Alternatively, the officers could share the chore of going there to pick up the mail.

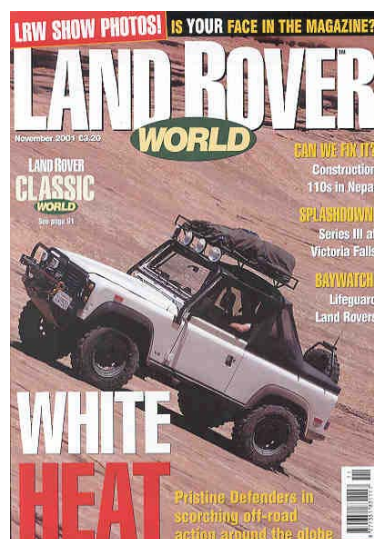
Trips--this lead into a very long discussion about being more inclusive as a club. We want to make sure that everyone understands that families are welcome at club events. Jason and Petra talked about going to the black rock desert. Chris Dow mentioned a New Year's trip near Mojave, but wanted it to remain non-club. The new event/trip schedule will be made early in 2002.

Chris Dow

Calendar submissions:

Calendar items should be sent to Jeff Rogers at least 2 months before the event.

president@norcalrover.org or Club PO Box



Mr Secretary's (Ben Mitchell) 90 on the front cover of LRW. We are getting famous!!!

Cover Photo:

Daniel Openhime at Knoxville

Public Affairs

Land Use and OHV Access

The Membership Responds

Twenty one survey forms were returned providing valuable input on what role the membership feels the NCRC should take in the ongoing debate over land use and OHV access. The response was overwhelmingly in favor of the Club taking an active role in advocating environmentally sensitive multiple use of public lands. There was one response that felt the club should stay out of the debate and should take no position. I will take this strong positive response as a mandate to continue the NCRC's efforts to advocate "protecting the environment FOR the public and not FROM the public".

Every respondent was in favor of continuing our Adopt-a-Trail and several expressed interest in expanding our activities to adopt another trail. The surveys were also unanimous in urging the NCRC to increase our interaction with the National Forest Service. The Forest Service has been very appreciative of our efforts in the Mendocino Forest. My feeling is the best single way to protect access to public forest lands is for all members establish a personal relationship with as many Rangers, administrators, and politicians as possible. Write your congressperson, or CA assembly members, or better yet go to their local office and introduce yourself. Invite them to join us on a club run. Make it clear what it is we support.

Two questions addressed whether or not the NCRC should affiliate itself with either the Blue Ribbon Coalition (BRC) or The Association of California 4 Wheel Drive Clubs (Cal 4 WD). The responses generally supported joining either or both organizations but there were several concerns expressed. Several asked for more information as there is not great familiarity with either organization. I will attempt to provide additional information about both organizations in future newsletters. There was also concern expressed about negative stereotypes that may accompany BRC or Cal 4WD. I feel strongly that the NCRC has the opportunity to project a positive image that is very different from the stereotype many have of OHV recreationists. It is up to all of us to make sure we do not fall into the trap of using old and sometimes negative rhetoric.

All but one survey agreed that advocacy of OHV recreation opportunities is consistent with a "pro environment" perspective. Getting that message out to the general population should be one of our primary goals. One survey stated that some "environmental" groups that have excellent PR are not really pro-environment as much as they are anti-human. While this is certainly true, there are some groups strongly pushing the "wilding" of America;

our best defense is not to get into a battle of rhetoric with the "anti's". We need to make a clear statement that we ARE pro-environment and can play a pivotal role in protecting that environment for this and future generations. Then we MUST get that statement out to those that form public opinion and make public policy.

Watch this space for more information on the BRC and Cal 4WD. Thanks to all those that returned the survey. Feel free to contact me directly if you did not respond but would like to have some input on what role the NCRC takes or if you have any specific or additional ideas on how to promote and protect responsible and sensitive OHV recreation.

Bruce Bonar
Public Affairs Officer

Friends of the Rubicon

Tripreport from Rob Kerner:

This NCRC trip was going to be like no other. I packed all sorts of snacks and reading materials. We were going to the Rubicon. We weren't going to run it, but were going to provide Ham Radio support for FOTR. FOTR is basically a large group of other off road clubs who got together to save the Rubicon trail. Many groups are trying to get the Rubicon trail closed, and a big reason they site is water clarity in Lake Tahoe. Winter runoff pulls tons of silt off the access roads and brings it down into the lake. The goal was to rebuild or build approximately 30 water bars so that runoff did not flow down the road. Our club was providing Ham radio support for communication between the different work groups, the organizers, and emergency services.

