



## Overview

Wildlife corridors and crossings are a vital and cost effective way to maintain resilient landscapes for fish and wildlife, to protect watersheds, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities. Crossings can be in the form of highway and road overpasses, underpasses, or culverts, which provide safe crossing for animals and recreation. Corridors are large areas of undeveloped habitat that connect isolated habitat and allow for ecosystem and genetic connectivity for plants and animals.

States have recognized the importance of connectivity in both the 2008 Western Governors Association [corridors initiative](#) and 2010 [report](#), and the 2016 Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers' [resolution](#) recognizing the importance of ecological connectivity. A number of state legislatures and agencies have also championed wildlife corridors and/or crossings.

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## Legislation

- California: [AB 498](#) (2015), encouraging wildlife corridors and development mitigation and conservation.
- New Hampshire: [SB 376](#) (2016), requiring the DOT to study and recommend wildlife corridors in the state.
- New Mexico: [HJM 10](#) (2011), requesting agencies to coordinate a pilot traffic safety project to reduce WVCs; and [HM 1/SM 11](#), (2013), requesting Game and Fish with DOT to identify future wildlife crossing projects, funding, and declaring a wildlife safety awareness day.

## KEY POINTS

- Wildlife corridors can provide critical habitat, watershed health, clean air and water, and enhanced property values and outdoor recreation for nearby communities.
- Many plant and animal species are relocating due to changes in temperature, water cycles and seasons, yet habitat loss is accelerating across the U.S., creating bottlenecks for animals and wildlife-vehicle collisions with human injury or death.
- Wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs) cost over \$8 billion per year, thus wildlife crossings generally pay for themselves quickly in costs saved for emergency and medical assistance, property damage and value of animals lost.

## Other Resources

- Center for Large Landscape Conservation: Large Landscape Conservation : [A Strategic Framework for Policy and Action](#).
- Federal Highway Administration report on [costs of WVCs](#).
- NM Game and Fish/Transportation/State Police [2012 report to legislature](#) on wildlife crossings.

