

# MAXTRAX Snow Test



**WIKIDFJ**

**IPAD INTEGRATION**

**SURF-N-TURF 2010**

**ALUMINESS MANUFACTURER PROFILE**



On The Cover:  
Testing the MAXTRAX in  
deep Colorado snow



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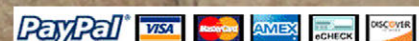
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## FROM THE STAFF

We honestly could not be more excited about the future of Toyota FJ Cruisers, FJC Magazine, and Zaxyn Media! As we begin our fourth year of publishing FJC Magazine and the fifth year of the FJ Cruiser the future looks bright and we're so thankful to each and every one of you for your enthusiasm and support for our little venture.

Not only is the FJ Cruiser coming to Australia this year, but Toyota very recently started selling the right hand drive FJ in Japan as well. I'm sure other countries will see the FJ soon as our iconic vehicle continues to gain market. While the future of any vehicle is certainly subject to the demand of consumers, we're very confident that the FJ will continue at least for a while.

On January 30th we'll be hosting the Tacoma Magazine Launch Event at Arapahoe Basin in Colorado (Tacos on the Beach 2011), and we couldn't be more excited about this new venture. If you or anyone you know is interested in Tacoma Trucks, please have them visit the website – TacomaMag.com – for information on the launch event and all future issues. We'll be giving away hourly prizes all day at the event - and EVERYONE is invited!

2011 is already shaping up to be a banner year. We're already working on some cutting edge articles for future issues, and our event schedule will be keeping us very busy. The dates for FJ Summit #5 have been announced (July 20-24, 2011) so we know that event will be another huge success. We're also planning on covering all the FJ Cruiser events as well as several TLCA events this summer, so make sure you check our website & Facebook pages often for the latest news and information.

We wish you all a wonderful New Year and hope you get to have as much fun as we will. Until next time, Tread Lightly, Stay the Trail, and HAVE FUN!

--FJC Magazine

**Tacos On The Beach** **TACOMA**  
magazine  
**Sunday January 30th, 2011**

**FJC**  
**Magazine**  
**GET A PRINTED COPY**

For FJ Cruiser Owners & Enthusiasts  
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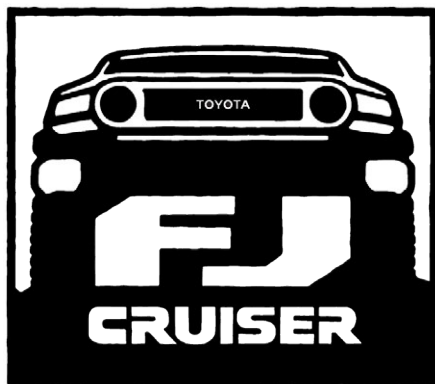
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# iPad Integration

If you've been a reader of FJC Magazine for a while, you know that we've always strived for the best options when it comes to navigation, especially off road navigation (See Off Road Navigation Parts 1-3, April-October 2008). In our January 2009 issue we covered the Kenwood 7120 with custom topo maps loaded with about 300 of our favorite Colorado off road trails. At the time that was absolutely the best available option for in-dash navigation with topo/off road maps.

When the iPad was announced last year it was pretty clear that this device could change everything. The iPhone is a great device and can be used for off road navigation to a limited

degree, but the small screen really makes it better for hiking vs off road driving. This fall the ideal solution became clear when we realized that we weren't using many of the features the Kenwood had to offer. In reality it had become little more than a pass through for our iPhone. We did use the topo maps when offroad, but the outdated (2008) maps for everyday use started becoming an issue. The Kenwood is still a great system for those that aren't interested in the modifications required when installing an iPad, but for us it was time to move on.

Last year, just after the iPad shipped, Scosche demonstrated their iKit, which is meant to integrate the iPad into any double-DIN dash, but that product hasn't been released yet so we had to figure out our own parts. So we built a list of parts we knew we would need to install an iPad in the FJ. The initial intention was to find a small amplifier that would fit in the dash, which would make the install very tidy and easy to do. Unfortunately, after trying several options we could not find a suitable amp so we ended up installing the Sony Xplode amp under the passenger seat. This solution works well but does add at least an hour to the install time. Not counting the time it took for the install, the entire project ended up costing about \$1,050 including all the installation hardware. This is in the same range as low-end NAV systems and about half the price of some of the new Kenwood systems that support custom maps.

The last piece we had to figure out before the install was what software we were going to use. We basically have two things in mind for the in-dash iPad install. First, we need a competent turn-by-turn navigation software. There are several options for the iPad but we decided to test the top two: CoPilot HD from AKA and Navigon. The second software package we need is an off road trail app. Again there are several options, but after trying all of them we decided to stick with EveryTrail. Not only are they our partner for the Off Road Trail Maps project, but they really have the best offline topo maps that also allow you to import



**iPad Integration  
Parts Used**

**Mounts Tested:**  
ProClip  
RAM Mount  
~\$100 ea

**Total Parts: \$370**  
**Total Cost: \$999**



iPad \$629 (16gb/3g)



FJ Cruiser Stereo Wiring Harness \$10



iPad Breakout Cable \$20



Sony XM4S Slim Line 4 Ch Amp \$150



Griffin iPad Charger \$15



Stereo/RCA Converter \$5



Stereo RCA Cables & 2x splitter \$10



JL Audio CL-RLC \$60

## CAUTION:

As with any aftermarket system, the iPad should only be used by the driver when the vehicle is parked. Distracted driving is dangerous!





### EveryTrail App on the iPad

any trail data you want. The Every Trail Pro app is not iPad native, but the view is very acceptable at the 2x resolution.

Once all the pieces were assembled it was time for the install. While we've attempted to cover this project entirely, this article should be thought of as a guide versus wire-by-wire instructions. There may be better/faster/easier ways to do things but we want to lay out the process we did in general terms, so you can figure out a similar install if you're so inclined. After removing all the Kenwood 7120 components we were left with nothing more than the stock wiring harness and OEM radio mounts.

