



Wildlife Crossing Work In Wyoming



Fall 2024 Update



Problem: Wildlife Vehicle Collisions

- Average 7,656 wildlife-vehicle collisions in WY annually, over 80% are with deer
- Cost appx. \$55 million annually, just in Wyoming, which has doubled in the last 15 years



Problem: Barriers



- Busy Highways: Mule deer need a minimum of 30 seconds, ideally 60 seconds to safely cross highways
- Fences: Stack up wildlife so many cross together, woven wire can also be an entire barrier



Highway and Fence Barrier

RECONNECTING A VAST LANDSCAPE

GPS tracking collar data reveals how Interstate 80 disrupts migratory big game movements in Wyoming. New wildlife crossing structures could reconnect habitats that have been severed for 50 years.

Trappers Point
WYDOT completed the world's first overpass for pronghorn in 2012. Migratory pronghorn immediately began using the structure, making thousands of safe crossings each year. Together with the Boroff Hill overpass, six underpasses and fencing, the project reduced mule deer mortality along this 12-mile stretch of highway by 85 percent, and took pronghorn mortalities to zero. In 2018, collared pronghorn 200831A used this overpass and then migrated all the way to I-80.

Dey Flney
To address the Wyoming Wildlife Roadways Initiative's number three priority statewide, WYDOT, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and partners have pooled more than \$18 million to build fences and underpasses. The project will reduce traffic mortalities for mule deer, pronghorn, and moose along 19 miles of US 185.

Wyoming Highway 372
Barriers such as a highway, railroad, solar farm, and mining restrict pronghorn movements. Biologists suspect that pronghorn would benefit from being able to cross south of I-80.

Nugget Canyon
This landmark wildlife crossing project built in summer 2008 showed the effectiveness of underpasses and fencing in reducing mule deer mortalities. Deer made nearly 6,000 crossings from Oct. 1 to Dec. 22, 2008, along with elk and moose.

The Three Sisters
Near government ridges known as the Three Sisters, fences guide deer herds through large snow tunnels built during initial construction of I-80. Tracks show deer are also crossing the interstate through a six-foot-tall culvert. Here, the author found bones from a lion that died in a power line gate, suggesting further fence improvements may help wildlife in this area.

Granger Junction, Exit 66
In the winter of 2017, a trucker driving eastbound on I-80 killed 25 pronghorn that entered the right-of-way. The animals were likely trying to migrate south toward Flamingo Gorge where there is less snow.

Point of Rocks
Mule deer ran up against I-80 after migrating 150 miles from the Hoback Basin to the Red Desert, and crossing two highways and more than 100 fences. Biologists wonder how far these deer might continue if I-80 didn't stop them.

Table Rock
GPS data shows pronghorn obstructed on both sides of the interstate. A wildlife crossing structure here could enable long-distance animal movements. Biologist Ben Robb tracked a Table Rock pronghorn 100 miles south to near Sunbeam, Colorado across the state line.

Baggs
In summer 2003, WYDOT and Wyoming Game and Fish Department installed a wildlife underpass on US 208 six miles north of Baggs. Cameras recorded an impressive 5,700 crossings by migrating mule deer from Sept. 1 through Dec. 31, 2010. Elk also use this structure.

Dana Ridge
When the interstate was completed in 1970, this migration thoroughfare became a hotbed for collisions with mule deer. In the late 1970s, workers added fences to funnel deer through a machinery underpass and tunnels. Deer, such as the GPS-collared animal shown here, still cross I-80 using these structures, but elk and pronghorn do not.

Durbin Ranch
In the harsh winter of 2010-11, many pronghorn migrating west to Saratoga Reserve died, while a similar population south of I-80 survived in greater numbers.

Haleck Ridge
This is the Wyoming Wildlife Roadways Initiative's highest-priority location on I-80. In 2020, WYDOT and Wyoming Game and Fish Department began assessing improvements to existing underpasses and fences, along with new crossing structure options.

Southeast Wyoming
Research in the 1970s tracked deer and elk responses to the interstate from the Laramie Range to Dana Ridge. One study showed that elk recourt rates increased when they approached I-80. Only minimal recent wildlife movement data is available from the Colorado and Nebraska borders to west of Laramie.

