

**From:** [Kermit Williams](#)  
**To:** [Exhibits HNR](#)  
**Cc:** [Kermit and Donna](#)  
**Subject:** Please support House Bills 2829 and 2834  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 12, 2019 1:05:32 PM

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To the members of the House Committee on Natural Resources: Rep. Brad Witt, Rep. Chris Gorsek, Rep. Sherrie Sprenger, Rep. Greg Barreto, Rep. Caddy McKeown, Rep. Jeff Reardon, and Rep. David Brock Smith:

Having been one of the original volunteer members of Protect Animal Migration (PAM), a non-profit organization that partners with public agencies such as ODFW, ODOT, and the Deschutes National Forest Service, to advocate for barrier free migration along wildlife corridors for our mule deer, elk, pronghorn, and dozens of other species, I strongly ask that your committee support both House Bills 2829 and 2834.

To support the need for funding for conservation projects for our wildlife, HB 2829, which gives ODFW a more reliable funding mechanism to protect our natural resources and the outdoor recreation industry that these resources of wildlife, like our mule deer and elk and fisheries, provide. Oregon's outdoor recreation generated \$5.1 billion in wages / salaries and \$749 million in state / local revenues. Oregon's outdoor recreation generates a \$16 billion industry. Protecting our wildlife and their habitats with a more stable funding makes sense when there is declining funding through hunting and fishing license fees.

PAM, since its creation, has mainly supported creating more wildlife crossings for Oregon. HB 2834, the Wildlife Corridor Safe Road Crossing Act, will ensure that there can be a sustainable future for Oregon's wildlife. No Oregon conservation group had ever gathered statistics regarding the yearly deer and elk vehicle collisions (DVC's) for all Deschutes Co. Roads (ODOT, City of Bend, and Deschutes Co. Road Dept.) Starting in 2016, I started to combine the numbers of DVC's for Deschutes Co. revealing a shockingly high figure of over 1000 total DVC's a year! And these numbers are only the documented dispatches. According to our ODOT, ODFW, and FS wildlife biologists, for every one DVC there are an estimated 5 more kills that are never seen as these injured deer or elk end up dying off the road edges and deeper into the forest and are never picked up. As PAM provides outreach and education through presentations and films on migration to our Deschutes Co. Neighborhood Associations, and to the public, citizens were astounded at the losses just in one county. This Bill will create a program to reduce wildlife vehicle collisions by creating infrastructure to allow for barrier free passages by protecting habitat and help design options for road projects that threaten wildlife connectivity. Oregon, known for its love and support of our wildlife, needs to catch up with many of our Western states which already have dozens of wildlife crossings and plans for more. Crossings not only reduce DVC's by almost 90%, but also pay for themselves over time by reducing the public threat of injuries and death. Expenses of injuries to humans and their vehicles are estimated to be on the average of \$6500 / collision in Deschutes Co. Also helping pay for the cost of wildlife crossings is the reduction of the costs of dispatches that the cities, ODOT, and county roads incur. ODOT's figures for Oct. and Nov. 2018 DVC's were 1062 and 1160, respectively. With appropriately placed wildlife crossings, this figure should be reduced by 90%!

In my case, protecting Oregon's wildlife is not only an economic priority but a moral obligation. Central and eastern Oregon's mule deer population has been determined by our ODFW wildlife biologists to be at only 50% sustainability. When we have a chance to greatly improve the populations, we must do so.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Harris D.V.M.  
Bend, OR.

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