### And a big hole in the dash...

The first order of business was wiring the aftermarket radio adapter to all the components we needed for the iPad install. We used an amplifier installation kit to run a main power lead directly from the battery, and then used the included remote turn-on cable to activate the amp only when the ignition key is on. Wiring the speakers from the harness to the amp is pretty straightforward since the harness supports standard color codes. We chose to use a 12V socket hidden in the dash for the Griffin iPad charger, so that had to be spliced into the aftermarket harness as well.

The more interesting wiring challenge was getting audio out of the iPad and into the amp. One of the things we had to give up with this install is the steering wheel controls. In order to have volume out of the iPad audio breakout cable we used a pre-amplifier from JL audio that includes a volume knob. While it is theoretically possible to wire the JL audio device into the steering wheel controls, we'll save that for another time. So the stereo jack out of the breakout cable converts into RCA jacks for the JL audio pre-amp with a \$5 adapter. From there, the JL audio right/left output had to be split for each of the 4 channels in the amp:



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## ProClip iPad Mount -with Tilt Swivel & Pass-through Connector

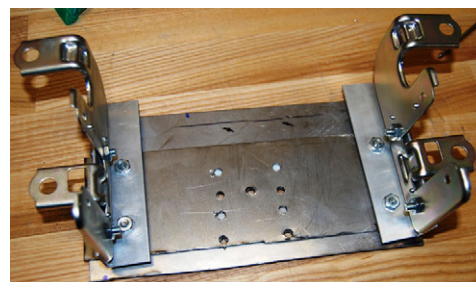
The mount ProClip sent us to review includes a pass-through connector so you don't have to plug the iPad cable in each time. Instead you can just insert the iPad into the mount and it will dock to the system. This is a great feature and although ProClip offers the same mount without the pass through, this really is the one to choose. As we mentioned, this mount is slimmer than the arm/ball combination of the RAM so it will take additional modification to install it to the steel plate. We used a 2X4 cut to about 3"X2" as an offset block. We simply ran long (about 3") sheet metal screws/nuts to secure the mount to the steel plate and wood

block. The result is a very 'svelt' mount install that fits tight up against the dash. We actually had to place the mount about 1" higher on the steel plate than the RAM mount so it wouldn't interfere with our heating controls, of course the clock and vents are now partially blocked. There's just no way to NOT block something with the iPad installed. While this mount is not as movable as the RAM, it is on a swivel base so it's possible to transition from landscape to portrait and back with ease. Overall it presents a very integrated look even though it's not as movable as the RAM option. For a close in mount, the ProClip is a good choice.

SOURCE:  
<http://www.ProClipUSA.com>



Front & Rear view of  
the custom faceplate



Custom faceplate installed

## RAM iPad Mount



RAM offers this mount in a locking and non-locking version. The idea of a locking mount is very cool, but we asked to review the non-locking version since it's a little smaller. If you haven't seen the

RAM mounting system before, they basically use a ball/arm setup that you attach the mount to. We mounted a 1" ball on the steel plate, and then used a short (2") arm to attach to the ball attached to the RAM mount.

The great thing is that this system is very versatile and you can do just about anything you need. This versatility comes at a cost though, the RAM setup protrudes from the dash quite a bit

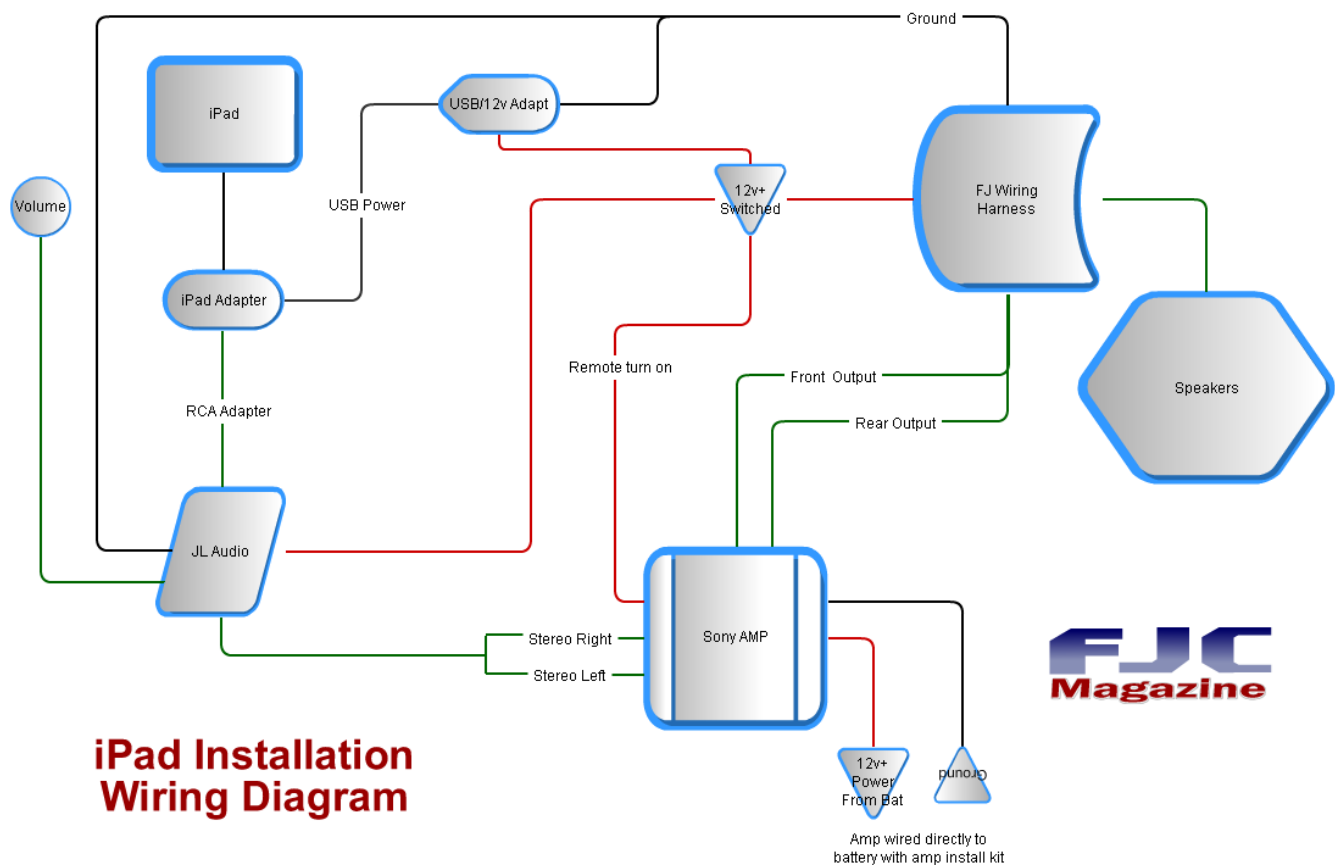
and can interfere with your heater controls. Luckily the entire mount can move up, but then it covers your clock & heater vents.

