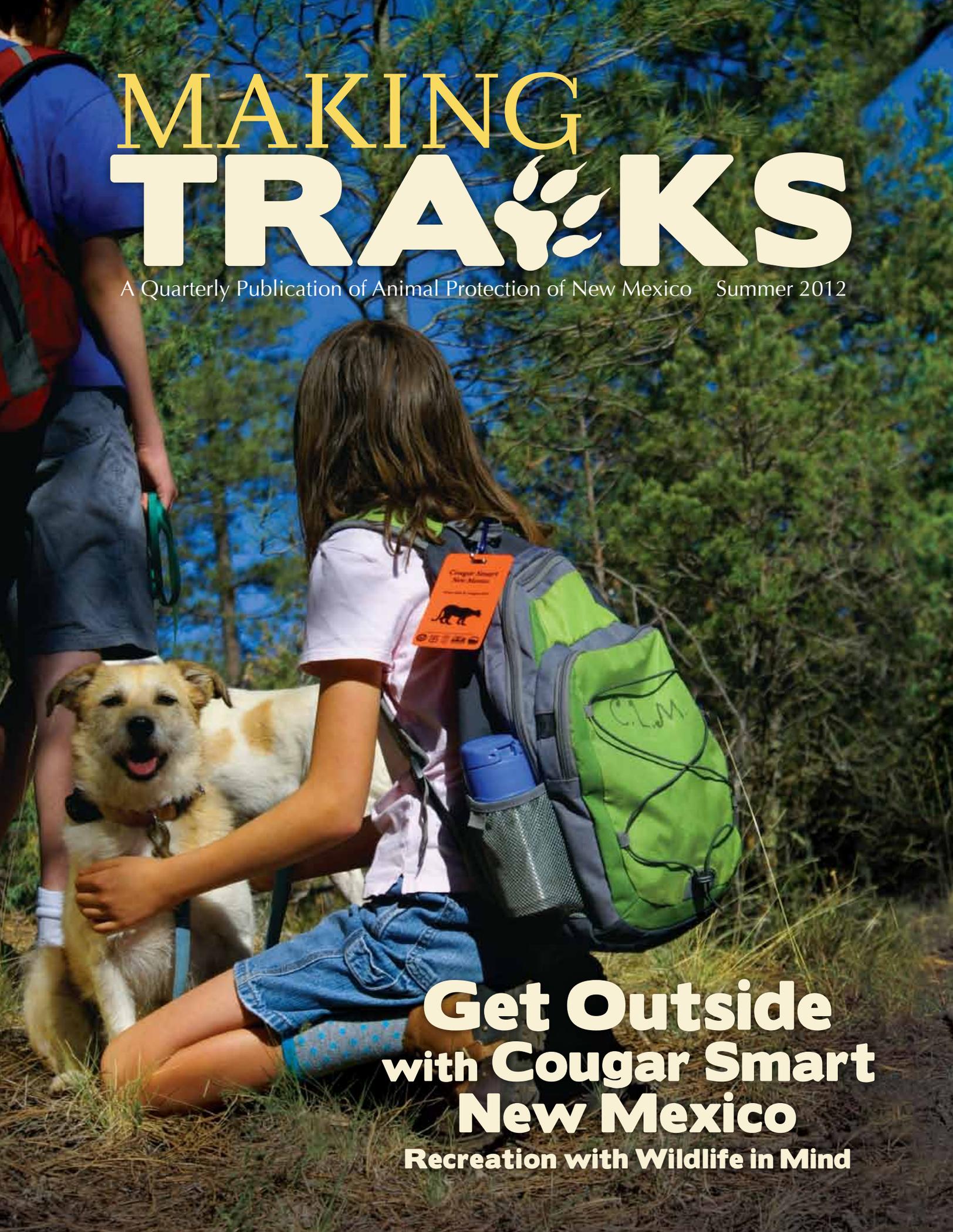


MAKING TRACKS

A Quarterly Publication of Animal Protection of New Mexico Summer 2012



**Get Outside
with Cougar Smart
New Mexico**

Recreation with Wildlife in Mind

As we kick off summer, Animal Protection of New Mexico wishes you and your family a safe, enjoyable season. Whatever your outdoor pleasure—be it hiking, camping, boating, climbing, sports, or backyard barbecuing—we encourage you to always be mindful of the creatures who call New Mexico’s awesome landscapes home.

Cougar Smart New Mexico: Outdoor Recreation WITH WILDLIFE IN MIND

New Mexico’s borders contain some of the highest diversity of wild animals in North America. Rather than a time of rest and relaxation, the hot summer months are when these creatures are stocking up on food in preparation for winter.

Meanwhile, the manner in which people play outdoors has real consequences for wildlife. Beyond intentional culling of animals via hunting and fishing, simple unthinking or irresponsible behavior—including actions you may have never thought of—can be devastating to animals. Historically, one such animal that has been persecuted on behalf of human shortsightedness is New Mexico’s majestic wild cat, the cougar.

Attacks by cougars on humans are extremely rare; nonetheless, public safety is often cited as an excuse to destroy the animals. This is unacceptable, particularly when methods of mutual safety and coexistence between people and cougars are simple and reflect common sense rather than any surrender of enjoyment of the outdoors.

Cougar Smart New Mexico—a partnership among APNM, the U.S. Forest Service, New Mexico Dept. of Game &

Fish, New Mexico State Parks, and other land agencies—has worked since 2010 to develop and distribute posters, brochures, and clip-on tags (like the ones our young hikers are wearing in the cover photo, and Whiskey is modeling in the photo below) featuring information to prevent conflict between recreationists and cougars. Through the efforts of APNM and these agencies, thousands of the tags have been distributed to New Mexico children and the posters can be found at trailheads and campsites across the state.

APNM continues to raise awareness of carnivore coexistence via Cougar Smart and other efforts. You can help spread the ideals of responsible recreation and sharing the land with our wildlife. Contact us to order free educational materials and to schedule a public presentation.

So what are you still doing reading this? Get outside and play with your companion animals!

