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MISSOULA PARKS AND RECREATION PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

For immediate release through May 5, 2025

Mount Jumbo North Zone opens Thursday, May 1

In consultation with state wildlife biologists, Parks and Recreation closes much of Mount Jumbo City open space annually on December 1 to protect wintering wildlife. Mount Jumbo's [North Zone](#), which includes all points north of the Saddle Road, will open Thursday, May 1, as the Jumbo elk herd moves into its summer range in the Rattlesnake Wilderness Area.

The annual wildlife closure protects 100+ elk and other animals inhabiting Jumbo's lower elevations to feed and regain strength after a long winter. Jumbo's [South Zone](#), which includes all points south of the Saddle Road, opened this year on April 26. The "L" Trail and US West Road remain open all year.

Parks and Recreation staff regularly monitor elk presence throughout the winter with assistance from the [citizen science Elk Spotters Program](#). Starting in early March, staff regularly monitor spring vegetation status further north on Mount Jumbo. Resource managers balance elk presence, vegetation green-up, and spring weather forecasts to determine appropriate opening dates to protect overwintering elk.

Mount Jumbo is collaboratively managed through a partnership between the City of Missoula, Lolo National Forest, and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The agencies work together to implement cross-boundary land management actions, including managing public access, habitat restoration, fuels management, and other projects. They also work together to implement the seasonal closure to protect overwintering elk.

(more)

This spring, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) completed a forest management project in the North Zone of the State Wildlife Management Area. The project aimed to restore forest health and improve elk habitat quality. While trail users in the North Zone may notice the effects of the forestry operation, FWP, Parks and Recreation, and the Missoula Mountain Bike Coalition have restored any impacts to roads and trails before reopening them. Trail users should be aware that potential hazards may still exist in areas where the forestry project took place.

The City of Missoula would like to thank residents for their cooperation in protecting Mount Jumbo's unique natural resources. Please call 911 to report wildlife closure violations. Check the [Conservation Lands Closures webpage](#) for real-time updates during the winter closure. For more information, call 721-PARK (7275) or visit www.missoulaparks.org.

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