

Wildlife has the right of way

West of the city of Wenatchee lies an upland area known as the Home Water Wildlife Preserve. The 960-acre parcel was purchased by Chelan County PUD as wildlife and habitat mitigation for the Rock Island Hydro Project. The land is important for wintering mule deer and other wildlife. Chelan PUD is required by federal regulators to maintain this property as a wildlife preserve under terms of its license to operate Rock Island Dam.

Home Water Preserve is CLOSED to all Public access Dec. 1 – March 31 to protect wintering wildlife

Allowing trail access across the preserve while protecting wildlife is a balancing act. Chelan PUD has granted the city of Wenatchee a permit for a single recreational trail through this critical wildlife habitat. The section

of trail through the wildlife preserve is managed by the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT), which oversees several trails in the Wenatchee foothills. The PUD, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, and CDLT work together to allow seasonal access.

The Home Water Wildlife Preserve and the Sage Hills Trail system are closed each year from Dec. 1 to March 31 to give wildlife, especially mule deer, a sanctuary during the winter. In addition, unauthorized trails are being rehabilitated to prevent erosion, reduce noxious weeds, and improve habitat for wildlife.

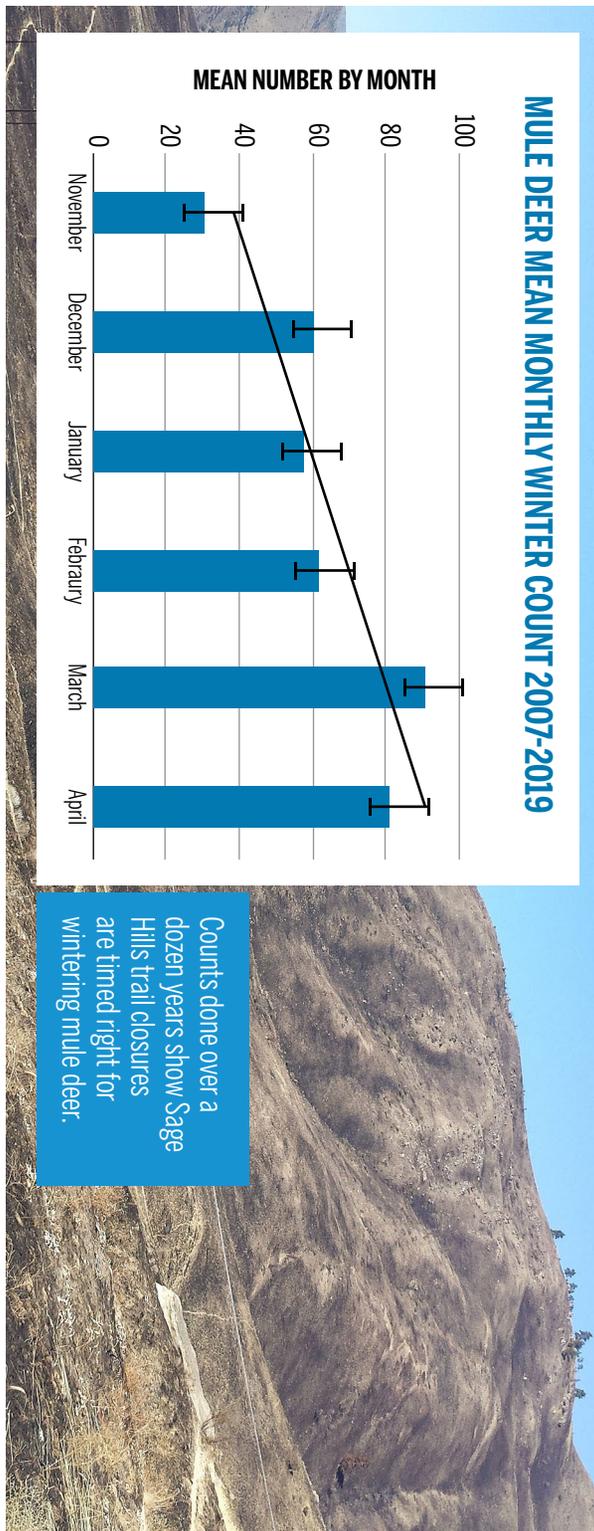
Please respect the trail closures to allow the natural vegetation to take hold. Your cooperation will ensure the Home Water Wildlife Preserve remains open to trail users.

