



COUNTY OF SISKIYOU

Board of Supervisors

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October 13, 2023

Rebecca Fris
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090
Rebecca.Fris@wildlife.ca.gov

Subject: WCB Funding Application for the Siskiyou Mountains Interstate-5 Wildlife Crossings Planning Project

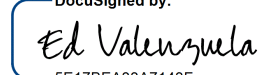
Dear Ms. Fris:

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors strongly support the “Siskiyou Mountains Interstate-5 Wildlife Crossings Planning Project” and urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to grant funding for this proposal. This project seeks to restore connectivity and safe passage for elk, mule deer, black tail deer, mountain lion, black bear, and other wildlife across Interstate 5 between Yreka and the Oregon border to alleviate one of the most problematic barriers to wildlife movement in northern California. The Department of Fish and Wildlife’s California Wildlife Barriers 2022 report listed this section of I-5 (W005) as one of the most important priority barrier in the north state. The section of I-5 through the north state bisects important habitat for mule deer, elk, mountain lion and many other wildlife species.

Based on roadkill and crash reports collected by the UC Davis Road Ecology Center, camera trap observations of wildlife at existing structures and in nearby habitats, and locations of GPS-collared deer, the project team will identify possible locations of wildlife crossings. Then the team will determine which types of crossings are most suitable for different wildlife species to cross the interstate. The team will clear project alternatives through the Caltrans process, resulting in a feasible and buildable crossing project, including improved crossing in a number of areas.

As traffic loads increase wildlife will face increasing rates of collisions and population separation across the highway to reach critical resources for their survival. One or more wildlife crossing opportunities and barrier fencing are needed to reduce mortality and prevent the loss of habitat connectivity between available habitat areas on either side of the highway. Extensive GPS data collected by CDFW has identified areas of frequent use near the highway where wildlife crossing features would be beneficial to deer and other wildlife. We are hopeful to see some reprieve for the deer herds in our region and respectfully request the Wildlife Conservation Board’s consideration of this funding request.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Ed Valenzuela

Chair, Board of Supervisors

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Nancy Ogren
District 4

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