

Missoula Parks and Recreation
Public Service Announcement
For immediate release through Dec 21, 2009

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Mount Jumbo North Zone Closes Dec. 1, South Zone Closes Dec. 8

The return of winter will bring Mount Jumbo's own special elk herd back to its traditional winter range. When winter snows deplete forage at higher elevations, about 75 elk move to lower elevations on the slopes of Mt. Jumbo to feed. To help increase the elk herd's chance for winter survival, citizens, staff and wildlife biologists have agreed to institute seasonal closures of critical areas of the mountain to all recreational use. Mount Jumbo's North Zone, from the Saddle Road to the north, is closed December 1 until May 1. The South Zone, from the Saddle Road above and south to I-90, is closed December 8 to March 15. Maps and more information are available at www.missoulaparks.org. The Saddle Road is located at the north end of Lincoln Hills Drive.

Several trails on Mount Jumbo are open all year, including the U.S. West road above I-90 and the "L" trail, both of which are accessible at the Cherry Street trailhead. Dogs must be leashed on the "L" trail and U.S. West road during the winter closure. The road linking Upper Lincoln Hills Drive with Tamarack Street and the 40 acres below the road are also open all year.

Winter hikers and their canine companions can enjoy the numerous trails, scenic views and varied terrain on the North Hills, Mount Sentinel, Rattlesnake Greenway, and in the Rattlesnake, Pattee Canyon and Blue Mountain Recreation Areas. Call 721-PARK for more information about winter walking and hiking opportunities.

When Mount Jumbo was acquired for public ownership in 1997, an extensive public process was conducted to design a long-term management plan to preserve all of the mountain's resources. Wildlife experts, citizens, and the City Council worked together to design a plan to preserve and protect Jumbo's wildlife, vegetation and open space characteristics. During harsh winter months, when food is scarce, elk and mule deer must strike a balance between the reduced calories they consume and the energy they expend to stay warm and move through the deep snow. Even during mild winters, the food available at Jumbo's lower elevations is crucial to the elk's survival. Human disturbance causes elk to flee, thereby expending energy at a time when they need to conserve it the most.

For more information about the Mount Jumbo management plan, visit www.missoulaparks.org or phone Conservation Lands Manager Morgan Valliant at 552-6263.

Frequently asked questions about the Mount Jumbo elk herd

What's at stake if folks ignore the closure? The loss of the Jumbo elk herd. The 75 or so elk that winter on Mt. Jumbo face serious danger. Their chances of survival dwindle if disturbed repeatedly by people and dogs.

Are people really the problem? Yes. Elk view people as predators, and run from them. Racing through deep snow takes enormous energy at a time when elk are already stressed by the cold and effort it takes to paw through snow for food. Every time elk run, they deplete the fat reserves they need to survive the winter.

Why can't the elk just move elsewhere?

Mt. Jumbo makes up about 2/3 of the elk herd's winter range. The remaining range is too small to support the entire herd. The elk migrate from points north in the Lolo National Forest to Mt. Jumbo, their only choice for finding enough grass, shelter and solitude.

Hikers and Skiers DO have options—elk DON'T

Under the closure, hikers may climb to Mt. Jumbo's "L" or follow the trail paralleling I-90. Leash dogs and remember that elk and deer are nearby. Winter hikers and their canine companions can enjoy the numerous trails, scenic views and varied terrain on the North Hills, Mount Sentinel, Rattlesnake Greenway, and in the Rattlesnake, Pattee Canyon and Blue Mountain Recreation Areas. Visit www.missoulaparks.org for more information about winter walking and hiking opportunities.