CDLT Trails

cdlandtrust.org/what-we-do/recreation-access/trails

Home Water Wildlife Preserve

chelanpud.org/habitat-management.html



Protecting wildlife in the Wenatchee foothills

Home Water Wildlife Preserve



Fulfilling our promise to care for wildlife and its environment as part of generating renewable hydropower at Rock Island Dam



CHELAN COUNTY

Foothills are key to wildlife survival

The foothills of the Eastern Cascades are rich with wildlife. Many different animals depend on this transitional zone between the mountains and the valley floor for food, cover and to raise their young. Some animals spend all of their lives here. Others are seasonal visitors. The one thing they all have in common is they need this habitat to survive.

How you can help:

- Stay on the trail
- Respect trail closures
- Stay out of areas being restored
- Don't cut switchbacks
- Keep your dog leashed at all times
- Lead by example; share the rules with other trail users



Keeping it natural

Restoration efforts are ongoing in the Home Water Wildlife Preserve to prevent erosion, reduce the spread of noxious weeds and improve habitat for wildlife.

People and pets are allowed to use only one trail through the preserve. Although many old trails cross the wildlife preserve, they aren't safe and can't be maintained.

Many of the old, problem trail sections have been phased out and rehabilitated using erosion-control "blankets" (mats made from natural fiber) and native plants. Other areas have been enhanced with native shrubs and access to water for wildlife improved. They are regularly checked for noxious weeds.

Trail users can help prevent the spread of noxious weeds by staying on the permitted trail, keeping off restored areas and removing seeds from clothes and pets before leaving trailheads. Tread lightly, and don't cut switchbacks. Your conservation efforts are vital to making sure public access to the Home Water Wildlife Preserve continues.



Erosion control mat.

Fire impacts

The Canyons Fire in 2012 and the Sleepy Hollow Fire in 2015 had a great impact on the Preserve habitat. The landscape now has less vegetation to support wintering wildlife and is more susceptible to noxious weed invasions and erosion. Chelan PUD is planting, controlling weeds, and enhancing habitat. Please stay on the trails to protect the fragile habitat.



Watch for deer, coyote and hawks

In spring and summer:

Many species of birds travel through the area in spring looking for food. Some remain during the season to raise their young, while others continue north to their summer homes. Coyotes raise their pups in dens, and deer fawns hide among the grasses and shrubs. Red-tailed hawks patrol the Home Water Wildlife Preserve for snakes and small mammals. Pollinators take advantage of the many flowers found throughout the wildlife preserve from spring through early fall.

In fall and winter:

By fall, black bears may venture into the brushy draws to clean bushes of their berries. Migrant birds from the north may stop for some much needed food and rest before continuing south for winter. Mule deer begin their migration to lower elevations as the snow begins to deepen.

Wintertime finds deer pawing through the snow to get at the nutritious plants needed for survival. The deer are wary of the coyote and cougar that are on the lookout for the sick and weak. Bald and golden eagles survey the wildlife preserve from the sky, looking to scavenge carcasses left by predators and those that have fallen prey to severe weather. A prairie falcon may rocket past nearby houses in hopes of scaring up a quail for a meal.

The Preserve is popular

While humans enjoy the open space of the Home Water Preserve on the permitted trail from April-November, other wildlife, especially mule deer, find the preserve very popular during the winter closure. Each winter, the number of deer using the preserve and the surrounding natural habitat increases—with peak use in March and April. In early spring, the emergence of new lush vegetation (spring green-up) at the lower elevations draws even more deer to the property. As this green-up moves up in elevation, migrating deer follow it up into the higher elevations.

As growth pushes neighborhoods further into the foothills, leaving less native habitat, the Home Water Wildlife Preserve becomes even more valuable for wildlife.

Please help protect this critical area for wildlife by following trail rules and regulations.