



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
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Moose Captured in Downtown Santa Fe

SANTA FE – A bull moose was captured this morning by Department staff and City of Santa Fe Animal Services Officers near the intersection of Grant Avenue and Rosario Boulevard. The moose has been successfully relocated to suitable habitat in northern New Mexico.

According to Colonel Tim Cimbala, the Department received a call from Animal Services at approximately



8:10 this morning reporting a moose near Fort Marcy Park in Santa Fe. Officers soon tracked the animal to the intersection of Grant Avenue and Rosario Boulevard and set up a perimeter to protect the safety of residents and pedestrians in this popular walking area.

The moose had progressively moved closer to urban areas, exposing it to hazards like moving vehicles and fence entanglement. It also showed little fear of humans or pets, creating concern for resident safety. Moose regularly exhibit aggression towards humans and pets, especially bulls during the rut or breeding season which begins in late September. After assessing the situation, the Department made the decision to capture and relocate the moose to protect both public safety and that of the animal itself.

Department staff and Animal Control officers sedated the moose using a tranquilizer dart and loaded it onto a trailer for transport by 11:00 a.m. Upon capture, the moose

was evaluated by the Department's veterinarian and determined to be in good health. Department biologists estimate that the moose weighed over 900 pounds and was 4-5 years old. Mature bull moose in this region grow to approximately 1,200 pounds. According to Stewart Liley, chief of the Department's Wildlife Management Division, the moose has been transported to suitable habitat in northern New Mexico. It was released in an area where moose do not currently occur, but closer to adjacent populations in southern Colorado where this moose will hopefully find a happy ending to its long journey. The Department reminds hunters that moose are a protected game animal in the state of New Mexico. New Mexico does not have an open hunting season for moose, and it is unlawful to harvest them in the state.

"I commend all Department personnel and City of Santa Fe Animal Safety officers for their efforts to expeditiously capture and relocate the moose in downtown Santa Fe this morning," stated Mike Sloane, director of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. "We are happy to see a positive outcome for this moose, who can now thrive in quality habitat where it does not pose a threat to public safety."

There have been almost a dozen confirmed sightings of different moose in New Mexico over the past 10 years. Moose require a cool climate and wetland habitat next to rivers and streams. This type of habitat is more abundant in Colorado where it supports a robust moose population. Most sightings in New Mexico are younger males emigrating from Colorado in search of new habitat and breeding opportunities. Females have been observed in New Mexico as well, but there are presently no known breeding populations of moose in the state.

Department wildlife biologists suspect that the moose captured in Santa Fe this morning started its journey south from Colorado, perhaps a few years ago. It is also suspected that this is the same moose spotted in the southern Sangre de Cristo mountains in autumn 2022 and observed on multiple occasions near Ski Santa Fe throughout the winter. After some time without making an appearance, the moose was spotted in the Tesuque area last week before showing up in downtown Santa Fe this morning. This was one of the southernmost sightings of a moose in New Mexico.



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