Viewing Jumbo's Elk

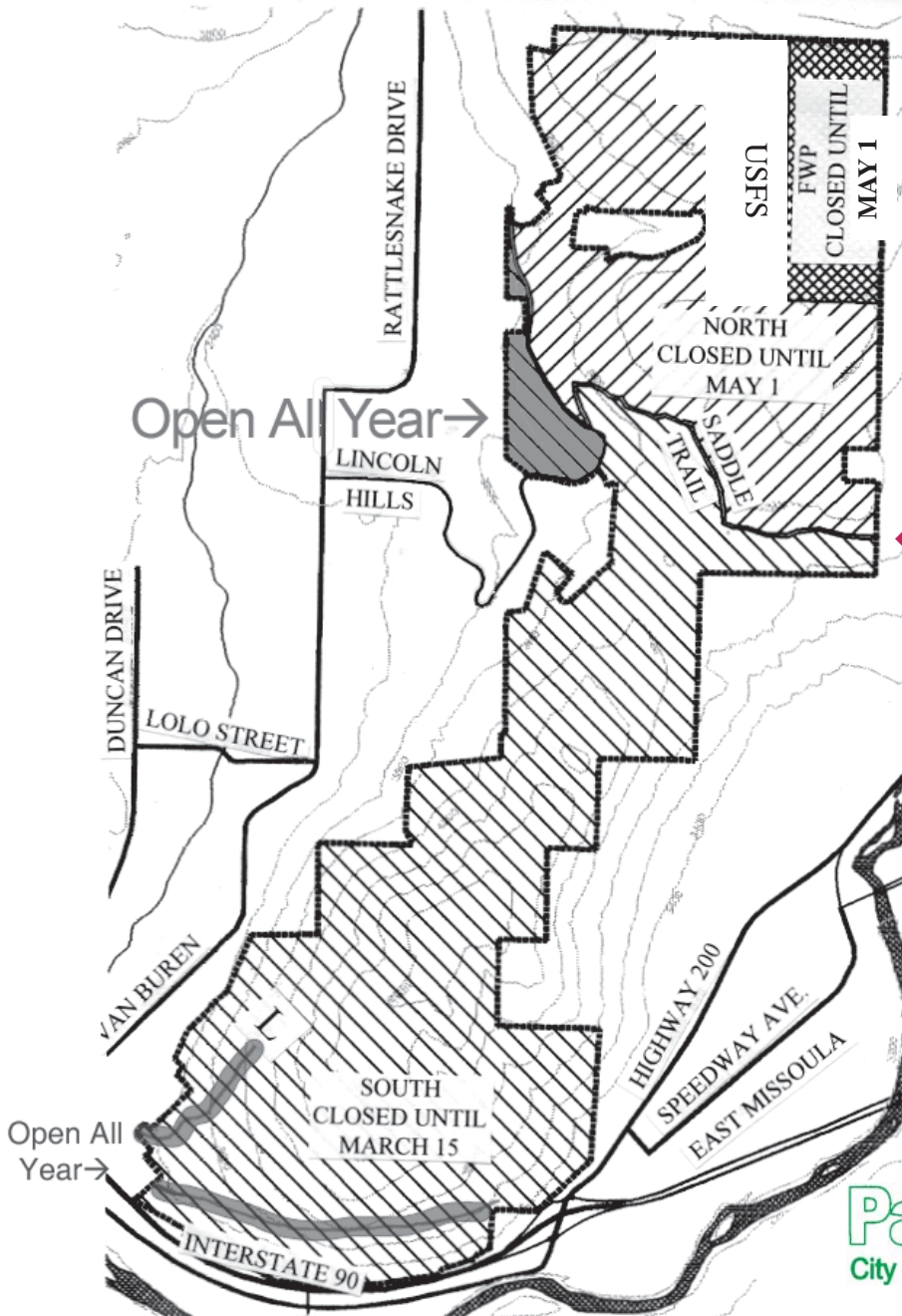
Watch them from the Rattlesnake Valley or from downtown. Mornings and evenings usually are best. Look for horse-sized animals moving high on the west and south facing open slopes, not far from sheltering trees.

For more information, call Missoula Parks and Recreation, 721-PARK.

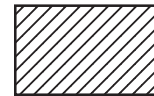
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****Media Note: Map Attached****

Mt. Jumbo Winter Closure



Area North of Saddle Trail
Closed
December 1 - May 1



Saddle Trail And Area
South Closed
December 8- March 15



Trails Open All Year

- ✓ Trail to the "L"
- ✓ Trail along I-90
- ✓ Road between upper Lincoln Hills and Tamarack, and land below.
- ✓ North Hills Open Space
- ✓ Mount Sentinel Open Space

Parks & Recreation

City of Missoula • 100 Hickory Street • 721-PARK

Thanks for your help:

Missoula Parks and Recreation
Mount Jumbo Advisory Committee
Missoula Police Department
Lolo National Forest
Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

**Call 911 to report dogs off-leash or
trespassers on closed areas.**

Questions? Call Missoula Parks
and Recreation 721-PARK

A Friendly Reminder... Mt. Jumbo's elk depend on YOU this winter.

What's at stake?

The loss of the Jumbo elk herd.

The 75 elk that winter on Mt. Jumbo face serious danger. Their chances of survival dwindle if disturbed repeatedly by people and dogs.

Are people really the problem?

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Hikers and Skiers DO have options— Elk DON'T

Under the closure, hikers may climb to Mt. Jumbo's "L" or follow the trail paralleling I-90. Be sure to leash dogs and remember that elk and deer are nearby. City Open Space Lands on the North Hills and Mount Sentinel are open. On the Lolo National Forest, Pattee Canyon, the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area, and Blue Mountain offer excellent winter recreation. For a guide to Missoula's trails, call Parks and Recreation at 721-PARK or visit the Parks and Recreation website at www.missoulaparks.org.

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A message from the Mount Jumbo Elk Herd and Missoula Parks and Recreation: Please don't violate the closure. Doing so can cost you up to \$500. Protect both your wallet and the elk and observe closure areas and dates. Thanks!