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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release March 29, 2018

Mount Jumbo South Zone Opens Friday, March 30

Mount Jumbo's South Zone will reopen to public use on Friday, March 30, bringing the area's annual winter wildlife closure to a close. At least 50 elk remain in Jumbo's South Zone; trail users and their pets should stay on trails and at least 100 yards from the herd while hiking. **Dogs must be leashed in the south zone for the next few weeks to prevent them from chasing wildlife.** Allowing a dog to chase or harass hoofed game animals is against state law and can result in a fine of up to \$1,000.

During the spring green-up, elk follow the emerging vegetation northward as the snowpack recedes. This is a critical time for the animals to acquire food and to avoid spending calories running from dogs and other predators. This is especially important for pregnant female elk who will deliver this spring's calves.

As the snowpack recedes, the herd will move farther north, eventually settling into its traditional summer range in the Rattlesnake Wilderness and Marshall Canyon. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks will continue to track the movements of the Jumbo herd to assess population size and health.

The South Zone includes all points south of the Saddle Road, which bisects Mount Jumbo's conservation lands and can be reached at the north end of Lincoln Hills Drive. Jumbo's North Zone (all points north of the Saddle Road) will remain closed until May 1. The "L" trail and the US West easement

road remain open all year. Hikers must stay on the designated trails only; off-trail travel is prohibited. For closure maps and more information, visit www.missoulaparks.org.

Those who violate the wildlife winter closure may be cited for trespassing and may incur fines and penalties. Please call 911 to report closure violations. Vehicle license plates or other identifying characteristics will help law enforcement identify trespassers. The Mount Jumbo winter closure is mandated by the Mount Jumbo Management Plan and the City Conservation Lands Management plan, both of which were adopted by the City Council after extensive public processes.

The City conducts an interagency review with Montana FWP and others when considering adaptations to the regular closure dates. Changes to the winter wildlife closure dates are largely based on weather conditions and the movements of wildlife on the mountain. For more information, visit www.missoulaparks.org or phone 721-PARK.

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