NOTE: The iPad is bigger than the stock radio opening, so it will always be covering something up. Overall though, the RAM mount is a great option if you're looking for maximum versatility. It's simple to loosen the arm clamp and rotate the entire mount in any way you like. That's very good because the Every Trail Pro application only works in portrait mode while we usually keep the iPad in landscape mode. For an install that needs to move the mount often, this is the way to go. If you're looking for a more 'integrated' mount, you may want to check out the ProClip.



SOURCE:  
<http://www.RAM-Mount.com>





front right/left and rear right/left. The result is a lot of cabling and splitters, but everything worked out as we expected. You can see the diagram below for details on how everything is wired. It was quite an amazing feeling the first time everything powered on and the sweet sounds of Aerosmith came blasting out of the iPad. While the small Sony amp won't win any awards for power, the 50watts/channel are more than enough to drive the aftermarket speakers up front, and we had to dial down the rear output to about 50% to avoid damaging the stock speakers.

Of course wiring the system is only half of the job. An iPad wired into the FJ doesn't do any good if it's sitting on the passenger seat. This is where the real ingenuity in the form of a custom mount comes into play. There are probably a dozen different ways to fabricate an iPad dash mount, but we had to use mostly regular hand tools and wanted to come up with a mount that's easily repeatable. We also wanted to try a couple of options for the actual iPad mount itself so our solution had to support either the RAM or the ProClip platform.

The basic idea was to 'fill in' the hole in the dash with a steel plate that we could secure the iPad mount to. In order to do this, we used two 4" (approximately) pieces of 1" right-angle

aluminum that were bolted to the OEM radio mount. This gave us a flat surface to mount an 8" X 3.5" (approx) 16ga steel plate to. That steel plate was then drilled to accommodate either of our mounting options. Of course there were several sets of screws/bolts/washers/nuts needed to secure everything together as well. One interesting item we didn't anticipate needing was a 3" X 2" X 4" block of wood. The mount ProClip sent us to test included their offset block, but it didn't provide enough depth from the steel plate to the front of the dash, so we used the wood block to push the mount out farther. See our iPad Mount Hardware List for details on all the pieces we used.

We ended up testing both the ProClip iPad mount with pass-through connector as well as the RAM iPad mount. The first thing you'll notice about nearly all iPad mounts is that they cannot be used with a case. RAM does offer a generic mount that will work with a case, but for our integration we wanted to review the specific iPad mount. We love our OtterBox cases for the iPad, so the fact that we can't use a case with our mounts is disappointing. Still, we realize that it would be impossible for mount manufacturers to create a mount that works with all (or more than 1-2) specific cases, so this limitation is understandable.

We've had this setup installed for about two weeks and overall we're very happy. On the trail it's a dream come true. The ability to use big, detailed topo maps with any trail data we want is a huge plus. The iPod/Pandora controls are awesome for tunes, and the turn-by-turn navigation options are great. There are some obvious limitations that we should mention as well though. For day to day use I've found that I use my iPhone instead of the iPad for my 10 minute drive to work, so the iPad mount sometimes sits empty. There is no AM/FM radio, CD player, or DVD player (which I never used anyway), but for some people that may be a deal breaker. Overall though, if you're serious about a custom audio/navigation install, this is a great way to go.

### iPad Mount Hardware Parts

- » ProClip Mount ([ProClipUSA.com](http://ProClipUSA.com))
- » RAM Mount & accessories ([RAM-Mount.com](http://RAM-Mount.com))
- » 8"x3.5" 16ga steel sheet
- » 4 sheet metal screws/nuts 10mm
- » Asst bolts/nuts to attach the mount of your choice
- » 1" right-angle aluminum pieces, about 4" long
- » 2x4 block to offset the ProClip mount
- » Long 3" sheet metal bolts/nuts to go through 2x4 block



# OFF ROAD 101: MAXTRAX RECOVERY

MAXTRAX



MAXTRAX is relatively new in the US Market, but they've been rescuing trucks in their native Australia since 2004. This year MAXTRAX is hitting the US in a big way, determined to change the way we think about recovery. You may have seen the MAXTRAX FJ Cruiser at the 2010 SEMA Show in Las Vegas, we were so impressed with the display that we contacted Ben Meddows (the US representative for MAXTRAX) to see about testing a set at our annual Snow Recovery Run in December. Ben was kind enough to send his personal set out to us so we could see how they work. Recovery gear is absolutely essential for any successful off road adventure.

We've written plenty in the past about recovery straps, winches, and even using your Hi-Lift as a recovery device when you're stuck in snow, mud, or sand. MAXTRAX is meant to provide instantaneous traction in muddy, sandy, or snowy conditions by giving your FJ Cruiser grip when none exists. The idea is actually pretty simple, but the way MAXTRAX tackled the problem is unique and very effective.





