

News Release
USDA Forest Service
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Effective Immediately

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INCREASED MOUNTAIN LION ACTIVITY IN MADERA CANYON **Visitors Advised to Use Caution, Leave Pets at Home**

TUCSON, AZ (October 26, 2008) – Recent mountain lion activity near Madera Canyon, in the Santa Rita Mountains south of Tucson, has led officials from the Coronado National Forest and Arizona Game and Fish Department to advise visitors to use caution while in the area, and leave pets at home.

“Mountain lions typically avoid contact with people,” said Kent Ellett, Acting Nogales District Ranger. “The lion in question showed no fear of humans, which is unnatural behavior and indicates a heightened sense of awareness and caution needed by visitors to the area.”

Officials from both agencies are investigating an incident reported to have occurred on Saturday, October 25 in the vicinity of Rogers Rock, near a social trail referred to as the Pipeline Trail, off the popular Super Trail. A hiker reported a mountain lion exhibiting aberrant behavior, possibly stalking him and his small dog. Officers are attempting to locate the animal at this time.

Forest officials remind visitors to the area to remember the following lion safety measures:

- Supervise children. Keep them close and in sight at all times.
- If you meet a mountain lion, stay calm. Do NOT run.
- Slowly back away. Keep your eyes on the lion. Do not crouch down.
- Make yourself look bigger. Raise your arms over your head. Yell and throw rocks.
- If the lion becomes aggressive, fight back with whatever you have and remain standing.
- Report all lion encounters to the Arizona Game & Fish Department.

For more information about mountain lions and safety, please visit www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado/forest/faq/lion-faq.shtml .