

From: Lawrence Robinson
To: John Hendrickson, Tim Reis
Date: Wed, Jul 15, 1998 1:04 pm
Subject: Cougar sighting

This is a note I absolutely dread writing. I don't know if Glen talked to you yet, but I had the terrible misfortune of seeing the Alcona Co. cougar. On July 6, I was picking up the bear baits on routes in Alcona and Oscoda counties. It was pouring rain and I was soaked-ass wet and driving between bait sites. I was on a sandy, narrow USFS road when I came over a rise and a cougar was in the road about 60 yards away. It immediately bolted into the brush. I stopped and looked at the fresh tracks. They were in soft sand and were very clear impressions showing the cat had been walking on the road toward me until I appeared. It angled across the trail taking a couple bounds before leaving the road.

I did not have my camera in the truck to take pictures of the tracks. I drove to a gas station north of Comins and bought a little disposable Kodak camera. I returned to take pictures of the tracks and area. The camera only focused to 4' or more, but the pictures are good enough to show they are cat tracks. I used a folding knife and my boot track for a size reference in the photos.

I told Glen about it and how reluctant I was to say anything after dealing with Larry Lippert's cougar picture last year. I still get letters and calls about the "Alcona County Cougar". Last year I was hounded by most of the news reporters in the state, all the people who ever think they saw a cougar, most of the people who have seen U.F.O.'s, and several people who have reported Elvis is still alive. I have always been very skeptical about the cougar sightings we get from all over the state. So, you can understand why I wish this hadn't happened.

The location was between secs 31 and 32, T26N, R5E, Alcona County. It was on USFS 4435 about 3/10 mile south of USFS 4001. It was an adult animal and there were no other tracks around. I can't even give you a guess on weight, but the pictures show how deep the tracks were in comparison to my tracks.

I figured I had to fess up eventually. What do I do to get the pictures and info to our division files without this getting out to the media? I really don't want this to turn into another media event like the picture last year did. Let me know your suggestions.

By the way, the location is about 10 miles "as the cougar flies" from the Lippert property where the picture was taken last summer.

CC: Glen Matthews