

Land Use / Access

An international view



A need to work together

- We face growing environmental arguments against 4x4 use.
- A need to develop better “public relations” ability to put our case.



Southern Africa

- A loss of beach access by 4x4 in 2004
- A threat by Government of restriction on 4x4 use on public and private lands
- The creation of “NOW” to bring together 4x4 enthusiasts and 4x4 commercial interests in 2005. www.now.org.za
- A plan to self regulate 4x4 activity through a training / license scheme



- *“To encourage the different sections or interest groups in the off-road industry, to organize themselves into unified bodies with a unified opinion. It is the purpose to encourage these groups to come to the national workshop with unified points of view.”*



Australia

- It was interesting to see a move by the ANFWDC in 2006 to establish better links to their off-road industry...a 4WD Industry Council.
- Development of a permit scheme for the Canning Stock Route in Western Australia through Aboriginal lands
www.anfwdc.asn.au
- Strong State associations



New Zealand

- A current threat of legislation to ban vehicle use on Department of Conservation managed public lands unless permitted.
- The first stages of reviewing the 10 year Conservation Management Strategies (CMS) for each of the 14 NZ conservancy regions.



- Rights over use of unformed and old legal roads better defined following a report by a Government appointed Panel in early 2007
- A threat now, that those same legal roads will be affected by new laws.
- The NZFWDA is considering hiring a lobbyist to raise its profile.



An effect of doing nothing

- In the United Kingdom (UK) there is no national 4x4 organization.
- There are several large 4x4 clubs.
- There are advocacy groups for their system of “green lanes” or old roads that cross the countryside.

www.laragb.org

www.glass-uk.org



- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC)
- A quote from Land Rover Monthly (March 2007).....

“from May last year all RUPP’s (roads used as public paths) in the UK ceased to exist.

Thousands of rights of way that have been open to motorized vehicles since the invention of the combustion engine were permanently closed to all traffic overnight”.



- “Without any consultation or even a respectful examination of individual cases. But the saddest thing is - that most people had no idea. By the time off-roaders who only occasionally enjoy the countryside realized that things were getting serious, it was too late.

In a matter of months the off-road landscape was changed forever”.



Where to?

- An anti-4x4 success in one region gives encouragement elsewhere.
- The UK example highlights a need to be able to mobilize people.
- Organized groups make that easier but don't reach everyone, especially the individualistic four wheelers.
- We need to use better public relations skills to get our message out to the public.



What is our message?

- We need to convince the 4x4 industry that their livelihoods depend on having places to use 4x4's and that they must work with us to retain those opportunities.
- We need to convince the public that our recreation can be environmentally sustainable.
- We need to convince the public that our recreation allows a wide cross-section of the community to enjoy the outdoors.



- We must get the message to mass media advertisers that the way they portray 4x4 activities can damage our image.



Information

- Providing solutions requires finding information.
- Most environmental research is weighted towards finding a “villain”, since it is usually commissioned.
- Four wheeling must find or commission research that answers our questions.
- We must make our own “luck”.



- Four wheeling must emphasize the positives and get our message to the wider public.
- The facts must be clear.... The Paragon saga recently was a mess because the commercial facts were not clear.



Conclusion?

- Things are the same the world over.
- Sharing information is essential.
- Improving our public relations / marketing is needed.
- UFWDA is the only 4x4 international link.
- We can't do it without the information from you our members.
- We can't do it without money!