Since I did not have a HAM license I was the ride along partner of Brigid Cope, who's husband was hard at work. Brig and I caravanned up from Davis to Blackwood Canyon which is on the west shore of Lake Tahoe, just past Homewood ski area. We arrived Friday evening, and were promptly informed there was a Forest Service ban on fires. ARGH. Luckily it was pretty warm that night. We imitated a fire and sat around a lantern, which of course was in the fire ring.

Sat. we were up early and headed out for the work site. There were well over 100 volunteers. Our club was assigned sections to stay with and radio for whatever

Continued on page 5

NCRC Meeting Minutes 05/08/2002

Election Status

Nomination period closed per dates set in last newsletter and past calendars. Ballots going out with May calendar. The office of the Secretary is the only office contested; Mehdi Saghafi and Petra Esterle are running.

The issue of insurance came up again in the context of a conversation of officer liability. Jeff Rogers reported that he had spoke to an insurance agent that experience with car clubs. He said that this agent mentioned that we could buy liability insurance but it wouldn't cover auto-related incidents at all. The agent recommended setting minimum coverage for members who participate in events. Regarding liability coverage the agent says, "Each person's auto policy would pick up that exposure. In light of that, each person should have adequate liability limits to pick up the perceived "exposure". If I were on the board, I would suggest at least \$500,000. Consider the cost of firefighting, and the potential for loss of property, etc." The club will need to decide what minimums are appropriate and how to enforce. This will be discussed at the next meeting after the officers have had time to do some homework.

Working w/ "The Disco List"

Member Michael Sewell has collected approximately 16 contacts that own Disco's. Some of these folks are NCRC members, some are not. These folks frequently get together for day trips they organize on discoweb.org. We discussed the fact that the NCRC isn't geared to facilitate the organization of last-minute day trips. We discussed using the "Mendo" list to organize these trips but the members in attendance concluded that ListServ's aren't accessible enough. It was decided that the NCRC Website should be expanded to include a bulletin board where members can post information. Jason Pipes, the club's Webmaster, has this functionality nearly completed. It should be running in a few weeks.

Review Club Revenue Objectives

Member Michael Sewell brought in a list of suggestions for raising money for the club. These ideas included collecting donations at club events, raising membership dues and producing and selling a video showcasing trails. His thought was that if the club had more money that it could do more for the members. We discussed both absurd and practical ways to spend the money and concluded that membership dues will remain \$30/yr and that the club will continue operate as it has for the most part. Everyone thought that passively collecting donations to the club at events was fine - this money would be put into the club's general fund to be used for things like making deposits on facilities, manufacturing t-shirts, etc. We also discussed

the idea of making a video. We decided that it was fine for someone to make videos that would be sold to the membership and the public, but that such an endeavor would be driver by an interested member rather than the officers.

Club T-Shirts

The club has a new t-shirt. Jeff Rogers should have a sample the week of 5/13/02. An initial run of ~50 shirts will be printed and divided between the club Treasurer and the President for distribution. Roughly 25% of the shirts will be large. The rest will be a mix of small, medium extra large and a couple of kids shirts. The shirts should be available within the next month.

On a related note Jeremy Bartlett mentioned that the new club stickers are now available. They are the same as the 1st batch except they are windows stickers with the adhesive on the topside.

Club Non-Profit Status

The club had a deal with a member who was going to generate the necessary documents to incorporate the club as a California non-profit corporation. This person is now too busy to handle this for us so the club President will begin looking for another way to economically incorporate the NCRC. We discussed the fact that incorporating the club will also mean that the NCRC will need to file quarterly estimated taxes.

Financial Review

The club currently has approximately \$2400 in its bank account. This balance will shortly be reduced by the cost of producing a newsletter. But there will be enough left over to fund the first batch of t-shirts, etc. We also decided that all club memberships would be extended six months to offset the club's lack of activity this year.

Newsletter

The next newsletter is about to go out. The president's letter will be divorced from this issue because the number of topics warrants a separate mailing. Also, this letter has been the hold-up in getting the newsletter out.

Website

We discussed the recent changes to the Website and everyone agreed that the new site is much better. Kudos to Jason Pipes. It was decided that the NCRC Website should be expanded to include a bulletin board where members can post information. The idea is to give members a place to organize trips, but there might be major threads on repairs, restoration, etc. This section will contain a disclaimer that neither the NCRC or its officers will be responsible for the content posted to this

NCRC Meeting Minutes, Cont

portion of the site.

