

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT STATE AGENCIES, USING EXISTING RESOURCES, WORK WITH OTHER AGENCIES, INDIAN NATIONS, TRIBES AND PUEBLOS AND PRIVATE GROUPS TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT KEY WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.

WHEREAS, for thousands of years migrating wildlife have been using paths called wildlife corridors to find food, water, shelter and space and to mate or to change locations as the seasons or climate changed; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is rich in biodiversity and ranks fourth highest in the United States in native species richness; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has six of the seven life zones identified by botanist Clinton H. Merriam based on temperature and elevation, with tremendous diversity; and

WHEREAS, wildlife provide us with food, medicine, insect control, pollination and other beneficial services and help the state stay beautiful and colorful; and

WHEREAS, tourists come to New Mexico for wildlife recreational opportunities, such as photography, hunting and fishing, contributing billions of dollars annually to the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, protecting precious wildlife is in the best interest of all present and future New Mexicans and can stand

as an example for conservation efforts nationwide; and

WHEREAS, land use changes and climate changes are challenges to wildlife and their migration paths and require proactive conservation efforts; and

WHEREAS, animals that move across roads not only risk injury and death to themselves, but they also cause property damage to vehicles and injury and death to people; and

WHEREAS, House Joint Memorial 3 of the forty-sixth legislature, first session, was passed in 2003, and the memorial requests state agencies to take action to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions; and

WHEREAS, wildlife corridors in selected areas of New Mexico have already decreased wildlife-vehicle collisions; and

WHEREAS, the mapping of wildlife corridors will help improve the planning of development and roads; and

WHEREAS, the western governors' association unanimously passed a resolution that urges states to identify key wildlife corridors and crucial habitats in the west; and

WHEREAS, the comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy for New Mexico has identified several gaps in existing data, including the location of wildlife corridors; and

WHEREAS, state law provides opportunities for private landowners to create conservation easements on their property to protect the natural or open space values of the land, which

can help connect wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, wildlife is important to the heritage of New Mexico, and all state agencies need to find common ground to help protect wildlife corridors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it recognize the importance of wildlife corridors to the health of New Mexico's wildlife; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies, using existing resources, and by September 1, 2009, work together with other agencies, Indian nations, tribes and pueblos and private groups, in a workshop led by the energy, minerals and natural resources department, to share the information gathered by the western wildlife habitat council of the western governors' association to identify and map wildlife corridors and crucial habitats and to identify funding needs and future data and mapping needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies consider existing and future data about wildlife corridors in their planning decisions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies encourage citizen-scientists to help with data collection about wildlife; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the office of the governor, the commissioner of public lands, the department of environment, the New Mexico

department of agriculture, the economic development
department, the energy, minerals and natural resources
department, the department of game and fish, the department of
public safety, the department of transportation, the office of
the state engineer, the New Mexico association of counties and
the New Mexico municipal league.