



City of Ketchum

August 17, 2020

Mayor Bradshaw and City Councilors
City of Ketchum
Ketchum, Idaho

Mayor Bradshaw and City Councilors:

Recommendation to Adopt Resolution No. 20-017 Forming the Wood River Valley Wildlife Smart Communities Coalition

Recommendation and Summary

Staff is recommended the council adopt Resolution No. 20-017 and adopt the following motion:

I move to adopt Resolution 20-017.

The reasons for the request are as follows:

- The Wood River Valley has experienced an increase in human/wildlife conflicts.
- A meeting of key local stakeholders was called by Idaho Fish and Game in January 2020; attendees included elected officials and employees representing the cities of Ketchum, Sun Valley and Hailey, Blaine County Commissioners, the owner of Clear Creek Disposal, and staff from the Idaho Conservation League, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Fish and Game.
- Stakeholders agreed to work collaboratively to implement strategies to mitigate human/wildlife conflicts in Blaine County through the formation of the Wood River Valley Wildlife Smart Communities Coalition.

Analysis

Blaine County, and specifically the Wood River Valley, is experiencing similar trends in population growth and increased human/wildlife conflicts that are occurring in other parts of the western U.S. Since 1970, the population of Blaine County has grown by 284%, from a small, rural population of about 5,800, to today's population of 22,600.

From July 15 to September 9, 2019, Idaho Fish and Game's (IDFG) Magic Valley Region received 23 black bear reports from the Wood River Valley, resulting in two food-conditioned bears being euthanized. As of August 2020, the Region has received over 11 black bear reports from the Wood River Valley, with bears getting into unsecured residential garbage and one food-conditioned bear being euthanized. Many other incidents go unreported.

Between July 12, 2019 and March 23, 2020, over 90 sightings, encounters or attacks (on pets) by mountain lions have occurred. IDFG personnel euthanized two lions, a concerned citizen shot one lion, and two were hazed. Five dogs were attacked, three fatally, with numerous house cats being reported as killed or missing, at least some seemingly a result of lion depredation.

The Wood River Valley Wildlife Safe Communities Coalition's goal is to develop a long-term, ongoing campaign to proactively change the behavior of residents and visitors to the Wood River Valley to reduce the number of human/wildlife conflicts and keep wildlife wild. The coalition applied for two grants, totaling \$33,500, from the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation which, if awarded, would fund:

- Creation and management of a website
- Production and distribution of an educational video series
- Development of in-person wildlife safety workshops
- Public service announcements
- Print materials
- Sandwich boards for placement in neighborhoods with known wildlife activity

City Council will consider adopting Resolution 20-017 to acknowledge the City's active participation in the Wood River Valley Wildlife Smart Communities Coalition by providing guidance, recommendations and education to our residents and visitors on best practices that will result in Ketchum being a wildlife smart community.

Sustainability Impact

There is no sustainability impact associated with the recommendation.

Financial Impact

The only financial impact associated with the recommendation is staff time dedicated to participation in the coalition.

RESOLUTION 20-017

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITIES OF KETCHUM, SUN VALLEY, HAILEY, BELLEVUE; AND BLAINE COUNTY, TO FORM THE “WOOD RIVER VALLEY WILDLIFE SMART COMMUNITIES COALITION”, SUPPORTING THE VALUE OF WILDLIFE TO THE WOOD RIVER VALLEY, AND RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANT ROLES OF COMMUNITIES IN PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE AND SAFE HABITS FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO WILDLIFE.

WHEREAS, Blaine County residents and visitors appreciate the diversity of wildlife that live throughout the county, and desire that wildlife be encouraged to retain their natural behavior by not allowing wildlife to habituate to our human environments; and

WHEREAS, residents of Blaine County recognize the intrinsic value and ecological role, and economic benefits of wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the Wood River Valley has experienced increased human/wildlife conflicts, raising concerns for the safety of the public and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, residents of Blaine County recognize the need to minimize human/pet/wildlife conflicts and property damage that may lead to lethal control of wildlife by implementing wildlife smart communities best practices; and

WHEREAS, communities and residents of Blaine County desire to work with Idaho Fish and Game, the state agency with trust responsibilities for the State’s wildlife and who is charged with preserving, protecting, perpetuating and managing wildlife, while considering the health, safety and welfare of the surrounding public; and

WHEREAS, a critical component to reducing human/wildlife conflicts is a holistic community effort that requires Blaine County residents to ensure that their actions and behaviors minimize impacts to wildlife.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Cities of Ketchum, Sun Valley, Hailey, Bellevue; and Blaine County, that we recognize the importance of wildlife to our citizens, environment and economy, and acknowledge the responsibility of each community to ensure that wildlife stays wild keeping residents, visitors, pets and wildlife safe.

FURTHERMORE, we acknowledge the collaborative intent is to actively participate in the Wood River Valley Wildlife Smart Communities Coalition by providing guidance, recommendations and education to our residents and visitors on how to implement best practices that will result in wildlife smart communities.

FURTHERMORE, this resolution will be forwarded to Idaho Fish and Game, Sawtooth National Forest and Bureau of Land Management to acknowledge and agree to their active partnership in supporting this resolution’s efforts.

PASSED by the City Council and **APPROVED** by the Mayor this 17th day of August 2020.

CITY OF KETCHUM, IDAHO

Neil Bradshaw, Mayor

ATTEST:

Robin Crotty, City Clerk