



## SOLUTIONS THAT WORK

Wildlife underpasses and overpasses, which allow animals to cross roads below or above the road surface, are highly effective at reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions and ensuring that animals can cross roads safely. These wildlife crossing structures consistently reduce collisions by 80-90% and create more connected habitat for the animals. Wildlife fencing is used to guide animals to the crossing structures.

There are many other potential solutions to wildlife-roadway conflicts, but none are as effective as crossing structures. In some places, crossing structures are not feasible. In these spots, other measures, such as movable message signs that can be set up during peak wildlife crossing seasons, fence modifications, and alterations to roadside vegetation that make animals more visible to drivers may also be part of the solution. Drivers can also help by slowing down and watching out for wildlife in areas that have high rates of wildlife-vehicle collisions.

## BENEFITS OF ACTION

Installing crossing structures or other solutions at the 10 highlighted sites would be a significant win for both human safety and wildlife conservation. It would:

- ▲ Reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions at some of the worst collision hotspots in the state by as much as 90%.
- ▲ Save approximately \$3 million per year in collision costs.
- ▲ Provide a safe way for wildlife to cross several highways that are now nearly complete barriers to animal movements.
- ▲ Maintain big game migration passages and reduce mortalities for several priority herds.

## FUNDING NEED

Substantial funding is needed to implement the solutions we have identified for the statewide priority areas. WYDOT and WGFD Wyoming have a long and productive history of collaboration between agencies and organizations to reduce wildlife and roadway conflicts. State and federal funding has not kept pace with Wyoming's roadways and wildlife needs. Therefore, additional funding is needed to implement the most effective solutions, such as crossing structures.

### KEEP UP WITH THE WYOMING WILDLIFE AND ROADWAYS INITIATIVE

<https://arcg.is/Kjarz>

### CONTRIBUTE TO SAFER ROADS

You can contribute to safer roads for wildlife and people by purchasing a Wildlife Conservation license plate from WYDOT: [http://www.dot.state.wy.us/wildlife\\_plate](http://www.dot.state.wy.us/wildlife_plate)



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# WYOMING Wildlife & Roadways Initiative



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## SAFE PASSAGES ON WYOMING ROADS

Wyoming's wildlife and roadways are both important resources to the state's economy and heritage, yet they often come into conflict. When big game cross roadways, it can be dangerous for motorists and for the animals. Fifteen percent of all reported vehicle collisions in Wyoming involve big game animals. Although the vast majority of accidents involve deer, vehicles also hit larger animals like elk and moose, and these collisions are usually more dangerous than collisions involving smaller animals.

Every year, more than 6,000 deer, pronghorn, elk and moose are hit by vehicles on Wyoming's roads. These accidents cost nearly \$50 million annually in damages to vehicles, human injury expenses and loss of wildlife.

When vehicles and big game collide, it is not only a safety hazard for humans; it is also bad for the wildlife. Nearly all animals hit by vehicles are killed. Roadway collisions cause avoidable deaths for many big game herds, some of which are already in decline. Traffic and roadside fences make it stressful, difficult or even impossible for animals to cross roads. This interferes with the animals' ability to follow their migration routes or access the food and habitat they need to thrive.

Fortunately, there are steps we can take to reduce the conflicts between roads and wildlife.

