



Cruisin' Colorado

Located in the Heart of Pikes Peak Country

www.ColoradoLandCruisers.org

Colorado Land Cruisers is a four-wheel drive club based out of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and sanctioned by Toyota Land Cruisers Association. We are organized to bring together Toyota owning families and individuals interested in exploring Colorado four-wheel drive trails.

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Edited and Published by Jeff Shapiro

Next Events

What: Mosquito Pass
Where: Near Fairplay
When: September 24, 2005
Meet at: Western Gas Station just east of Woodland Park at 7:00 a.m. leaving at 7:30 a.m.

While looking at the schedule on the web site I noticed that we need to schedule a couple of runs for October and November. Snow runs?

Send your input for Trip Planning to CLCTrip@ColoradoLandCruisers.org

Editor's Note

Hmmm...we seem to be having a hard time getting input for the newsletter again. Well, I guess that does come with the nature of the beast. But, it does make it a bit difficult for the person putting out the newsletter, namely me. Well, since I didn't receive any thing from the membership, you'll have to listen to me ramble on about my one trail trip in the last several months.

Have you read your new Toyota Trails yet?

Next CLC Meeting

When: September 20, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.
Where: Liberty Toyota, North
5597 North Academy Blvd.
Colorado Springs, CO

Mark your calendar for CLC's next meeting, See you there!

A CLC Member Does the Lockwood / Miller Jeep Trail

By Jeff Shapiro

Due to many factors, circumstances, and excuses I haven't done much four-wheeling lately. (Something that I'm *really* not happy about.) The one chance I did have to get out on a trail was the Lockwood / Miller Jeep Trail in Southern California. Like most trails in California it is about two hours from anywhere, and since it was such a long drive, I decided that I would campout the night before and meet up with the Point Mugu Four-wheelers at the appointed spot in the morning. Well, as it turns out camping in California is not for me. It was the first time in 13 years that I camped at a developed campground (because there was no dispersed camping allowed in the area). Fortunately, there was only one family that showed up. But, they did have a small dirt motorcycle that they just * had * to ride around the campground.

On Sunday morning I met up with the Point Mugu Four-wheelers (PMFWD) at a gas station near Gorman on Interstate 5. Point Mugu is the club that maintains the trail and spends a lot of time patrolling the area. They also hold their major fund raising event on the trail, which actually sounds like it might be fun. It is a night run around Halloween and they put on skits and stuff on the trail. I think this is their 11th year doing the event. Anyway, back to my trip over Lockwood/Miller. On a 1-to-10 scale they rate the trail an 8. The assembled group was three CJ type Jeeps, although I think they were TJ's or YJ's or something like that, and a couple of Cherokee's, a modified Toyota truck (he had a flat bed and a bunch of lift) and my Tacoma. From the gas station we drove the 10 miles to the trail head. Oh yeah, I should mention that it was about 85 degrees already at 9:30 a.m. It was going to be a very hot trip over the mountains.

At the Lockwood trailhead we aired down and locked hubs and did all the normal type stuff. The trail starts off with a creek crossing followed immediately by a short narrow steep climb on a shelf road. That was about

the only excitement until we got to a small optional rock ledge to climb. This is where I rediscovered that you shouldn't let guys spot you though an obstacle if they drive and are used to spotting vehicles with 25" less wheelbase. Of course, I also had just met the guy that morning so I really didn't know how good a leader he was. He wasn't all that bad if you drive a short wheelbased vehicle. It took me a while to get over the rock ledge mainly because this area of California is known for its loose powdery dirt and the spotter thinking my long wheelbase should go the same place as a CJ. Up to this point the dust wasn't all that bad; however, later in the day there were times that I couldn't see the Jeep 50 yards ahead of me because of the dust.



The sign for the campground where I spent the night.

The Lockwood trail winds up and over a mountain ridge and really isn't all that bad. It's just narrow and windy with some rock croppings thrown in for a change of pace. There's only two spots that get really interesting; the first is a very tight switchback. What made the switchback even more fun was the 6 inches of loose powdery dirt and being slightly off camber while we were going downhill. The next spot is kind of like Jaws 2 on Mount Blanca (see picture 2). It's not as bad really, even if it is about half as wide. The high side of the rock out cropping is on the cliff side instead of the hillside; however, it does want to lean your truck into a big rock in the hillside. One of the guys mentioned on one trip he tried to hug the hillside too closely and squashed his rear valve stem and couldn't put air back in the tire.



The only really challenging spot on Lockwood Trail.

The Miller Jeep Trail is basically a trail that climbs up from a creek along the top of ridges. There really aren't any switchbacks. I think it was 2,500 feet of climbing in 3.25 miles. Which led me to the impression that Lockwood / Miller is either going up or going down. There were a couple of tight corners with rocks on the inside that made things interesting. Overall, I didn't see anything that would make me want to rate the trail an 8 of 10. Of course, my longer wheelbase did keep me out of the ruts and holes dug by the CJs. I think the mercury got close to 100 degrees by the time we finished with the trail. This was the first time that I was happy that my Tacoma has luxury features like air conditioning. It got hot enough that I decided to run the AC while crawling around on the narrow dusty trails. My truck's temperature never seemed to get any hotter because of running the AC and I didn't see any loss of power. But then it would be hard to notice a 2-3 hp drop when you are in second gear low range. And there was the added benefit that the AC helped keep dust out of the cab.



After running the trail we came out in the Hungry Valley OHV Park, and played a little in the 4WD Training Area.