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Dockets Operation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Ground Floor, W12-140
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Dear Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary,

On behalf of our staff and board, thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, Docket No. DOT-OST-2025-0468. Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation has been protecting wildlife in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem for over 30 years. Our mission is to advance wildlife conservation driven by science, collaboration, and a community of volunteers. We accomplish large-scale hands-on conservation projects through our close partnerships with local, state, and federal partners working with hundreds of well-organized volunteers. Our Give Wildlife A Brake program provides robust roadkill and crash data that illustrate hotspots of wildlife-vehicle collision. Local, state, and federal agencies use this information to prioritize mitigation locations, increasing motorist safety and reducing wildlife loss along roads. We are a key voice in the development of local wildlife crossings and vital in communicating their significance to the public.

The Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program has been an incredibly powerful tool in enabling state transportation agencies and their partners to implement wildlife crossings in the United States. These mitigation efforts, while effective in reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions and making landscapes more permeable for wildlife movement, have high upfront costs and have benefitted from federal transportation bills like the Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program. There is still great need across the United States to build more wildlife crossings that will reduce human injury and death and help conserve wildlife.

We advocate for a permanent Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program, initiating with a minimum of \$500 million in the upcoming transportation act reauthorization and increasing funding in subsequent acts. We also urge for a stronger National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that prioritizes transparency and environmental preservation, including re-integrating climate change analysis and mitigation. A robust NEPA is crucial for public health, impacting all environmental protections, especially along roadways. For example, climate-informed crossings can significantly improve the cost-benefit analysis for infrastructure designed to help

wildlife move and disperse (e.g., <https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/fee.2816>).

In short, state and local governments need federal funding to effectively protect the environment, wildlife, and people on our roads. Without a surface transportation bill that supports well-designed wildlife crossings, we miss crucial opportunities: to save money long-term by reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions, and to safeguard the vital wildlife heritage that underpins healthy ecosystems and human well-being.

Sincerely,

Renee Seidler

Renee Seidler
Executive Director
Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation