



4.5 million dollars are needed to save lives on Highway 97 in north-central Washington.

Between Riverside and Tonasket, more than 350 vehicle-deer collisions occur every year in just 12.5 miles of Highway 97.

Medical costs, car repairs, Washington State Patrol and Sheriff's Department response, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) clean-up crews, and the value of the deer all add up to approximately \$6,500 per accident, costing the public more than \$2.5 million every year.

There is a solution that has broad support. WSDOT is proposing comprehensive planning on this highway corridor in three phases that begins with an initial recommendation for **installation of three wildlife undercrossings complemented by necessary fencing and cattle-guards on the most dangerous 4-mile segment(s) for motorists and wildlife.**

Upon completion of the first phase, vehicle deer collisions are expected to be reduced by 50 percent over the entire 12.5 miles.

WSDOT has completed a precise pre-design scoping document for the first phase. After implementation, partners will utilize monitoring and deer carcass removal data to inform future actions necessary for subsequent phases on the remaining 8.5 miles of this dangerous corridor.

Community partners from across the state, including Conservation Northwest and the local Okanogan Trails Chapter of the Mule Deer Foundation, **have raised \$200,000 for the purchase of the first undercrossing structure.**

We are asking the legislature to leverage off of this private support to fully fund phase one with \$4.3 million in the 2019-2021 transportation budget.

In addition to providing safer passage on this stretch of Highway 97, funding this phased approach will show how private and public partnerships can be strategically targeted to address similar problems that exist on other highways in the state.

Highway 97 wildlife undercrossings have strong support from:

- County Commissioners
- local legislators
- City of Omak
- WSDOT
- Colville Confederated Tribes
- Mule Deer Foundation
- Conservation Northwest
- Okanogan Tourism Council
- Trucking Association
- Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board
- Okanogan Land Trust
- National Wildlife Federation
- Canasol Farms
- Central Washington Latino Community Fund
- Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

Together, we can make safer passage on Highway 97 a reality.

Learn more at safepassage97.org
or okanoganwildlifecrossing.org





Mule deer roadkill on Highway 97 within the project area

A CONCERNED COMMUNITY

Okanogan County citizens, WSDOT, Conservation Northwest, the Okanogan Trails Mule Deer Foundation Chapter and others are looking for a solution to reduce animal-vehicle collisions along Highway 97. The stretch of highway between Riverside and Tonasket is an important north-south commuting route and freight corridor. This area is also an important travel route and habitat for mule deer. The combination of vehicles and deer results in an epidemic of roadkill and vehicular accidents.

Washington state has adopted Target Zero—a goal to reduce human fatalities and serious injuries on Washington's roadways to zero by the year 2030. Their goal is zero deaths and serious injuries, because every life counts.

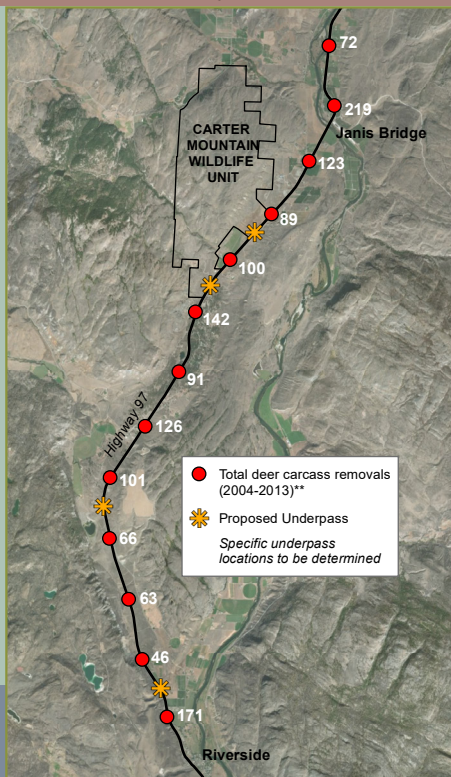
GOING UNDER

Currently, the Washington State Department of Transportation proposes that the most effective way to reduce deer-vehicle collisions in this high-collision highway segment is through the construction of roadside fencing with associated undercrossings. Fencing at some level may be necessary to direct wildlife to these new undercrossing, but will be included based on monitoring.



Visual simulation of a potential undercrossing in the project area
credit: Jones and Jones Architecture

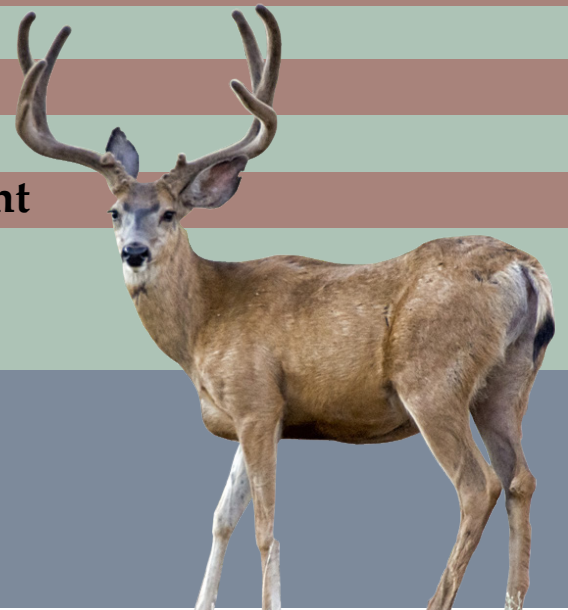
MAP OF PROJECT AREA



350 deer hit per year*

12.5 miles

\$6,500 per incident



*Estimate Source: Washington State Department of Transportation, all estimates are approximate.
**Deer estimated at 3X the amount hit and removed by WSDOT