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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend stories of success

Santa Fe, NM – This month, hundreds of young, impressionable minds descended upon State Parks across the country and in New Mexico for the 5th Annual National [Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend](#). **This year's theme was "Stewardship, let's show the love"** and it was a great success!

[The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department State Parks Division](#) partnered with Girl Scouts USA to assist scouts in activities required to earn the Girl Scouts Love the Outdoors Challenge Patch among several other patches that were earned over the weekend of September 9th and 10th.

More than 200 Girl Scouts participated in events at 15 New Mexico State Parks enjoying camping, fishing, raptor talks, pond programs, guided hikes, night sky viewing, bird walks, historic mine viewing, and other interactive events.

For some families, **it's more than just a weekend of adventure and fun. It's also an opportunity** to connect with nature and engage with our amazing park rangers. For one Girl Scout mom, it was a potentially life changing moment for her and her daughter this year.



Storrie Lake State Park Ranger Joseph Apodaca and Girl Scout Cosette with her puppy Burrito.

Melissa Cullen brought her Girl Scout Cosette to [Storrie Lake State Park](#), where she attended a fishing clinic with Park Ranger Joseph Apodaca. The young scouts mother revealed that her daughter is autistic.

“Joseph did an amazing job keeping her engaged. She learned a lot and loved talking to him,” said Melissa Cullen, **Girl Scout mom.** **“I’m very grateful for the experience.** We felt really safe with Joseph. The park was so beautiful, and we had a wonderful time camping there.”

Cosette’s experience is just one of several success stories from **this year’s Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend.** A high school cross country runner took advantage of the outdoor environment to get in a few miles on the trail, while other scouts learned about different materials needed for fishing and which animals have superpowers, such as jackrabbits who stay cool in the desert by releasing excess heat from their giant ears.

“We thank Girl Scouts USA for helping teach values that align with the New Mexico State Parks mission to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources, provide first-class recreational and education facilities and opportunities, and promote public safety to benefit and enrich the lives of visitors,” said Toby Velasquez, State Parks Director.



Rio Grande Nature Center State Park. Photo: NM State Parks, Liz Axtell.



Local Girl Scouts visited 15 State Parks across New Mexico. Photos (L-R): NM State Parks, Alesha B. and Christina Morris.



Girl Scout Troop 10595. Photo: NM State Parks, C. Phelps

Your New Mexico State Parks can be found in 25 of 33 counties and 70% of New Mexicans live within 40 miles of a state park. Reserve your camping spot up to six months in advance on emnrd.nm.gov or reserveamerica.com. Vámonos! Let's go New Mexico!

VÁMONOS! LET'S GO NEW MEXICO!

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