We also discussed the format change to the club calendar and the fact that it will change again. Soon the calendar will feature compact text-based calendars that have links on days where there are events. The links will take users to that date on the list of club events. This will make it possible to navigate both by date and browse all upcoming events.

The idea of putting a simple site stats package on the server would be a good idea so that we have some idea of how much traffic the site gets.

We decided that the soon-to-be-implemented past events section should include a place for members to post information and photos about past trips. This functionality would not be bulletin-board style, rather all submissions would be run through the Webmaster. The Webmaster would then post as appropriate.

Everyone thought the newsletter archive should be made public so that potential members could see the club's considerable history and the quality of the publication. This content will still be present under the Member section, but it will also be available in the About section.

Club Calendar

The meeting ran short before this topic was completed but a number of events were decided, including a number of "socials". They will be on the next calendar. It was decided that the annual club rally will probably be run sometime in October but that needs to be confirmed by the Forest Service. Also decided was an Amateur radio class for

November where member David Brown would get people prepare for the tech / no-code exam.



Bill Burke Offroad Workshop Weekend ***June 22-23***

Come learn some serious offroad driving and recovery secrets with noted Camel Trophy veteran and Rover guru Bill Burke! This two day workshop will be packed with useful information and will allow lots of time for your questions during this hands on "in the field" workshop event. In addition to driving, winching and other recovery tricks, the class will also cover common Rover field repairs as well as many other offroad driving issues. The workshop will be organized to help the beginner but will also cover info useful to the advanced offroader.

The cost per person for this weekend workshop is \$195.00 paid in advance. Make checks payable to NCRC and send to:

Michael Sewell
P.O. Box 811
Forest Knolls, CA, 94933

or contact Mike via email (michael@visualpursuit.com) to make specific payment arrangements.

So far only a few people have enrolled. Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to improve your offroad driving skills.

Bill Burke is an internationally recognized 4x4 trainer who teaches back country driving techniques, winching and extrication methods, vehicle preparation and maintenance, land navigation and woods' skills through classes, private training, trainer courses and back country trips for individuals, families, groups, clubs, vehicle manufacturers and dealers, tour operators, governments, and all companies that use 4WD vehicles in their operations. Environmental awareness and trail etiquette are also taught on every outing.



Technical Information



High Lift Jack Basics

Most of us travel with a high lift jack of some sort, yet many of us have never taken the time to get to know our high lift. When it comes time to use it, those unprepared may be unpleasantly surprised by the outcome. For explanatory purposes I am using my Hi-Lift Brand HL-485.

Basic components:

Foot- Notice the foot is not securely attached, this gives the jack the ability to lift when not perfectly level, yet it also makes the jack highly unstable. It is recommended to chock the wheels of the vehicle being lifted to help prevent shifting.

Bar--The bar can be different lengths and different materials depending on the make and model. The standard is 48"; however some of you have the 60" Model. Be very careful about weight limits. Just because your high lift is rated at X#lbs, doesn't mean it is rated at that amount over the entire vertical lift. For example the 60" Hi-Lift model is only rated at 2660 lbs the last 12 inches of the bar, while it is rated at 4660lbs the first 48". As you get higher on the jack, typically the lifting capacity goes down. **DO NOT OVERLOAD YOUR JACK!**

Sheer Bolt-- If you succeed in overburdening your high lift, some jacks are designed to break so that you cannot jack it anymore, but should not release the load. Make sure you have one of these jacks. If this happens the load should stay up, but you will need another jack rated for a higher capacity to lower the load.

Handle -- The handle has obvious uses, but be careful: it takes quite a bit of force to lift a lot of weight and the handle can snap back and kill you. It also makes an excellent brace to lash broken limbs to in an emergency.

Basic Maintenance

Many of us mount our high lift jacks and just forget about them. Cleaning and lubrication is critical both to the safe operation and long life of your jack.

To clean I just spray on some oil-eating compound and use a powerful hose to get off the grit and grime.

I follow this up with a heavy dousing of your favorite lubricant. I lubricate the entire moving mechanism. You can look at your owner's manual to see the specific locations that should be lubricated, but the lazy bugger in me just shoots the whole moving mechanism with lubricant.

Without proper maintenance you will find it difficult to get the jack to raise or lower without beating on it so that the pins release properly.

