



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 1

Trail Leader Pre-Run Items

At our major SFWDA Events, all trails must be pre-run by the Trail Leaders. At Meet & rides, pre-running is optional. The reason for this is that at SFWDA major events, attendees pay for the event and therefore expect that the trails will be as advertised - no surprises (closures, rating changes, etc.). Here are some things to check for:



- Obtain a map of the trail system and specifically the trail you plan to take.
- Confirm the route from the meeting location to the Trail Head so you don't get lost getting to the trail head!
- Identify a safe air down location that does not block the trail and provides level space to allow all vehicles to park.
- Zero out your trip odometer at the trailhead.
- Confirm that the trail is open and that the rating has not changed from what was advertised to the members.
- Check the condition of all major obstacles and by-passes. If need be, practice spotting vehicles on pre-run to confirm the lines that work.
- Determine 3 to 5 potential 10-100 (restroom) spots. They should provide adequate cover for those in need. Record mileage from air down spot.
- Determine 1-2 potential spots to stop for lunch. Plan on arriving at lunch stop anytime between 11:30 and 1 PM. Lunch spots should provide shade and off-trail parking for all vehicles. Record mileage from air down spot.
- If you are interested, this would be a good time to plan what you are going to say about the geology, history or geography. If you see something interesting that you don't know about, make a note and research it before you lead the trail ride!
- Identify 1-3 possible "outs" for vehicles that might need to leave early (breakdown, sickness, etc.). Record mileage from air down spot.
- Document the total trail length to confirm what was told to the members. If there is a significant difference, review that with the Event Trail Ride Coordinator to determine what actions, if any, should be taken.
- Select an air up location that does not block the trail and provides level space to allow all vehicles to park. Record mileage from air down spot.
- Confirm the route from the air up location to the rally site so you don't get lost getting back to the park!
- Have a way to identify your exact location (GPS Coordinates) and know your egress options in case you have an emergency on the trail.



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 2

Driver's Meeting on Day of Run

It is important for all Drivers to meet prior to departure from the Event site so that the fundamentals of the run can be reviewed. This is the opportunity to set expectations about the difficulty and length of the trail, any obstacles that may be encountered, CB and Ham channels and other logistics. This is also a great time to do introductions. Here are the items to be covered:

- Introduce yourself and your navigator.
- Introduce your Tail Gunner(s) (selected based on their ability to take over as trail leader if needed).
- Announce the name of the trail and its difficulty rating
- Give people an idea of when you might be back in camp (no guarantees!)
- Announce radio communication channel – CB/FRS/GMRS/HAM
- Stress that keeping up with the group is an important safety issue, as is keeping the vehicle behind you in sight.
- Announce that if the group becomes separated on the trail, the trail leader should be notified immediately.
- Spotting is available at any time. Driver and Spotter should have a clear understanding of the level of assistance required, preferred line and vehicle restrictions or concerns. The driver is ultimately responsible for picking a safe and doable line.
- Remind participants to request 10-100's (restroom breaks) if needed. Remember "men to the left, women to the right".
- Announce: There will be no use of alcoholic beverages or drugs on the trail rides sponsored by SFWDA. The trail leader will inform the park management if this rule is not followed.
- Drivers will be notified regarding obstacles on the trail, oncoming traffic and turns
- Ensure people understand that if there is a breakdown on the trail, every effort will be made to repair the broken vehicle. If the vehicle cannot continue the trail, the Tail Gunner is responsible for ensuring that the broken vehicle makes it back to camp. If necessary, the Trail Ride Leader will appoint a new Tail Gunner.
- Ensure that all vehicles are capable of finishing the rated trail and are in good mechanical condition before beginning the trail ride. Lockers and winch are required for harder trails.
- All vehicles must have as a minimum front and rear attach points, fire extinguisher, same size spare tire and first aid kit.
- Have everyone introduce themselves – club affiliation, hometown, etc.
- Identify any people with emergency medical training
- Give everyone an emergency card and ask them to complete it and put it in their vehicle.
- Give short instructions on how to reach trail head in case someone gets lost along the way.
- Remember, the Trail Leader's decision is final in all cases!
- Park Rules: _____



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 3



Trail Leader Duties on the Trail

While on the trail, the Trail Leader is just that, Trail Leader! They will not only set the pace, navigate the trail and ensure the safety of the group but will also supervise any abnormal situations - breakdowns, recoveries or spotting over obstacles. If they don't personally do it, they will make sure a qualified person does. In all cases, the Trail Leader's decision is final! Trail Leader responsibilities on the trail are:

