A-Bill for an Act

Relating to habitat connectivity; creating new provisions; amending ORS 366.161 and 366.162; and prescribing an effective date.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 366.161 is amended to read:

366.161. (1) The Department of Transportation shall establish a program to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions in areas where wildlife corridors identified in the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan by the State Department of Fish and Wildlife intersect with proposed or existing public roads. The program shall include, but need not be limited to, feasibility studies and plans for creating or modifying road infrastructure in a manner that reduces wildlife-vehicle collisions and promotes public safety. The plans may include but need not be limited to the use of wildlife crossing structures and roadway fencing.

(2) To the extent practicable, the Department of Transportation shall coordinate with local governments, as defined in ORS 174.116, and the tribal governments for tribes and bands listed under ORS 172.110, to achieve the goals of the program described in this section.

SECTION 2. ORS 366.162 is amended to read:

366.162. (1) The Department of Transportation shall establish the program required under ORS 366.161 no later than December 31, 2023.

(2) Until the Department of Transportation establishes the program, the Department of Transportation and the State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall coordinate efforts to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions based on the data gathered under ORS 496.272. The Department of Transportation shall consider the benefit of including a wildlife crossing as part of a project if the data suggests that such a crossing could significantly reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions.

(3) The Department of Transportation shall report biennially regarding the status of the program required under ORS 366.161 to interim or regular Senate and House committees relating to natural

NOTE: Matter in boldfaced type in an amended section is new; matter [italic and bracketed] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in boldfaced type.
resources in the manner provided by ORS 192.245. The report shall include, but not be limited to, information concerning the number and types of wildlife corridor feasibility studies and infrastructure projects established or planned, a timeline for planned project implementation, estimated project costs and funding sources and the realized or expected effect of established or planned wildlife corridor infrastructure projects on the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions.

(4) In addition to the information described in subsection (3) of this section, the report shall describe any actions taken by the department to secure funding for the program and make recommendations for an ongoing funding strategy, including but not limited to:

(a) Efforts to ensure the existence of one or more dedicated funding sources that meet program needs; and

(b) Efforts to secure federal competitive grants.

SECTION 3. Consistent with ORS 496.252 and 496.254, the State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall carry out projects to support wildlife mobility and habitat connectivity within priority corridors identified in the Oregon Connectivity Assessment and Mapping Project.

SECTION 4. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the State Department of Fish and Wildlife, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, out of the General Fund, the amount of $5,000,000, for deposit in the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund to carry out the provisions of section 3 of this 2023 Act.

SECTION 5. This 2023 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the date on which the 2023 regular session of the Eighty-second Legislative Assembly adjourns sine die.