Using a high quality engineering-grade reinforced polymer (Nylon), MAXTRAX has crafted a stout, durable product that is resistant to the most extreme environments on earth. To test their new second generation MAXTRAX product (the MAXTRAX MK-2), we gathered a few FJ's in central Colorado in early December for some fun in the cold. We couldn't think of a better way to test MAXTRAX than over a foot of fresh snow and below freezing temperatures.



At about four feet long, MAXTRAXs are sold in pairs since most people will only need two (for front or rear recovery) to get out of trouble. For hard core mud boggers or those constantly in deep sand, four MAXTRAX may be advisable to keep your truck moving. Each piece is about 13" wide although one of our test vehicles had tires wider than the MAXTRAX, they still did a great job providing traction to get out of the snow.



ket mods. While we didn't test the MAXTRAX with a bone stock FJ, they should work just fine with any FJ Cruiser. The MAXTRAX website does note that for best performance an All-Terrain type tire (or anything more aggressive) should be used. We tested them with several All-Terrain and Mud-Terrain tires in snow that

was over 12" deep.

Our process was simple: drive the FJ up the snow covered hill as far as possible using A-Trac as well as the rear locker until stuck in the snow. Once the truck is nice and immobile, we pulled out the MAXTRAX and placed them under the front or rear wheels, depending on the direction of recovery. The key to using these devices is getting them as far under the wheel as possible. A couple of times we didn't push them back far enough and the tire couldn't get a grip. They really need to be under the tire tight to work properly.

While we had several people helping with recovery operations, it's entirely possible to use MAXTRAX in a solo situation. They were specifically designed to make recovery easy and safe for a single person to use. With MAXTRAX you don't have to worry about stressed components like winch line or tow straps that can fail catastrophically. Recovery with MAXTRAX is a relatively smooth process that presents very little danger.

For our testing, we had several FJ's with various types of tires, lift kits, and other aftermar-







Once the MAXTRAX are placed in the right position, it's simply a matter of using very gentle throttle to climb out of the rut. If too much power is applied the MAXTRAX can simply slide under the tire and you'll still be stuck, with the MAXTRAX buried in the snow. A gentle, easy throttle is all it takes to quickly recover the FJ.

One great piece of advice is to tie a rope or cord about two feet long to one end of each MAXTRAX. This will help you retrieve it from the deep snow after it's been used. We omitted this step and spent as much time digging out the MAXTRAX as we did using them for recovery.

So the question: "Do MAXTRAX work in the snow?" is a very enthusiastic YES. We noticed that even if the rear wheels are 'more stuck' than the front on a forward recovery, the MAXTRAX provide plenty of traction to get the FJ out. The only key is to get them pushed under the tire far enough to give the tire plenty of grip. They worked very well on all the types of tires we tested and we didn't have to use any other recovery method all day.

We're looking forward to testing them in mud and sand this year and will report back on what we find.

While MAXTRAX shouldn't be your only recovery solution, we definitely think a set should be at the top of your list for quick and easy recovery gear. The MAXTRAX MK-2 version will be available in late January or early February 2011 and can be ordered from [www.maxtrax.com.au](http://www.maxtrax.com.au) or by calling 855-MAXTRAX in the US. **FJC**

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**October 2006:**

**“That is the **UGLIEST**  
car I’ve ever seen.”**







This is a quote from my wife and her first encounter with the FJ Cruiser in Sedona, AZ where we saw a convoy of them driving down a hill from a resort area. We were in Sedona with her all wheel drive Highlander, driving a popular dirt road called, Schnebly Hills Road, “unknowingly, looking for a different type of adventure.

Fast forward to December 2006 and after the grind of a busy year and our annual week off from business during Christmas. “Out of the blue”, I suggested we go look at Toyota FJ’s. Of course out of the blue is more for the wife’s sake because I had been researching them since our trip to Sedona. On December 27th I drove one home.

### *Then it began.*

Within a week we had found more dirt on the Four Peaks Trail. The following week, we joined a trail with another new FJ owner and christened our FJ with brush scratches. We don’t have to worry about that any longer.

At the beginning the mod bug was furious and frenzied. Without a total plan on how I would be using my vehicle, I made less than perfect choices on equipment. After months of wheeling, the plan began to form and further mod decisions, were based on experience and function.

For anyone new to the FJ or are considering it for adventure, I urge you to step away from the credit card. There are a few things you need to ask yourself before unleashing the plastic until it melts all over the machine.

**By Don Lamb**  
**WikidFJ.com**

- (1) How do I plan on using my truck?
- (2) Is this also going to be my daily driver?
- (3) How will my mods affect my gas mileage?

Ultimately, if you choose your mods wisely, they will save you from having to do them, over and over.

Just recently, through an opportunity, Wikid got a new look. I always wanted an FJ in white but in 2007 it wasn’t an option.

It’s now **Toyota Super White** and I am in the process of changing the entire interior over



to the new color. There are still remnants of yellow that will eventually be completely gone.

This is not just a vehicle for me to modify, it's my escape and stress reliever from the daily grind. It's my sanity!! I think of my build, with the journey of it, in mind. I enjoy sharing my experience, methods and plan to attend many events and trails yearly. We enjoy helping educate those who may be considering, or new to off-roading. We have met many nice people and I share my knowledge, with mod installations. Promoting responsible wheeling is essential. We attend trail cleanups, supporting; Tread Lightly, Blue Ribbon Coalition, to mention a few. To keep our trails safe, clean and accessible.

### *Since that infamous day in Sedona...*

The wife now owns a 2008 Trail Teams FJ that we purchased brand new.

## Dreaming of your next adventure?



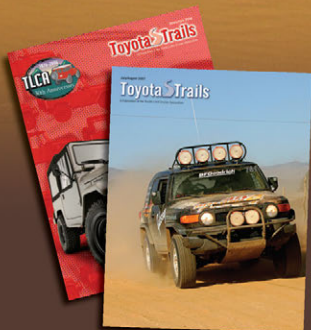
### We sure are.

