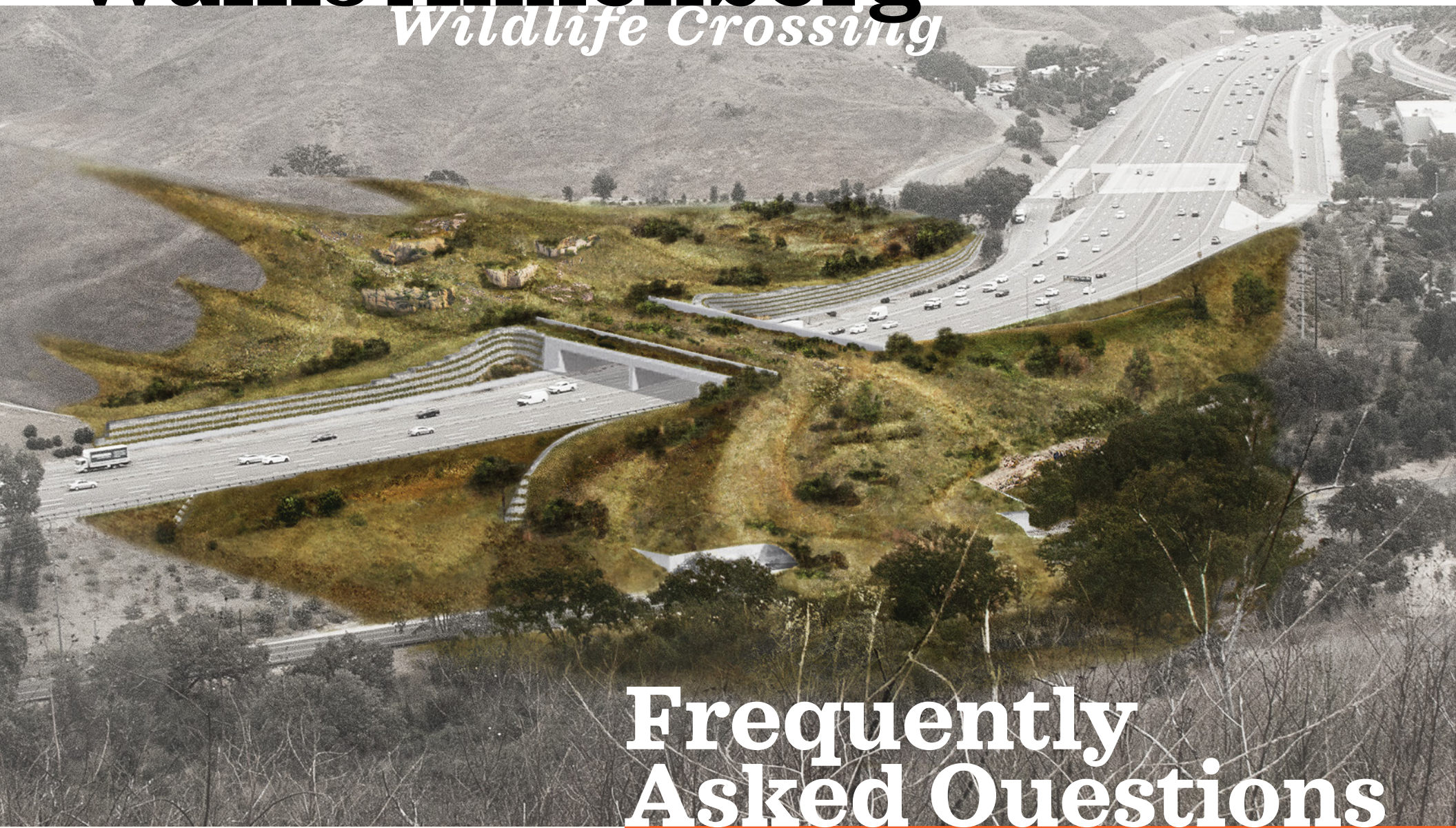


Wallis Annenberg

Wildlife Crossing



Frequently Asked Questions

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is a public-private partnership. The project's core partner team includes Caltrans, the National Park Service, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy - Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority, the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, Living Habitats, LLC, and the National Wildlife Federation.

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Overview

**“Nature doesn’t work
without connection.”**

**Mary Ellen Hannibal,
Author, *The Spine of the Continent***

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is a project for the next century, providing a lasting benefit to wildlife for generations to come. More than two decades of study by the National Park Service in the Los Angeles area has shown roads and development are not only proving deadly for animals trying to cross, but have also created islands of habitat that can genetically isolate all wildlife—from bobcats to birds to lizards. The species most immediately at risk, the mountain lion, could vanish from the area within our lifetime.

Of all the area roads, multiple research and planning efforts have identified the 101 Freeway as the most significant barrier to the ecological health of the region—this crossing will re-connect an entire ecosystem that has long been fragmented by this almost impenetrable obstacle for wildlife. By building a wildlife crossing over the ten lanes of freeway and an access road — in the last 1,600 feet in the area that possesses protected land north and south of the 101 — this project will re-establish ecological connectivity for a multitude of native plant and animal species in the Santa Monica Mountains ecosystem.

The preservation of this key wildlife linkage also spans over thirty years of protecting vital habitat by groups like the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been dedicated to acquiring and preserving thousands of acres of open space in the Santa Monica Mountains over almost half a century, and the wildlife crossing provides a critical last step in this historic effort. The project also supports both the state of California and the Federal government’s 30 by 30 conservation initiatives.

This visionary structure will preserve biodiversity across the region by connecting an integral wildlife corridor, and most immediately critical, help save a threatened local population of mountain lions from extinction. When complete, the crossing will be the largest in the world, the first of its kind in California, and it will serve as a global model for urban wildlife conservation.



Native American Connections

“Indigenous people have used the animals as teachers for thousands of years.”

Alan Salazar, Fernandño Tataviam, Band of Mission Indians Elder, Chumash, Tataviam, & Pipimaram lineage



What Native people call the crossing location home?

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is located on the homelands of the Chumash. We celebrate, honor and respect the history and people of this land. We extend our gratitude for the wisdom and understanding they have given us in creating this wildlife crossing.

How have the Chumash and other tribes been involved with the crossing?

Caltrans, the National Park Service, the National Wildlife Federation and other project partners have consistently engaged the area Native community throughout the project in all phases: environmental review, planning, design and engineering, and will continue to ensure Native involvement as the project moves toward completion. Additionally, Alan Salazar, Fernandño Tataviam, Band of Mission Indians Elder, Chumash, Tataviam, & Pipimaram lineage, serves as an official member of the design team, advises on educational materials and participates in events.



As we develop interpretative and educational materials for the crossing completion, tribal members will be key stakeholders in helping us create content that represents their cultural heritage and current involvement. The project is also compatible with tribal historic preservation goals, which seek to protect and enhance disappearing/non-renewable natural landscapes within their ancestral lands. In addition, the mountain lion is considered sacred in Chumash cosmology. Providing a safe and sustainable wildlife passage to reduce mountain lion mortality rates along with the restoration of native vegetation is of significance to the tribes and is complimentary to their efforts in cultural sustainability (i.e., preservation of their tribal heritage).

How can I learn more about the Chumash and other Native American people in the area?

The National Wildlife Federation produced the video series, Indigenous Voices, featuring people from the area Native American communities sharing their stories and knowledge about wildlife.

You can view the series here:

[View Series](#)

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLySTJFzFFByINEuO_fIPJa-G3fIZFMqCn

You can learn more about Alan Salazar's work at:

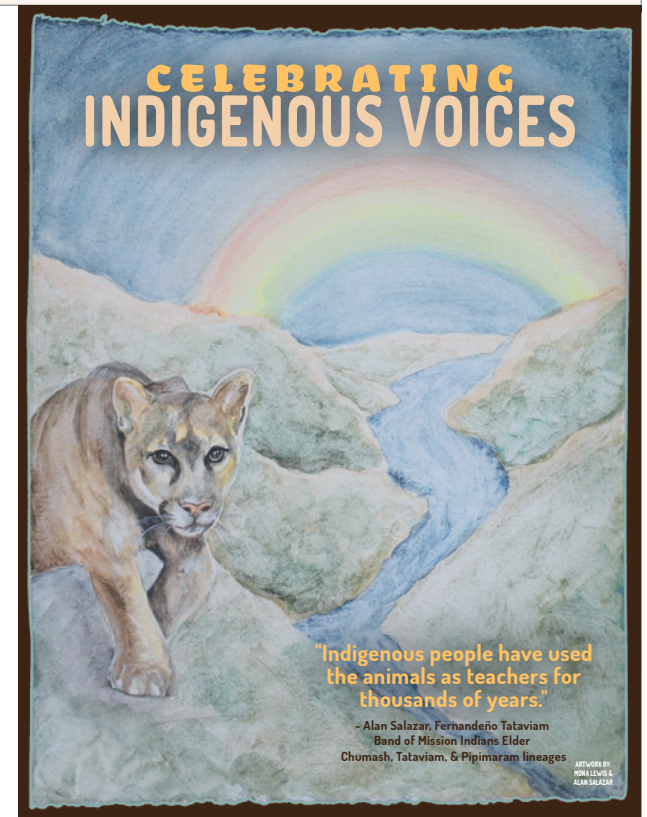
[Learn More](#)

<https://mynativestories.com/>

Discover the Chumash creation story of a Rainbow Bridge:

[Discover](#)

<https://www.nps.gov/chis/learn/historyculture/limuw.htm>



Current Status & Project Phases

What is the current status of project?

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing broke ground on Earth Day, April 22, 2022.

You can watch the groundbreaking video at

[Watch Video](#)

<https://savelacougars.org/groundbreaking/>
and download the commemorative booklet at

[Download](#)

https://savelacougars.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WAWC_Booklet_F_Spreads.pdf

Due to construction logistics and other factors like the need to relocate utilities, the construction of the crossing will be completed in two stages:

Stage 1: Section over the 101 Freeway. Construction began in spring of 2022

Stage 2: Section over Agoura Road: Design anticipated to be completed in 2023; construction to begin in 2024. Completion of the entire wildlife crossing is estimated for late 2025.



What are the all the project phases?

Caltrans has required phases for every project they undertake—these requirements are not unique to wildlife crossings. The table below outlines a summary of each phase for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, along with cost and completion date.