- Lead people to the trail head, through the trail and back to the event site safely!
- Proceed at a reasonable pace. If someone is not keeping up, talk to them in private. If multiple people are not keeping up, perhaps your pace is too fast.
- Call out all turns at intersections. "Keep left at the fork", "Turn right at the T intersection". Avoid giving long explanations for directional instructions. Keep it simple! Avoid saying things like "Don't go right". All people will hear is Right.
- Expect confirmation of all your directional instructions from your Tail Gunner "Copy - Right at the Intersection". If they don't respond, ask them if they heard the instructions and then tell them in private that you would like a repeat back as confirmation. That is your only way of knowing that your instructions were heard and understood.
- Spot anyone at any time they need it. Always spot at difficult obstacles. Err on the side of caution.
- If you are willing, be prepared to talk about geology, history, geology, fauna, etc along the trail. If you don't feel comfortable doing this, recruit someone to fill in for you. This is a social event and you are the event coordinator for the day - make sure everyone is having a great time!
- In the event of any breakdowns or recovery tasks, take charge. Make sure safety is first and that everyone who can help is being supervised. If you don't feel comfortable with a recovery, ask for a volunteer.
- If there is a breakdown and it cannot be quickly repaired, work with the Tail Gunner and the driver of the broken vehicle to discuss options. If at all possible, finish the trail with the rest of the group.
- Try and stop several times in the morning and several times in the afternoon for 10-100 stops and call out the lunch stop.
- The Trail Leader should slow down after making major changes in direction and wait for the Tail Gunner to confirm that the he or she has made the turn.
- At air up location, remain there until the last person has aired.
- Announce oncoming traffic.
- Other: _____



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 4

Tail Gunner Duties on the Trail

The Tail Gunner has several important responsibilities to keep the Trail Leader informed of any abnormal situations, assist in breakdowns, spotting and, if necessary, taking over for the trail leader in emergencies. The Tail Gunner responsibilities include:



- Obtain a trail system maps and know the trail. You may need them if you have to take over for the Trail Leader!
- Report to the Trail Leader when all vehicles are moving following a planned stop.
- Repeat all major instructions from the Trail Leader (“Copy - Turn Right at the intersection”). This helps ensure that all people in the pack hear the instructions and lets the Trail Leader know that their instructions were understood at the back of the pack. Do NOT simply say “Copy that”!
- Report to the Trail Leader when you have completed a major turn or crossed a major intersection. The Trail Leader should slow down after making major changes and wait for the Tail Gunner to confirm that the Tail Gunner has made the turn. “Tail has made the right turn at the intersection”.
- Report any unexpected delays to the Trail Leader. Unexpected delays sometimes indicate that someone is having trouble.
- Close any gates opened by the Trail Leader.
- Assist in spotting. Best practice is to relieve the Trail Leader after about half of the vehicles have been spotted up an obstacle. That way, the Leader can move on to the next obstacle.
- Upon the Trail Leader’s request, take charge of all trail repairs. If necessary, accompany the disabled vehicle back to civilization.
- Report to the Trail Leader if the group is being overtaken by faster-moving traffic. The Trail Leader may then have everyone pull over and let the faster-moving traffic by.
- Report to the Trail Leader when oncoming traffic has cleared the group.
- Let the driver of oncoming traffic know that you are the last one in the group.
- Other: _____



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 5

Spotting Checklist

The Driver is ultimately responsible for getting their vehicle safely through the trail. If at any point, they are not comfortable with the Spotter's instructions, they should stop and get comfortable.

The spotter will:

- Ensure the safety of Drivers, Passengers and Spectators
- Ensure the safety of the vehicle
- Provide instruction and encouragement
- Minimize trail damage
- Let everyone have fun!


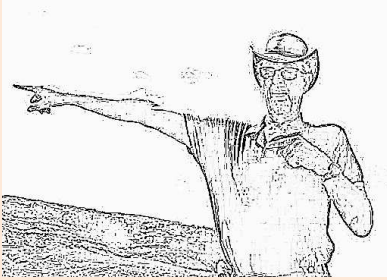






- Assess the obstacle to make sure you have a plan to get each vehicle through. Your line may differ depending on the vehicle width, length, capabilities and driver skills.
- Communicate with the Driver to determine:
 - Does the Driver want to be spotted on the recommended line?
 - or- does the Driver want to be spotted but on an alternative line?
 - or- does the Driver NOT want to be spotted but only be alerted to dangerous or expensive situations?
- If necessary, appoint someone to watch the rear or sides of the vehicle. This alternate should only communicate with the spotter - not the driver.
- Give clear, unambiguous hand and verbal signals. Extend your arm fully and point. Make dramatic signals with closed fist to stop.
- Use the verbal directional commands “ Driver or Passenger” rather than “Left or Right”.
- Instruct the Driver to only make small movements of the steering wheel in response to your commands unless you instruct them otherwise (e.g. HARD Driver)
- Keep your voice calm when talking to the driver. Provide encouragement.
- Make it clear that no one other than the Spotter should talk to the Driver. If someone has a suggestion, tell the Spotter.
- The vehicle has six sides to track! Driver side, Passenger side, front, rear, top and bottom. Depending on the obstacle, you may have to stop and survey each one of these sides for interference or damage potential.
- Be aware of all four wheels at all times. Watch for one wheel climbing while another wheel might be dropping into a hole.
- If a vehicle becomes stuck, determine best strategy. Options include stacking rocks, slight bump, straps, winching or bypass. In no situation should people stand on the vehicle.



