

FJCR MAGAZINE



OCTOBER 2011 • VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 4



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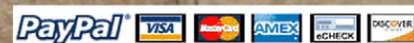
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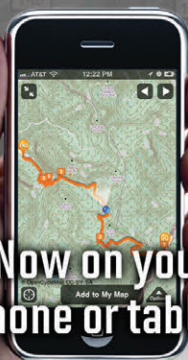
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FROM THE STAFF

We're so excited about this issue of FJC Magazine!

The 2011 FJ Summit was our favorite event to date, probably because we were fortunate enough to stay the entire week this year. Ron Flint from XPLORE Adventure Series also let us take the XPLORE FJ Cruiser for a spin while in Ouray, so that was a real treat!

We were hoping to make it to Sedonafest but were unable to make the trip, luckily Mike McCambridge worked with several forum members and sent us some amazing photos!

Our multi-month project to turn a Disney Princess FJ Cruiser into a TRD Special Edition is finally complete, and it's Brenden's new favorite toy even though he can't quite reach the 'go' pedal yet.

Overall we really had a great summer and we're looking forward to a nice peaceful fall season. The colors in Colorado are gorgeous and the weather is turning chilly - soon we'll be planning our first snow run of the year!

We really hope you enjoy this issue of FJC Magazine!

Until next time, Tread Lightly, Stay The Trail, and HAVE FUN!



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For FJ Cruiser Owners & Enthusiasts
Colorado Springs, CO 80923

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New & Noteworthy

MPAC STRADDLE

As all FJ owners are aware, storage space is always at a premium in the front of the truck. Ham & CB radios, GPS units, iPad & iPhone devices, and a plethora of other accessories really eat up the small amount of space available. Doc over at Springtail Solutions has always been on the forefront of FJC storage solutions, so when he announced the Straddle – we had to have one!

The straddle does just that: it straddles your center console to provide a mounting point for just about anything you want. Some mount flashlights, electronics bags, even holsters to their straddle. With a somewhat dated ham radio hanging in our TRD, the straddle was the perfect mounting solution. Install took all of 30 minutes, thanks to the excellent instructions and hardware that are provided, and now the Kenwood radio is secure and easy to use.

The straddle is available for both manual & auto consoles for just \$79. Bags are not included since there are so many combinations possible.

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EVENTS

Southern Cruiser Crawl

Dates: October 13 - 16, 2011

Location: Superlift ORV Park, Hot Springs, AR

Contact: CottonLand Cruisers

2012 Toyota Jamboree

Dates: April 19-22, 2012

Location: TBD

Contact: <http://www.facebook.com/ToyotaJamboree>

2012 Overland Expo

Dates: May 18-20, 2012

Location: Flagstaff, AZ

Contact: <http://www.overlandexpo.com>

2012 FJ Summit

Dates: July 2012

Location: Ouray, CO

Contact: <http://www.fjsummit.org>

2012 SedonaFest

2012 Thrill on the Hill

For the latest event news
& coverage, visit
FJC-Mag.com and click
on Event Calendar

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When most of us get excited about the FJ Summit, we imagine the Wednesday dinner, trail runs Thursday through Saturday, and the group photo on Sunday morning. We are all always very grateful for the work the volunteers and directors put into the event, but don't give much thought beyond a thank you, hand shake, and the occasional adult



beverage.

This year I was lucky enough to be able to help organize the event in a minor capacity. In addition to the event guide FJC Magazine does every year, I had the opportunity to act as a vendor liaison for the FJ Summit. This meant that I got involved in the planning

Above: FJs line up for the Sunday morning photo.

Right: FJS HQ setup begins with the tent.





process fairly early and got to witness much more behind the scenes action that most Summiteers never get a glimpse of.

As you're well aware, planning for the annual event begins early in the year. The directors usually start having discussions in the January timeframe that center around dates and key improvements/changes over previous events. Once the dates are decided upon, everyone gets their assignments and work begins on the planning. For every feature of the event: Vendors,

tent, venue, food, trail runs, etc.; there are dozens of tasks to be accomplished.

I honestly don't remember the number of conference calls we held during the planning process, it was certainly dozens. During each call every member of the team gave updated on the status of their areas as everything began to come together. The directors (Tye, Seth, Jared, and even Tim) still carry the lions share of the workload, but a few of us were able to lend a hand and help a little.



Above Left: Near Lake Como after Poughkeepsie
Above Right: Wikids FJ during a pre-run.
Left: Joe Bacal spots an FJ up an obstacle.



Stuffing swag bags takes volunteers nearly a full day to complete

We were very happy this year to welcome several new sponsors in addition to the excellent companies that have supported the Summit for years. FunTreks, Restop, Pandor Adventures, XPlore, and Surefire are a few of the new sponsors kind enough to support the event. Once again TRD-Parts4U.com, TRD, Toyota Motor Sales, and many others really made the event possible as well. We've attended many events and I can honestly say the Summit features some of the best sponsors you'll find anywhere.