Caltrans Phase	Status
<p>1: Feasibility Study (PSR) Cost: \$250,000</p>	<p>Completed 2015: Funded by grant from Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy / Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority</p>
<p>2: Environmental Review (PA & ED): Cost: \$1.2 million</p>	<p>Completed 2018: Funded by grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy</p>
<p>3: Final Design and Engineering (PS&E): Cost: Estimated \$8.7 million</p>	<p>Stage 1: Complete Stage 2: In Process Funded by multiple grants and private donations</p>
<p>4: Construction: Cost: Estimated \$82.7 million</p>	<p>Stage 1: Underway Stage 2: Estimated Start 2024 Estimated Completion: 2025 Funded by multiple grants and private donations</p>

The crossing was subject to environmental review —CEQA and NEPA—what were the findings?

Caltrans completed environmental review as part of Phase 2. Findings are detailed below.

CEQA: Completed 04/12/2018:

Initial Study, Negative Declaration/
Mitigated Negative Declaration

NEPA Completed 04/12/2018:

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), Liberty Canyon Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Project

In compliance with CEQA, Caltrans held a 47-day public scoping period to allow the public and regulatory agencies an opportunity to comment on the scope of the IS/EA and to identify issues that should be addressed in the environmental document. A scoping report documents the issues and concerns expressed during the public scoping meetings held on January 14, 2016 and the written comments received from the public, community organizations, and governmental agencies during the public scoping period from December 14, 2015 through January 29, 2016. The release of the Final Environmental Document with responses to comments included was completed in the summer of 2016. NEPA/CEQA was completed in April 2018. A total of 8,859 comments were received in response to the draft Environmental Document, with only 15 opposed.

US 101 Liberty Canyon Wildlife Crossing Project
Public Scoping Meeting Notice

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is initiating studies for a wildlife crossing across U.S. Route 101 (US-101) west of Liberty Canyon Road in the City of Agoura Hills in Los Angeles County. The project would include construction of a vegetated bridge in order to help maintain wildlife populations that travel between the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills and ultimately to the Sierra Madre Mountain Range.

You are cordially invited to attend a Public Scoping Meeting to learn more about the project and to provide your input. Your participation will help guide the environmental studies as they move forward over the next year.

The meeting will be held:

Date: Thursday, January 14, 2016
Time: 6:30pm-8:30pm
Place: King Gillette Ranch Auditorium
26800 Mulholland Hwy
Calabasas, CA 91302

The map shows the project location on US-101, west of Liberty Canyon Road, in the City of Agoura Hills, Los Angeles County. The map also shows the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills, and the Sierra Madre Mountain Range. The project location is marked with a red dot and a callout box labeled "PROJECT LOCATION".

Construction Information

Who is building the crossing?

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is a project managed by Caltrans, and they oversee all aspects of construction. Caltrans bid out the majority of the construction work, and after a competitive process, selected C. A. Rasmussen, Inc. to build stage 1, the portion over the 101 Freeway. C. A. Rasmussen, Inc. is based in Valencia, and has been building roads, bridges, highways and communities throughout California for more than 50 years.

How long will construction for the crossing take?

Completion of the entire wildlife crossing is estimated for late 2025

Will construction take place during the day or at night?

Most of the heavy construction will take place at night. There will be some regular activity, however, during the day.



Beth Pratt

Will the 101 Freeway be closed during construction?

No full freeway closures are anticipated. We will have few nighttime directional (one direction at a time) closures between 12 am and 5 am. During the closures, traffic will be detoured on to the Agoura Road.

Will any areas roads like Agoura Road or Liberty Canyon Road be closed during construction?

No full road closures are anticipated or scheduled at this time

Will the trails on the both sides of the freeway remain open during construction?

We expect that the trailhead on the North side of the crossing generally will remain open during construction; however, we anticipate it may need to be closed at times to ensure the safety of the public during some construction activities. If closure is required, notice will be given to the public in advance whenever possible.

Access to the trailhead along Agoura Road will not be impeded by construction activities.

I live nearby. What about pollution or noise from the construction site?

For stage 1, Caltrans anticipates a negligible negative pollution or noise impact to the nearby communities as most of the businesses and residential homes are a quarter of a mile or more from the construction site. They estimate that noise or pollution impacts would not greatly exceed the existing ones from the regular heavy traffic and use of the 101 Freeway.

How many jobs will the wildlife crossing provide to the area economy?

As a green infrastructure project, the wildlife crossing offers an economic stimulus that provides jobs and other benefits to the state's economy. Caltrans estimates that in transportation, for every \$1 billion spent, 13,000 jobs are created, and a Florida DOT study found that the state's transportation projects were estimated to yield an average \$4 of benefits for every \$1 invested.

Will there be a live construction camera?

You can follow the progress of the construction for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing virtually by tuning in to our new live camera feed at <https://savelacougars.org/> or at <https://app.oxblue.com/open/NWF/WallisAnnenbergWildlifeCrossing> Images update every ten minutes. The camera also will be capturing a time lapse of the entire construction process through 2025, that we will release as a short video once complete.

The camera is sponsored by a generous donation from John Logan, a longtime supporter of the crossing. John is a playwright, screenwriter and producer, and has worked on films such as *Gladiator*, *Skyfall*, and *Alien: Covenant*. The camera set up was led by Johanna Turner, expert wildlife camera trapper and founder of [Cougarmagic](#), along with help from the MRCA trail crew, and a number of volunteers.

Read more about this new camera in an [article on LAist](#)

Is it true construction was delayed because of acorn woodpeckers?

Yes! Acorn woodpeckers nesting in a utility pole that needed to be removed caused a brief delay in construction at the beginning. Luckily the baby woodpeckers fledged after a few days, and construction continued. You can watch a brief video showing the woodpeckers here: <https://www.facebook.com/p22mountainlionofhollywood/videos/570689681205740/>

How can I stay updated about construction?

Sign up for the Caltrans email list for construction updates by contacting: To receive email updates about this project, contact the Caltrans representative shown below.

Michael Comeaux

Public Information Officer

Cell/text: (213) 500-5840

Michael.Comeaux@dot.ca.gov

And follow the social media accounts below:

Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing

Website: [101wildlifecrossing.org](https://www.101wildlifecrossing.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/101wildlifecrossing>

Twitter: [@101wildcrossing](https://twitter.com/@101wildcrossing)

Caltrans District 7

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CaltransD7>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CaltransDist7>

Partnership & Stakeholders

“Backed by significant public and philanthropic support, the wildlife crossing is an inspiring example of the kind of collaborative efforts that will help us protect our common home for generations to come.”

California Governor Gavin Newsom



Who are the primary partners working on the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing?

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is a public-private partnership of monumental scope that has leveraged the expertise and leadership of dozens of organizations and institutions from across the state, country, and the world. The work of the Liberty Wildlife Corridor Partnership serves as an international model for collaborative solutions for wildlife in the transportation sector.

The core project partner team includes Caltrans, the National Park Service, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy / Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, and the National Wildlife Federation. The project partners also added a world-renowned design team led by a landscape architectural practice, Living Habitats LLC, that collaborates with Caltrans and coordinates with a broad team of wildlife crossing experts in the planning, design and construction of the wildlife crossing.

The Partner Leadership Team, who lead the project and serve as the decision-making entity for the project, includes:

Rorie Skei, Chief Deputy Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

Barbara Marquez, Sustainability Initiatives Manager, Caltrans

Sheik Moinuddin, Project Manager, Caltrans District 7

David Szymanski, Superintendent, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

Beth Pratt, California Regional Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation

What are the roles of the primary partners?



CALTRANS is the largest transportation agency in the nation and manages more than 50,000 miles of California’s highway and freeway lanes. As the agency of record and landholder of the right-of-way and structure, Caltrans is responsible for the development, construction, and maintenance of the crossing.



The **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE** manages Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area—the largest urban park in the country—where the crossing is located. The agency also conducts the important study of mountain lions and other wildlife in the region.



Since 1980, the **SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY** has helped to preserve over 75,000 acres of parkland in both wilderness and urban settings. The **MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY** is dedicated to the preservation and management of local open space and parkland. These two entities share joint oversight for the land the crossing connects, and will provide the long-term management of the habitat on the crossing.



The **RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS** partners with public and private landowners to restore native habitat, and to protect and create green space and corridors for sensitive wildlife. Their team provides critical expertise to the project for design, architectural services, and habitat restoration, and helped develop the preliminary design for the project.



As one of the oldest and largest conservation groups, the **NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION** has 7 million supporters across the country and a successful track record of large-scale conservation work, such as multi-million-dollar projects in the Great Lakes or the Gulf Coast. The non-profit is responsible for conservation guidance and education, fundraising, advocacy, and outreach for the project.



LIVING HABITATS LLC, collaborates with Caltrans and coordinates with a broad team of wildlife crossing experts in the planning and design development of the wildlife crossing. The team includes globally-recognized wildlife ecologist, Tony Clevenger, who has worked on wildlife crossings around the world, including the ones in Banff, Canada, along with subject matter experts in soil science, mycology, herpetology, engineering and more.

Who are other people and organizations that helped make the crossing a reality?

The strength of the wildlife crossing project from its earliest stages has been a dedicated coalition built with a wide variety of public, private and non-profit resources, agencies, and supporters.

Our thanks to the hard work, dedication, and support of the following individuals who also worked as part of the crossing partnership and beyond to make the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing possible.

Gavin Newsom, California Governor
Wade Crowfoot, California Natural Resources Agency Secretary
Toks Omishakin, California State Transportation Agency Secretary
Tony Tavares, Caltrans Director
John Donnelly, California Wildlife Conservation Board Director
Ted Lieu, U.S Congressman
Chuck Bonham, California Department of Fish & Wildlife Director
Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer, California State Coastal Conservancy
Adam Schiff, U.S Congressman
Fran Pavley, California State Senator (ret.)
Henry Stern, California State Senator
Laura Friedman, California State Assemblymember
Richard Bloom, California State Assemblymember
Linda Parks, Ventura County Supervisor
Sheila Kuehl, Los Angeles County Supervisor
Paul Koretz, City of Los Angeles Councilmember
Deborah Klein Lopez, City of Agoura Hills Mayor
Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

For a complete list of all those involved in making this historic project a reality, please see the groundbreaking commemorative booklet.

https://savelacougars.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WAWC_Booklet_F_Spreads.pdf



Does the public support this wildlife crossing?

The public support for this wildlife crossing has proven unprecedented. A total of 8,859 comments were received in response to the draft Environmental Document, with only 15 opposed.

The crossing site is located in Agoura Hills, who passed a resolution supporting the project. Surrounding cities such as Malibu, Calabasas, and Thousand Oaks have also passed similar declarations, and the Southern California Association of Governments, the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents, also passed a resolution in favor of the project.