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TLCA membership includes a subscription to **Toyota Trails** magazine, featuring in-depth tech and trail articles, event listings, TLCA merchandise and Land Cruiser classifieds.

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# TRAILS AND EVENTS

**FIRST TRAIL: 4 PEAKS**

**FIRST REAL OFF-ROAD:**

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**LIST OF EVENTS:**

FJ SUMMIT, OURAY COLORADO 07, 08, 10

CRUISE MOAB 10

PISMO BEACH SURF-TURF 07-08

THRILL ON THE HILL RUIDOSO, NM 08

SEDONAFEST, 08, 09, 10

PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY, 08

NWFJCC MEET, PORTLAND OR. PAVILIONS MEET-N GREET ORGANIZER 07, 08, 10, AZ

ROCKS 07, 08, 09,

FOUR PEAKS CLEAN-UP 08, 09, 10.

SHOWING TRUCK AT OVERLAND EXPO 09-10 AND 11 TO FOLLOW

WE HAVE SCoured THE STATE OF ARIZONA, EXPLORING, FINDING NEW TRAILS, HAVING FUN, TOO MANY TO LIST

### ORGANIZATIONS

FJ CRUISER FORUMS, LIFETIME MEMBER, MODERATOR  
IH8MUD COPPER STATE CRUISERS

AZFJ NON CLUB, FOUNDING MEMBER

TTORA,

TOYOTA 120

TREAD LIGHTLY

BLUE RIBBON COALITION



## 2007 FJ Cruiser,

### Package 1

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Quad Channel DVR/ motion sensing, gps tracking  
Center panel, cb mount, 9 switches  
Custom battery box , over passenger, rear, wheel  
Custom air compressor mount, over drivers rear,  
wheel  
Second skin audio, complete interior sound dead-  
ening/ insulation

### Gearing

East Coast Gear Supply Nitro 4.56 gear's

### Performance

Doug Thorley SS ceramic long tubes, Y pipe and  
muffler  
Custom 3 inch pipe, through bumper, oval exit  
AFE Pro Guard Dry CAI

### Suspension

Overland Warehouse/Radlo 2.5  
3" adjustable Coilovers,  
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Extended rear swaybar links  
Swaybar relocate, bump stop extension  
Camburg 1.25 uniball UCA's  
Toytec hd rear links/ 1" Dif Drop  
Toytec 1" Bodylift

### Armor

Ricochet Full underbody skid package  
Custom Laser cut, front skid.  
Lower control arm skids  
Rear shock skids  
Inchworm, E-locker skid  
Demello Hybrid Slider

### Wheels/Tires

Method Race Wheels 16x8 4.5 backspace  
General Grapper Red Letter 315/75/16  
Spydertrax 1.25" spacers

### Steering

HD steering links

### Bumpers

Road Armor bull bar front  
Bulldog 9500, Remote control  
Viking Synthetic Winch line/ thimble  
Metal Tech rear custom cut tube bumper  
Bushwacker Pocket Style fender flares

### Electronics/Communication

Lowrance Baja 540c Navigation  
Cobra CB/Wilson 1000 antenna  
National Luna dual battery controller  
Red Top Optima for start  
Sears Platinum M-1 Marine Battery  
Engel 45 refrigerator  
Blue sea 12 circuit fuse panel  
Zantrex 1000 watt power converter  
Custom nine switch overhead panel, triggered to rear  
buss bar  
CTEK trickle charger/conditioner

### Lighting

Lightforce Striker 170's, PIAA 520 ions  
Vision X Tantrum rock lights/controller, remote  
Onzuim interior lights, dashboard lightbulb

### Interior

Custom Graphite headliner  
All silver and gray, painted graphite  
Ellis Black Shift knobs

### Off-Road gear

BajaRack, utility rack  
Puma, 12v Air compressor, 1.5 gallon tank  
Rear bumper mount air chuck.  
Recovery bag, shackles, d-rings, straps,  
Fire extinguisher  
Titan air jack  
48" hi-lift  
First Aid kit

### Tools

Trail tools  
CV axle , tie rod, serpentine belt etc.

### Coming Soon...

Fujitsu 730 Tablet PC for all offroad nav, custom lap-  
top mount  
LED exterior lighting, to be determined  
Custom badge plate, by Ricochet  
Expedition one, front bumper change?



# I would like to thank all of these comp

## Total Vision Products

With some visibility issues and the idea of doing something totally different, I began thinking about rock spotting cameras. A year had passed when I wandered Costco's auto section and picked up a simple wireless camera to play with. Immediately after arriving at home, I double-face-taped the camera to my bumper and temporarily wired it. I drove with my tires following cracks in the road and that was it! After exhaustive research, I located a company in Tucson called Total Vision Products. Rod and I spoke at length, about a simple four-camera rock spotting system. Three months later, the idea evolved into a Baja Camera System, which includes eight cameras, overhead console, four screens, digital switchers and a quad channel DVR with GPS Tracking. Rod designed the equipment for this system. I gutted the interior of the FJ, created the overhead console, and did the majority of the install and final tweaking was done at Rod's shop in Tucson. One week later we showed its potential at the Overland Expo in Prescott Valley by driving with all windows covered and only navigating with cameras, on the off road course.



Driver side views will be the front approach, rear departure, rock spotters, and axle cameras. Passenger side will be all roof view cameras. The thought behind this is using the driver

### *Camera Views Include:*

- Front approach & Rear Departure (wide view)
- Front rock spotters, left and right tires
- Rear axle camera
- Roof forward facing (wide and normal view)
- Rear Roof (normal view)

side screens for utility and the passenger side for trail video. Cameras selected on screens, are all recorded to a quad channel DVR. I've prewired in capabilities for up to eight additional cameras, with two channels of audio.

