

# Harsh winter took heavy toll on wildlife across western US

July 2 2017, by Bob Moen

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Wildlife managers in seven states in the western U.S. report this past winter was rough on wildlife.

California, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming report above-normal losses of wildlife in the wake of one of the coldest and snowiest winters in decades.

Record snowfall made it difficult for wildlife to find food, and spells of bitter cold made matters worse.

Wildlife managers are assessing the damage using radio collars and surveys of herds.

Mule deer in several Rocky Mountain states and elk in eastern Washington were hit hard. Wyoming was expecting above-normal losses among antelope, and California's threatened Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep herd lost dozens of animals.

Wildlife managers are reducing hunting permits in the hard-hit areas.

Biologists say the [wildlife](#) herds should eventually recover, with the help of reduced hunting, if normal conditions return next winter.

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