Support for this wildlife crossing also extends around the world—people around the country and across the globe have made donations to the project and taken action to urge for its completion. International media outlets such as *AP News*, *BBC World News*, *Wall Street Journal*, *NPR*, *The Today Show*, *Marketplace*, *The Guardian*, *National Geographic*, *The New Yorker*, *CBS News*, *Los Angeles Times*, *AARP*, and many more have featured the story of the crossing — *the project has received over two billion media impressions globally!*



History

“It takes a village. Let’s use this opportunity to congratulate the many advocates and environmental leaders, past and present, who spent years working with local, state and federal officials to protect and preserve the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills for future generations of people and wildlife. Reconnecting these large islands of habitat on both sides of the busy 101 freeway is an almost unbelievable story, especially in the most populated County in the U.S.”

California State Senator Fran Pavley (retired)



Where did the idea for a wildlife crossing at Liberty Canyon come from?

Agency scientists with the National Park Service, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and more began considering the idea of a continuous wildlife corridor in the Liberty Canyon area in the 1980s—they were truly ahead of their time, as wildlife crossings were not dominant in the scientific paradigm back then.

In 1987, a study identified Agoura Hills to Hidden Hills as one of the three key choke points in the area for safe animal passageways. In the early 1990s, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy prepared a report, “Critical Wildlife Corridor/Habitat Linkage Areas Between the Santa Susana Mountains, the Simi Hills and the Santa Monica Mountains” and hosted a seminar “*Carving Out Wildlife Corridors.*”

STATE OF CALIFORNIA — RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Santa Monica Mountains District
2860A Camino Dos Rios
Newbury Park, California 91320
(818) 706-1310 or (805) 499-2112

PETE WILSON, Governor



BD/AC

JTB LA

August 29, 1991

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SEP - 3 1991

SANTA MONICA
MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
MALIBU

Mr. Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Director
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
3700 Solstice Canyon Road
Malibu, California 90265

Mr. David E. Gackebach, Superintendent
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
30401 Agoura Road, Suite 100
Agoura Hills, California 91301

Dear Messrs. Edmiston and Gackebach:

Joe & Dave

I would like to thank and commend your agencies for hosting the one day seminar Carving Out Wildlife Corridors: Preservation of Critical Regional Habitat Linkages from the Santa Monica Mountains to the National Forests. I found the seminar to be both informative and interesting. Further, it was a loud call for action.

I would like to specifically note my appreciation to Paul Rose and Paul Edelman for their fine work on this program. Paul Edelman's report: Critical Wildlife Corridor/Habitat Linkage Areas Between the Santa Susana Mountains, the Simi Hills and the Santa Monica Mountains is first rate.

Please pass along our expression of appreciation to both Pauls and to all of the other staff and volunteers. Please also consider this letter as a call for a focussed joint effort between State Park, National Parks and the Conservancy to acquire or otherwise assure the continued protection of all of the wildlife habitat linkage areas identified as critical to our mountains and parklands. Few goals could be of more importance.

I look forward to working with you on this exciting venture.

Sincerely,

DCP

Daniel C. Preece
Deputy Regional Director

cc: Mr. Walt Parker
William O. Douglass Outdoor Classroom



Since 1996, NPS biologists have researched carnivores and other local wildlife in the Santa Monica Mountains and the surrounding region. The project began right in the Liberty Canyon area, with the tracking of bobcats and coyotes, and as the research progressed, the National Park Service, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Caltrans and other stakeholders began collaborating and considering solutions for wildlife movement across the 101.

In 2002, the National Park Service [began their landmark study on mountain lions in the Santa Monica Mountains](#), and their subsequent findings of genetic isolation elevated the urgency to connect the fragmented landscapes north and south of the 101. In 2003, the first attempts to actually get a crossing of some kind came from the National Park Service and Caltrans. Early proposals included examining the feasibility of a tunnel.

Additionally, the 2008 South Coast Missing Linkages: *A Wildland Network for the South Coast Ecoregion* report identified the corridor as key for wildlife movement. In 2010, the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project also identified the need to preserve the linkage between Santa Monica Mountains to the Sierra Madre Range as being critical to wildlife movement. The same year, the National Park Service and Caltrans submitted a proposal for funding as part of the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program, which came close to being funded but ultimately wasn't successful.

The first larger stakeholder group was led by Senator Fran Pavley and Joseph Edmiston, Executive Director of the Santa Monica Mountains. This group in 2013, after mountain lion P-H was hit and killed right in the Liberty Canyon area, began evaluating the best options for connectivity, and discussions led to the need for an overpass. In 2012, the National Wildlife Federation joined the partnership, and developed the #SaveLACougars campaign to support the wildlife crossing—this campaign went public in 2014 with a rally at the crossing site where over 400 people showed up to support the effort. The rest, as they say, is history.

**Come hear State Capitol News
from Fran Pavley
as she announces
• A Cougar Corridor!**

and talks about
• **Climate Change**
• **California Drought**
• **Traffic and Caltrans Safety**

Presented as part of the
Malibu Democratic Club Second Saturday Series
11:30 a.m., Sat., July 11, Malibu Public Library
23519 Civic Center Way

How was the land for the crossing preserved?

“The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy & MRCA are excited to enter this last critical phase in making a safe passage for wildlife across the 101 and delivering on our thirty-plus years of work to preserve habitat linkages.” Rorie Skei, Chief Deputy Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, and the larger wildlife corridor it connects, is the result of over 50 years of historic land use battles by dedicated grassroots local activists who helped preserve thousands of acres of land acquired by the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

Without contiguous protected land, the wildlife crossing would not have been possible. In the past, many commercial uses were proposed for the site of the crossing at Liberty Canyon such as a large furniture store. Fortunately, this site was acquired by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy before it could be developed, and as Senator Pavley remembers, “we celebrated by tearing down the huge billboard at this location.”

In 2001, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy acquired 106 acres known as the Abrams parcel and held a ceremony that year declaring it the “Liberty Canyon Wildlife Corridor.”



Project Goals and Needs

What is the goal of the project?

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing project's objective is to connect habitat to the north and south of the 101 Freeway to create a sustainable and resilient regional ecosystem for the future. This will be accomplished by building this crossing to span the 101, as well as the road adjacent to the freeway that will link existing publicly protected wild lands across the last 1,600 feet of passage opportunity available in the central Santa Monica Mountains where protected natural lands exist on both sides of the 101 Freeway.

This project will re-establish a key connectivity path in the Santa Monica Mountains and link to critical open space to the north like the Simi Hills, Santa Susana Mountains, the over 2,700 square miles of Los Padres National Forest, and many more thousands of square miles of habitat beyond.

“I grieve over each mountain lion lost on our roadways. Yet wildlife crossings are not just about single tragic losses of beloved animals. Our wild heritage, from mountain lions to monarch butterflies, is something Californian’s value and treasure. Ensuring that wildlife remain on our landscapes into the future across the Golden State requires that we address the devastation that freeways and roadways have caused to ecosystems, fragmenting them into islands that threaten wildlife large and small with extinction.” Beth Pratt, California Regional Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation



Why should we worry about connecting this habitat? Doesn't wildlife have plenty of open space in the Santa Monica Mountains?

Without this wildlife crossing, mountain lions could vanish from the area within our lifetime. Yet the critical need for this crossing extends to beyond mountain lions.

Re-connecting the entire region is of significant ecological importance. Located adjacent to the city of Los Angeles, the second largest city in the United States, the Santa Monica Mountains is one of the largest and most significant examples of Mediterranean-type ecosystems in the world. Located in one of just 36 'biodiversity hotspots' worldwide—and the only one of two in the continental United States—the mountains are home to over 1,000 plant species in 26 distinct natural communities, from freshwater aquatic habitats and two of the last salt marshes on the Pacific Coast, to oak woodlands, valley oak savannas, coastal sage, and chaparral. Numerous mammals are found in the Santa Monica Mountains, including bobcats, coyotes, and mountain lions, along with nearly 400 species of birds, and 35 species of reptiles and amphibians. The Santa Monica Mountains are also home to more than 50 threatened or endangered plants and animals –among the highest concentrations of such rare species in the United States.

The historic drought Southern California is currently facing has heightened the urgency to reconnect this ecosystem and has increased the challenges for the region's wildlife. The lack of rain can impact the quality and abundance of forage for many species, which in turn, may impact the ability of mountain lions and other carnivores to secure adequate prey in these fragmented areas. The added stress of a sustained drought may cause stressed wildlife in highly fragmented areas to risk additional freeway and other roadway crossings as well. The impacts of severe drought fueled by climate change on wildlife are not all known, but anticipated to be significant.

The recent fires in the region make the need for connecting this landscape with the crossing even more critical. As the Woolsey Fire burned 88% of National Park Service land in the Santa Monica Mountains and 47% of the total natural land within the recreation area, this loss of habitat in the short-term adds another challenge that wildlife face living in this highly urban landscape. A recent study by scientists from UCLA and the National Park Service found that the animals, no longer able to utilize burned areas, engaged in risky behaviors that increased the likelihood of dangerous encounters with human-built infrastructure and rival mountain lions. <https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/wildfires-drive-mountain-lions-to-take-deadly-risks>

What other wildlife will benefit from this crossing?

Although the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing will help save this local population of mountain lions, it is also reconnecting a regional ecosystem for all wildlife, large and small. The same genetic isolation that the mountain lions have experienced has also been found in research by the National Park Service on other creatures such as coyotes, bobcats, birds and lizards. The genetic differences across the freeway have been observed in a wide range of species! This crossing will be a living habitat over the 101 freeway, with not just mountain lions and other animals traveling over it, but butterflies, lizards, birds and frogs living on it. Pretty remarkable that a wildlife habitat will exist over one of the world's busiest freeways!

Should wildlife even live in urban areas? Shouldn't we just relocate the mountain lions instead to "wilder" places?

"During our time, we have enjoyed wild animals right in the middle of our communities and cities. Science has shown us this cannot last unless we re-connect the Santa Monica Mountains to the rest of southern California. This project helps ensure that we fulfill perhaps our greatest responsibility – to pass these lands, these animals, this sense of wonder to future generations."

David Szymanski Superintendent, National Park Service, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

Nature is everywhere, even our in cities and town, and although we make the distinction between wild and human spaces, the wildlife do not—they are only interested in survival.

The number one threat to wildlife worldwide is a loss of habitat. Animals are running out of places to live, and we need to learn to coexist and share our spaces, or wildlife may not have a future. The majority of Californians support living alongside wildlife, and value the state's wild heritage, whether it be a black bear in Yosemite, or a mountain lion in Los Angeles. Additionally, connectivity is key to ensuring sustainable wildlife populations, especially in light of the increased challenges they face with climate change, fire, drought. Connecting fragmented protected areas such as national parks or wildlife refuges will require creating pathways through human developed spaces to be successful.

