



February 2, 2022

Representative Pam Marsh, Chair
House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Oregon Legislature

Re: Environment Oregon supports House Bill 4130 and the -1 amendment

Chair Marsh and Members of the Committee,

Environment Oregon is a statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organization working for clean air, clean water and open space, representing tens of thousands of members across Oregon. We support House Bill 4130 and the -1 amendment.

We need more nature. More nature means abundant wildlife in our world – from butterflies floating by, to coyotes howling at night, to whale tails breaching the surface just visible from shore. Nature works better when it's connected.

But in Oregon and in the U.S., our wild spaces have been fragmented by roads, fences and other products of human development that block the movement of animals. This can push whole ecosystems out of balance, cut off genetic flow between populations, leave animals short of key resources, interrupt migration cycles and leave species more susceptible to other challenges like disease, wildfires and climate change.

A key solution to habitat fragmentation is to create wildlife corridors, projects that reconnect separated habitats, keeping in mind a species' need for adequate space, food, water, shelter and mates. Corridors can be made up of single projects or networks of small-scale infrastructure, including but not limited to wildlife crossings.

Wildlife crossings are overpasses or underpasses that allow wildlife to safely cross major roads that run through their habitats. Oregon currently only has five wildlife crossings, much fewer than other Western states. As a result, wildlife are regularly injured or killed while crossing Oregon roads.

We urge the passage of House Bill 4130 to increase the safety of our roads, provide more freedom of movement for our wildlife and help to create more complete ecosystems that have been fragmented by human development. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

Celeste Meiffren-Swango
State Director