Basic safety

When jacking things up, chock the wheels, and don't raise it higher than necessary. Note: The jack will not stabilize the load; you must do so, or you are at risk.

Don't overload the jack.

When lowering be aware that as soon as there is less than 150 lbs of weight on the jack that the lifting mechanism will drop to the ground. If your toes are at the base of the jack don't be surprised if you break





Technical Information



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High Lift Jack Basics, Cont.

a couple.

When using your high lift to winch, make sure you secure it with shackles so it cannot slip.

When used as a winch the top clamp limit is 5000 lbs. Overburdening this can cause it to break and kill you.

Always make sure you are clear of the handle. It can move with great force when you are not expecting it to. It can easily break bones or do severe injury.

Think before you jack. Many times when a high lift jack is needed you are in a heightened state because you are stuck. Slow down, think things through, and make sure everyone and everything is safe before proceeding.

Basic Use

Chock wheels, steady vehicle.

Keep the jack handle clipped to the bar when not jacking.

Place the base on a flat level area where you are going to jack.

Lift up on the jacking mechanism so that it slides up the bar until it makes contact with your vehicle. At this point you are going to need to pull on the reversing latch to engage the jack. From here you can start jacking. Do not stand in the way of the handle. The jack lifts on each down stroke.

Jack slowly, being aware of the load and if it is shifting.

Once you are done, push down on the reversing latch, and use the jack handle in the same way you did when jacking up. Notice the load is lowered with much force on each up stroke of the handle.

When you are close to all the way down, look for your feet. Are they in the way? Once the weight is released a properly working jack will slide to the bottom quickly.



Other advise

Look at some of the winching accessories to make using your jack easier. Practice lifting. Practice winching. Jack safely.

Friends of the Rubicon, Continued

supplies were needed. Brig and I were floaters, and eventually were assigned to the "official inspectors." The inspectors were made up of the agencies that were responsible for the areas; Forest Service, USGS, Lake Tahoe Water something. They essentially went to each previously marked problem site and discussed what was to be done to fix it. Needless to say they disagreed on more than one site. After they agreed on the work to be done a crew would get to the hard work of digging moving rock, and building runoff channels.

The HAM radios were invaluable. All day long there was controlled chatter about Division B needing RipRap, a loader lost the bead on his tire, Division A needs inspection

on work done so they can move on to the next water bar. All of the radio work was channeled through our leader Bruce Bonar, KG6QBF. He worked out of Spot at the home base with the people in charge.

CB's would not have worked for this trip because the work was done over a 2 mile section of road which snaked up the canyon. It was a great weekend, and it convinced me to get my HAM licence. KG6IPO.

Thanks to Bruce for organizing this trip, and all his hard work for our club.

Trip Report

Niagra 2001 By: Rob Kerner



Saturday morning, September 21st dawned clear and cool at Niagara Creek campground where Brigid and I had established base camp for the weekend's activities. The Niagara Rim OHV area is located in the Sierra Nevada Mountains at the 7,000 foot level just off Hwy.108 and offers a variety of sterling (but dusty) trails. Difficulty level is moderate with some interesting rock face descents and cross-axled climbs up loose, slippery slopes artfully strewn with boulders and roots.

After liberally dosing myself with caffeine and bagels the morning's ritual of vehicle safety inspections and NCRC waivers was begun. For folks new to our club and it's routines, here's what we look for:

- Valid driver's license and insurance.
- Functioning seat belts.
- Parking brake engages in 3-4 clicks.
- Brakes hold well with no pumping.
- No excessive steering play.
- Hardtop or rollcage.
- Front and rear recovery points.

Most vehicles pass okay, but I'd like to point out that many folks with brand new Discos or Range Rovers rely upon the factory tow points for recovery. These simply are not adequate for a highly stressed off road recovery. It's best to invest in purpose built after-market D rings or shackles.

Attendees and vehicles were (please forgive any inaccuracies):
Michael Petrone.....green Disco
Jason Pipes and Petra Esterle.....NAS D-110
Eric Schoenman.....silver RR
Scott Rachfal.....green Disco
Jon Turner.....silver RR
Jeanne Chung.....black Disco
Rob Kerner.....green Series III, 88"
Bill Ruttan.....green Disco
Casey McMullen.....red Series III, 88"

Eric Fournier.....white Disco
Barry and Lori Ellis.....champagne Disco
Joe Mulqueen.....pastel green SIIA, 109"
Eric and Brigid Cope.....limestone SIIA, 88"

Safety and legal matters completed, we had a brief presentation on spotting hand signals, trail etiquette and radio procedures then headed out for the trails. The first day's run was the "Rim Trail" consisting of 5N09A, 6N38Y and 5N04.