To learn more about the need for urban wildlife conservation, you can [watch a TedX talk](#) by the National Wildlife Federation's California Regional Executive Director Beth Pratt, or read her book, *When Mountain Lions Are Neighbors* (all proceeds from the book benefit the wildlife crossing—the author receives no royalties).

As to relocating the mountain lions to “wilder” areas, there is no mountain lion Shangri-La—where there is viable mountain lion territory in California, there are already mountain lions. Relocating a mountain lion to a new place will result in the death or displacement of one of the animals, as they do not share territory, and will sometimes fight to the death over it.

Will the crossing bring more mountain lions to the Santa Monica Mountains or elsewhere?

No. The crossing is to ensure the population does not go extinct, not to increase the number of lions in the area. Where there is suitable mountain lion territory in the Santa Monica Mountains, there are already mountain lions. Mountain lions are solitary creatures and will fight even to the death over territory. The population is self-limiting, and the wildlife crossing is about increasing genetic diversity and ensuring a healthy population that will endure in perpetuity, not about increasing the population size.

Why not bring in mountain lions to the Santa Monica Mountains from elsewhere? Wouldn't that be cheaper than building a crossing?

Relocating mountain lions is risky, and would only be used as a short-term solution if the situation warranted. Relocation does not provide a long-term solution, unless it was continued in perpetuity, as the same genetic isolation would keep occurring over time unless the fragmentation problem is solved. To save the Florida panther from extinction, scientists brought in mountain lions from Texas to increase the genetic diversity, yet they also invested extensively in wildlife crossings and fencing to fix the underlying problem.

The ability of mountain lions to move freely across the 101 into the Santa Monica Mountains is necessary to ensure a sustainable population into the future. Additionally, as the wildlife crossing is also about the long-term health of the ecosystem, a single-species solution was also ruled out by scientists during the planning process.

Isn't this a lot of money just to save some mountain lions?

Mountain lions are an indicator of the health of an ecosystem and their survival is linked to the greater resilience of the entire Santa Monica Mountains. Without this wildlife crossing, mountain lions could vanish from the area within our lifetime.

Yet the critical need for this crossing extends to beyond mountain lions. Re-connecting the entire region is of significant ecological importance for all flora and fauna. We have spent hundreds of millions of dollars preserving land in the Santa Monica Mountains and surrounding areas— this is another critical step.

Mountain lions and other wildlife are killed on many area roads. Do we need more crossings?

Yes! Although the Liberty Canyon area is the most significant impediment to connectivity in the region, it's certainly not the only road that needs a solution. And we are not stopping with the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing! Indeed, the project partners are already looking at additional crossings or other ways to improve connectivity like exclusionary fencing, culvert improvements etc, and some of this work has already begun.

Check out this project that Caltrans and the National Park Service worked on for the 118.

<https://www.nps.gov/samo/learn/news/caltrans-and-nps-retrofit-project-helps-wildlife-cross-highway-118.htm>



Wildlife and Wildlife Crossing Research

“We have been studying wildlife, including bobcats, coyotes, and mountain lions, in the park and in the Liberty Canyon area for more than 25 years now, and we have documented the major barrier effects of the freeway, in terms of movement and gene flow. But it is incredibly exciting to see this research turn into conservation action. It is also inspiring to think of the hundreds of thousands of people who will drive under this overpass every day and realize what is possible, even across one of the busiest freeways, and in one of the largest urban areas, in the world.”



Dr. Seth Riley, Wildlife Branch Chief, National Park Service, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

What research supports the need for this wildlife crossing for mountain lions?

Since 2002, the [National Park Service has conducted research](#) on the conservation needs of the Southern California cougar population and other wildlife. The wildlife crossing at Liberty Canyon is based on conclusive findings and an identified need to connect the open spaces that have been preserved through local community efforts over three decades.

The National Park Service has published extensive research that shows the population is threatened with extinction due to inbreeding within our lifetimes. This is due to a number of factors, none more significant than the loss and fragmentation of habitat by roads and development. This leads not only to deaths from vehicle collisions (to date a total of 32 mountain lions have been struck and killed by vehicles in the NPS study area since 2002), but also multiple cases of first-order inbreeding (e.g., sibling to sibling, parent to offspring) because animals are not able to disperse in and out of the area.

Genetic analyses indicate that lions in the Santa Monica Mountains have among the lowest genetic diversity of any mountain lion population ever documented. The wildlife crossing would provide the connectivity needed to fix this genetic collapse by allowing for the cats living north of the Santa Monica Mountains to travel into the range and for animals living south of the freeway to disperse out of the area.

[One study released](#) reaffirmed the importance of the project, noting that the Southern California mountain lion population is nearing an “extinction vortex.” In April of 2020, [the California Fish and Game Commission unanimously voted to advance the petition](#) by the Center for Biological Diversity and the Mountain Lion Foundation to declare this population of cougars as threatened under the state’s Endangered Species Act for final consideration—this decision is still pending.



In September of 2020, the National Park Service [announced an alarming discovery](#) that further underscored the critical and urgent need for the wildlife crossing—the first physical abnormalities linked to an inbreeding depression in the area mountain lions. “This is something we hoped to never see,” said wildlife biologist Jeff Sikich. “We knew that genetic diversity was low here, but this is the first time we have actually seen physical evidence of it. This grave discovery underscores the need for measures to better support this population.”



What research demonstrates this is a critical wildlife corridor?

The Santa Monica Mountains to the Sierra Madre Range is one of the few coastal inland connections remaining in Southern California and has been identified as a critical corridor in multiple research and planning efforts in order to preserve biodiversity in the region, and ensure ecosystem resiliency given increasing impacts from challenges like climate change and urban development.

The South Coast Wildlands 2008 whitepaper and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife 2010 California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project have both identified the need to preserve and enhance this critical linkage, *“as one of the highest priority linkages to conserve in order to sustain ecological and evolutionary processes”* in California’s South Coast Ecoregion.

Decades of local, regional and statewide scientific study, research projects, and planning efforts have informed need for a wildlife crossing at Liberty Canyon.

- [Research conducted by the National Park Service](#) since 2002 has demonstrated that mountain lions could face extinction in the Santa Monica Mountains within decades because of a fragmented landscape.

- A [report published in March of 2018](#) summarized the recommendations from some of the world's foremost experts on wildlife connectivity and crossing structures and combines them with landscape characteristics and wildlife data to prioritize locations for wildlife crossings. The experts' findings noted that the site at Liberty Canyon provided the best location in that region for improving connectivity and an overpass structure the best solution for serving the broadest range of species.
- A report by the [U.C. Davis Road Ecology Center](#) identified the 101 Freeway in the area of the wildlife crossing as one of the Statewide Wildlife-Vehicle Conflict Hotspots
- [South Coast Missing Linkages: A Linkage Design for the Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connection 2006](#), identified this linkage as one of the highest priority linkages to conserve in order to sustain ecological and evolutionary processes in California's South Coast Ecoregion, in light of existing land use pressures and in the context of climate change.
- This linkage was also identified by the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project, which was commissioned by Caltrans and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife with support from the Federal Highways Administration in a report [California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project "A Strategy for Conserving a Connected California, 2010."](#)



The development of a wildlife crossing at Liberty Canyon is also in accordance with federal landscape-scale planning efforts such as the following:

- Integrated Eco-Logical Framework (IEF)/Eco-Logical Program, (Transportation Research Board; Release Date: 2012).
- US Fish and Wildlife Service’s Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (Title: *California Landscape Conservation Cooperative Science-Management Framework*; Release Date: December 2013).
- Western Governor Association’s Initiative on Wildlife Corridors and Crucial Habitat, (Title: *Wildlife Corridors Report*; Release Date: November 2008).
- Regional Advance Mitigation Planning (RAMP; 2008) in California.

How do we know the wildlife will use these crossings?

As evidenced from decades of wildlife crossing projects across the world, such as the successful structures in Banff National Park, and the array of animals seen using an overpass in Utah in a recent viral video, wildlife crossings work. As the organization [ARC: Animal Road Crossings](#) published in a recent report, “Data collected from studies of crossing structures with wildlife fencing throughout North America indicate up to an 86-97% DECREASE in wildlife-vehicle collisions upon affected roadways.”

How will the wildlife find the crossings?

The wildlife themselves in many cases figure out these crossings provide safe passage fairly quickly--they will go to great lengths to avoid crossing roadways, and actively seek out safer routes. At a crossing in Colorado, the deer started using it just days after completion; in Washington State, deer attempted to use a crossing before it had even been finished!

Decades of wildlife crossing research has also provided methods we will be utilizing for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing to encourage animal use, including exclusionary fencing, which eliminates options, and landscaping and vegetative cues.

For the Liberty Canyon site, we predict the wildlife will use it almost immediately after completion. The location is already a natural funnel from open space north and south, leading animals to the last 1,600 feet of protected space on either side of the freeway. The National Park Service has also documented multiple mountain lions attempting to cross at that location. We will watch with interest to see what species of animal uses it first!

“Agoura Hills is known as the ‘Gateway to the Santa Monica Mountains,’ so it makes perfect sense that our city is the site of the future wildlife crossing. We are honored to serve as that ‘gateway’ not just for humans, but for our native flora and fauna that will rely on this bridge to survive and thrive.” Deborah Klein Lopez, Mayor of the City of Agoura Hills

Where is the crossing located?

The crossing site is located along the U.S. Route 101 at the Liberty Canyon Road exit, in Agoura Hills, California.

The 101 freeway is a heavily travelled commuter route that serves the Greater Los Angeles area; connects Los Angeles and Ventura Counties; and acts as the primary access route to and from downtown Los Angeles, various residential communities, and tourist destinations in Los Angeles, as well as the central California coast. This location is a formidable and virtually impenetrable barrier for many wildlife species including mountain lions, bobcats, gray foxes, coyotes, and mule deer that inhabit the Santa Monica Mountains, the Simi Hills, and the Santa Susana Mountains – over 300,000 cars pass through this freeway site daily.

How was the site at Liberty Canyon selected?