Angie, Brenden, and I arrived on Sunday excited for the event as well as an extended stay in Ouray. For previous events, we've only been able to attend Wed-Sun, so the chance to hang out and help with setup was pretty exciting for all of us.

The real workload for setup begins on Tuesday with bag stuffing, pre-running, and FJS HQ setup. This year the swag bags were extra-full, so the stuffing team spent almost a full day separating, stuffing, and organizing. With several last minute additions, we were literally waiting for the UPS truck with the last shipment of bags

and swag to finish up the task.

Wednesday morning brings FJs to Ouray, and plenty of them! Of course many Summiteers arrive earlier in the week, but since registration begins Wed morning, that's when most FJs start showing up to FJS HQ. There is a constant stream of registrations all day long, causing a line to form at times. Luckily the Off Roadies do a great job at handling the crowds and everyone gets registered without too much hassle.

How did the event go? Well, due to the hard work of everyone involved – the 2011 FJ Summit was a huge hit! This year we had well over 250 trucks in attendance, and all the vendors took really great care of everyone. We talked to dozens of Summiteers and everyone was thrilled with the trail

runs, food, entertainment, and of course the raffle.

There was one very special guest that we were thrilled to have in attendance this year: Mr. Joe Bacal. In case you missed our January 2011 interview with Joe, he's currently the championship winning Baja driver for Lexus, but he also owns & runs JT Grey Performance Driving. Most importantly (to FJ people), Joe was the lead test driver for the FJ Cruiser during its development. Remember the stories of the prototype FJ Cruiser on the Rubicon Trail? Yep, that was Joe Driving. So it was really great to not only have him at the summit,

Joe Bacal expertly spots an FJ up a slick rock



but to run the hardest trail at the event with him. Of course I mean Poughkeepsie Gulch.

For hard-core rock crawlers, Poughkeepsie isn't a difficult trail. In all honesty, it's not overly difficult except for one obstacle: the wall. Having a true expert in all things FJ with us on the very first time we ran it was pretty exciting and made for a great day on the trail. Joe was very excited to guide everyone in our group up the 'notch' just before the last major obstacle, and up the wall as well. We're happy to report that despite a little breakage (on one of Joes FJs, an original Trail Teams truck), everyone in our group safely made it up the wall and out the top of Poughkeepsie Gulch.



Left: Shane getting instruction from Joe

Left Below: The slickrock before the wall was a major challenge

Below: Joe signing posters at the TRD Booth



FJ Summit No. 5 was, without a doubt, the most fun we've had at an off road event. The people, the vendors, the trucks, all combined for another amazing event. The only thing we're wondering now is how next year could possibly top this year in Ouray? Maybe Black Bear Pass will be open.



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285 70 17 All Terrain - Who's got the best Deal on 5 of them?			11-16-2010 01:02 PM	3	84	Wheels and Tire



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*An easy way over rocks,
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It's easy to spend thousands of dollars and pack your rig with recovery gear, yet when the time comes to use that gear it just doesn't meet your needs. When we came across the LiftTrax we were very intrigued by the possibilities. LiftTrax use pneumatic power of trapped air to support your truck in recovery situations. According to their website, they can be used to avoid high centering, to cross ditches, climb shelves, or as traditional sand ladders.

They arrived rolled up in a canvas case that's very stout. LiftTrax includes instructions as well as two Schrader adapters to make inflation easy. They're very stout, and although they're made of fabric they look like they can take beating. The inflation tube is easy to find and although the instructions call for a standard air compressor or hand pump, we used our CO2 tank to put the 2-8psi depending on the need. LiftTrax is clear that you should never exceed 10psi to





avoid bursting. The LiftTrax can also be tied together end to end to create a longer recovery device.

We took our LiftTrax out to the local play hill to see how they perform. We tried a few different obstacles with the LiftTrax as a traction aid, and they're definitely easier to move around than heavy rocks.

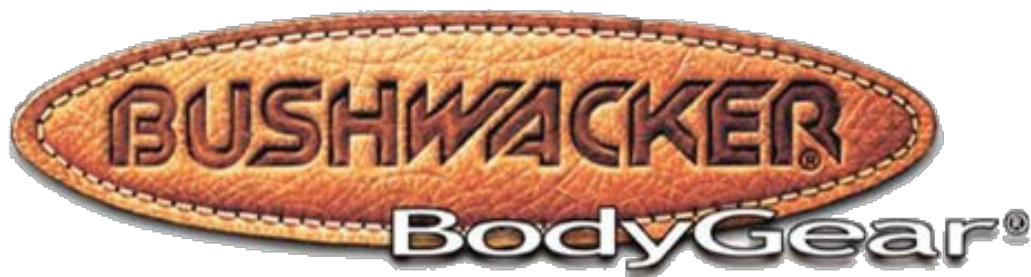
We tackled shelves, rocks, and ditches near the infamous "Moab Hill" just outside Colorado Springs. Other than a couple of slippages due to an over-excited driver, they did their job very well. We tried several orientations along with the obstacles and it's clear that a little practice with these is necessary so you can recover quickly and effortlessly.

