



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation and Teton Valley Idaho Master Naturalists Launch Roadkill Study to Improve Wildlife Safety on Idaho Highway 33**

**TETON VALLEY, IDAHO – June 1, 2025** – The Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation (JHWF), in partnership with the Teton Valley Idaho Master Naturalist (IMN) chapter, is proud to announce the launch of a collaborative Roadkill Study aimed at better understanding wildlife-vehicle collisions on Idaho Highway 33. The pilot project will begin mid-June 2025, focusing on the stretch of highway between Trail Creek Pond and the Idaho-Wyoming state line.

This community-driven study will utilize trained volunteer teams to survey the highway twice per week to document the location and frequency of roadkill incidents. Surveys will be marked with Survey Crew signs to notify drivers of people working on the side of the road. Please give them space and slow down when passing crews.

Our goal is to collect accurate data on the species and locations of roadkill to identify wildlife-vehicle collision hotspots," said Renee Seidler, Executive Director of JHWF. This information will be instrumental for local and state agencies, including Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), and Teton County, Idaho, in addressing wildlife connectivity and considering future mitigation strategies."

"We greatly value these kinds of studies from area partners to have current data when planning toward future improvements on Idaho roads," said ITD District Six Planner Jeffrey

Sneddon. Reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions not only helps protect animals—it also improves roadway safety for drivers and reduces the risk of serious accidents.

Understanding where and why animals attempt to cross roads is more than a matter of numbers — it's about recognizing that roads fragment critical habitats and disrupt migration routes that wildlife have depended on for generations. Each data point in this study represents a loss, but also an opportunity: a chance to build smarter, safer infrastructure that recognizes the natural movements of the region's iconic wildlife.

**Migration is essential for many species to access seasonal food sources, find mates, and maintain healthy population genetics across the landscape.** When these natural movements are blocked or interrupted by roads and traffic, it can lead to increased mortality, inbreeding, and population decline.

This pilot study is a critical first step in helping us understand and reduce wildlife mortality on our roads,” said Kathy O Neil, Chair of Teton Valley IMN chapter. “If successful, we hope to expand the program to other roads in the region.”

**In the orientation survey on May 31, volunteers recorded four recently deceased mule deer, killed by vehicles within just a 2.5-mile stretch of highway** — a striking number that highlights both the frequency of collisions and the urgency of addressing this issue. Each collision not only represents a loss for local wildlife populations but also poses a serious safety risk for drivers.

This project is supported by several agencies including IDFG, ITD, Teton County, Idaho, and Wyoming Department of Transportation.

For more information, visit [www.jhwildlife.org](http://www.jhwildlife.org) or contact [ash@jhwildlife.org](mailto:ash@jhwildlife.org).

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### **About Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation**

Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation works to promote ways for our community to live compatibly with wildlife. Through collaboration, research, and hands-on projects, JHWF creates practical solutions to protect wildlife and their habitats.

### **About Idaho Master Naturalists**

The mission of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to actively work toward stewardship of Idaho's natural environment. At the state level, the program is sponsored by IDFG. Each local chapter may also develop partnerships with area natural resource agencies, organizations, and citizens.