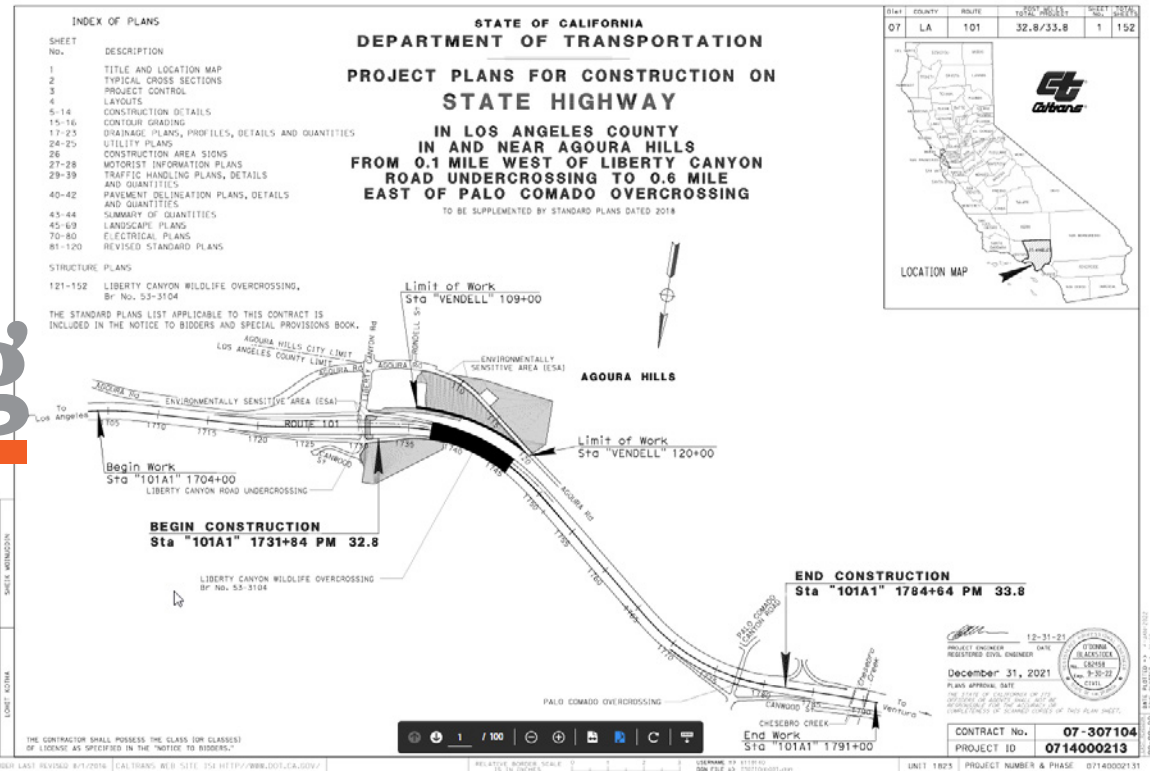
Of all the area roads, multiple research and planning efforts have identified the 101 Freeway as the most significant barrier to the ecological health of the region, and contributes to a probable extinction vortex. A [crossing site assessment](#) by experts from across the world was released in 2018 that reviewed potential sites along the 101 Freeway as part of a linkage analysis—the experts agreed the Liberty Canyon location was the best option to reconnect this vital corridor and an overpass the best solution. As a primary condition for success of any wildlife crossing is having protected space on both sides, this location was the only viable choice in some respects—it’s the last 1,600 feet of adjacent protected space north and south of the freeway in the area.

What does the research show regarding how the wildlife crossing will help with public safety?

As the organization [ARC: Animal Road Crossings](#) published in a recent report, “every year in the United States, there are 1-2 million wildlife-vehicle collisions that cause, 200 human fatalities, 26,000 injuries, and cost \$9.7 billion.” The costs of collisions to society often outweigh the costs of building wildlife crossing structures. Placing structures along road segments with as few as 5.1 deer collisions per mile per year creates net benefits.”

Additionally, according to the sixth annual Wildlife Vehicle Conflict report from [the Road Ecology Center at the University of California, Davis](#), wildlife collisions are a public safety issue. California drivers lost about \$232 million to costs (these costs include the expense of vehicle damage, injury treatment and recovery, emergency response, lost work, loss of the wildlife and other costs) associated with wildlife-vehicle conflicts in 2018 and over \$1 billion since 2015. The report also found records of ~7,000 reported accidents per year on California highways involving deer and other large wildlife. Colorado, Wyoming and other states have implemented wildlife crossings and other state-led solutions that cut mortality at key collision sites by as much as 95 percent.

Crossing Design & Engineering



“The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing embodies a resolute hopefulness made possible through the courage, dedication, and action of many. As both a tool for and a symbol of connection it will stand as an alluring challenge to future generations to pick up the mantle of design to bridge the gaps elsewhere in our world.”

Robert Rock, Principal & COO, Living Habitats LLC

How was the crossing designed and engineered?

The scientific inquiry, evaluation and planning that led to this design was quite extensive, and involves, and continues to involve, some of the top experts in the world on wildlife crossings along with input of the main project partners: Caltrans, the National Park Service, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/MRCA, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, Living Habitats LLC, and the National Wildlife Federation.

A feasibility study by Caltrans was conducted in 2015 that evaluated other alternatives, and a crossing site assessment by experts from across the world was released in 2018 that reviewed potential sites along the 101 Freeway as part of a linkage analysis—the experts agreed the Liberty Canyon location was the best option to reconnect this vital corridor and an overpass the best solution.

In 2018, the environmental document was released with a 30% design plan developed by Caltrans and the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains. Since none of the project partners had designed or built a wildlife crossing of this scale and magnitude, in order to ensure the design and engineering of this landmark crossing was guided by the best available science we consulted with some of the world's foremost experts on wildlife connectivity and crossing structures.



In 2019, we began collaborating with ARC-Animal Road Crossings, an interdisciplinary partnership working to facilitate new thinking, methods, materials and solutions for wildlife crossing structures. In May of 2019, the National Wildlife Federation hosted ARC and its partner the Ecological Design Lab, to conduct an integrated design workshop for project partners, key stakeholders, local residents, scientists, elected officials, and members of the Native American community. In June of 2021, ARC also conducted an additional technical review at the 95% designed milestone.

As a recommendation from the 2019 workshop, the partners conducted a RFP process and selected a world-renowned team led by a landscape architectural practice, Living Habitats LLC, to provide a design guidance report for the final design and engineering stage of the project—they produced an extensive 200-page book, “*Designing for Wildlife: Strategies and Considerations for the Wildlife Crossing at Liberty Canyon*,” which helps guide design decisions for the project team. Using a science-based strategy and an integrated design approach, Living Habitats has been working with Caltrans and the project partners on every aspect of the design planning process and is also helping to monitor construction.

What is the size of the crossing?

The main crossing structure will be 210-foot-long across the freeway, and scale 170 feet in width along the freeway, and will be 10 - 12 acres in total—roughly the size of an American football field!

Will it be the largest wildlife overpass in the world?

Once built, it will be the largest wildlife crossing in the world of its kind. There are some nuances to how you define that, but that is the phrase we have fact checked. It is also the first to be done of this scale in an urban area.

Will it span 10 lanes of the 101 Freeway, or 8 lanes? I have read both.

It will span ten lanes of pavement, or eight lanes of traffic. So, both numbers are correct. The other two lanes are breakdown lanes. Caltrans uses the “ten lanes of pavement” to denote traffic plus breakdown lanes.

What about a tunnel instead of an overpass? Wouldn't that be cheaper?

As part of the feasibility study, planning and environmental review for our project, a tunnel was eliminated from consideration as a solution as it does not provide for a fully connected ecosystem and not all wildlife will use a tunnel. The goal of the Liberty Canyon crossing is to reconnect an entire ecosystem in the middle of one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, and allow for connectivity of flora and fauna, as well as save the local mountain lion population.

A tunnel would also might have been more expensive given some original Caltrans estimates, as you cannot drill the needed size given the distance, and Caltrans would have had to perform a "cut and cover," which uses excavation equipment to dig a trench and then cover it with concrete. To do this would have required the 101 Freeway—one of the busiest freeways in the world—to close for a period of time. We think everyone in the Los Angeles area would agree this isn't feasible nor desirable!

Why is it so big? Can't you decrease the size to decrease the price?

We lead with the science. We are not trying to build the world's largest wildlife crossing because we want to be ambitious, we have to build the largest in the world because that's what the project requires to be successful. We would gladly build the smallest crossing in the world, yet we don't have the ability to shrink the 101 Freeway. What first and foremost dictates the size of the crossing is it has to cover ten lanes of pavement over the 101, along with Agoura Road. Crossing science also has shown that for every foot long a crossing needs to be, the width needs to increase to make the landscape appear inviting to wildlife—a narrow passageway across the freeway would deter animal movement.

I see crossings like the one in Utah at Parleys Summit that are smaller and don't have as much habitat on top. Why can't the Liberty Canyon crossing use that design to save money?

Crossings have different factors that drive design, and are all site specific, and the Liberty Canyon crossing is not comparable with others. Factors that drive our design are things like the slope at our location, the size of the freeway, the urban setting and traffic.

For example, many existing wildlife crossings are located in areas with average traffic of less than 10,000 cars per day. Parleys Summit receives an average of 10,000 cars per day. Liberty Canyon gets over 300,000 cars a day and is one of the busiest roadways in the world. We have to mitigate for impacts others do not, like extensive sound and light pollution, which influences the design. We have to add sound walls for example, where other crossings might not have such considerations.

We also have only one site where we can location this crossing—it's the last 1,600 feet with protected space on both sides of the freeway in the area, and this site, from an engineering and design perspective, is not ideal and requires additional considerations that also add to the cost like grading and sloping. We also have to relocate utilities, which increases the expense as well.

Additionally, most other crossings are trying to solve a roadkill problem. Parleys Summit was nicknamed “slaughter alley,” for example, because of the excessive number of wildlife-vehicle collisions. By contrast, we do not receive a comparable amount of animal deaths at Liberty Canyon given most animals abandon attempts to cross given the formidable barrier the 101 presents. Our main project goal is reconnecting an entire ecosystem, for both flora and fauna, to solve for genetic isolation and to prevent the extinction of a mountain lion population, which requires a biological focused design rather than one just developed for conveyance. And this contributes to design, scope and cost—for example, just adding the needed soil base alone to create a living habitat adds significantly to the load requirements for the structure.

What will the habitat look like on the top?

Unlike a traditional freeway overpass, the crossing will support wildlife and provide the habitat, shelter, food and water that individual species need to thrive. To achieve this, the top of the structure will be covered in nearly one acre of native vegetation. The wildlife crossing will connect native chaparral and coastal sage scrub to the north and south by providing an addition of over ten acres of habitat restored as coastal sage scrub and oak savannah.

Will native plants be used on the crossing?