## Overland Warehouse



Working with Mark and Andres at Overland Warehouse (OW) is a delight. I feel they understand the requirements of the FJ platform and have a custom tuned suspension to work well with it. We are using the complete 2.5 Radflo System that they have developed and is designed with the weight of my build in mind. After having three different systems on that didn't perform well I finally have the right one. It handles flawlessly and smoothly on the road and handles everything I throw at it off-road. This system comes complete with 2.5 coilovers, 2.5 shocks, springs for rear, sway-bar relocate bracket, extended bump stop for rear, and they added extended sway-bar links for testing. This year we traveled to Moab, for Cruise Moab with an off-road trailer that was barely noticeable behind the rig. We threw everything at the OW/Radflo and it worked perfectly.



# Companies for being involved with Wikid:

## Ricochet Skids

Ricochet skid products are protecting the belly of Wikid. Brad is excellent to work with and his skid plates are designed well. I have been abusing his skids since early 2010 with Cruise Moab, Sedona Fest, the FJ Summit and many local trails. They have been sliding over rocks and still staying true to form. His instructions are thorough and always have a last step: "Have a beer"

- Full under body skids customized with laser cut "Wikid"
- Lower control arm skids
- Brad is also working on a badge mount

## BajaRack

I started with the exp rack, but have since decided to get the utility rack so the FJ will still slide in the garage (even lifted with 35's). Anyone that has dealt with BajaRack will know the level of customer service and build quality are second to none. They are really just like regular guys that want to succeed in business while forming friendships.

Enough said there

## Doug Thorley Headers

Doug Thorley has outfitted Wikid, with a complete exhaust:

- Long tube 304 Stainless Steel headers that are ceramic coated (this is brand new from Thorley)
- Y-Pipe and muffler

In addition to this, I had a local exhaust shop, Apache Muffler, run custom three inch tail section through the rear bumper with a three inch oval tip. I acquired the oval tip from a place called "Dr Gas" online.

## East Coast Gear Supply

Chase from ECGS helped outfit Wikid, with some new teeth. They sent out rear diff third member and front, outfitted with 4.56 nitro gears, in turn I sent them the cores. I would highly recommend these guys for regearing. If you have the mechanical ability to do the switch you can save some serious money by regearing this way. These guys really know their stuff when it comes to gears.



## Toytec

- HD rear lower links that have jonnies joints on one end. They are beefy and I have slid them over many obstacles.
- Front diff drop keeps CV angles good
- One inch body lift gave me just the clearance need to stuff 35s

## Viking Offroad

Viking provided synthetic winch line that "work horsed" eight rigs over the Poughkeepsie Gulch waterfall in Ouray, Co. Not to mention various other occasions it's been asked for service. I really like that fact that it doesn't become a weapon if it fails. I have really enjoyed the ease of working with this line.

## Method Race Wheels

Trying to get the correct look for Wikid, I found Method Race Wheels with the correct look and size I wanted my build to have. The wheels are lightweight and strong, and their customer service is excellent. I ordered them from out of state Wednesday morning and received them Thursday afternoon.





## Go Pro

Having a need for HD trail video, Go Pro has the answer. It's portable, lightweight, waterproof and features a wide assortment of mounting options. The SD card memory is only limited by the number of cards you have. The largest card available is 32gigs so you could record, a ridiculous amount of HD video and transfers it to your computer for video editing.



## Second Skin Audio

Thinking of quieting the beast some and making the sound system work better, I decided to add a few barrier products

Inside the roof is a product called "Dampifier Pro", with a layer of "Heatwave" below it to keep vibration noises to a minimum, along with keeping some of the heat out of the truck.

Since the inside was gutted, I used a spray in sound deadener called "Spectrum" for the floor and inside the door panels. I had some papering and taping to do, but it was worth it. Then I added "Heatwave" to some areas on the floor. I lined all the insides of the doors and quarters with "limo liner". Then used "Dampifier Pro" to seal all of the holes in the door panels and quarters I found. It really quieted my ride down. My stock stereo sound much better now. The FJ stays cooler in the summer too.







## **REAR BUMPER UPDATE**

While we're still working on a backup camera solution and wiring the lights, we were able to get the Jerry Can & Cooler Racks installed on the LoD Bumper. These attachments are excellent for long-haul and expedition type journeys in the FJ as they allow you to store up to 10 gallons of fuel and your cooler or other large container on the rear bumper. They really finish off the FJ and give it that 'expedition feel'.

The installation is a breeze (although you have to remove the tire to install the cooler rack), and all three pieces are very secure. Make sure to use either lockwashers or thread locker on all bolts to avoid any rattling while on the trail. LoD lets you choose

the best way to attach everything to the racks, so we picked up a set of heavy duty ratchet straps (in matching red, of course) which seem to keep the cans and cooler very secure. We'll be testing this setup over the next few months and will let you know how it works out. Now we just need to find a matching cooler :)

We're very excited to finally have all of our external armor completed on the FJ! We look forward to seeing everyone on the trail this spring and summer!

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By Steven Dozen



The thought of California beaches conjures up a myriad of images. Bikinis, surfing, beach volleyball and...Toyotas?

It was a soggy weekend in early November 2002 when 25 Land Cruisers, including a group of Canadian "cruiserheads" (who joined Rolland Gueffroy on his Pan American journey in his 1984 BJ45) rolled onto the wet sand of Oceano Dunes along California's central coast. Among the drivers was, Jim Brantley, now more commonly known as Pismo Jim.



Jim's inspiration to organize an event came from the great experiences he had while being attending other regional Land Cruiser events. "I really appreciated the effort put forth by the locals at these events and how they shared their favorite trails with outsiders. I wanted to return the favor to my new cruiser friends," stated Brantley. As a result, Brantley organized a weekend of camping and wheeling at the Oceano Dunes (the surf) along with a couple trail runs located further inland (the turf). And Surf N Turf was born.

#### Of The Community

Since its inception, Surf N Turf has grown exponentially with the recent introduction of the FJ Cruiser line further fueling its growth. Now in its ninth year, Surf N Turf attracts over 400 cruiserheads from all over the country and has since moved to a full three-day format. "Thursday is the new Friday," is a saying that is commonly overheard these days as organizers have accelerated the schedule and begin as early as Thurs-

setup  
day morning.

