

June 2, 2009

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### *Hailey to Mitigate Tree Hazards in City Parks*

The City of Hailey will undertake major hazard tree mitigation projects at Hop Porter Park and Heagle Park starting June 12. With much needed community support and volunteerism, the city estimates that \$20,000 of tree removals and hazard mitigation will take place with the volunteer help of Davey Tree Surgery Company, Idaho Power's utility line clearing contractor, and other local tree care contactors. Davey often performs community service projects for communities in which they perform work.

Davey will also perform a smaller hazard mitigation project along Trail Creek for the City of Ketchum.

The Hailey Tree Committee, formed in August 2008 with the adoption of Hailey's Tree Ordinance, was recently directed by city leaders to identify priorities relating to the proper management of the city's urban forest. The committee identified a GIS-based public tree inventory as its number one priority along with the immediate identification of hazard trees in parks and other public places. Idaho Power representatives contacted Hailey Tree Committee chair and Ketchum city arborist, Jen Smith, prior to their arrival for a scheduled 36-month rotation of utility line pruning. "The Davey guys are really generous when they offer to do work for the communities. They take down hazard trees that are nowhere near power lines as a community service just because they understand how painful it can be to local folks when they have to do their required line pruning. They want to soften the perceived drastic impact of their power line clearing work."

Utility line pruning occurs on a three-year rotation to ensure trees planted under power lines do not interfere with power transmission. "The utility pruning can appear drastic, but these guys really need to do the work; they are certified arborists and use accepted pruning standards but the finished look can be jarring," says Smith.

Trees to be removed and pruned were identified by Smith and other certified arborists using strict best management standards set forth by the International Society of Arboriculture. Public safety is among the principal factors when evaluating a potential hazard tree. Public works director, Tom Hellen, also accompanied the inspectors and endorsed the recommendation for hazard mitigation along with the Hailey Parks & Lands Board. The hazard mitigation was ultimately adopted by the Hailey City Council and Mayor Rick Davis.

The Hailey Tree Committee's next focus, along with the city-wide public tree inventory, will be an aggressive under planting effort at the city parks affected by the hazard mitigations. Smith adds, "We will recommend the planting of several new park-friendly shade tree species planted as soon as possible to start the next generation of growth for Hailey's beautiful parks."



*Carol Brown, Hailey City Council member hefts a six-inch diameter limb that fell from a black cottonwood at Hop Porter Park sometime last week. Brown is accompanied by members of the Hailey Tree Committee*

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Contacts: Jen Smith 720-5208; Tom Hellen 788-9830 ext. 14