Yes! With the help of Caltrans and the National Park Service, Living Habitats started collecting seeds, acorns and mushrooms over a year ago. In 2022, a special project nursery was built, where much of the plants will be grown. These will be planted on the site allowing the habitat to grow vegetation naturally throughout the site from the soil up and retaining the critical local genetic material. Native oak and willow trees sourced from the site will also be planted and ten acres of space along the two adjoining slopes where the wildlife crossing will be built, will also be improved.

We are also restoring the native vegetative community to a project site that has experienced both a reduction in biodiversity as well the onslaught of non-native vegetation that represents an increase in the potential fuel load for future wildfire. These invasive species are being removed within the project footprint and are being replaced with an array of native species, restoring and improving the health of the ecosystem. In addition, the project includes cutting-edge solutions for restoring biological health to the soils on the site through the collection of mycorrhizal fungi and the preparation of native inoculum for reintroduction into the constructed landscape.

The site grading and vegetative strategies will replace several acres of invasive grasses and will serve to improve the overall health of the ecosystem as well as protect against surface erosion and impacts to the existing waterways.

Will people be able to use the crossing as well?

During the public engagement process, the community heavily supported planning that would allow wildlife every opportunity for safe passage, and it was decided that there would be no trails or public access. However, the crossing will be seen along the recreation trails that are in the area, and a viewing platform will be built to facilitate optimal viewing, too.



Does the crossing increase the fire risk to the area?

We have consulted with fire officials, (and fire safety is a part of any Caltrans project) and have been advised the wildlife crossing poses no additional risk in terms of wildfire spread. Fire can easily jump a half a mile or more, indeed, the Woolsey Fire crossed the 101 Freeway right at the crossing location and burned the entire site, demonstrating you don't need the crossing for a fire to jump the freeway.

The crossing project will actually help with fire safety as we are restoring native vegetation on and around the crossing—currently, the project area is mostly non-native mustard, a plant that poses more of a fire risk than native grasses. And on the south side, we funded the undergrounding of electrical transmission lines, which also reduces fire risk.

How does the crossing design help mitigate against the impacts of climate change?

“This is a huge step forward. Not only will Liberty Crossing be the largest wildlife crossing of its kind in the world, it is emblematic of the bold and creative solutions we need to protect California’s wildlife as our state continues to grow. Nature-based solutions like Liberty Crossing are also essential for combatting the climate crisis and our work to conserve 30 percent of California’s land and coastal waters by 2030.”

Wade Crowfoot, California Secretary for Natural Resources

The wildlife crossing will connect native chaparral and coastal sage scrub habitat to the north and south of the 101 Freeway by providing an addition of over ten acres of habitat. As climate change brings additional pressures to California and the Santa Monica Mountains, both flora and fauna require options in order to persist and adapt to rapidly changing conditions. Reconnecting an ecosystem long fragmented will significantly help mitigate the increasing challenges wildlife and plants face with from a changing climate.

The South Coast Wildlands 2008 whitepaper and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife 2010 California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project have both identified the need to preserve and enhance this critical linkage, “as one of the highest priority linkages to conserve in order to sustain ecological and evolutionary processes” in California’s South Coast Ecoregion, due to existing land use pressures and climate change. The wildlife crossing will also add native vegetation to the landscape, which will help reduce greenhouse gases. In addition, the preservation of biodiversity in the Santa Monica Mountains will reduce greenhouse gases by maintaining substantial, healthy vegetative cover in this area.

Wildlife crossings are nothing new. What makes this crossing unprecedented? Why has this crossing design been called a ‘model for urban wildlife conservation’?

“The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing bridges landscapes, boundaries and disciplines: it is a project of hope that connects people to nature with new, innovative infrastructure, and integrates engineering, ecology and landscape architecture for a sustainable future. In doing so, the Crossing catalyzes a system to reweave California’s significant, biodiverse and protected landscapes, for people and wildlife — and sets a new standard for reconnecting landscapes worldwide.”

Nina-Marie Lister, Professor & Director, Ecological Design Lab at Ryerson University & ARC Partner

“To break ground for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife crossing is to launch an exciting new class of green infrastructure for biodiversity. Not only will it cross one of the largest and busiest highways in North America, but it will do so with close attention and respect to the protected landscapes on each side of the highway that ensure its success. Its design is the ideal blend of structural and natural design and it will serve not just as a crossing for wildlife but as an inspiration to the world that we can build well for nature and our shared future.”

Jeremy Guth, Conservation Director, the Woodcock Foundation & Founding Partner and Steering Committee Member, ARC Solutions

Indeed, wildlife crossings are nothing new, and the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing benefited from decades of science, design and experience from crossings around the world. Yet it is also a landmark crossing in many ways, such as the densely populated location, the unprecedented research, the project goal of saving a population of animals threatened with extinction and reconnecting a regional ecosystem, the integrated design, and the significant public-private partnership.

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is the first to attempt such a large-scale intervention for wildlife in such an urban setting — the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area is the most densely populated area in the United States and is home to 20 million people.

The [National Park Service research](#) that led to discovering the need for the crossing is groundbreaking as well—thought to be one of the longest running studies of urban carnivores. Since 1996, NPS biologists have researched carnivores and other local wildlife in the Santa Monica Mountains and the surrounding region. The project began right in the Liberty Canyon area, with the tracking of bobcats and coyotes, and it expanded to include mountain lions in 2002. Overall, the research has focused on urbanization and habitat fragmentation in wildlife communities. The study will continue to provide landmark science for urban wildlife conservation that will help inform future efforts worldwide.

Additionally, the project goals differ from many other crossings, which are trying to solve a roadkill problem. By contrast, Liberty Canyon is not the site of as significant an amount of animal deaths by vehicles as other projects, as most animals abandon attempts to cross given the formidable barrier the 101 presents. Our main project goal is reconnecting an entire ecosystem, for both flora and fauna, to solve for genetic isolation and to prevent the extinction of a mountain lion population, which requires a biological focused design rather than one just developed for conveyance. The 101 Freeway isolated the entire Santa Monica Mountains from the rest of the world for the first time in its evolutionary history. We can find no precedent of a crossing designed to reconnect an entire regional ecological system.

The design reflects a wholesale ecosystem approach, which is also not typical for the majority of crossings. While the physical bridging structures serve as the keystone element, the full project embraces a comprehensive design solution that leverages multiple facets of scientific research, sustainable principles, and best practices in support of an ecologically vibrant and resilient solution for regional habitat connectivity. As the team at ARC: Animal Road Crossings, wrote as part of their technical design review in 2021:

“Where this project really excels, is the treatment of the landscape surface as a set of specifically designed and integrated ecosystem types that reflect the native plant communities and habitats that create a draw for the target species. In this way, it’s critical to appreciate that the landscape surface is not “surface decoration” or an add-on, but rather is integral to the ecological functioning of the crossing design as a system – and to its success.

This project area extends far beyond the crossing overpass structure, encompassing an ecological design effort impacting eight acres of the surrounding landscape. The scale and magnitude of this endeavor should be highlighted as it further emphasizes the singular and extraordinary nature of the Liberty Canyon project in advancing connectivity and wildlife conservation across urbanized landscapes.”

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is a public-private partnership of monumental scope that has leveraged the expertise and leadership of dozens of organizations and institutions from across the state, country, and the world. The work of the Liberty Wildlife Corridor Partnership serves as an international model for collaborative solutions for wildlife in the transportation sector, including the role of private philanthropy. The invaluable contribution of Wallis Annenberg and the Annenberg Foundation in bringing their leadership in philanthropy to this project cannot be overstated. Their donation of \$26 million dollars—the largest private contribution to a wildlife crossing to date—helped us leverage public funds and inspired the additional giving needed to reach the finish line.

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing is also inspiring efforts to improve connectivity across California, the United States and the world. As Louis Sahagún [wrote in an article about the crossing](#) for the Los Angeles Times, “Future historians may look back on the second decade or so of 21st century American architecture as the Age of Wildlife Crossings. Congress in November passed a national infrastructure package that for the first time sets aside \$350 million in federal funding for wildlife crossings to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions in all 50 states.”



Funding & Cost

“Wildlife crossings restore ecosystems that had been fractured and disrupted. They reconnect lands and species that are aching to be whole. I believe these crossings go beyond mere conservation, toward a kind of environmental rejuvenation that is long overdue. It’s a model for the kind of public-private partnerships that can heal our environment for the long haul. Thanks to this extraordinary commitment, California is now in the vanguard of that change.”

Wallis Annenberg, Chairman, President, and CEO of Annenberg Foundation



What is the total cost of the project?

Caltrans’ current estimate for total cost for all phases of the project is \$92 million. This represents an increase from the 2018 estimate of \$4 million at 30% designed plans. This increase resulted from changes in design considerations once blueprints were finalized, primarily due to the need to relocate utilities, adding mitigation for sound and light, and other factors.

The estimate for design and construction for Stage 2 (the structure over Agoura Road) is still preliminary and will be finalized after Stage 2 design is completed and the bid is awarded for Stage 2 construction. Estimates do include contingency planning.

A cost and funding breakdown is below. This represents Caltrans costs only. Please note the #SaveLACougars campaign is funding other important project needs outside of the Caltrans budget—see next question.

Caltrans Phase	Status
<p>1: Feasibility Study (PSR) Cost: \$250,000</p>	<p>Completed 2015: Funded by grant from Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy / Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority</p>
<p>2: Environmental Review (PA & ED): Cost: \$1.2 million</p>	<p>Completed 2018: Funded by grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy</p>
<p>3: Final Design and Engineering (PS&E): Cost: Estimated \$8.7 million</p>	<p>Stage 1: Complete Stage 2: In Process Funded by multiple grants and private donations</p>
<p>4: Construction: Cost: Estimated \$82.7 million</p>	<p>Stage 1: Underway Stage 2: Estimated Start 2024 Estimated Completion: 2025 Funded by multiple grants and private donations</p>

What are the other needs for the project outside of Caltrans costs that need funding?

Although the total projects costs estimated by Caltrans are \$92 million, the National Wildlife Federation through its #SaveLA-Cougars campaign has a funding goal of at least \$105 million. Other project needs including the important mountain lion and other wildlife research by the National Park Service, wildlife crossing expertise, construction and maintenance of the native plant nursery, habitat stewardship, educational outreach, exhibits, events and collaterals, and other related initiatives.

How is funding for this being raised? What organization is the official fundraiser for the project?

The National Wildlife Federation is the official non-profit partner for the wildlife crossing, and donations to its [#SaveLACougars campaign](#) fund the wildlife crossing project. The National Wildlife Federation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a Federal Tax ID number of 53-0204616. In 2013, we signed an MOU with our local partner the Santa Monica Mountains Fund, and committed to raising the funds needed to complete this project. The Santa Monica Mountains Fund also raises needed funds for the National Park Service Research and the crossing native plant nursery.

