

STRENGTHENING WILDLIFE PROTECTIONS THROUGH NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Passed: 233-188

SUMMARY:

The House passed a broad infrastructure package to create a national system of wildlife corridors, restore legacy roads and trails, create a national wildlife refuge, and fund aquatic resilience. *(July 1, 2020, Roll Call No. 138)*

BACKGROUND:

Improving wildlife-related infrastructure is essential for preserving vulnerable species and restoring habitat. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) introduced H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act, as a large infrastructure package that included several important wildlife-infrastructure provisions. The bill contained approximately \$125 million in annual funding for wildlife connectivity projects like wildlife crossings and corridors via agency funding and grants to states, tribes, and private landowners. Notably, H.R. 2 adopted the text of H.R. 2795, the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act, to create a National System of Wildlife Corridors on federal lands. The package also supplied significant funding to remediate, repair, and improve roads, bridges, and trails in national forests. One provision contained a \$3 billion Coastal and Great Lakes Resiliency and Restoration grant program to increase marine resilience projects and habitat restoration through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The package also included a bill to create the Western Riverside County National Wildlife Refuge, which would conserve approximately 500,000 acres in the increasingly developed Southern California, for the express purpose of preserving multiple endangered species. Each of these provisions were tied to both the economy and the environment, significantly benefiting wildlife while also creating short-term and long-term jobs.

OUTCOME:

On July 1st, the House passed the Moving Forward Act 233-188. “Yes” was the pro-conservation vote.