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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release through April 7, 2017

Mount Jumbo South Zone Closure Extended Again

Mount Jumbo's South Zone, which includes all points south of the Saddle Road, will remain closed until further notice to protect wintering elk. City land managers hope to open the south zone by Friday, April 7, weather permitting. The area traditionally opens March 15.

About half of the Mount Jumbo's 75-90 elk are still feeding at lower elevations in Jumbo's South Zone, replenishing their physical reserves after a long winter. As the snowpack recedes and green vegetation emerges at higher elevations, the herd will move on to its traditional summer range in the Rattlesnake Wilderness and Marshall Canyon. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks will be tracking the movements of the Jumbo herd in their upcoming seasonal flights to count herd size and assess population health.

Jumbo's North Zone (all points north of the Saddle Road) will remain closed until May 1. The Saddle Road bisects Mount Jumbo's conservation lands and can be reached at the north end of Lincoln Hills Drive.

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. Dogs must be leashed on the "L" trail during the winter closure. For closure maps and more information, visit 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 inter-agency 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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