Operating for over 80 years, the National Wildlife Federation is one of the United States' largest and most influential non-profit wildlife conservation organizations with more than 7 million supporters across the country and a successful track record of large-scale conservation work, such as multi-million-dollar projects in the Great Lakes or the Gulf Coast.

What sources did the funds come from?

The work of the Liberty Wildlife Corridor Partnership serves as an international model for collaborative solutions for wildlife in the transportation sector, which includes the role of private philanthropy. Investments from leadership donors were needed for this visionary project to be realized within an ambitious timeline given the mountain lions were at risk.

The funding includes a variety of sources, and at this time, represents about a 50/50 split between public funds and philanthropic dollars.

The invaluable leadership of Wallis Annenberg and the Annenberg Foundation by investing in this project cannot be overstated. Their total donations of \$26 million dollars—the largest private contribution to a wildlife crossing to date—helped us leverage public funds and inspired the additional giving needed to reach the finish line.

Will this project take away funding in other public segments?

The public dollars we received were primarily funds already earmarked for conservation, such as bond measures. No transportation dollars were used for this project, and monies were not diverted from other taxpayer funds from things such as schools, hospitals, bridges or road repairs.

How much have you raised to date?

The #SaveLACougars campaign to date has raised over \$103 million to date from over 5,000 donors from around the world—contributions have come from places such as Hong Kong, London, Kansas and Florida. Significant supporters of the project include Wallis Annenberg and the Annenberg Foundation, Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, California State Coastal Conservancy, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, California Department of Fish & Wildlife, the California Conservation Board and many more.

Who are some individuals or organizations that have donated or made grants to the project?

Over **\$103 Million** has been raised to date for this project from over 5,000 donors from all over the globe. Some major contributors to date include:

\$26 Million: Wallis Annenberg & The Annenberg Foundation

\$25 Million: California State Wildlife Conservation Board

\$7 Million: State of California AB128

\$5 million: Frank and Joann Randall

\$3 Million: Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

\$2.2 Million: California State Coastal Conservancy

\$2 Million: S.L. Gimbel Foundation

\$2 Million: Anonymous private donor

\$1 Million: Boeing Corporation

\$1 Million: John Logan Foundation

For a full list of major donors, please visit <https://savelacougars.org/our-supporters/>

What does my contribution to the National Wildlife Federation's #SaveLACougars fund?

Contributions to #SaveLACougars are used to realize the following:

- Completion of the wildlife crossing
- Wildlife crossing design expertise to collaborate with Caltrans team
- Advance ongoing National Park Service research on mountain lions and other wildlife
- Landscape and habitat stewardship for the crossing once completed for MRCA/SMMC
- Conservation education, outreach, advocacy, fundraising, and communal engagement

Will the project be receiving Federal funding in light of some of the recent national legislation passed?

Congressman Ted Lieu requested [\\$2.5 million in federal funding](#) for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing in Los Angeles in the Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations bill.

Why is it named the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing?

The crossing is named the “Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing” in recognition of her landmark conservation gift, and also her and the Annenberg Foundation’s long involvement in supporting this visionary project since the earliest phases, starting with their first \$1 million challenge grant in 2016, which they turned into multiple millions raised to help with design. They are not just contributors to the project, but long-term partners.

Is there precedent for this?

This is keeping with what has been done in other conservation projects to boost public-private partnerships, and is in keeping with state precedent that allows the University of California to name facilities, programs, and professorships, the authority that the Parks and Recreation Commission has to name redwood groves and trails, and the permission that the Fish and Game Commission has to name marine protected areas. Additionally, a recently completed wildlife crossing in Texas, for example, was “named after Robert L.B. Tobin, for sponsoring the feasibility study to see if such a bridge could work, and for the generous donation that closed out the private fundraising, ushering the bridge into reality.”

How much is left to raise for the project?

Approximately \$2 million is still needed as of September 2022. Until we have a final estimate in stage 2 from Caltrans in 2023, we will not know the final costs for completion, but based on current estimates, construction costs have been covered by funding to date. Our goal is to meet or exceed our \$105 million campaign target in order to have a contingency fund in the event of escalated construction costs, and to fulfill the other campaign needs like National Park Service research and long-term habitat stewardship for the crossing.

How can I donate to the project?

Donations to the National Wildlife Federation's #SaveLACougars campaign can be made online at <https://savelacougars.org/giving/>

If you prefer to donate by check, make your check out to National Wildlife Federation with #SaveLACougars in the memo line. Mail your check to National Wildlife Federation, Will Casey, 11100 Wildlife Center Drive, Reston, VA 20190.

Donations of stock and securities are also accepted. For more information or to ask questions about donating to the project, please contact:

Brian Dulski, Senior Director of Philanthropy, National Wildlife Federation, at DulskiB@nwf.org or (618) 975-6734

Beth Pratt, California Regional Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation & leader #SaveLACougars campaign, at prattb@nwf.org or (209) 620-6271

Are there recognition opportunities for donating?

Yes! We still have available some naming and recognition opportunities for this project. Additionally, donations of \$100,000 and above will be recognized on our permanent donor wall at the crossing site. For more information, contact

Brian Dulski, Senior Director of Philanthropy,
National Wildlife Federation,
at DulskiB@nwf.org or (618) 975-6734





P-22, Mountain Lion of Hollywood

Steve Winter/National Geographic

“A lion alone, P-22 is living out the classic science-fiction narrative of the protagonist who wakes up to discover that he is the last of his kind.”

Dana Goodyear, *The New Yorker*

Who is P-22?

P-22 made a miraculous journey and crossed two of the busiest freeways in the country to make a home in Los Angeles' Griffith Park, where he has roamed since 2012 under the Hollywood sign, coexisting peacefully with neighbors and the over 10 million visitors a year, and remaining largely unseen as befitting his species nickname, "ghost cat."

Occasionally he makes an appearance on the Ring doorbell cam of one of the homes surrounding Griffith Park—the footage from these encounters is widely shared on social media. He has also strolled down Sunset Boulevard and roamed the grounds at Universal Studio. He is the only mountain lion known to have survived crossing both major freeways—the majority of the animals die attempting these perilous crossings.



Why is he called P-22?

His moniker originates from the National Park Service's scientific naming system-- P stands for Puma, which is just another name for mountain lion like cougar or panther, and his number means he was the 22nd cat collared in the National Park Service study (they are now up to over 100). You can learn about P-22 and the other cats in the study at <https://www.nps.gov/samo/learn/nature/puma-profiles.htm>

Is P-22 the only mountain lion in Griffith Park?

Yes. He is the first mountain lion to have been sighted there many years. At eight square miles, P-22's home range is the smallest ever recorded for a male mountain lion—on average, adult males possess ranges of 100-200 square miles.

Why is he the face of the #SaveLACougars campaign?

“Truly, it’s something to celebrate that the city that gave us Carmageddon also has allowed a mountain lion to thrive. Los Angeles now needs to prove to P-22 his journey wasn’t for naught. Let’s give him—and all his Santa Monica Mountain kin—a Hollywood ending by building the largest wildlife crossing in the world in one of the largest urban areas in the country. He deserves as much.”

Beth Pratt, from *When Mountain Lions Are Neighbors*

He is the ultimate cougar influencer! People across Los Angeles and around the world have rallied around his inspiring story—he is a mountain lion hero! His story has been featured in *The New Yorker*, Wall Street Journal, *Los Angeles Times*, *National Geographic*, CBS News, BBC World News, NPR, *Men’s Journal*, 60 Minutes, the book *When Mountain Lions Are Neighbors*, a museum exhibit, and a documentary film, *The Cat That Changed America*. His story has fueled a new conservation movement, showing that wildlife and people can coexist in mutual wonderment, and although he roams Griffith Park unaware of his enormous impact, he inspired the building of the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing. Not bad for a small-town cougar!

P-22’s magical journey changed a lot of minds, both scientifically and philosophically. His plight as a lonely, dateless, bachelor, roaming the Hollywood Hills, and cut off from the rest of his kind, has inspired a new paradigm in conservation. When the number-one threat to wildlife worldwide is loss of habitat, we can no longer think of our cities or towns or neighborhoods, or even our backyards, as exempt from the natural world—or as off-limits to wildlife. We need to expand our view and realize that our shared spaces are as essential to conservation as our traditional protected lands. We need to create a new model of suburban and urban wildlife refugia. And P-22 showed us this was possible, even with a large predator. If LA can coexist with a mountain lion, for instance, then what excuse can any other city offer for not making way for monarch butterflies?

Will the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing help P-22?

The wildlife crossing will not help P-22 travel from Griffith Park—it is being built about 30 miles to the west. But his miraculous journey and current plight inspired it, and as a result, he ensured a future for his mountain lion kin in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Why don't they relocate P-22 to a wilder area, or bring him a girlfriend?

Moving wildlife in general, and for mountain lions in particular, doesn't go well – they try to get back, and often die. Relocating the mountain lions to “wilder” areas is also risky, there is no mountain lion Shangri-La—where there is viable mountain lion territory in California, there are already mountain lions. Relocating a mountain lion to new place will result in the death or displacement of one of the animals, as they do not share territory, and will sometimes fight to the death over it. P-22 might even try to come back to Griffith Park if relocated, as it is his home, which could risk his safety.

As for playing matchmaker and bringing him a girlfriend, blind dates for mountain lions don't always go so well, and setting up a match would also be risking the safety of the female cat.

How old is P-22? And how long do mountain lions live?

P-22 is estimated to be about 12 years old. Mountain lions in the wild live until about 10-12 years old, yet in captivity can live as long as 25-30. We truly hope P-22 will beat the odds!

How can I follow P-22 on social media?