Interstate 25
This highway is a known barrier to mule deer and pronghorn along the Laramie Range, Casper Mountain, and the Big Horn Mountains. Research and mitigation efforts are underway, especially between Kayote and Buffalo beyond the north edge of this map.

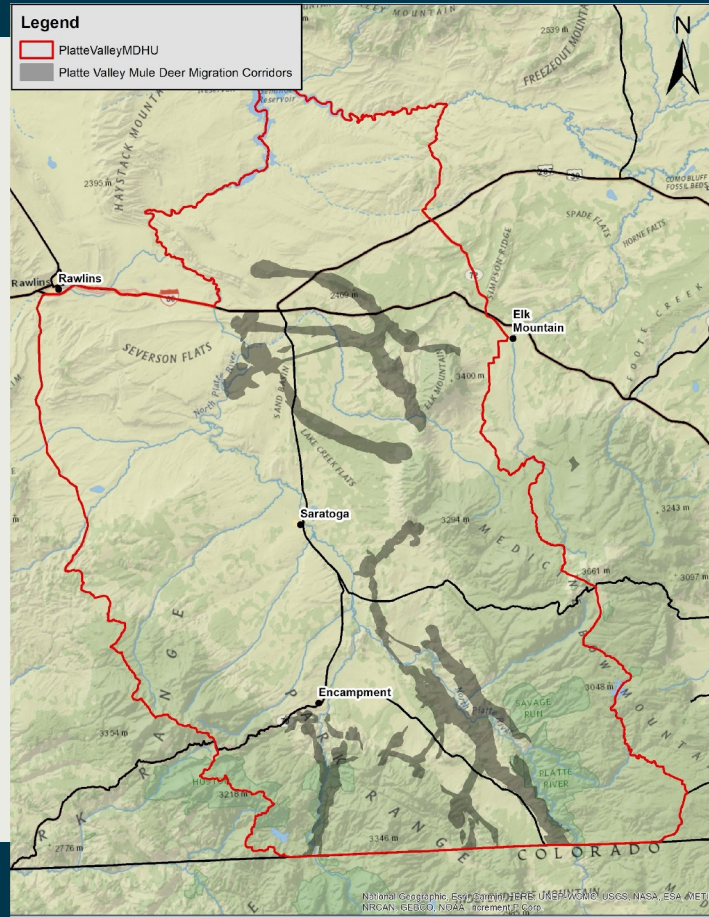
0 20 mi.
0 20 km

To Sunbeam, Colorado

Contributors: University of Oregon In-Pediatrics Lab, Revised New World Atlas
Atlas of Mammals in Wyoming, Oregon, Idaho and Utah, 6th Edition, 2004
Wyoming and the World of Oregon, Arizona and California by George W. Hartman,
Reporting Mortality in Wildlife. Map created May 2021.



Highways Cross Migration Routes





Plan Teton County Wildlife Crossings

107 West Design, LLC
Apr 28, 2021



In Progress Projects:

- Wilson: US 22-390; 2 miles of high fence, 4 underpasses
- S. Kemmerer: WY 189; 20+ miles of high fence; 1 overpass and 6-8 underpasses
- Trappers Point Extension: US 191; 1 mile of high fence

TOTAL: \$41.2 million



S. Kemmerer



Dry Piney



Kaycee to Buffalo

Recently Completed Projects:

- Dry Piney: US 189; 16 miles of high fence, 9 underpasses
- Kaycee to Buffalo: I-25; 16 miles of high fence
- S. Jackson: US 89; 7 miles of high fence, 6 underpasses

TOTAL: \$25.6 million



Baggs



Togwotee

Older Projects:

- Nugget Canyon: US 30; 13.5 miles of high fence, 7 underpasses
- Baggs: WY 789; 4.5 miles of high fence; 2 underpasses
- Trappers Point: US 191; 12 miles of high fence, 2 overpasses and 6 underpasses
- Togwotee Pass: US 26; 2 underpasses and 24 structures

TOTAL: 24.3 million (not adjusted for inflation)



Dubois

Fundraising Projects:

- Dubois: US 26-287; 9 miles of high fence, 1 overpass, 3 underpasses
- Halleck Ridge Design: I-80; high fence; 1 overpass and 2 underpasses



Halleck Ridge



Other Crossing Projects Throughout the State:

- WYDOT right-of-way fence modifications
- Installing extra gates
- Vegetation mowing for visibility
- Speed reduction
- Variable Message Signs

