

RESOLUTION NO. 2019 -__

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
COUNTY OF SUMMIT
STATE OF COLORADO**

A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE SUMMIT COUNTY SAFE PASSAGES PLAN: A COUNTY-WIDE CONNECTIVITY PLAN FOR WILDLIFE

WHEREAS, Summit County recognizes the value of the county's landscapes for a diversity of wildlife and is committed to preserving these species; and,

WHEREAS, Summit County residents recognize the importance of creating safe passages for wildlife, ensuring safer travel for motorists in Summit County and fostering healthy wildlife populations through increased public awareness, improved connectivity for wildlife, reduced wildlife-vehicle collisions, and safer driving conditions; and,

WHEREAS, there are nearly 4,000 vehicle crashes involving wildlife that are reported to law enforcement each year, resulting in injuries and fatalities to humans and costing an estimated \$66.4 million annually, not including the value of the wildlife that is killed and the impacts to wildlife populations. Increased traffic rates in Summit County cause roads to become a barrier to wildlife movement, preventing animals from accessing needed resources, and presenting a heightened risk of wildlife related car accidents; and,

WHEREAS, the cost of wildlife-highway conflicts include economic impacts, social impacts and ecological impacts including human fatalities and injuries, wildlife mortalities and decreased opportunities for wildlife viewing, hunting and fishing all of which are core values of Summit County's residents and visitors; and,

WHEREAS, implementation of highway mitigation strategies such as wildlife crossing structures and wildlife exclusion fencing along with habitat restoration, and coordinated land use planning in important wildlife movement areas can effectively reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, reconnect landscapes for plants and animals and save taxpayer dollars; and,

WHEREAS, Summit County recognizes that people, nature and wildlife are inseparable and highly interdependent. Shared stewardship of these resources through collaborative partnerships will help people and communities live off the land in ways that improve the health of the land. Implementing mitigation recommendations from the Summit County Safe Passages Plan will set the example for communities state and nationwide to work together and provide for the needs of both people and wildlife; and,

WHEREAS, the Summit County Safe Passages Plan was developed through the collaboration of local governments, federal and state agencies, ski areas, non-profit conservation organizations and local citizens to address the challenges posed by wildlife-highway conflicts along Summit County roads; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has reviewed the Summit County Safe Passages Plan at a public work session held on June 18, 2019 and considered the information presented at this meeting, including the Plan's Key Strategies and Wildlife Movement Considerations, and potential opportunities for Summit County Government to participate in furthering Plan implementation; and,

WHEREAS, the Summit County Safe Passages Plan is intended to serve as a management tool for all stakeholders participating in the Plan as well as the community at large, outlining shared goals and

recommended strategies for implementing highway mitigation which may be pursued over the coming years to further reduce wildlife vehicle collisions and reconnect biologically important landscapes in Summit County; and

WHEREAS, the Summit County Safe Passages Plan is a guidance document to support the integration of wildlife movement needs into transportation projects, land use planning and land management in Summit County, and the Plan living document that will evolve over time as changes to our community, best science practices and new data become available.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF SUMMIT, STATE OF COLORADO, THAT the Board of County Commissioners hereby endorses the Summit County Safe Passages Plan, dated October 2017, as a guiding document to inform future actions, including future updates to county master plans and development code amendments.

ADOPTED THIS 22ND DAY OF OCTOBER 2019.

**COUNTY OF SUMMIT
STATE OF COLORADO
BY AND THROUGH ITS
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Thomas C. Davidson, Chair

ATTEST:

Kathleen Neel, Clerk & Recorder