



May 19, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

On behalf of Wildlands Network, one of the nation's leading wildlife connectivity conservation organizations, I write to express strong support for the Building Unrivaled Infrastructure and Long-term Development for America's 250th Act ("BUILD America 250 Act") and to thank the Committee for its bipartisan leadership in reauthorizing and increasing the discretionary funding dedicated to the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program. As an organization that represents the priorities of conservation biology-focused researchers, advocates, and Americans, we have a narrow scope of interest in this BUILD America 250 Act as it pertains to wildlife crossings.

Since its establishment in the last infrastructure law, the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program has demonstrated the tremendous value of—and demand for—projects that reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. When carefully sited and constructed, wildlife crossings improve motorist safety, protect wildlife populations, enhance habitat connectivity, often pay for themselves over time by reducing the costs associated with the collisions. Federally funded wildlife crossings serve Americans, save money, and protect lives in Democratic and Republican Congressional districts, allowing drivers to safely travel to their destinations and wildlife to migrate along natural corridors. We appreciate the Chairman and Ranking Member working together in a bipartisan fashion to protect this critical investment in road safety, collision avoidance, and transportation planning and give states, local transportation departments, and Native Tribes much needed predictability and flexibility to embed wildlife crossings into their transportation projects.

In a time when affordability is a concern for many Americans, a collision with wildlife can mean a totaled car, a lost means of transportation to work (especially in rural areas), and even injuries that lead to missed work and missed paychecks. Today, motorists strike roughly 2 million large animals every year across the U.S. By increasing our investment in the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program, we can reduce these collisions and the costs associated with them in the areas with the highest rates of collisions.

We are also extremely grateful for the decision to have the federal government provide 100% of the award cost-share to Tribes. The previous matching requirements prevented a significant number of Tribes from applying for this program, despite there being interest from over 100 Tribes, according to the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society.

The Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program has become one of the federal government's most effective initiatives for addressing dangerous and costly wildlife-vehicle collisions through practical, locally driven transportation solutions that produce multiple public benefits. As a result, it is unsurprising that the program has been woefully oversubscribed, with requests from each application period totaling roughly \$200 million more than what has been made available for the entire five-year program.

- **In 2022-2023**, the Program received 67 applications for \$549 million in funding requests (almost double the entire five-year program), and only \$110 million in grants were available for 19 projects.
- **In 2024-2025**, the Program received 61 applications for \$585 million in requests, but only \$125 million in grants were available for 16 projects.

We sincerely thank you for your vision, leadership, bipartisan support, and ultimate inclusion of the program in the BUILD America 250 Act, and look forward to working with you to swiftly advance this important legislation out of Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erin Sito".

Erin Sito, JD
U.S. Public Policy Director
Wildlands Network

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