The LiftTrax worked great, and while they won't get you out of every jam, they're tough and very easy to use. There are many different recovery options for your FJ Cruiser, and we'll be including the LiftTrax in our kit from now on.



Source: <http://www.lifttrax.com>
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INSTALL



When we talk to new FJC owners, one of the most common questions is how to change the look of the truck while adding a performance. Of course a lift kit, tires, and bumpers are all valid options. However for the relatively small investment, fender flares are certainly one of the best options. Flares can significantly improve the look of your truck while adding room for larger tires at the same time.

sive look so we sourced a set of Pocket Style Fender Flares from Bushwacker. These are by far the most popular flares for the FJ Cruiser, and for very good reason: they look great!



There are a few options for flares available, everything from basic 'OEM style' flares to full tube 'flat' flares. We wanted a little more aggres-

sive look so we sourced a set of Pocket Style Fender Flares from Bushwacker. These are by far the most popular flares for the FJ Cruiser, and for very good reason: they look great!

tions in the box, they're printed in black & white so we recommend using a computer or iPad to view the PDF you can download from their website. A digital device is also very helpful in zooming in on photos during the install. Installation is pretty straight forward, except that the instructions are written for an FJ with stock bumpers, so we knew from the beginning changes would be needed.

The first major obstacle we ran into were the clips that hold the stock flares on. All the bolts came out fairly easily, but the plastic 'push in' clips were a real pain. After nearly 70,000 miles on the OEM flares – the clips get brittle and quite 'stuck' in their position. We didn't manage to get any of them out without breaking, luckily Bushwacker includes new clips so the originals can be discarded. Removing the clips took by far the most time of the two hour install.

We were a bit concerned that the Aluminum front bumper would have clearance issues, but as it turns out the fit is absolutely perfect, almost like the flare was made specifically for this bumper. We did need to mod the small piece of plastic Bushwacker includes to hold the stock plastic in the wheel well. Since some of that was removed during the

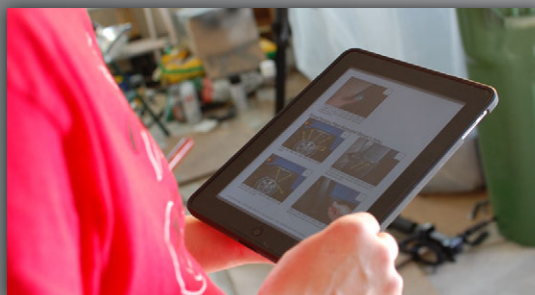


A slight modification to the inner piece

The huge box of flares arrived and unfortunately had to sit in the house for a week while we finished up the first part of our FJC Mini project (Page 14), so we would have room for the install. In the meantime we downloaded the instructions to the iPad and went through them a couple of times. While Bushwacker includes instruc-



Stock clips can be a challenge



Color instructions are the way to go



Before & After the Pocket Style Flare install. The difference is quite remarkable.

Aluminess install, we simply drilled an extra hole in the retainer plastic and it functions perfectly. Both front flares went on exactly according to the instructions, so it was on to the rear of the truck.

In order to work around the bumper wings on the stock rear bumper, Bushwacker includes add-on pieces for the bottom of the rear flares.

After removing

the original rear flares, it only takes a few minutes to fit up the Pocket Style flares. The included instructions have you install the add-on pieces before you mount the flares to the truck, but after a test fit we noticed that the add-ons wouldn't work with our LoD rear bumper, some trimming would be needed. We mounted the main flare piece first, then got the

rotary tool and utility knife out to modify the add-on piece. All that was needed was a notch near the top of each piece, and a little trimming on the bottom half, and our flare was complete.

Of course, by 'a little' I mean an hour or two of trimming, fitting, trimming, and fitting. Luckily our new photographer & number one tool guy, Jim, is a whiz with a utility knife. If you have an aftermarket rear bumper, you can count on some type of trimming to get the add-on pieces installed correctly.



Trimming was required on the rear

The results speak

for themselves with these flares. We really couldn't be happier with the new look of our FJ. The Bushwacker Pocket Style flares give the FJ a much more aggressive, rugged look,



Cutting original flare from rocker

and provide more space for larger tires the next time we upgrade. If you're in the market for an inexpensive performance + aesthetic upgrade, give Bushwacker a call.

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FJC

MINI *Part 1*

Have you tried to find an FJ Cruiser Powerwheels lately?

When the FJ first came out, the black FJC Powerwheels was available at nearly every Walmart, Target, or toy store. Today, there is exactly one listed on Amazon.com and it's selling for nearly \$800. Not exactly a great option. Of course you can, if you look around enough, find a purple & pink "Disney Princess FJ Cruiser". That's wonderful if you have a little girl, but our boy just wouldn't look right rolling around in a pink FJ.



Brenden enjoyed his FJ, but the color just wasn't right

So what does a crazy FJ Daddy do? He buys the Disney Princess FJ Cruiser and mods it, of course. Had I known how much time and effort would go into this project I may not have done it. Ok, I admit it, I totally would have. While it's been a lot of work so far, transforming the Disney FJ into a mini replica of our '07 TRD has been a great project even though I may never been done with the mods for this FJ either.