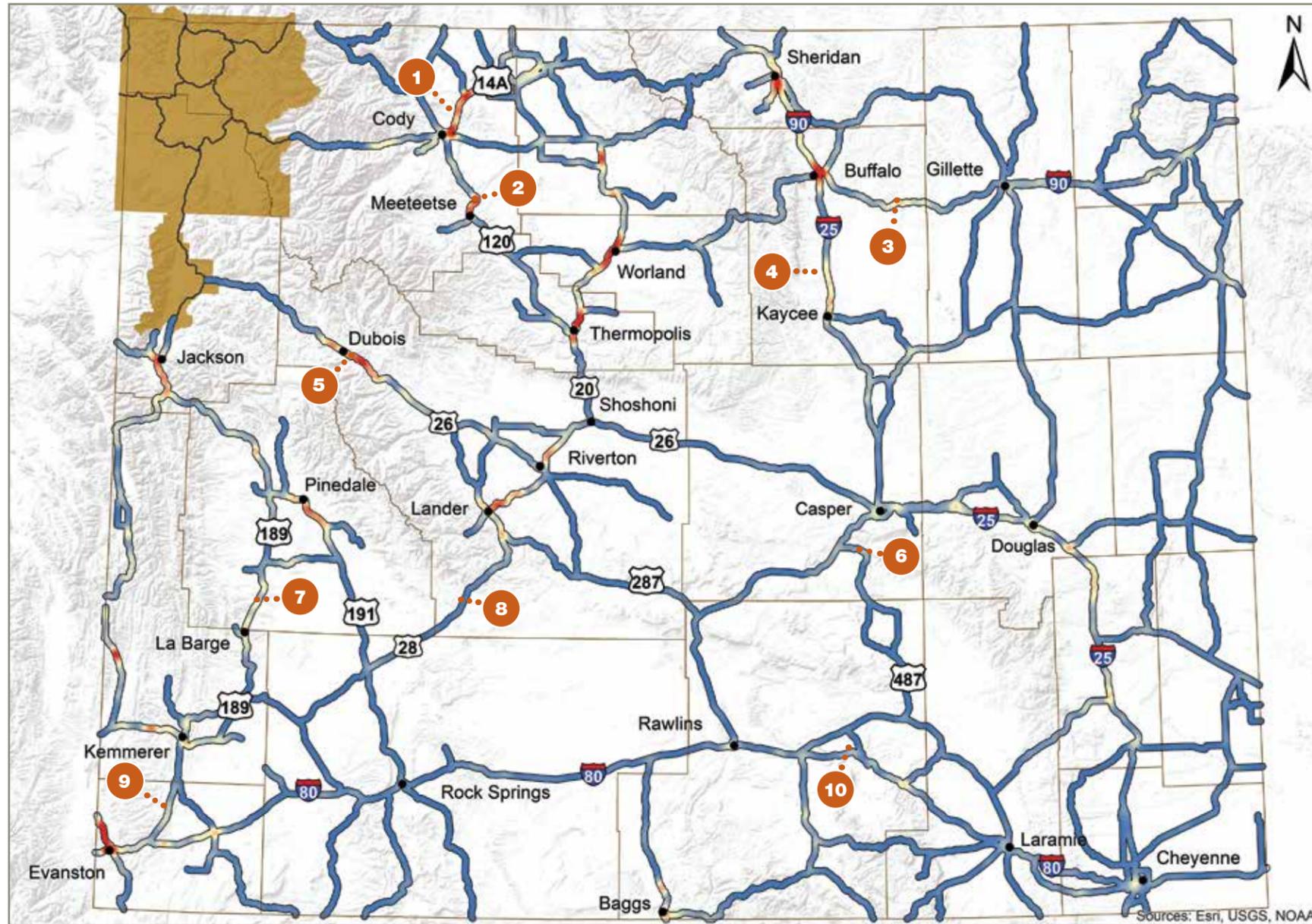
## NEXT STEPS

The Wyoming Wildlife and Roadways Initiative began in 2017, with the Wyoming Wildlife and Roadways Summit. At this event, more than 130 representatives from government and non-governmental organizations, as well as scientists and members of the public, gathered to share ideas about how to reduce the problem of roads and wildlife. The Wyoming Wildlife and Roadways Initiative Implementation Team was formed to take the summit recommendations forward.

Led by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) and the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), the team identified more than 240 sites around the state that are the greatest concern for wildlife and motorists. The two agencies are already working together at a local level to address many of these sites. Using best available data and expert knowledge, the team identified a smaller group of 40 sites that are both high priority and may require more involved and costly solutions such as crossing structures. Ten of these are highlighted on the accompanying map.