The fun started pretty quickly with the descent of a very steep lava-rock shelf with a tight turn at the bottom. Jeanne in her Disco was the guinea pig and her spotter (okay, okay... it was me) promptly got her high centered on a frame rail. A quick tug by "Queenie" and she was free. Once I had the "coiler" line figured out the rest went smoothly except that I managed to bruise the rear quarter panel of Jon's brand new Range Rover by spotting him backwards into a pine tree...ouch! Sorry Jon. About a mile further along we came to another interesting spot, the Wedge and the Camel's Rump. Before proceeding we had a quick lunch followed by a walk through of the two obstacles and discussion of the correct lines. The Wedge is a down sloping granite face with a deep "V" abutted on the right by a near vertical rock face. What makes it creepy is the fine coating of powdered sand atop the granite making gravity your enemy and braking almost nil. The only safe line was to give half the vehicle brakes by straddling the "V" forcing each truck's right tires to climb the rock face and ever-so-carefully inch downwards riding the sidewalls. Most of the vehicles got very light at their right rear corners, two managed to get their tires airborne, but the heart stopping moment of the day came when I spotted Joe in his immaculate Series a little too far over...his left front dipped...and the right rear wheel proceeded to do the watusi at about chest height. Joe to his good credit remained cool as a cucumber, hanging on his brakes as volunteers jumped aboard for ballast. The mighty 4-banger roared as he managed somehow to back up the slippery slope and then came safely down. Whew!

Trip Report

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Just around the corner was the Camel's Rump, a large granite dome again covered with sand which had to be tackled in a zig-zag climb...straight up, off camber right turn, left 2 or 3 point turn, then straight up over the hump. Much harder than it sounds.

Rob Kerner took charge here and began spotting the convoy up as I was engaged at the wedge. I gather that all went relatively smoothly even though I could periodically hear racing V-8 engines and screeching tires. I forgot to mention that there are bypasses for these obstacles, but to their great credit the drivers swallowed hard and took the gonzo option...remember, some were completely stock new trucks with factory (street) tires.

The last challenge on Saturday's trail is the "Rock Garden," an uphill narrow chute filled with a charming assortment of boulders followed by a long series of downhill granite stairsteps and crevices. Now this section is completely voluntary as it's actually a side loop off the main trail. Not being the sharpest knife in the drawer, I opted to try at least the first part in "Queenie." It didn't work. She got stuck and very cross axled whereupon her dimwitted driver pushed too hard and managed to snap both rear half-shafts (picture Rob Spotting Queenie.jpg). A quick tug backwards and out by Bill's Disco and I proceeded to pull the shafts while



Rob in his SWB and Barry in his Disco took up the challenge and proceeded through.

Back to camp for cocktail hour and an impromptu seminar on Series axle replacement (I had spares). Many thanks to Rob and Casey for parts support and to Brigid for her able assistance. Dinner was followed by marshmallows, port wines and bad jokes around a huge campfire.

Sunday's run began at 0900 on 5N09 and the southern part of 5N09A comprising a short loop of only 1.7 miles. The trail is difficult right away with the first 3/4 mile being nonstop uphill of soft, loose, dusty soil peppered with lava rock and gnarled tree roots. Cross axleing and it's attendant traction loss were the chef's "special of the day." It rapidly became apparent that this would take awhile, so a few

Jon Big Drop...

drivers opted out and returned. Of those who proceeded, we managed to get three of the first four vehicles stuck to some degree. Once again Rob and I split spotting duties in an effort to keep the line moving, but it was very, very slow going and involved a lot of rock moving at the difficult bits. Sheet metal offerings to the trail Gods were made here and there but nothing too disfiguring. Low sill clearance or non-aggressive tires were a definite handicap here, but we all eventually made it to the top



Eric Cope,
Axel Extraction

Rob Kerner
going for spares for Eric

Jason Pipes
Intently Observing

Brig is actually
doing all the work

Eric trying to break axels.
Note that he was successful

T r i p R e p o r t

for a well earned lunch break on the peak's jagged, rocky summit. All told it took about 2 1/2 hours to go maybe 1.2 miles. (Trail 2 - Tough Climb 31 Disco 2 Everyone on Board.JPG) After refreshments we viewed the day's last challenge...a 100 yard steep downhill on loose dirt with a smooth but way off camber left turn at the bottom. Here is where the newer trucks with ABS or traction control shone, while the Series rigs came down the old fashioned way working the edges of the traction/slither envelope. With ABS spectators could actually watch

the tires slip, release, slip, release for a controlled no-drama descent. All the drivers got a chance to hone their spotting skills here and I feel everybody did quite well.