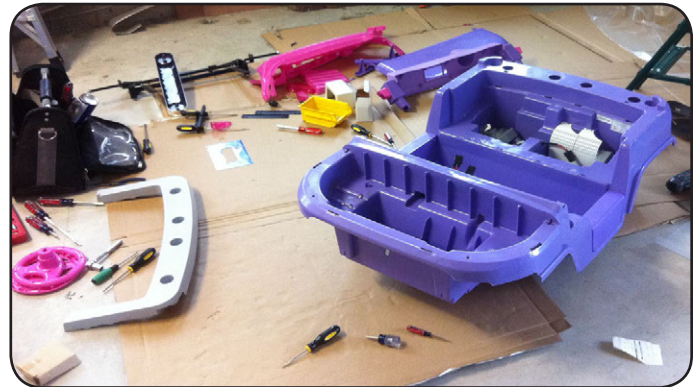
The process started with disassembly. Initially, I planned to just remove the 'main' body parts and paint the rest Black Diamond to match our truck. Of course once the screws started coming out, one thing led to another until we had virtually every removable part off of the truck. Luckily all the screws are the same size so they all went into one bin and re-assembly wasn't too bad.

Our TRD basically has four paint colors: Black, Black Diamond, Anthracite Gray wheels, and White, so it makes sense to finish Brenden's FJC Mini with the same colors. The mirrors, bezel, and 'roll bars' are white. The bumpers, rock rails, dash, windshield, and steering wheel are regular black, and the wheels are Anthracite Gray (see side box). Finally, the body, hood, and doors are black diamond to match our truck.

The painting process started with sanding all pieces to promote paint adhesion. Painting plastic is always a tricky project so I wanted to ensure maximum coverage. I tried self-etching primer but quickly discovered it's a little too harsh for plastic, so instead I went for a sandable, fillable standard grey primer for all parts. After one coat of primer and a little wet sanding, all the parts were ready for color.

Since the regular black parts take up the most room, I started with them. I used a flat black Rustoleum

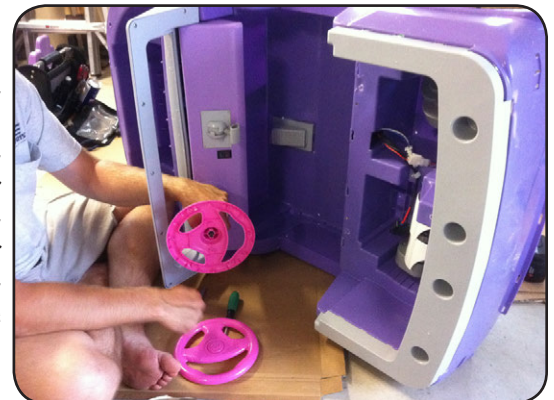
paint with an add-on sprayer grip for easier control. Each part got an initial coat, then wet sanding, then a finishing coat. A few parts had to be touched up a little before the two coats of eggshell



All parts are ready for sanding & painting

sealer went on. Overall I think the black parts came out very good, they blend in nicely on the finished truck.

Just like when we painted our parts white (See TRD White Out, April 2009), applying the white to these parts took some effort. For some reason white paint seems to go on a little thicker



Disassembly took some time



The body primed & ready for color



Windshield & hood ready for primer



The final satin clear coat came out great

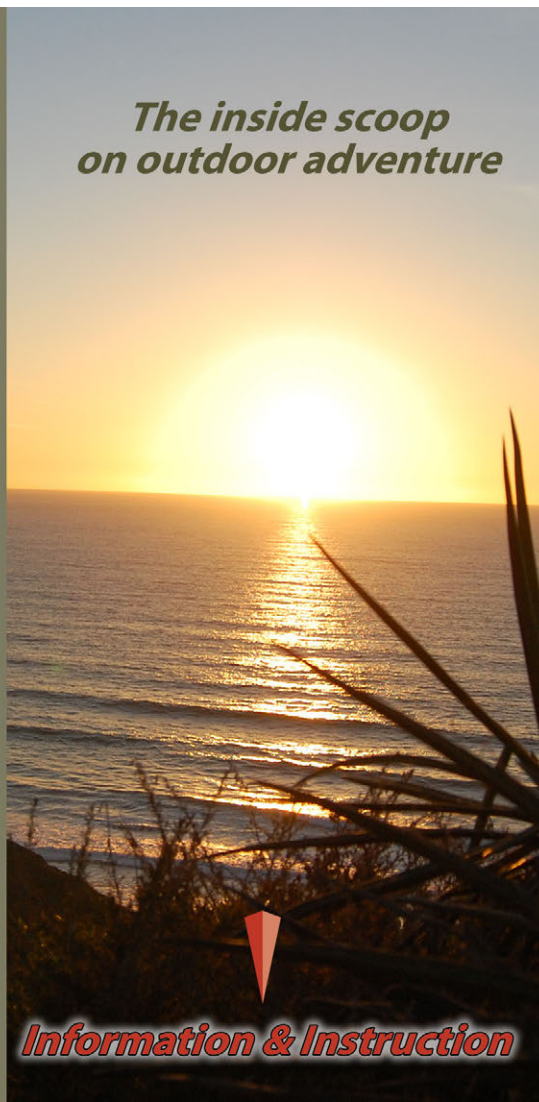


Steering wheel nearly done



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**Ready for first coat of
Black Diamond**



All parts are ready for final assembly

than others, so it's very easy to overspray the parts. This meant waiting for it to dry, wet sanding, and repainting. While the black parts only took two coats, all the white parts took three plus a little touch up to get them right.

