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Late Winter and Early Spring Are Important Times for Wildlife

The no-dog restrictions are still in place for the Red Devil/Hangman/Quigley/Cutter hillsides and Olympia Gulch immediately East of the Woodside neighborhood. However, they will be lifted on April 11th. These restrictions were established by the City of Hailey, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Shoshone Field Office and the Wood River Land Trust. Despite improving weather conditions deer and elk are still on winter range but are starting to transition to spring and summer habitat. Therefore, it is still important for everyone to keep an eye out for wildlife and minimize impacts to them by turning around when you see them.

Bradley Dawson from Idaho Department of Fish and Game states, “Many residents of the Wood River Valley are aware that deep winter snows and cold temperatures can make survival hard for wildlife. However, many may not know that March and early April actually see the highest number of annual fatalities for these animals. By this time of the year, wildlife are drawing on the last of their fat reserves that they have left, as the hillsides still do not have much of the new and green growth that is still a few weeks away. Using this last energy reserve to escape a real or perceived threat, such as a hiker or a dog, can make all the difference in survival to that animal.” It is everyone’s responsibility to be mindful of wildlife and do their part to help them survive into spring by following these tips for coexisting with wintering wildlife:

- Please be aware that wildlife may be present in an area even if you do not see them. If there are areas that you know are important to elk or deer in the winter, it is best for the wildlife if you can avoid them until the middle of April (April 11, 2022).
- Do not let your dog chase wildlife. If your dog is unresponsive to voice commands, keep them on a leash. An unattended dog can harass wildlife that have very little energy left to escape. Dogs are fully capable of killing weaker animals, especially fawns and calves.
- If you are out walking and come across an individual or group of animals, do not approach them. Change your route to give them space and prevent them from having to flee.
- As animals strive to conserve energy, you may see them lying down all day. This is normal behavior at this time of year, and does not necessarily mean that the animal is sick or wounded. If there are obvious signs of injury, or if the animal does not move after 24 hours, call the Idaho Fish and Game regional office.

Questions may be directed to the City of Hailey Community Development Director Lisa Horowitz at 208-788-9815