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 6

Typical Hand Signals for Spotters

	
Turn Passenger	Turn Driver
	
Come Forward	Backup
	
Stop	Verbal Command!



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 7

Stuck Vehicle Checklist

If a vehicle is having difficulty navigating an obstacle, there are several options. Take a bypass, strap the vehicle or winch it through the obstacle. Strapping is the easiest and simplest option to help a stuck vehicle. This works if there is a vehicle in front of the stuck vehicle and that vehicle has room to maneuver. Remember:



- One winch boss - Trail Leader should designate most knowledgeable person.
- Clear spectators from the path

Strapping:

- Attach the strap to both vehicles using Clevis, D Rings or soft shackles. Do NOT use straps with metal hooks!
- Pull forward until the strap has some tension on it.
- The purpose of the strap is to provide a little. It is important that the stuck vehicle drive through the obstacle when being strapped. Driver should not expect the tow vehicle to pull you like a dead weight!
- The Winch Boss will tell both drivers when to start moving.
- Once the vehicle has cleared the obstacle, stop and remove the strap. Do not drive up and over the strap!

Winching:

- Use heavy leather gloves. Secure loose clothing.
- Use a suitable/safe anchor point. Tree Straps, large boulders or other vehicles may be used. If using another vehicle, that vehicle should be in gear with the brakes applied. Do not leave in Park!
- Open part of the winch hook must always face up.
- It is sometimes desirable to have a third person operating the winch using the remote control. This person should stand far away from all vehicles and the winch line.
- Make sure winch clutch is engaged.
- Apply a damper on wire ropes.(a damper is a cloth such as a towel, mat or rug that will apply weight on the winch line and will push the winch line to the ground if it suddenly snaps free while pulling) Winch Boss yells "Clear" before engaging winch. Driver does not start winch until directed to do so by Winch Boss.
- The primary purpose of the winch is to provide assistance so that the stuck vehicle can drive / navigate the obstacle. It is important that the driver uses the accelerator even more than the winch to get free (unless the vehicle is disabled).
- Rewind winch after each use and inspect cable/rope. Replace if damaged.



Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 8

Vehicle Recovery Checklist

In the event of a vehicle rollover, the safety of the occupants is paramount. Once their safety is secured, step back and plan the recovery effort. Suppress the tendency to rush to a solution until a workable plan of attack has been formulated and then execute a SAFE recovery. If a vehicle has rolled, do the following:

- Turn off the engine and ensure that ignition is in the OFF position!
- Secure vehicle so that no movement is possible
- Check all occupants for injury. Assess situation and stay calm.
- Do not cut / release seat belts until occupants have secured themselves from an injury that might occur when they are released. Drivers should have seat belt cutting tool within easy reach.
- Set Parking Brake, make sure Transfer Case is engaged and put the vehicle in Park
- Check for leaking fluids, broken glass, sharp metal
- Ensure ready access to the fire extinguisher and first aid kit
- Trail Leader must designate ONE person to be in charge. That person should solicit input from all but when it comes time to execute recovery, they are calling ALL the shots.
- Develop a communication plan with all participants in the recovery effort.
- Secure the area. All spectators must be removed to a safe location.
- Secure at least two straps/lines to the vehicle - one to turn it upright and one to ensure that vehicle does not continue to roll. There are times when a third or fourth line may be needed.
- The person in charge should be directing both vehicles during recovery
- If necessary, secure a third and fourth vehicle to the two vehicles performing the recovery to prevent them from becoming part of the problem.
- Do not stand on the vehicle at any time during recovery
- Do not attempt to start a vehicle that has rolled until the engine block is cleared of any fluids that may have entered the cylinders.





Guided Trail Ride Checklist Part – 9

Emergency Information Card

Complete this card and place it in your glove compartment or another conspicuous place in your vehicle so emergency personnel can reference it in an emergency.

Your Full Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Full Name of all passengers: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

Allergies/Medical Conditions – Include Passengers

Medications – Include Passengers: _____

Other Information:

Use the back of this page if more space is needed