The Black Diamond went on very easily as well, although it wasn't quite as smooth due to larger surface area. After one coat of gray primer and two coats of flat black, I ended up shooting two coats of the Black Diamond

and one clear coat just to make sure everything sticks ok. I have no illusions of this paint holding up to the wrath of a toddler, but at least it looks good for now.



**The seats came out very well,
we'll see how they hold up**

The OEM colors (for the wheels & body) came from a paint dealer and were much more expensive than standard rattle cans. I painted the wheels first and it was immediately apparent why they cost more: quality. The Anthracite flowed out of the can very well, with no dripping or sputtering that is always a concern with most rattle cans. I probably could've gotten away with one coat



Anthracite Gray Paint

Toyota doesn't have a paint code for the Anthracite TRD wheels on our FJ, so an internet search turned up a Honda paint code that's close. While Hondas version is a little darker, it certainly closer than anything else available.

on the wheels, but had to shoot two to get full coverage in the tighter areas.

The final step of part 1 of this project was re-assembly. Luckily my good friend (and our newest photographer) Jim was on hand to help sort out the mess of parts and make sure everything went together properly. We ended up scuffing the paint

(of course) to reveal

some purple, but a little touch up goes a long way. The FJ is now drivable, and while Brenden is a little small to steer

AND move, he loves his truck anyway. There is no doubt he'll get plenty of years of enjoyment out of this FJC Mini.

Of course this project is not done quite yet. I'm still working on a way to make the pink tail lights and side marker lights not look so pink. I'm also planning several 'enhancements': Working lights, badging, and of course an iPod Touch based stereo system (just like daddy's FJ). Don't worry, there will be no movie watching while the FJC Mini is in motion. I'm sure these are all just a start, there are plenty of other mods that we'll come up with in the future. Look for this first round to be completed by the next issue of FJC Magazine!



You could say he's a little excited about his new FJ.



We sprayed the underside with just one coat



Final assembly is almost complete



What a great pair!



A great looking FJC Mini!

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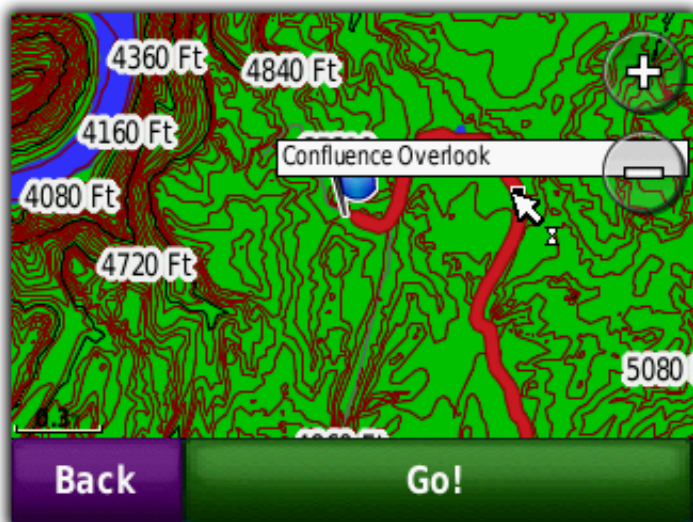


The data on these cards are in standard .gpx format, so if you're handy with a computer you can use it with just about any software such as Mapsource, Basecamp, National Geographic Topo!, Google Earth, or DeLorme Topo USA. Funtreks has plenty of support available on their GPS Resources page as well.

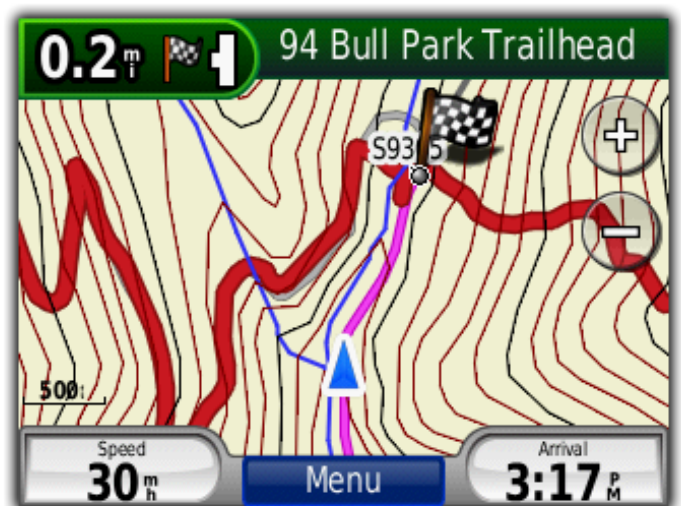
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In The News