"I'm not surprised," stated Brantley when asked about Surf N Turf's explosive growth, which can be attributed to word of mouth within the online and offline communities as well as the growing number of Surf N Turf-related videos, including Mike "FunJunkie" Kirsch's video album from 2007 and Vince "Cypilk" Wong's throttle-inspiring flick that has persuaded many a driver to make the trek to the sand. In fact, the event has grown so much that even the organizers like Brantley have be-

I knew I should've made that left turn...  
Photo: John Shaghafi





gun to blend in with the crowd. "My favorite part is when someone invites me to Surf N Turf. Yes, it happens."

The family-friendly event has developed a series of mini-events, including a Sand Chef competition, a fun run/walk on the beach, the ever-popular tradition of the Poker Run and the unofficial jump contest, to appeal to its expanding attendee demographic. Needless to say, there is never a dull moment when you get hundreds of cruisers together for fun on the beach and they usually manage to find ways to entertain themselves without event-intervention.

Over the years, the SnT has attracted more than just Land Cruisers. Recently, many Tacomas, 4Runners and even Tun-dras have joined in on the mobile beach community with the largest group of non-Land Cruisers being FJ Cruisers.

"It was like a small city of Toyotas that all came together for the love of wheeling!" stated Surf N Turf first-timer, Daniel May. "I truly enjoyed sitting around the campfire sharing different stories and walking around meeting new people." May was among 80+ FJ Cruiser drivers, including a small contingency from Las Vegas, who had congregated at the AllCal Republic camp along the southern edge of base camp.

"Last year our club made the trip to SnT and came back with such great stories about how awesome the group of people was and how much fun they all had," stated Sin City Wicked not miss it again 10 Las Vegas-based 800-mile round trip pil-year. And if there was ever they found it on the south end.

**"It was like a small city of Toyotas that all came together for the love of wheeling!"  
-Daniel May**

The AllCal Camp, a virtual mini-village, featured a number of amenities, family camping area, multiple group campfire pits, and one of the the hog-roasting spit hosted by BozTec. "I'm not even sure how, but annual High Sierra Run a few months prior to Surf N Turf]," said, Jake and FJ Cruiser enthusiast. "Next thing we all knew...we were doing a hog

ties including a camp kitchen-main attractions this year - hog roasting came up [at the Goaziou, master hog roaster roast at Surf and Turf 2010!]



Photo: John Shaghafi



"My favorite part is when someone invites me to Surf N Turf. Yes, it happens."  
-Jim "Pismo Jim" Brantley

Raised on a hog farm in rural Ohio, Goaziou learned the art of hog roasting from his father, Jim (aka the Bear). Goaziou invited Jim, who now lives in Indiana, and other family members to help prepare the highly-anticipated hog roast on Saturday evening. After some 12 hours on the spit, the hog was served to a long line of hungry campers and was all gone before you could say, "th-th-that's all folks!"

Photo: Mark Maes



The Surf N Turf family and community mentality was further exemplified by the participation of long-time, cruiser-supporting vendors. Among them was Metal Tech. David Duskin, who also happens to be the founder of a group of FJ Cruiser owners in central California called, StepCal FJs, represented Metal Tech at the event and was overwhelmed by the enthusiastic reception they received during the Sand Chef Competition on Friday Night. "The crowd at the Metal Tech booth was great!" said a grinning, Duskin. "I enjoyed talking with everyone."

All Good Things... One of the traditions at Surf N Turf is picking up pre-ordered goods, such as t-shirts, hoodies and dash plaques, at the main tent. This year's logo appealed to the masses and quite a number of goods were being picked up. However, one thing many attendees noticed was the fairly obvious "penultimate" moniker emblazoned on the official Surf N Turf 2010 logo. Word quickly spread around camp and the unfathomable reality set in – next year will be the last official Surf N Turf event.

Photo: Mark Maes



"Yes, it's true," said Brantley. "The tide comes in and the tide goes out, nothing stays the same. It's time to celebrate what we have accomplished. The purpose of Surf N Turf has been to share the unique wheeling opportunities on the Central Coast with our cruiser friends. It's fair to say, we've succeeded by introducing hundreds of people to driving on the beach, sand dunes and inland trails.

I wanted to give something back to my cruiser friends and the Land Cruiser community. Surf N Turf has provided a great venue to strengthen the community and tease everyone with the endless possibilities available all of us."

Although the Pismo Jim-hosted Surf N Turf will undoubtedly end next year, there is some hope that the event will carry on in some capacity in the future. Some rumors say that the Toyota Land Cruiser Association (TLCA) will adopt SnT and make it a fully-sanctioned TLCA event. Other rumors say the droves of people will continue to gather the same way as first November weekends past by having a number of small groups such as StepCal FJs stepping up to assist in the organization. However, as optimistic as those predictions may be, external factors may ultimately prevent future generations from experiencing Pismo Jim's brainchild. There are many special interest groups and individuals who are dedicated to the closure of Oceano Dunes SVRA to vehicular traffic.

Brantley had a few simple suggestions to keep the beach open for all to enjoy and for events like Surf N Turf to thrive for generations to come. "Responsible use is a good place to start, but everyone needs to invest money and/or time too. The best way is to support the Friends of the Oceano Dunes. These volunteers work hard to protect our interests and de-





**The BozTec Hog Roast Crew - L to R: Jake Goaziou, Al Simas and Jim (the Bear) Goaziou**  
**Photo: Blake Simas**

serve our support. Their objective is to unite the many people who enjoy the Oceano Dunes in a cohesive organization that can promote and reinforce responsible recreation."

Surf N Turf 2011 is bound to be an epic event, or as Brantley put it, "the 'Ultimate' Surf N Turf." Be sure to schedule the time off and pay a visit to Oceano Dunes one last time to witness Pismo Jim ride off into the sunset...in his Land Cruiser.

