



January 30, 2007

Mr. Paul Jernigan  
325 John Knox Road Suite F-100  
Tallahassee, FL 32303

**Re: Apalachicola National Forest Enforcement Issues**

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

I am writing today to address issues that have come to the attention of the Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc., with regards to enforcement issues within the Apalachicola National Forest. A meeting was recently held at the Crawfordville District Office where myself, Mike O'Lary, Wyatt Bass, Garth Smelser and Cathy Briggs were in attendance to address the ongoing route designation in the Apalachicola National Forest.

As part of the Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc., presentation, we also addressed issues that members have had with a particular law enforcement officer, Mary Pat King. There seems to be a good deal of miscommunication as to what the local district deems "acceptable use" of its trails and the interpretation of that by Mary King. Specifically, there have been accusations leveled by members of the four wheel drive community that Mary King's actions appear to have gone from that of law enforcement officer charged with the safety of those in the Forest and the protection of Forest resources to that of outright harassment with no acknowledgement of how off road vehicles are used within the Forest. As a result, the efforts of our members have been hampered because, in short, they're afraid of being cited if they happened to be doing something that Mary King does not agree with, whether it be acceptable by District Rangers or not.

Specifically, Mary King has (reportedly) issued citations to users with "mud on their vehicle" for significant resource damage. The issue we have with that statement is that someone could get mud on their vehicle by just traveling down certain trails within the Forest or the mud could have been on their vehicle before even entering the Forest. A majority of off road users do not participate in "mud-bogging" and any mud that happens to be on their vehicle is typically a result of an attempt to extract themselves from a depression that happens to be on a trail—a trail that is open according to the most recently published maps available from the Forest Service.

The Board of Directors of Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc., frown upon any significant resource damage and strongly discourage our members participating in any activities in the Forest where unreasonable resource damage could occur. However, there needs to be an understanding by you and your officers to what off road users do when they enter the forest for a day of trail riding. The vast majority of us are there to relax and enjoy the natural surroundings. But there seems to be a good bit of misinformation when it comes to what is acceptable use by your officers, what is acceptable use by your District Rangers, and what information is available from district offices for off road users.

Please feel free to contact me at your convenience, [jenn@fl4wda.com](mailto:jenn@fl4wda.com) or (904) 753-0244. Or you may contact Jason Kawaja, President of the Florida Four Wheel Drive Association, Inc., [jason@fl4wda.com](mailto:jason@fl4wda.com). I look forward to your response regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hawkins-Vice President  
FLORIDA FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

Cc: Cathy Briggs, Recreation Director, Apalachicola National Forest  
Garth Smelser, Deputy District Ranger, Apalachicola National Forest  
Marcus Beard, District Ranger, Apalachicola National Forest  
Carla Boucher, United Four Wheel Drive Associations, Inc.