

Support **HB 2978** & Funding for Wildlife Crossings

The Problem of Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions

"Each year, there are over 7,000 wildlife-vehicle collisions in Oregon; on average, four people die and 521 people are seriously injured in those collisions. There is no dedicated federal or state funding source to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, despite a recent state law meant to reduce these types of collisions (HB 2834 in 2019). An investment of \$5 million per year would enable the construction of an additional 20 wildlife fencing and structure projects over the next 30 years."

- Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Transportation Funding Needs, July 2024

With roughly 6,000 deer-vehicle collisions per year alone, Oregon has a \$114 million per year deer-vehicle collision problem, and elk collisions have cost Oregonians an estimated \$26 million.



Wildlife using underpass wildlife crossings on U.S. 97 in Oregon

The Solution - Wildlife Crossings

Existing crossings on U.S. 97 have reduced deer collisions by more than 90 percent.

Polls show 86% of Oregon voters want the state to build more crossings, and

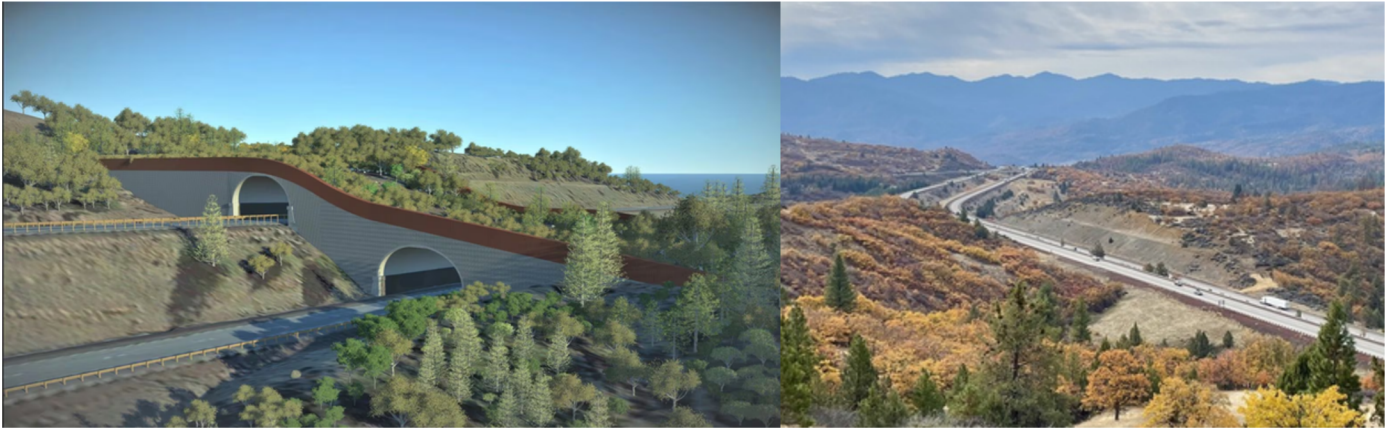
75% support increased funding to build those crossings.

In the 2025 legislative session, there are two interrelated wildlife crossing initiatives:

- **HB 2978**, would improve Oregon's existing connectivity law by requiring:
 - ODOT to update its wildlife guidance materials, standards, and highway specifications, to incorporate wildlife crossing design considerations;
 - An MOU between ODOT & ODFW to spur collaboration and resource sharing amongst agencies, Tribes, NGOs, academic Institutions & other community partners statewide;
 - Creation of a training program designed to educate ODOT staff and other stakeholders on the efficacy of transportation solutions for wildlife and human safety; and,
 - ODOT to coordinate with ODFW to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to wildlife connectivity from the construction, improvement, operation and maintenance of transportation infrastructure throughout this state.
- **A bill that provides a directly-related funding option** for the \$5 million per year needed for implementation of ODOT's wildlife-vehicle collision reduction program required by ORS 366.161.

Exceptional Opportunities to Leverage Federal Funding

There are **at least 15 federal grant opportunities available right now** to support wildlife crossing infrastructure and wildlife corridor conservation. The majority of those grants require state agencies to contribute a non-federal share of the funding, usually around 20 percent of the project cost, depending on the program, making state funding critical to leveraging federal dollars.



Left: Schematic of the proposed overpass on I-5. **Right:** I-5 in Southern Oregon.

In December 2024, Oregon won \$33 million in federal Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program grant dollars to construct the state's first wildlife overpass. The crossing will be built over I-5 between Ashland and the California border, connecting important habitat for a diversity of species living within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. **ODOT utilized a portion of the \$7 million the Oregon State Legislature provided in 2022 to help leverage these federal dollars for crossings.**

Help Oregon Continue These Success Stories For Wildlife & People on Our Roads

The Following Organizations & Groups Support HB 2978

