

# Enrolled House Bill 2834

Sponsored by Representative HELM, Senator PROZANSKI, Representatives MARSH, HELT, Senator DEMBROW; Representatives GORSEK, HOLVEY, KENY-GUYER, NERON, SMITH DB, ZIKA

CHAPTER .....

AN ACT

Relating to wildlife corridors.

Whereas the state of Oregon is home to a rich array of wildlife and landscapes; and

Whereas biodiversity and habitat connectivity play a vital role in Oregon’s economy and in ensuring a sustainable future for current and future generations of Oregonians; and

Whereas habitat loss and fragmentation are major contributors to declines in populations of native fish, marine life and terrestrial wildlife; and

Whereas wildlife corridors serve to connect wildlife habitat areas and allow for the movement, migration and dispersal of fish, wildlife and plant species; and

Whereas, in addition to other benefits, wildlife corridors provide ecosystem services such as pollination, air and water purification, carbon sequestration and disturbance prevention; and

Whereas wildlife corridors increase public safety and are highly effective at reducing vehicle-wildlife collisions and the costs associated with those collisions; and

Whereas formally designating and protecting wildlife corridors is a crucial strategy for bolstering Oregon’s ecosystem resiliency and for ensuring the long-term viability of wildlife population and communities; now, therefore,

**Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

**SECTION 1. (1) The State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall collect, analyze and develop the best available science and data regarding the connectivity of wildlife habitat areas. The State Department of Fish and Wildlife, in cooperation with the Department of Transportation, shall use the data to develop a plan, to be known as the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan, to preserve long-term habitat connectivity for wildlife as defined in ORS 496.004. The plan shall provide guidance for all state agencies to develop benchmarks for the designation and protection of wildlife corridors in Oregon.**

**(2) The Wildlife Corridor Action Plan shall, at a minimum, include:**

**(a) Identification of species of concern that are at risk from habitat fragmentation or barriers to species movement.**

**(b) Identification of the known migration and dispersal corridors for species identified under paragraph (a) of this subsection.**

**(c) A description of the potential effects of climate change on the movement of species identified under paragraph (a) of this subsection.**

**(d) Identification of known and potential human-caused barriers in Oregon that negatively affect wildlife habitat connectivity.**

(e) A contemporary map showing existing and potential wildlife corridors and core high quality habitat areas.

(f) A list of areas for which designation of wildlife corridors, land acquisition or other agency actions are of high priority to protect wildlife movement or habitat connectivity. The bases for identification of the high priority areas shall include but not be limited to a designation of a species by the federal government or the State Fish and Wildlife Commission as an endangered species or threatened species.

(3) The State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall review and update the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan every five years. Prior to final adoption of the plan or of a plan update the department shall:

(a) Post the plan or update on the department website and provide an opportunity for public comment; and

(b) Deliver a copy of the plan or update to Senate and House interim or regular committees relating to natural resources.

(4) Prior to final adoption of a proposed update, the State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall prepare a report on implementation of the update, including but not limited to information concerning changes in the number of high priority wildlife corridors established or planned. The State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall post the report on the department website and deliver the report to Senate and House interim or regular committees relating to natural resources.

**SECTION 2.** All agencies of state government, as defined in ORS 174.111, are directed to assist and advise the State Department of Fish and Wildlife in the development of the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan and in the five-year reviews of the plan required under section 1 of this 2019 Act.

**SECTION 3.** The State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall initiate work on the Wildlife Corridor Action Plan no later than January 1, 2020, and report department findings and recommendations regarding the designation and protection of wildlife corridors to interim or regular Senate and House committees relating to natural resources in the manner provided by ORS 192.245 no later than September 15, 2022.

**SECTION 4.** (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, 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 5.** (1) The Department of Transportation shall establish the program required under section 4 of this 2019 Act 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 section 1 of this 2019 Act. 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 section 4 of this 2019 Act to interim or regular Senate and House committees relating to natural 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 infrastructure projects established or planned and the realized or expected effect

of established or planned wildlife corridor infrastructure projects on the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions.

**SECTION 6.** The Department of Transportation shall submit the first report required under section 5 (3) of this 2019 Act no later than September 15, 2024.

**Passed by House April 16, 2019**

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

**Passed by Senate May 29, 2019**

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate

**Received by Governor:**

.....M,....., 2019

**Approved:**

.....M,....., 2019

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Kate Brown, Governor

**Filed in Office of Secretary of State:**

.....M,....., 2019

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Bev Clarno, Secretary of State