

Big game are accustomed to vehicles along the highway, but not people. It's best to watch them from your car in a pull-out. If you do get out of your car, stay close to it. Moving toward the animals will disturb them. If they start to run or walk away, you're too close!



Use Roadside Pull-Outs The map in this brochure identifies several plowed pullouts from which wildlife can be safely observed. Please use these pull-outs and do not stop in the road or attempt to watch the wildlife while driving.



Watch Your Speed Please drive slower than the posted speed limit when the road is icy or snow covered. You need to be able to stop quickly when elk or deer suddenly appear on the road.



Watch for Children! The Garden Valley elementary, junior high, and high schools are located at milepost 9. A one-room schoolhouse is located on the south side of the highway approaching Lowman. Both areas have a posted speed limit of 25 mph.



Watch for Wildlife The number of accidents between motor vehicles and deer or elk is high on this stretch of highway. It's extremely important to watch the road at all times. Follow the posted speed limit and always slow down when you see big game near the road. Wait until you get to the next pullout to stop and observe them.



Watch the Road Rocks from the steep, exposed hillsides of the canyon commonly roll onto the highway. Snowplows patrol daily, but cannot keep the road clear at all times. Keep a close eye on the road.



Mileposts The pull-outs on the map are identified by the nearest milepost. Starting at Banks, milepost signs are posted at one-mile intervals. The Garden Valley Ranger Station is located at mile 12.8. This means it's located 8 tenths of mile east of milepost 12.



Services Restrooms are available in the winter at Hot Springs Campground (mile 13.7) and at Danskin Rest Area (mile 19.5). There are gas, food and lodging in Crouch or Garden Valley.

CRITICAL WINTER RANGE DEER CROSSING

CAUTION:The amount of big game crossing the highway is especially high between mileposts 18 and 22.



In cooperation with:



Winter Wildlife Viewing Guide

Garden Valley, Idaho



United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Intermountain Region
Boise National Forest

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Wildlife Canyon

The "Wildlife Canyon Scenic Byway" was so named because of the distinctively high concentration of elk, deer, and bald eagles during the winter months. Wildlife can be observed from highway pullouts between Banks and Lowman, Idaho, in the South Fork Payette River Canyon.

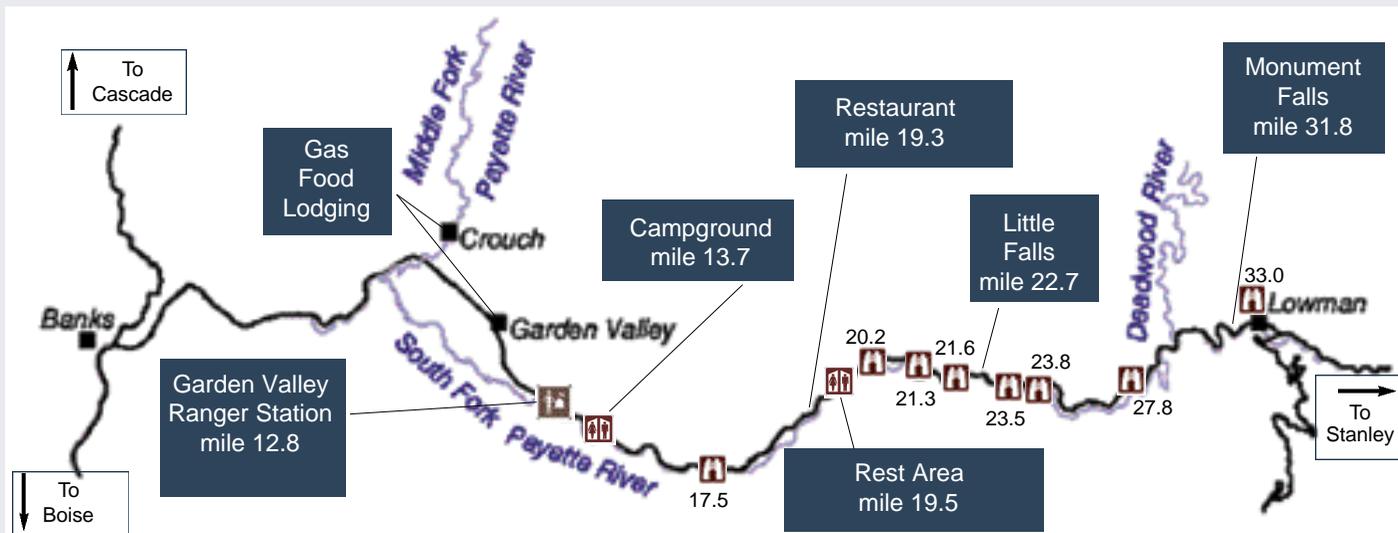
Big game gather in Wildlife Canyon during the winter because the area is lower in elevation than

the surrounding mountains and the south-facing slopes have much less snow. They can feed on sagebrush, bitterbrush, and chokecherry. These plants have little nutritional value when compared to the lush grasses and forbs they eat the rest of the year. Because elk and deer eat this low-nutrition food in the winter, they are primarily living off of stored fat reserves that were built up the previous summer and fall.

The cold temperatures and lack of nutritional food in the winter stress animals. This winter range

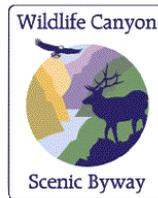
is very important to elk and deer. It is an area that is relatively warm, has easily accessible food, and they can just pass the time and conserve energy. Running uses a significant amount of energy that can weaken animals and reduce their chances of surviving the winter. Purposely chasing wildlife jeopardizes their lives and is punishable by state and federal law.

Please view all wildlife from a distance and keep pets restrained. If deer and elk start to run or walk away, you are too close!



Scenic Loop

If you come to see Wildlife Canyon, why not make a day of it? By traveling on three designated scenic byways, you can make a loop trip. From Boise, take Highway 55 (the Payette River Scenic Byway) to Banks. From there, take the Banks-Lowman Highway (Wildlife Canyon Scenic Byway) to Lowman. Then go west on Highway 21 (the Ponderosa Pine Scenic Byway) through historic Idaho City. The loop is 120 miles.

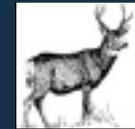


Watch for Wild Turkeys



Some pullouts are plowed during the winter months. The best wildlife viewing pull-outs are located at miles:

17.5	20.2	21.3	21.6
23.5	23.8	27.8	33.0



Mule Deer

You will mostly see mule deer, however, whitetail deer are also seen here. The mule deer is so named because of the size and shape of its ears. It has a white rump patch and narrow black-tipped tail. It holds its tail down when it runs, unlike the whitetail which raises its bushy white tail like a flag.



Rocky Mountain Elk

The elk has a whitish heart-shaped rump patch that surrounds the tail and extends down the upper parts of the thighs. Its head and neck are distinctly darker than the remainder of the body. Today, elk number about one million in North America. This represents roughly ten percent of the estimated population before European settlement of this continent.



The Bald Eagle

Bald eagles winter in Wildlife Canyon to fish the South Fork Payette River and to eat deer and elk that have died.

The bald eagle is not really bald. It actually has white feathers on its head, neck, and tail. "Bald" is a derivation of an Old English word meaning white. The eagle was named for the white feathers, instead of a lack of feathers.

The immature bald eagle (less than 3 years old) does not have the white head or white tail feathers. It looks similar to a golden eagle (mostly brown).