

Submitter: Suzanne Linford
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

I am Suzanne Linford, Executive Director of Protect Animal Migration, an educational non profit. I am asking you to support HB 2999. This bill would leverage money that would be matched many times over to support habitat connectivity and help Oregon become closer to the industry standard for wildlife crossings of other western states. Because crossings pay for themselves over time, reduce animal vehicle collisions by 85-95 %, support economies that towns east of the Cascades often depend on, halt the precipitous decline in populations like mule deer, and help preserve the open landscape that crossings f they have the funding. Now, there is funding. Five million \$'s will be matched many times over by federal funding and will reduce costs from animal collisions. Here in Deschutes County it is reckoned that as much as \$32 million a year costs from 5,000 animal vehicle collisions on ODOT maintained highways, county and city roads. That is a conservative estimate.

A recent PEW survey found that an overwhelming majority of Oregonians support crossings. This includes rural, urban, college educated and non college educated, women, men and other diverse criteria. Preserving our wildlife is bipartisan, a win win for everyone, and a much needed source of healing at this otherwise divisive time in our country. Please support HB 2999. Providing wildlife with necessary connections between fragmented or degraded habitats is needed, required, and desired.

Thank you,