At the end of August, Autoguide.com broke the story of the first REAL Red FJ Cruiser – the 2012 Trail Teams Edition. In keeping with all previous TT models, the 2012 includes blacked out features and black TRD wheels. The official color is 'Radiant Red' which sounds like a famous 80's song, but the color is pretty cool despite the name. While we generally prefer the 'whited out' look on FJ's, this all red FJ is certainly sharp. Beyond the color, all the features carry over from previous Trail Teams editions. We'll definitely be looking to test drive this sharp truck as soon as they show up in Colorado!



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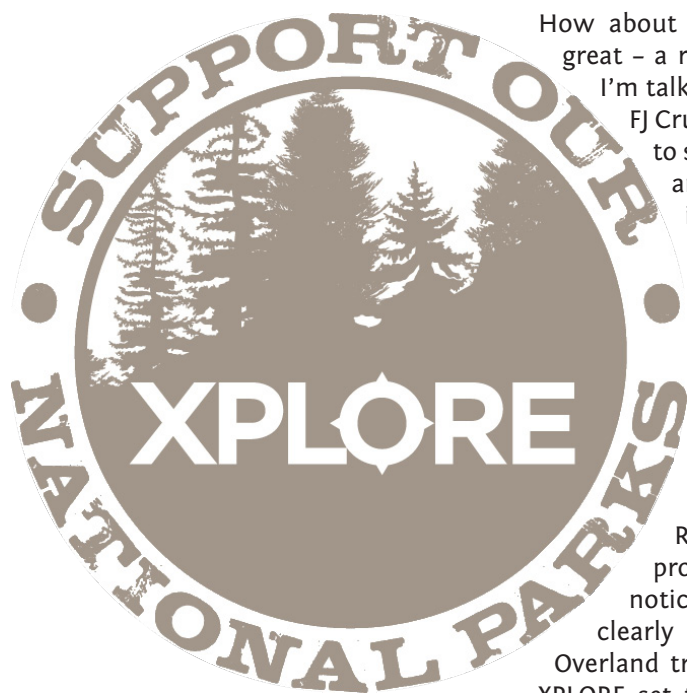
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Special guests, including Ron & Viv Moon, Tiffany Coates,
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Duncan Barbour & 10 other Camel Trophy veterans, Lois
Pryce (Lois on the Loose), & many more
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Red rock camping ~ Photo by BenEdmonson.com for Equipt Expedition Outfitters (Equipt1.com)



How about a green FJ? No, not THAT great – a real ‘off road worthy’ green.

I’m talking about a matt green 2010 FJ Cruiser, completely customized to support the XPLORE program and your national parks. This is the XPLORE Special Edition FJ Cruiser, and you can get one now at many Toyota dealers.

During the FJ Summit in Ouray, CO (See page 6), we had an opportunity to spend a little time with the XPLORE FJ and chat with Ron Flint from the XPLORE program. The first thing you notice about this FJ is that it’s clearly built for exploration. Part Overland truck, part weekend warrior, XPLORE set this FJ up for one purpose: Family fun!

Since the guys just completed a great night run the evening before, the FJ was in perfect ‘trail’ form. Dusty, dirty, and

definitely not ‘show floor ready’. We took it for a quick spin up toward Yankee Boy Basin and snapped a few great shots of the rig.



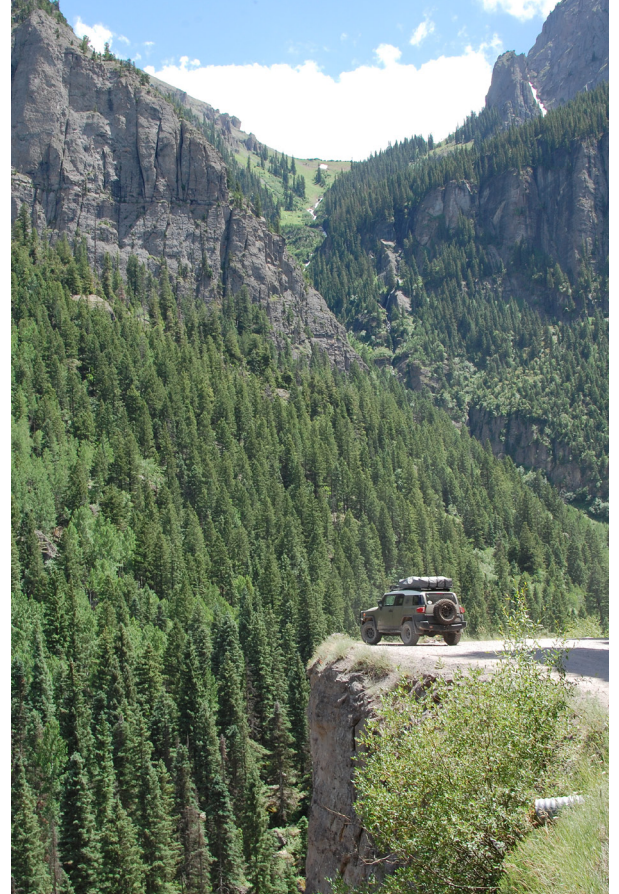


The truck drives well, as all FJs do, but the XPLORE touches add an aire of adventure. The Katzkin leather seats with custom XPLORE embroidery, the custom badging, floor-mats, and logo on the outside set this FJ apart from all others in Ouray, or anywhere for that matter.



