

Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment

Oregon State Capitol

900 Court St. NE

Salem, OR 97301

Regarding: Testimony in Support of Funding for the Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reduction Fund (Section 117(c))

Co-Chairs Senator Gorsek and Representative McLain,

Co-Vice Chairs Senator Starr and Representative Boshart Davis, and Members of the Committee:

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership ([TRCP](#)) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to guaranteeing all Americans quality places to hunt and fish. We champion a science-based, collaborative approach to wildlife conservation rooted in the principles of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. By working across diverse interests and political lines, we strive to safeguard habitat, expand access, and ensure that hunting and fishing opportunities endure for current and future generations.

Wildlife-vehicle collisions represent a significant and growing challenge to public safety and Oregon's wildlife. Each year, more than 7,000 collisions between vehicles and wildlife occur across the state, resulting in serious injuries, multiple fatalities, and millions of dollars in property damage. These collisions not only threaten human safety but also harm populations of deer, elk, and other iconic species that depend on connected habitat corridors for seasonal migration and survival.

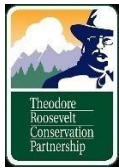
Investing in wildlife crossing infrastructure has been demonstrated to be a cost-effective solution. Oregon's own Highway 97 crossing projects have reduced wildlife-vehicle collisions by up to 90 percent. Similar projects in neighboring states have achieved collision reductions of 80 percent or more, preventing injuries and saving lives. These safety improvements translate into substantial economic savings by reducing vehicle damage, medical costs, and emergency response expenses.

The \$5 million annual appropriation proposed in Section 117(c) will provide Oregon with a stable, dedicated funding source to accelerate the planning, construction, and maintenance of wildlife crossings and related mitigation measures. This state funding is critical to leverage significant federal dollars. Oregon's recent successful wildlife crossing pilot program award for a wildlife overpass on Interstate 5 underscores the importance of state match funding in securing these federal resources.

Moreover, this investment will benefit Oregon's outdoor economy by helping to restore animal movement across barriers, supporting healthy wildlife populations and maintaining the quality hunting and wildlife viewing experiences valued by residents and visitors. Safer roads and connected habitats foster resilient ecosystems and vibrant communities.

For these reasons, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership urges the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment to retain and fully fund the \$5 million per year allocation to the Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reduction Fund in Section 117(c) of the omnibus transportation package. This funding will deliver meaningful returns in public safety, wildlife conservation, and economic benefits.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important issue.



Tristan Henry
Oregon Field Representative
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
thenry@trcp.org