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Images: Please see attached hi res pdf for maps showing wildlife closure areas

Help Jackson Hole's Wildlife Survive the Winter

Our long winter season is hard on Jackson Hole's wildlife. They need open areas for foraging and protected areas for security. Undisturbed habitat is essential for the survival of elk, bighorn sheep, deer and moose during the winter. Don't Poach the Powder is an annual campaign that lets winter recreationists know what areas they should avoid to help protect wildlife from the stress of human contact.

"In Jackson Hole, most of us really look forward to winters with lots of snow, and cold temperatures to make it last," said Louise Lasley of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance. "But those very things that make a winter playground for us are brutal for our wildlife. The less impact people have on wildlife, the better chance they have of making it through the winter."

Each year, a joint effort by government agencies and conservation organizations provides the funding and expertise to present the public with timely and accurate information on wildlife closures. Maps of the closed areas are available online at www.jhalliance.org/dontpoach.pdf. These closures, determined by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Grand Teton National Park, and the Bridger-Teton and Caribou-Targhee national forests, identify areas that are critical winter habitat for wildlife. The Don't Poach the Powder campaign publishes ads in local newspapers and on radio stations, and distributes a color brochure with maps of closures to local ski and snowmobile shops, and Forest Service and visitor centers. The ads encourage backcountry users to not "poach" closed areas on foot or with dogs, skis, snowboards or snowmobiles. Disrupting wildlife by intruding into their home can be as deadly as poaching with a rifle.

"Our wildlife make Jackson Hole unique," said Lloyd Dorsey of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. "To protect this valuable part of our community can be as simple as staying out of those places that can mean life or death to these animals."

Many people in the valley are new to the area, or have just discovered a new place to hike or ski, and are not aware of the winter closures. The goal of Don't Poach the Powder is to help everyone learn the boundaries of these areas and to avoid accidentally violating these closures. Wildlife is an important part of living in Jackson Hole.

Don't Poach the Powder is sponsored by Bridger-Teton National Forest, Grand Teton National Park, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, National Elk Refuge, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

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The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance is a non-profit organization dedicated to responsible land stewardship to ensure that human activities are in harmony with the area's irreplaceable wildlife, scenic and other natural resources.