The purpose of the XPLORE program, according to Ron, is twofold: to make it easy for you to get out and enjoy the outdoors, and to support Americas National Parks. A portion of every XPLORE package is donated to the National Parks Foundation, so you can rest assured that each purchase goes to a good cause.

These trucks are dealer built and supported, so there's no worry of voiding the warranty with mods. They're delivered to the FJ owner that would rather spend time playing in the woods than playing in the garage. What's more, the XPLORE Adventure Series FJ makes a great base platform for a unique overland rig. We certainly enjoyed spending a little time with her, and can't wait to see what XPLORE has in store for 2012!



Detailed Specs:

- BFGoodrich® All-Terrain T/A® KO Tires
- XPLORE/Katzkin Leather interior with embroidered logos
- XPLORE/Method aluminum wheels
- Bilstein 5100 Series shocks
- Magnaflow stainless steel cat-back exhaust
- XPLORE/National Park Foundation Special Edition dash badge
- XPLORE Adventure Series Exterior metal badges
- XPLORE floormats with embroidered logos
- XPLORE Owner's Package:
 - ARB Front & Rear bumpers
 - ARB Roof Top Tent
 - ARB roof rack
 - Warn Winch





Sedonafest 2011 has come and gone! The fifth annual event was the largest yet with 70 trucks and over 150 people in attendance. Many thanks to our generous sponsors for backing another year of our famous raffle. Over \$2,000 was raised for the Every Kid Counts charity and the Arizona Off Highway Vehicle Coalition.

Due to the threat of fire restrictions in the National Forest, the event was moved to August for 2011. Temperatures were mild and despite a constant looming threat of rain, we escaped with only one brief storm. The weekend was beautiful for simply being outside, camping and enjoying our public lands. Many thanks to all in attendance for practicing TREAD LIGHTLY principles and being extra respectful of some muddy roads in the area.

Sedonafest 2011 included three new trail offerings - an Expedition Run, the Cinder Hills OHV Park, and the challenging Smiley Rock trail near Jerome AZ (which was hilariously completed by someone in a 1986 VW Syncro Van). The Expedition Run covered dense pine forests and high desert landscapes, faint double track trails and mountain lakes on a 100-mile route through the lengthy maze of dirt passages East of Sedona. Cinder Hills OHV Park encompasses a series of volcanic craters in a dense pine forest with wide open black lava sand areas that put even the best suspension systems to the test during high speed runs.



Story by Mike McCambridge





Photo By tibal89



Photo By blue10



Photo By azeyecap

The GPS Challenge put on by Expeditioneers was once again a fun adventure. This year the trophy was taken by two brothers with minimal 4x4 experience in a totally stock FJ Cruiser - proof that strategy and efficiency are most important. Congratulations also go out to Don (aka Wikid) for taking home the grand prize in the raffle, an ARB front bumper from Findlay Toyota of Flagstaff.

Thanks to all who attended and we hope to see you next year! Check out www.sedonafest.com for more information or to contact the organizers.



Photo By deaz

In the years following the release of the Toyota FJ Cruiser, more and more experienced drivers began to take the vehicle on increasingly difficult trails and less experienced aspired to follow in their footsteps. The resulting factor demanded more all-around protection and any advantage a driver can get that will allow him/her to increase their focus on the most difficult aspects of a given trail.

Enter BozTec

With skid plate sets plentiful in the aftermarket and having protected their rigs with them, John and Leonie Bowers set out on the more challenging trails of the western United States. What they quickly discovered was the need to protect the rear from damage, which obviously builds assurance when exiting a difficult obstacle. As they enjoyed more trails and met more FJ Cruiser owners, it became obvious to them that they weren't the only ones who shared their experiences.

"My concerns with driving on rugged trails are to enjoy the drive and making it back to civilization with my vehicle intact and no major trail rash/damage!" states Indiana-native, Angela Jirousek. "I have dinged my rear diff before while driving in rugged territory. Although they were minor dings, I still felt the need to get protected to help build my confidence on more difficult trails."

For Scott Plavney of Texas, the vulnerability of the "rear pumpkin" was not something he was expecting. "At Wheeltoberfest 2010, I dinged my rear diff pretty good while in a stream bed, not knowing at the time that I busted the seal loose. It wasn't until later that day that someone on the trail behind me noticed that my diff had a 'wet look' to it, and we discovered that indeed it was dinged

Hung up in New Mexico without BozTec



Having fun in Moab

pretty bad, and leaking." Plavney credits fellow driver, Matt Robb, for noticing the damage and allowing him to keep putting fluid in for the trip back home.