Surf N Turf 2011 takes place on November 4 - 6, 2011 at Oceano Dunes SVRA on California's central coast. For more information on Surf N Turf and related event media, please access these links:

- Surf N Turf Official Website
- Surf N Turf video page
- Oceano Dunes SVRA
- Friends of the Oceano Dunes
- Cypilk's, SnT 2008 video
- Goaziou Hog Roaster Interview



**Trent Byrd at the apex of the rainbow**  
**Photo: Mark Phillips**

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**S**INCE WE FIRST LEARNED about Aluminess when they released their front bumper for the FJ Cruiser, we always liked the company. In addition to the front bumper, they now have a rear bumper and roof rack for the FJ, of course that's just the tip of the iceberg.

In November I had the opportunity to visit the Aluminess shop in Santee, CA for a tour and a chat with owner Dave Hoskins. While I was only able to hang out for a couple of hours, we had a great discussion on business, Toyota Trucks, and what makes Aluminess tick. I got some great in-the-shop shots as well!

"From the very beginning, I knew we wouldn't be the least expensive" Dave told me as we chatted around the conference table. The idea being that Aluminess products would not be the cheapest, but would certainly be well engineered, high quality, and useful. Dave was actually drawn out of retirement to begin building bumpers for Sportsmobile Custom Camper vans about 10 years ago. He wanted to build something strong, lightweight, and useful – and he certainly hit the mark on all three. It wasn't long before people with other vehicles were calling for Aluminess products. Soon Dave was building bumpers for Dodge & Ford Trucks, then other vans and motor homes, and eventually our beloved FJ Cruiser (among others).

While we at FJC Magazine love the FJC products, I was really impressed with some of the other projects Dave has been involved with. A few years ago Aluminess had the opportunity to outfit not one but two Sportsmobile vans for Jimmy Buffet (one for each coast) complete with racks for every kind of adventure. Then of course there's the van on tracks they helped build. My favorites though are the vans Aluminess outfitted for the country of Qatar. Qatar wanted to build a Search and Rescue fleet so they chose Sportsmobile and Aluminess to get their entire system setup. The vans carry SAR personnel, equipment and even rescue dogs and are flown into problem areas (such as Haiti earthquake relief) on C-130 aircraft.

Upon entering the Aluminess shop you can tell



Background: Bumper ready for powdercoat



this is a company that's not slowing down. There were plenty of fabricators hard at work as I walked around the shop, working on everything from Tacoma bumpers to a test install on a Dodge truck. While Aluminess has their aluminum stock laser cut, they do all the bending, welding, and prepping in the shop. The bumpers are then sent to a local powder coat shop for finish work before being shipped to the customer. An interesting point that Dave mentioned to me is that Aluminess has NEVER raised their prices in the 10 years they've been in business. Their ability to manufacture a high quality product with increasing efficiency has enabled this feat, and I think it's pretty amazing.



I knew Aluminess products were well built when we installed their bumper on our FJ, but seeing all that aluminum before it's been powder coated really shows the engineering that goes into every product. What's even more impressive is the way the plates are welded together and finished, even in bare metal it's difficult to find some of the welds! With several products for the FJ and many other vehicle applications, I have no reservations recommending

Aluminess to anyone looking to protect their truck.



Above: Tacoma bumpers ready to ship

Right: Jimmy Buffet Van

**JOHN C DVORAK**  
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 Phone: 619-449-9930  
[www.aluminess.com](http://www.aluminess.com)

Background:  
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 Above:  
 aluminum stock  
 Right:  
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Below Right:  
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# NEW PRODUCTS!

## BozTec Stainless Steel Antenna Mount

Rust is not your friend. It can weaken key components on your FJ Cruiser, so why let it affect your communications too? The all-new, all-stainless steel CB antenna mount from BozTec prevents rust from developing, resulting in prolonged signal strength and wear. Its streamlined design provides clean lines and barely makes its presence known on the back of your rig. The BozTec CB antenna mount installs in minutes and provides long-lasting use on the trails and highways.



SOURCE:  
BozTec  
Phone: 510.459.6460  
<http://www.boztec.us.com>

## Roll Top Cover Divider Tray

Industrial Forming has developed a divider tray that fits into the top of their Panamint Roll-top Cover. This simple insert keeps your small stuff from rattling around in the bottom of your console. It's available in a locking or a non-locking version and easily slips in and out of your existing roll top cover. There are three compartments to hold your iPod, headphones, and any other small item you need. This accessory is available right now at [Roll-TopCover.com](http://Roll-TopCover.com).



SOURCE:  
Industrial Forming  
Phone: 805-658-3350  
<http://www.roll-topcover.com>



# FJ Cruiser Events

Lone Star Toyota Jamboree

Dates: January 15-17, 2011

Location: Gilmer, Tx

Contact: Lone Star Jamboree Website

23rd Annual Rubithon

Dates: June 14-19, 2011

Location: Moab, Ut

Contact: Rubithon Website

## 2011 FJ Northeasters Easter Event

Dates: April 22-24, 2011

Location: Rausch Creek ORP, PA

Contact: FJ Northeasters Website

## 2011 FJ Summit

Dates: July 20-24, 2011

Location: Ouray, CO

Contact: FJ Summit Website

2011 Cruise Moab

Dates: April 27-May 1, 2011

Location: Moab, Ut

Contact: Cruise Moab Website

## 3rd Annual All Cal

Dates: July-August 2011

Location: Northern California

Contact: All Cal Website

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

## 2011 Spring Mud Fling

Dates: May 27-30, 2011 (Tentative)

Location: Winchester, VA

Contact: FJ Bruisers Website

## Thrill on the Hill 2011

Dates: Labor Day 2011

Location: Cloudcroft, NM

Contact: Thrill on the Hill Website

## 2011 SedonaFest

Dates: June 3-5, 2011 (Tentative)

Location: Sedona, AZ

Contact: SedonaFest Website



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*Have a great pic of your FJ?  
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Mark - NorCal



Stuart - Colorado