After that it was back to camp for a quick pack up and good-byes. Brig and I really thank everybody for coming along and being such good sports on some tough trails...I hope everybody liked it enough to come back next year!



View at lunch.
Joe Mulqueen coming
down a steep lava rock
slope.
Casey at Slippery
Slope.
Disco II Yehawww.
Lunch at the Vista.



Trip Report

Downieville and the Sierra Buttes

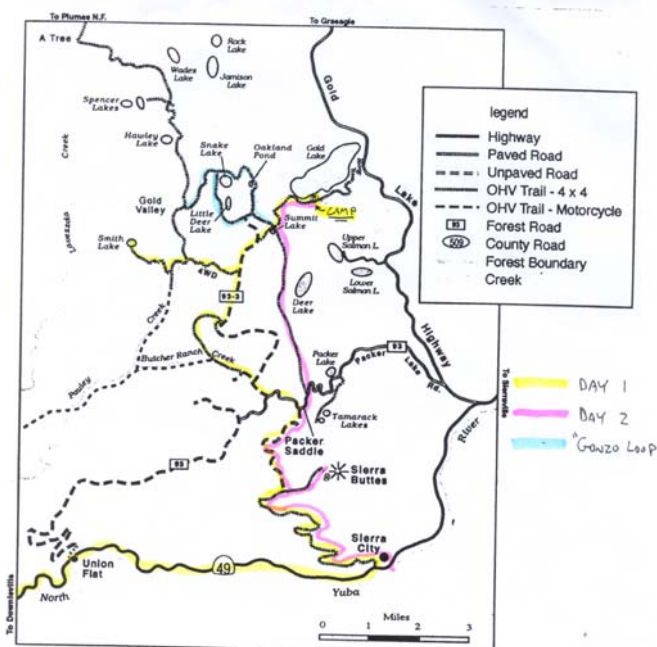
By Blair Peterson & Jason Pipes

(Blair Peterson Speaking) Last October, the Club hosted a repeat of a trip to the Sierra County high country above Downieville that was initially run 3 years ago. This trip was NCRC's 5th annual fall colors tour. Though the fall colors hadn't really sprung yet due to pretty mild weather this year, it was a beautiful, if at times a "different" kind of trip. We had an excellent turnout, with 18 trucks ranging from the austere but trusty "Rusty" (SIII 88) to several Defenders, Discoveries and Disco IIs, and even a Range Rover 4.6 HSE for the Grey Poupon set (it should be noted that Jon, Emily and Einstein Turner, in the HSE, were among the most ardent pursuers of the elusive "Gonzo Loop"). There were many new faces which is great—especially when they have nice food and expensive recovery gear (!) to share or happen to be an EMT (!!)—as well as few old friends which is always fun...

After handling the paperwork and a general briefing on a beautiful, clear morning in downtown Downieville we split into two groups and headed east on Hwy 49, making our way slowly to Sierra City. From there we hit the dirt, climbing an old mining trail that switchbacks up the mostly scree- and chaparral-covered south-facing lower slopes of the Sierra Buttes: almost 4000' in about 4 1/2 miles. The road itself was not challenging, but the vistas were spectacular. (Picture Climbing, lineup) Because of the size of our groups, we stretched back quite a ways on the trail, making for great, sometimes dizzying perspectives on the trucks climbing the switchbacks below. At Blue Point the track crosses the ridgeline and crosses over to the thickly wooded north slope, continuing to climb up a rutted double-track. I had decided earlier that rather than run up the Sierra Buttes OHV trail to the lookout on Saturday, we would try to get more miles of trails run and save that excursion for Sunday. So we headed north to Packer Saddle, towards Gold Valley and Pauley Creek. (See Map)

The Downieville/Lakes Basin region of the Tahoe and Plumas National Forests is managed very proactively towards 4x4, OHV and mountain bike use. The upside is that the Rangers keep trails open and encourage access, but especially in the case of cyclists, several trails have become extremely popular. To make a good loop, we had to (legally) share a few miles of OHV trail with the cyclists. Luckily for two of them, we did. We had traveled less than a mile from Packer Saddle, descending towards Gold