And for more experienced drivers such as Jake Ginsburg (aka TrAiLbUs1), choosing the right lines to keep the rear diff protected on some of the most extreme obstacles the FJ Cruiser can handle became standard practice and sometimes detrimental to other parts of the rig. "I always had to be extremely aware of where my rear diff was, making sure to position rocks as to not cause damage, to the point other parts may have taken a beating while positioning away from the rear diff," states the Arizona resident.

As a result, BozTec was formed.

Peace of Mind

One of the key reasons for the development of the BozTec rear differential skid plate was to provide the driver with peace of mind. While navigating through gardens of boulders, ascending and descending granite steps, or high-speeding it on a desert trail, the last thing you want to worry about is your rear end.

"It does give me a sense of 'I don't have to worry about the diff anymore because it's got a 'steel diaper' on it,'" says Plavney. "It's solid, and it's not going anywhere. Having something like the BozTec rear diff skid gives you a little less worry factor out on any trail. Now, I can shift my attention to picking more difficult lines on a trail because I know that pretty much nothing is going to hurt my rear, which is good, because it only improves my driving."

"My concerns with driving on rugged trails are to enjoy the drive and making it back to civilization with my vehicle intact and no major trail rash/damage!"
-Angela Jirousek

**"I always had to be extremely aware of where my rear diff was...to the point other parts may have taken a beating while positioning away from the rear diff."
-Jake Ginsburg**



BOZTEC®

Having a little peace of mind can be the difference between getting over an obstacle successfully and damaging your vehicle, but as in Plavney's case it also allows one to concentrate on becoming a better driver. "With the BozTec diff skid, I am able to focus more on increasing my driving skills and attempting more challenging lines on the trail," says Jirousek.

But even peace of mind means different things to different people and sometimes it shifts from actual use on the trail to the microscopic discussion and debate of the online forums.

To protect the yoke or not, that is the question

One of the many questions that BozTec receives is in regards to protecting the yoke. Some critics have pointed out that without yoke protection, the diff skid is not 100% full-proof and subject to failure. However, BozTec begs to differ. Bowers explains:

"I've thought about it and it is a doable thing but not without cost. The first cost is monetary, more metal, forming and gusseting equals more dollars. The second and far more extensive cost is possible failure. If you were to hit something at high speed or fall off a rock and land on the "tongue" under the yoke there would be potential for metal bending. If the tongue were to bend upward into the drive shaft it would not only ruin the drive shaft, but would also render the truck useless. It could be argued the skid could be taken off at that point, but if the underside of the truck were inaccessible driving or winching further could and would do more damage possibly leaving the truck stranded on the trail. At least if you run into rocks with your drive shaft you have the option of stopping and doing something different, maybe Hi-Lifting and stacking rocks for more clearance or backing off the obstacle all together, but a rigid piece of steel pinching a drive shaft equals a more serious situation requiring a more extensive repair.

The BozTec diff skid is engineered to protect the case of the axle and the drain plug as well as adding a slight bit of spring when riding over an obstacle translating the force further out towards the springs, effectively spreading the load out over a longer area. You may notice upon installation the inside of the plate does not contact the bottom of the case. We intentionally leave a little space to absorb the energy of impact. Pre-loading the axle in an upward direction with the skid only puts undue stress on the axle in the wrong direction."



Peace of mind on the trails

Although it may ultimately come down to preference, BozTec's reasoning behind designing the rear diff skid in its current state came to be with much thought and thorough field testing. On top of that, Bowers has over 25 years of metal fabrication experience and 12 in waterjet cutting under his belt, not to mention a passion for the great outdoors. As a result, BozTec is able to provide peace of mind for generations to come.

Ginsburg goes on to conclude, "Peace of mind 100%. It's nice to know that you are protected when you hear that rock ripping across the bottom of your chassis. Much less stressful knowing the BozTec diff skid has your back, or may I say rear."

**"Now, I can shift my attention to picking more difficult lines on a trail...which is good, because it only improves my driving."
-Scott Plavney**

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G R E A T

S H O T S

I took this image of my 2007 FJ Cruiser last December in Big Bend National Park. I had found the spot that I wanted for that evening's sunset shoot, and while waiting for the right time I found this spot to grab a photo of my FJ too. This is taken along the infamous Black Gap Road with Elephant Tusk Peak, one of the most famous landmarks in Big Bend, in the background.



I sent a copy to Toyota as well a few months ago. They responded that while it is a great shot, my FJ is too old for their current marketing. I suggested they send me a 2011 to shoot, but for some reason they didn't, heh



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this trail. Don't be the last.

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Trail. Discover all the challenging off-road adventure Colorado
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FJ's In Action

BRETT IN NEW MEXICO



GREG & FRIEND @ THE FJ SUMMIT



OUR NEW FJC MINI



ANTHONY & HIS FJC MINI



Have a great pic of your FJ? E-mail a high-res version to pics@fjc-mag.com