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# EXAMPLES OF HIGH PRIORITY LOCATIONS FOR ACTION

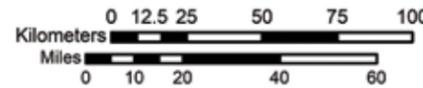


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Wildlife-vehicle collisions per mile per year



Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks



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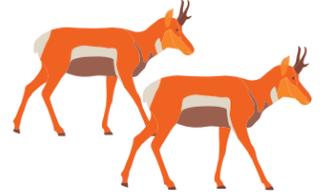
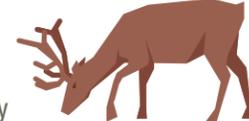
## CROSSING STRUCTURES

Crossing structures have already been installed at several locations in Wyoming, where they have dramatically reduced wildlife-vehicle collisions and improved habitat connectivity for big game. There are currently six underpasses west of Kemmerer; six underpasses and two overpasses west of Pinedale; two underpasses north of Baggs; and six underpasses under construction south of Jackson. Studies have shown >80% reductions in wildlife-vehicle collisions and thousands of deer, pronghorn, and elk using these structures every year.



Collisions with elk, mule deer, moose, and pronghorn costing \$50 million annually

6,000 big game collisions annually



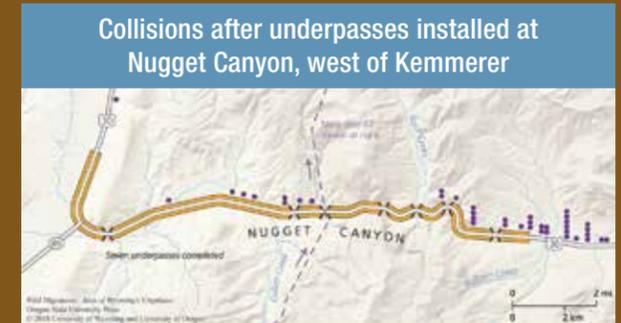
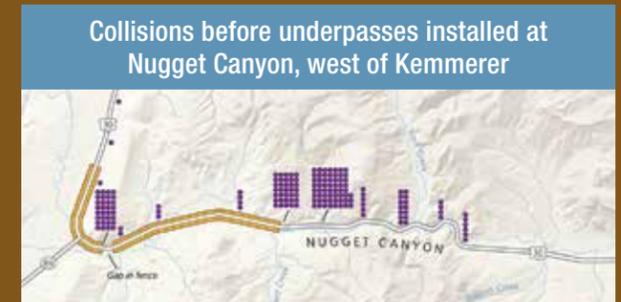
Migrations severely impaired by multi-lane interstates

Roads and fences impact wildlife movements

- 1 Cody**
  - Average 31 mule deer collisions per year in the first 4 miles outside of Cody
  - Opportunity to install fencing that directs animals to a safe crossing under an existing bridge
- 2 Meeteetse**
  - Collision hotspots for elk, mule deer, and pronghorn, costing \$324,000 annually
  - Elk-vehicle collisions are particularly dangerous and costly
- 3 Powder River**
  - Average of 60 deer collisions on this stretch every year
  - Multi-lane interstate is a significant barrier to mule deer and white-tailed deer movement
- 4 Kaycee**
  - Average of 53 animals hit on this stretch every year
  - Multi-lane interstate is a significant barrier to mule deer and white-tailed deer movement

- 5 Dubois**
  - Average of 136 mule deer collisions costing \$746,000 per year
  - Road impairs movements for bighorn sheep and the WGFD priority Dubois mule deer herd
- 6 Bates Hole**
  - High rate of collisions relative to traffic volume
  - Collisions known to be under-reported
  - Road affects pronghorn and a WGFD priority Bates Hole/Hat Six mule deer herd
- 7 Dry Piney**
  - Average of 117 mule deer collisions costing \$646,000 per year
  - Moose also frequently hit
  - Road impacts the WGFD priority Wyoming Range herd
  - Fence impacts pronghorn

- 8 Sweetwater**
  - Pronghorn migration is impaired by fencing
  - Mule deer migration from the Red Desert to Hoback – the longest known mule deer migration – also impaired
- 9 Kemmerer**
  - Average of 80 deer-vehicle collisions costing \$462,000 annually
  - Road and fence impact the WGFD priority Wyoming Range mule deer herd and pronghorn movements
- 10 Halleck Ridge**
  - Mule deer and elk migrations severely impaired by the multi-lane interstate
  - Elk-vehicle collisions are a major safety concern
  - Road affects WGFD priority Platte Valley mule deer herd



Legend: Mule deer mortalities (purple bar), Fence zone (yellow bar), Wildlife underpass (yellow and blue bar)