

SENATE BILL 72

56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2023

INTRODUCED BY

Mimi Stewart

This document may incorporate amendments proposed by a committee, but not yet adopted, as well as amendments that have been adopted during the current legislative session. The document is a tool to show amendments in context and cannot be used for the purpose of adding amendments to legislation.

AN ACT

RELATING TO WILDLIFE; AMENDING THE WILDLIFE CORRIDORS ACT TO  
CREATE THE WILDLIFE CORRIDORS FUND; REQUIRING ANNUAL REPORTING;  
SFC→~~MAKING AN APPROPRIATION~~←SFC .

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 17-9-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2019,  
Chapter 97, Section 1) is amended to read:

"17-9-1. SHORT TITLE.--~~[This act]~~ Chapter 17, Article 9

.223706.1AIC February 17, 2023 (12:09pm)

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NMSA 1978 may be cited as the "Wildlife Corridors Act".

SECTION 2. A new section of the Wildlife Corridors Act is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] WILDLIFE CORRIDORS FUND--CREATED--  
PURPOSE.--

A. The "wildlife corridors fund" is created as a nonreverting fund in the state treasury. The fund consists of appropriations, gifts, grants, donations, income from investment of the fund and any other money distributed or otherwise allocated to the fund. The department of transportation shall administer the fund, and money in the fund is appropriated to the department of transportation for the purposes set forth in Subsection B of this section. Disbursements from the fund shall be made by warrant of the secretary of finance and administration pursuant to vouchers signed by the secretary of transportation or the secretary's authorized representative.

B. Money in the wildlife corridors fund shall be used:

(1) to provide safe road crossings for wildlife and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, including the projects contained in the wildlife corridors project list prepared as a part of the wildlife corridors action plan pursuant to Section 17-9-3 NMSA 1978;

(2) for costs related to:

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- (a) project feasibility studies;
  - (b) planning, construction, retrofitting and maintenance of wildlife road crossing infrastructure;
  - (c) roadkill tracking and studies;
  - (d) animal detection systems;
  - (e) signage;
  - (f) exclusionary fencing;
  - (g) wildlife jump outs; and
  - (h) private land conservation efforts;
- (3) to provide matching money as required by federal grant programs relating to wildlife corridor projects; and
- (4) for administrative and personnel expenses related to the purposes of the fund as set forth in this subsection.

C. The department of transportation shall:

- (1) consult with the department of game and fish concerning the distribution of money from the wildlife corridors fund for the purposes set forth in Subsection B of this section and, if the money is distributed to a project on or adjacent to lands owned by Indian nations, tribes or pueblos, consult with the appropriate tribal government; and
- (2) consider distributing money from the fund to projects to fill funding gaps for wildlife road crossings and connectivity that are not otherwise budgeted or required

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for projects under other federal or state obligation.

D. By October 1, 2024, and by October 1 of each year thereafter, the department of transportation shall provide a report to the governor and the legislative finance committee regarding:

(1) an aggregate accounting of all money expended from the wildlife corridors fund during the prior fiscal year; and

(2) a listing of all projects receiving funding from the fund and the amount of funding for each project during the prior fiscal year."

SFC→~~SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.--Fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the wildlife corridors fund for expenditure in fiscal year 2024 and subsequent fiscal years to fund the wildlife corridors fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund.~~←SFC

SECTION SFC→4.←SFC SFC→3.←SFC EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the provisions of this act is July 1, 2023.