



Wildlife Corridors and crossings Conference, Tucson Az. May 9th and 10th.

Approximately 270 in attendance mostly from western US and Canada

Oregon Reps: Laurel Williams (PEW), Cidney Bowman (ODOT), Rachel Wheat (ODF&W), Michael Moore (ODF&W), Tyler Dungannon (OHA), Jeromy Austin (CO Land Watch) Mark Labhart (ODF&W Commission)



Speakers included:

- Jennifer Toth, Director **Arizona Department of Transportation**
- Robert Bonnie, **Undersecretary of Ag.**
- Casey Stemler, DOI Coordinator for Secretarial Order 3362, **US Fish and Wildlife Service**
- Brendan Moynahan, Chief, Wildlife Conservation Branch, **National Park Service**
- Lesli Allison, Executive Director, **Western Landowners Alliance**
- Sarah Greenberger, Associate Deputy Secretary, **US Department of the Interior**
- Nada Wolff Culver, Deputy Director, Policy and Programs, **Bureau of Land Management**
- Siva Sundaresan, Deputy Director, **US Fish and Wildlife Service**
- Josh Van Wieren, Science Advisor – Conservation Planning, **Parks Canada**
- Colleen Fletcher, Program Manager, **Federal Highway Administration**
- Brian Yanchik, Lead Ecologist, **Federal Highway Administration**
- Tommy Beaudreau, Deputy Secretary, **US Department of Interior**

- Kim Tenggardjaja, **White House Council on Environmental Quality**

- Brian Logan, National Wildlife Program Leader, **US Forest Service**
- Logan Christian, Wildlife and Habitat Coordinator, **National Caucus of Environmental Legislators**
- Erin Sito, US Public Policy Director, **Wildlands Network**
- Patricia Cramer, Director, Researcher, **Wildlife Connectivity Institute**

- Cheryl Brehme, US Geological Survey, **Western Ecological Research Center**
- Shailyn Miller-Wiechman, Wildlife Connectivity Coordinator, **Native American Fish and Wildlife Society**
- Travis Belote, Senior Science Director, **The Wilderness Society**
- Jon Holst, Energy and Wildlife Senior Advisor, **Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**
- Zack Lowe from **Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies**

The **purpose** of the two-day conference was to **bring together scientists, practitioners and policy makers to share up-to-date research, lead technical training and discuss policy innovations regarding wildlife migrations and landscape connectivity conservation.**

Highlights from Conference Regarding Wildlife Connectivity and Crossings

- In a recent survey of **every state's DOT's**, they found that on average there are **345,795** reported crashes with animals every year. Those are just the ones reported. It is estimated using modeling that this means there are **between 1.9 million and 3.1 million crashes every year with wildlife on the state's highway systems**. This **does not include county or private roads**. The insurance companies report that the total average cost of animal-vehicle crashed in just the western states alone is **\$10.1 billion per year**.



- The **Undersecretary of Ag.** said all federal agencies are to include connectivity and corridors in in their work plans.



- Many **private landowners** are willing to participate as long as we work jointly with them to include their objectives and include **financial incentives for them to participate**.
- No one entity can or should be responsible for corridors and connectivity.
- **Wildlife use private lands because they want to be there because of various reasons elsewhere.**
- The **Wyoming Legislature allocated \$150 million over multiple years for wildlife crossings and corridors.**
- The state of **Florida has allocated right at \$1 billion dollars for wildlife corridors, connectivity and land purchases for wildlife**



Oregon Data Sourced from ODOT

- For the period **2010 through 2022** there were **73,072** deer that were confirmed killed in vehicle collisions on Oregon's state highways. That **averages to 5,621 deer per year over that 13-year period**. ODOT estimates that these numbers are way under reported for the actual number of collisions. Many wildlife collisions are never reported or documented and these figures do not include county roads and just so you know there are more miles of county roads in Oregon than there are state roads.



OREGON IS DEFINITELY BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL REGARDING CROSSING STRUCTURES

Number of Dedicated Wildlife Crossings by State (Source PEW Charitable Trust Data)

- Arizona - 40 (4 overpasses and 36 underpasses)
- Colorado – 65
- California – 50
- New Mexico – 10 (major with new one under construction)
- Nevada – 23 (major ones)
- Washington – 30 to 40
- Wyoming – 20
- Utah – 50
- Montana 122
- **Oregon 5**

I'd like to hi-light our own Rachel Wheat was one of four state agencies who was invited to talk about our work on Oregon's wildlife corridors mapping effort. She did a great job.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ([H.R. 3684](#)), which became law in November also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law”), provides new federal funding for projects and research to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs) and improve habitat connectivity.

One of the key provisions is the establishment of a new **\$350 million Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program** (“grant program”), with grant funding available in FY 2022 – FY 2026.

Oregon Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program (WCPP)

- Applications due August 1st
- 20% non-federal match requirement (lower in some special circumstances)
- No cap on request amounts, or timeframe before which funds need to be spent
- **~\$112M available this cycle, across all 50 states**
- Eligible applicants include state DOTs, federal land management agencies, tribes, local governments
- Primary merit criteria are the extent to which the project will protect motorists and wildlife by reducing WVCs and the extent to which the project will improve wildlife habitat connectivity
- Funds can be applied to any phase of a passage project, from feasibility to design to construction to monitoring

FHWA has not provided any information about when they expect to make awards