

Why It Matters

Fences can cause serious injuries and even death for wildlife. Installing wildlife friendly fencing can help prevent these incidents and keep wildlife safe.

Wildlife damage to your fencing is also costly and frustrating to fix. By tailoring fence design and placement, you can reduce wildlife injuries and decrease damage to your fences.

Avoid:

- Fences with spikes, pickets, or barbs that protrude above the top bar.
- Net fencing or loose and broken wires that may catch and tangle an animal's legs or antlers.
- Blocking access to food and water sources.
- Fencing too close to the road, which can cause animals to walk into the road instead of next to it.

Instead Try:

- Removing spikes and barbs from existing fences or covering them with a decorative guard.
- Securing loose wires, maintaining proper tension, and replacing poly-rope fencing.
- Using an alternative barrier such as hedgerows or a line of fence posts to delineate property lines.
- Keeping topography and animal movements in mind when designing fencelines.



More Information and Resources

- El Dorado County Fish & Wildlife Commission:
<https://www.eldoradocounty.ca.gov/County-Government/County-Departments/Fish-and-Wildlife>
- El Dorado County Fencing Ordinance:
https://library.municode.com/ca/el_dorado_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT13ZO_ART3SIPLPR_DEST_CH130.30GEDEST_S130.30.070FEWAREWA
- California Department of Fish & Game:
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/>
- Fencing With Wildlife in Mind:
<https://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/LandWater/PrivateLandPrograms/FencingWithWildlifeInMind.pdf>
- The Dangers of Spiked Wrought Iron Fencing:
<https://www.cbsnews.com/sacramento/news/wrought-iron-spiked-fence-killing-deer/>
- Deer Friendly California:
<https://www.deerfriendly.com/deer/california>
- Think Wild - Wildlife Friendly fencing
<https://www.thinkwildco.org/wildlife-friendly-fencing/#:~:text=Fencing%20can%20create%20a%20complete,and%20become%20impaled%20by%20barbs.>

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- Front cover: Yardzen & Great Lakes Metal Fabrication
- Injured wildlife: CO Parks and Wildlife, Rebecca St. Pierre, & On the Wing Photography
- Fencing examples: Kavin Fence Company, Sebring Design Build, Yardzen, Great Lakes Metal Fabrication, ARIRON
- Right of Way: Kathleen Jermstad

Contact us at
530-621-5520

or on the web at:

<https://www.eldoradocounty.ca.gov/County-Government/County-Departments/Fish-and-Wildlife>

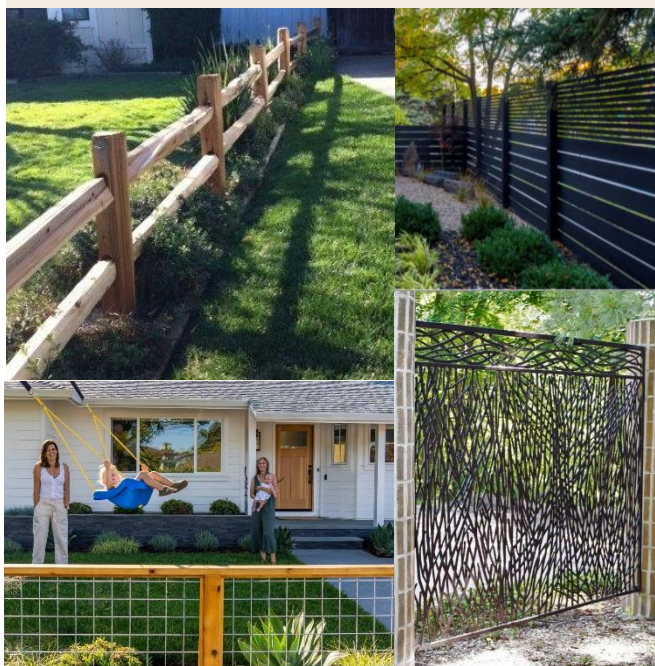


Your Guide to Residential
*Wildlife Friendly
Fencing*



El Dorado County
Fish & Wildlife
Commission

Examples of Wildlife Friendly Fencing >>>



Making Your Fence Wildlife Friendly

Best Management Practices for home and landowners in wildlife areas

What Kinds of Fences Cause Problems For Wildlife?

Fences that:

- Are too high to jump safely
- Are too low to crawl under
- Have loose or broken wires
- Have wires or bars spaced too closely together
- Can impale or snag a leaping animal
- Are difficult for running animals or birds to see
- Create a complete barrier to food and water
- Create a 3-dimensional obstacle

Considerations for Designing Your Fence

The best situation for wildlife is open habitat with no fences at all. Whenever possible, remove obsolete fences that are no longer in need.

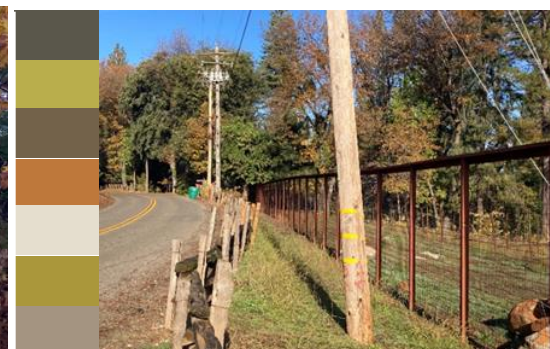
If fencing is necessary, consider:

- Purpose of the fence
- Topography – hills, gullies, streams, wetlands
- Species of wildlife present
- Daily or seasonal movement of wildlife through property
- Presence of food, water, shelter for wildlife
- Presence of your animals
- The El Dorado County Fencing Ordinance

Residential Fences

Fences serve many functions around homes: defining property boundaries, creating play spaces, containing pets, or discouraging wildlife from yards and gardens.

- Avoid fences with spikes, pickets, or barbs that protrude above the top bar. Modification to existing decorative spike fencing might include: cutting off or covering spikes to reduce hazard.
- Any tall residential fence, whether wrought iron, plank, picket or chain-link, should be used only for small areas around the home and not for larger permanent fences. Low decorative yard fences pose little hazard or barrier to wildlife and allow landscape permeability.
- Consider fence alternatives to define boundaries or discourage trespass including hedgerows – a line of shrubs or trees. These provide nest sites for birds and food and cover for wildlife. Also, a line of fence posts can work as an attractive alternative to delineate property lines.
- The El Dorado County fencing ordinance sets limits on heights and styles of fences depending on location, topography, and purpose. Any fence over 7' in height requires a permit. Contact the Planning Division at (530) 621-5355 to learn more.
- For deer fencing guidelines around gardens and edible plants, see the agricultural fencing brochure.



Fencing Along Roads and in Right of Ways (ROW)

Pictured above (left) is an example of a fence placed too close to the road, forcing wildlife to walk in the road and exposing animals and drivers to danger.

Pictured (right) is an example of a more wildlife friendly fence, placed an appropriate distance from the road. This allows wildlife to walk safely along the side of the road.

Fences should be placed no less than 5' from all improved areas of a ROW, including banks and ditches to provide some safe space for wildlife away from vehicle traffic. Keep topography such as steep slopes in mind as well. If the ROW is a steep slope or ditch, more space may be required for wildlife to move safely.