

Holcom Creek run, 8-6-2011



Meeting up a Fawnskin were Mike Deaner and Ann, Alfred Ricci, Greg and Carole with a friend Sergey, Richard and Janet DeWolfe, Lee Elster and Phyllis Engle, Fred Prater and Lorie Stoddar, John Hemphill, Mary Ellen and Randy Smith, Joe and Deb Cox, and finally chasing us down was Bert who was strangely towing a small mobile home. I think we ended up with about 11 rigs in all. I thought it might be cold up high in the mountains, boy was I wrong, at one time the temp went over 100. It turned out I didn't

need the two coats.

This trail was closed after the Big Bear fires about 4 or 5 years ago and was recently opened due to the enormous efforts of local off roading clubs. I used to not understand why trails were closed after fires, but after seeing the hundred of trees that had fallen on the trail or "could" have fallen on the trail, I



have seen the light. Nothing would quite ruin your day wheeling like a 100 foot pine tree coming down on the middle of your Jeep. I cant imagine how much work the clubs did cutting these monstrous trees into manageable chunks and moving them off of the trail.

I have to say that it seemed that every club in southern Cal picked this Saturday to go wheeling on Holcom Creek, it felt like rush hour on the 405 (except for all the rocks of course). We hit the trail and met our first obstacle, which was a tight right turn at a water crossing that was full of large rocks. Mike slid though high on the left bank followed by Richard, me, then Randy who took a slightly different line and high centered. We tried to extricate him, but he finally succumbed to the tug of a strap. A little later John didn't climb quite high enough on the bank and also hung up on a rock and had to be tugged off with a strap.



The trail consisted of easy dirt roads with the occasional appearance of a rock piles. One such pile of rocks was about 150 feet long; with a couple of different lines you could take. I had been having an easy day of it so I picked a harder line which ended up in front of two large boulders. I tried to get up to them but kept sliding off to the left. After about four attempts I went with the flow and took the easier exit. Mike later told me a few weeks ago he saw tricked out rigs with

37s get stuck trying to climb those rocks (bet I could have made it).

The end of this trail was boulders all the way to a graded dirt road. Everyone picked their way and made it without a problem (even Bert with his puny axles towing the mobile home). At the road some



folks headed home while the rest of us took another trail back that met up with Holcom Creek, then back to Fawnskin. It was on this trail that my temp gage suddenly pegged in the red. Ouch, this doesn't bode well. After seeing that no coolant was spurting out I figured it was just the temp sensor and nervously soldiered on. A few minutes later the temp returned to normal. Another gremlin bit me when my seat belt wouldn't work, I just stuck the end of it in my ice chest on the passenger seat, that should hold me in.

Randy had a couple of problems, somehow he managed to jamb a large rock between the top of his left rear tire and the top of the wheel well. We pushed and pulled to no avail, finally dislodging it when I stood on top of it and had Randy drive backwards. A little while later Randy's slightly lifted Jeep quit moving forward. His auto trans linkage had parted ways and he wasn't going anywhere. Greg and Carole's rider, Sergey, quickly crawled underneath and got Randy into Drive, telling him not to move the shifter.



We finally left the trail and made it back to Fawnskin where we aired up.

The only trail damage I heard of was a bent license plate and bracket on Richard's 4-Dr, not bad for all the rocks we drove over.

It was a fun day on a new (to me) trail. Thanks to Mike Deaner for keeping up on whats happening in the mountains and around Big Bear and leading us on the runs. Thanks also

to Sergey for his rapid trail repairs.

My special "Wheeler of the Day" award must go to Randy Smith who got through all the rocks beautifully in spite of small tires and minimal lift. Just one question, was Mary Ellen telling you which lines to take?

Again, a great time with you folks. My camera is out, if any of you took photos please post them for all to enjoy.

Happy Trails

Gary Blackman