OHV Trails - Sierra Buttes Area
Downieville Ranger District
Tahoe National Forest



Northern California Rover Club

Valley, when mountain bike mishap #1 unfolded before our very eyes. Suffice it to say that Casey McMullen's EMT skills, a sand ladder cum stretcher borrowed from Michael Sewell, a soon-to-be splint cut from a nearby lodge pole pine and a lot of help from others in the NCRC group (including Jason Osborne who volunteered to drive Casey's 88 down the mountain while Casey stabilized the patient) handled the hapless cyclist's broken femur in a way that made us all proud. (picture Broken Leg) Not to be outdone, a few miles further, just where the Butcher Ranch OHV trail gets interesting, we arrived at mountain bike mishap #2.

(Jason Pipes speaking) This biker was even more seriously injured than the first! He had been found laying unconscious about 20 feet from the trail. He was found by his three biker friends who were not with him when he crashed. No one saw the accident occur. When we came upon the scene his friends had already slapped him into consciousness and gotten him up to move around for about 2 or 3 minutes. No one knew how long he had been down but it was estimated to be about 5 minutes. With Casey gone we no longer had a trained first responder

Trip Report

to assess the situation and stabilize the biker, but we did our best. The first thing we realized was that he should not have been moved - at all. That was a serious mistake that could have cost his life or future mobility had he more seriously injured his back, head or neck. As it was, he was bleeding rather profusely from many locations, seemed to have broken both his lower arms, sustained rather heavy trauma to his head, and was totally incoherent, dizzy and



nauseous.

Although he had been moved before we arrived, he was once again on the ground when we came upon the scene. During the short time we were present it was clear that his condition was only getting worse. As it was also pretty clear that he had hit his head very seriously, we knew that he needed to get to a medical facility very quickly. As he wasn't totally coherent, we weren't able to assess if his neck or back was also injured, but we took the fact that he had been walking as a "good" sign. I spoke with him, asked him who he was, talked about his injuries, who we were, what was going on, what we were going to do, etc, in an effort to keep him alert and see if his condition was getting worse. He was moved carefully into the back of our D110 which was promptly cleared of its contents by everyone present. We made a support for him to lie on in the form of our sleeping pads and some blankets and we covered him with a brand new wool blanket we had just gotten exclusively for use in the truck on the trail! I don't know how the ride back to Downieville was for the first team under Casey, but this ride was very stressful as his condition continued to get worse while we drove. For one thing, we were on actual trail when we found him and were about 15+ min from any sort of pavement. It could have been worse I suppose, but any length of

time driving off-road with a seriously injured person is not pleasant, for the driver or the injured. As we drove he threw up multiple times and bled an awful lot. Lucky for us the blanket and sleeping pads caught most of it... He also continuously asked the question "was this a dream" which indicated to us he wasn't totally with it. It was rather dramatic driving back to town as we had to flag down and wave aside every biker or passing vehicle we came upon to insure we got back quickly. It took about 45 minutes to get to the medical center in Downieville.

When we arrived at the small medical clinic in town, the scene was one of controlled excitement. Casey had just left but saw us speeding into town and we radioed him about our second injured biker. He promptly turned around and sped back into town as well. Casey helped us to unload the 2nd biker from our truck. (picture 110 Ambulance) He then proceeded to continue helping the staff and paramedics to further stabilize and assess the first bikers condition. It was decided that both bikers

needed to be transported in an ambulance to a helicopter landing zone outside of town where they would be airlifted to Grass Valley for better medical treatment. The airlift was rather exciting given the circumstances - the fire service was present and



closed down the highway so the helicopter could land on the shoulder. (Pictures helicopter, landing) The pilots assessed their conditions before loading them, and shortly after they were put onboard and airlifted away.

After all was said and done Casey, his driver Jason, Petra and I all headed back to camp to meet up with everyone else. We stopped for pizza and beer in Downieville

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first though - I think we deserved it! The entire ordeal began around noon and it was nearly 5pm when we got into camp. Casey and I feel pretty strongly that NCRC should incorporate an unofficial subsection of the club, the NCRC-MRS or Northern California Rover Club Mountain Rescue Service! Last I heard everyone we rescued was alive and recovering well.

So in a span of about 2 miles and 2 hours we'd rescued 2 seriously injured cyclists and lost 2 Rovers and 4 participants to the effort.

