

Idaho Fish and Game Is Considering Phasing Out Wild

Idaho Animal Rescue Network | April 16, 2025



Idaho's wildlife rehabbers are often the first and only line of defense for injured, orphaned, and displaced wild animals. Their work not only saves lives but supports Idaho's ecosystems, communities, and conservation goals. By removing this vital support...

Idaho's wildlife needs help — and for decades, independent wildlife rehabilitators have quietly filled that role. But now, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) is moving to phase out these community rehabbers, and the consequences could be far-reaching.

On March 29, 2025, we were saddened to see a Facebook post from our dear friend at Palouse Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation, sharing the difficult challenges she and other wildlife rehabbers across Idaho are currently facing. Wildlife rehabbers are often the first and only line of defense for injured, orphaned, and displaced wild animals. Their work not only saves lives but also supports Idaho's ecosystems, communities, and conservation goals. By removing this vital support system, the state risks harming the very wildlife it aims to protect.

Wildlife rehabbers provide lifesaving care for Idaho's injured and orphaned animals

More Animals Will Suffer and Die Needlessly - Without licensed rehabilitators, injured and orphaned animals will have nowhere to go. Many will face euthanasia or be left to die

without care, even when their injuries or conditions are treatable.

Overwhelmed State Resources - IDFG doesn't have the staff, facilities, or resources to absorb the caseload currently handled by independent rehabbers.

Loss of Localized, Specialized Knowledge - Rehabbers develop deep, place-based knowledge of local wildlife, habitats, and recurring threats. Phasing them out means losing this valuable expertise.

Damage to Wildlife Education and Public Outreach - Wildlife rehabbers serve as educators and ambassadors, teaching communities about coexisting with native species and what to do in emergencies.

A wildlife rehabber helps a baby skunk.

Declining Public Engagement and Trust - When citizens feel powerless to help wildlife, they become disengaged. Removing rehabbers eliminates a key avenue for community involvement.

Higher Risks for Threatened and Sensitive Species - Some species at risk of population decline rely on successful rehabilitation and reintroduction programs.

Increased Illegal or Unsafe Animal Care - Without legal, trained options, well-meaning citizens may attempt to care for wild animals improperly, leading to further harm.

Fewer Opportunities for Veterinary Partnerships and Training - Wildlife rehabbers often collaborate with veterinarians and vet students, offering valuable training opportunities.

Damage to Biodiversity Conservation Goals - Every animal released back into the wild contributes to ecosystem health. Without rehabbers, this process is disrupted.

Negative National Reputation for Idaho Wildlife Management - Phasing out rehabbers could damage Idaho's standing in the national conservation community.

Lost Volunteerism and Grassroots Conservation - Removing rehabbers means losing a passionate, unpaid workforce dedicated to wildlife welfare.

Missed Opportunities for Scientific Data Collection - Rehabbers gather valuable data about wildlife injuries, disease outbreaks, and habitat threats — information that the state will lose.

What Can Be Done?

Rather than phasing out this critical network, Idaho Fish and Game should work with wildlife rehabbers to:

- Update and improve training and licensing standards• Strengthen reporting and oversight processes• Facilitate communication between rehabbers and state officials• Recognize and invest in the invaluable role rehabbers play in Idaho's wildlife conservationIdaho's wildlife deserves a safety net — and its people deserve the opportunity to care for it.If you care about Idaho's wildlife:
- Contact Idaho Fish and Game — express your concerns and ask them to protect and support local wildlife rehabbers. Idaho Fish and Game is asking for input on this and other issues. We have provided their contact information below.
- Share this post with your friends, neighbors, and wildlife lovers across Idaho.
- Support your local wildlife rehabbers — even small donations or volunteer hours make a difference.

Together, we can build a better future for the animals that make Idaho wild.

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Contact Your Idaho Legislators Here

Source & Contact

Current story:

<https://idahorescue.com/2025/04/16/idaho-fish-and-game-is-considering-phasing-out-wildlife-rehabbers/>

Website: IdahoRescue.org | Email: hello@IdahoRescue.org