(Back to Blair) We then navigated by OHV trail all the way to Smith Lake for a late lunch. From there we partly retraced our route—had we not lost so much time due to Good Samaritan duty we would have pushed farther north in Gold Valley—then crossed over the Pacific Crest and descended to set up our campsite at Gold Lake. (picture Sunrise) Earlier in the day I had mentioned that there was a yet-unsuccessfully-traversed “gonzo loop” that several NCRC'ers had attempted on a recce several years prior. A few folks in camp, led by the Turners and including the Ellises in their Disco II, decided to give it a go, while the rest of us wished them luck as we clutched our cool and soothing beverages of choice. Though the explorers had

some drama, they returned victorious claiming that the loop was do-able and not all that gonzo.

It wasn't until Sunday morning, on our climb back up to the crest, that a tribunal led by our leader (me) determined that the loop the explorers found was in fact not the gonzo one. With that, the group split; half, with Bruce Bonar, Stephanie Changaris and others headed north towards Little Deer Lake and the “Gonzo Loop” while the rest of us headed south on the Deer Lake OHV trail towards the Sierra Buttes. A spectacular drive it was (picture Sierra Buttes Road): another perfectly clear fall day, the trail literally tracing the Pacific Crest with plenty of terrain changes, obstacles and tight turns thrown in. Not “difficult” but fun and challenging. It was on this trail that Daniel Oppenheim conceded that his “Series III 127” did in fact need new shock absorbers lest we re-christen it “Pogo” instead of Columbus.

Beyond Packer Saddle the road turned to gravel; though at a side-route hill climb that I knew of, the NCRC group suffered its only real “injury” of the weekend: Casey broke a half shaft! (Picture Casey breaking axel, Casey Fixing Axel) While Jeff Rogers and Rob Kerner stayed behind



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to help Casey affect repairs (he's getting quite good at half shafts, apparently!) the rest of us climbed the steep OHV trail to the base of the actual Sierra Buttes. For anyone who hasn't done it, the hike to the fire lookout at the top of the Buttes is spectacular. Not only is it fun four wheeling to get there, but the views and short-of-breath clamber up the steel stairs at the very top combine for an amazing experience (don't try it if you are scared of heights!).

It was a great weekend, with a great group of people, whom I would like to thank for their patience and flexibility given the surprises of Saturday's rescues. I would especially like to thank Casey and Jason (rescue 1) and Petra and Jason (rescue 2) since they got in about 20% of the trail time of the rest of us. Later, on the Mendo_Recce email list, I read that the seekers of the Gonzo Loop found but did not succeed in running the trail: after much winching and in the fading light on a Sunday afternoon, they decided to give up the chase. If the Club ever needed inspiration for another trip to the area (it doesn't) that has got to be it!

The participants were:

Blair and Spence Peterson, D110; Jeff Rogers and Lisa Guerrero, D90; Rob Kerner, SIII 88; Matt Wilson, Jason Osborne, and David Kneeurne (he must drive a Series truck with a Smiths heater: Ed.), SIII 88; Bill Ruttan, Disco; Barry and Lori Ellis, Disco II; John Young, Disco II; Charles Phu and Orlando Shih, Disco II; Daniel and Nate Oppenheim, D130; Jason Pipes and Petra Esterle, D110; Michael Sewell and family, Disco; Casey McMullen, SIII 88; Michael Petrone, Disco; Bruce Bonar and Stephanie Changeris, D90; Gerry Mugele, Mitsu. Montero (didn't want to get his D90 dirty); Rich Luzzi and Michael Pezzimenti, D90; Jon and Emily Turner and Einstein, Rangie Mk II 4.6 HSE; Jarrod Wyrick, Disco II.



Mechanics & Parts & Service



The following list contains parts suppliers and mechanics who support and work on Land Rover and Range Rover vehicles. **This is not an endorsements list.** Before using particular vendors or mechanics we suggest you talk to fellow Land Rover and Range Rover owners regarding their experience and recommendations. Please contact us with any businesses or updates



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ABA	After-market Body Armor

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British Pacific [P]
3317 Burbank Ave.
Burbank, CA
tel. 800-554-4133

Carpenter Rigging [AA, ABA]
222 Napoleon St.
San Francisco, CA 94124
415-285-1954

Cole European [D, S, P]
2103 N. Main St.
Walnut Creek, CA
tel. 510-935-2653

DAP Enterprises, Inc.
86 Clinton St.
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Euro Parts, Ltd [P]
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Sacramento, CA, 95825
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