Of course our famous cougar influencer is on social media!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/p22mountainlionofhollywood>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/P22ofHollywood>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p22mountainlion/>

TikTok: @officialp22mountainlion

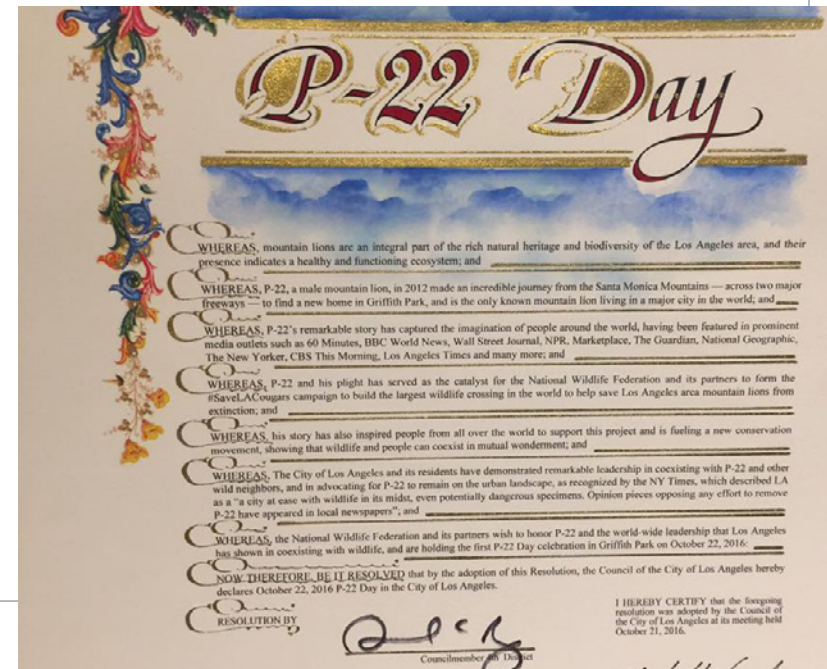
What is the P-22 Day Festival?

In P-22's honor, the City of Los Angeles declared October 22 as the official P-22 Day, and a festival in Griffith Park celebrates our hero mountain lion every year.

NWF's #SaveLACougars work goes beyond the usual scope of a conservation project --connecting people with wildlife is another important goal of our campaign benefitting all Angelenos by strengthening our connection to wildlife. We engage in extensive education and outreach efforts, including our annual P-22 Day Festival and Urban Wildlife Week.

We work with our partners to empower people of all ages and backgrounds to play a role in taking care of our ecosystem. The annual culmination of our on-going work is the P- 22 Day Festival & Urban Wildlife Week - the premier events for #SaveLACougars in the Los Angeles area, including specific outreach through the Wildlife 2 Watts program, with thousands of individuals attending each year and over a million reached virtually. The work we do within urban communities is strengthened by these partnerships and directly impacts our joint ability to educate and empower people to act on wildlife conservation efforts.

In 2019, more than 8,000 Angelenos attended and celebrated their famous mountain lion resident at the festival, and in 2020, 20,000 people attended virtually and tuned in to educational talks and a performance by the Grammy nominated band the Black Pumas. Students across Los Angeles Unified School District and other area schools participated in curriculum activities on native wildlife and P-22, our mountain lion mascot who made a dangerous trek to his current home in Griffith Park, crossing two of the busiest freeways in the country. Engaging educational activities held throughout the festival and highlighted by each school help foster lifelong relationships to wildlife and create future conservation stewards.

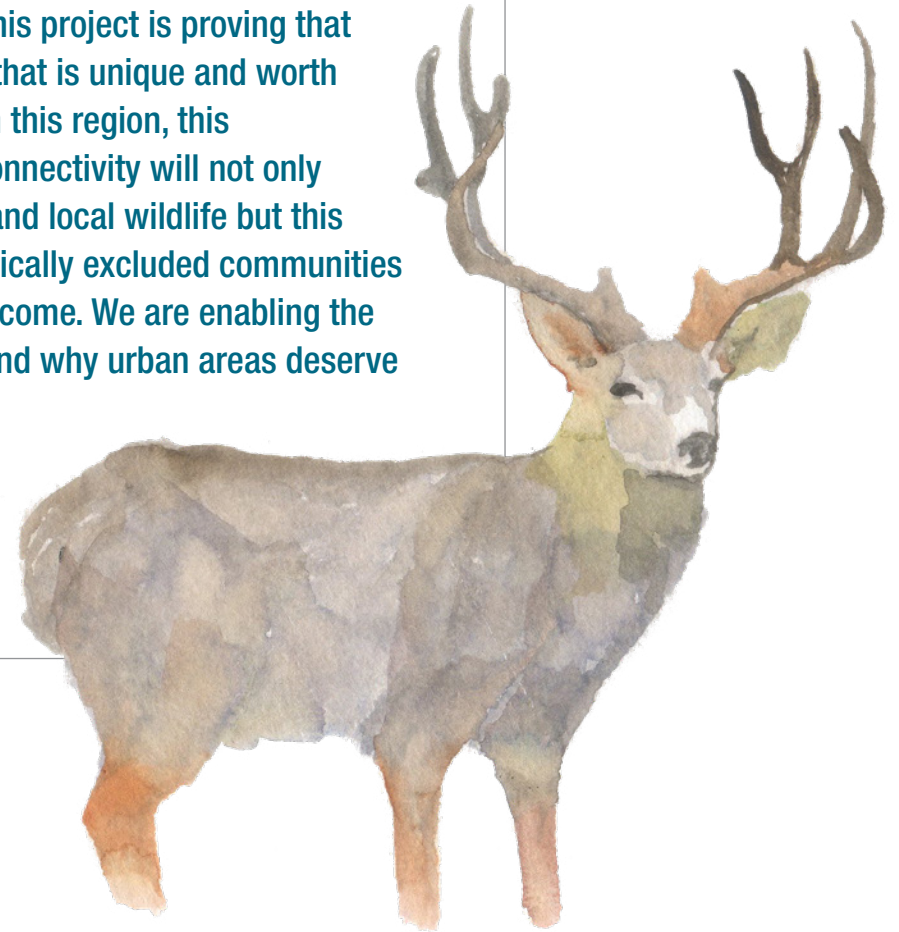




For more information on the events,
visit <https://savelacougars.org/urban-wildlife-week/>

“The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing campaign has sparked a conservation movement by making the plight of our local pumas a global conversation. The success of this project is proving that big cities like Los Angeles have nature that is unique and worth protecting. As someone who grew up in this region, this unprecedented investment in habitat connectivity will not only create a critical connection for pumas and local wildlife but this high profile crossing will connect historically excluded communities to local nature for many generations to come. We are enabling the world to redefine where nature exists and why urban areas deserve more conservation attention.”

MIGUEL ORDEÑANA Wildlife Biologist
& Community Science Manager,
Natural History Museum of
Los Angeles County



Coexisting with Mountain Lions

Please refer to the extensive Coexistence FAQ's developed in partnership with the Cougar Conservancy, for more information at 101wildlifecrossing.org

Isn't it dangerous to live in the same area as mountain lions?

The vast majority of people will never encounter a mountain lion at all, in their whole lifetimes, even when sharing the landscape with them. And the overwhelming majority of encounters between mountain lions and people end without incident. Indeed, most end without a person even knowing they had an encounter.

Mountain lions do not generally see us as prey, and indeed attacks on people are extremely rare. In California, a state with a population of 40 million, there have been less than two dozen attacks on people in the last 100 years, with six of those being fatalities. There is never a zero risk when living with wildlife, but the risk is extremely low. By contrast, over 3,000 people a year die on our roadways in automobile accidents in California. These statistics don't diminish the tragedy when a person is killed or injured by a lion, but it puts the risk in perspective. Living in lion country is much safer than living in car country.

What about the safety of my pets and livestock?

The research in the area to date has demonstrated that the mountain lions prefer their traditional diet of deer and other wild animals and largely leave domestic animals alone. But problems can occur, many of which can be prevented by implementing predator-proof practices. Many groups offer educational resources on living with mountain lions such as the [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) and the [Cougar Conservancy](#). There is also no evidence that a mountain lion attacking livestock or pets, which resemble its natural prey, pose an increased risk to humans.



Damon Ross

Will the wildlife crossing attract more cougars to the area?

No. Cougars and other wildlife are already living in the natural areas of the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills, including around the crossing on both sides of Highway 101. The National Park Service estimates that only 10 to 15 adult and subadult cougars form a stable population within the Santa Monica Mountains - this is the area's carrying capacity due to cougars' territoriality, large home range requirements, and available habitat. The wildlife crossing will enable the introduction of much needed genetic diversity into the subpopulation by promoting movement among resident and neighboring cougars.

Does the crossing threaten people and domestic animals living around it?

No. On the contrary, experts predict that human-cougar conflicts may be reduced by providing this habitat linkage. The National Park Service's long-term study of the Santa Monica Mountains cougar population showed that cougars have already been active in the Liberty Canyon area for over 20 years. When nature preserves become islands surrounded by impenetrable oceans of concrete, cougars are forced to use the urban interface as they attempt to disperse or avoid adult male territorial aggression, which is a leading cause of death of male subadults. The crossing will allow safe passage and dispersal of cougars in natural spaces, outside of the urban interface.

Numerous studies of cougars in urban Central and Southern California found that cougars are very rarely located outside of natural habitat, and are often far from the urban edge. When humans used cougar habitat recreationally, cougars became more nocturnal to avoid human contact. Cougars and humans can coexist safely and without conflict when given the opportunities and resources to do so.



Volunteering & Visiting the Wildlife Crossing



Are there volunteer opportunities for the wildlife crossing?

Yes! We have a number of volunteer opportunities throughout the year, primarily for events, but also in other areas like our native plant nursery. Please contact Kate Ekman, Volunteer Coordinator, National Wildlife Federation at ekmank@nwf.org for more information.

Do you have a docent program?

The Cougar Conservancy, in partnership with the National Wildlife Federation's #SaveLACougars campaign, has created the first ever docent-led tour program for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing. The program will build a bridge between the Santa Monica Mountains community, visitors, and area wildlife by engaging and empowering people with information about the importance of coexisting with cougars and a greater understanding of all of the benefits that the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing will bring. Learn more and apply at: <https://cougarconservancy.org/docents-1>

Can I visit the wildlife crossing site?

The construction site itself is closed to the public, but there are recreational trails on both the north side and the south side of the 101 Freeway at Liberty Canyon from where you can obtain views the construction activity.

You can follow the progress of the construction for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing virtually by tuning in to our new live camera feed at <https://savelacougars.org/> or at <https://app.oxblue.com/open/NWF/WallisAnnenbergWildlifeCrossing> Images update every ten minutes.

Do you give public tours of the wildlife crossing site?

We expect to start docent tours by the end of 2022. The guided hikes will give members of the public an opportunity to experience the project up-close and learn more about how the crossing will ensure that local wildlife populations thrive into the future. Participants will also have access to factual information about human-wildlife interactions including effective non-lethal strategies that can be used to coexist with cougars and other animal species while living and recreating in or near wild spaces. For more information, visit <https://cougarconservancy.org/docents-1>



Contact Information



Who can I contact for more information about the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing?

General information and questions:

Email crossinginfo@nwf.org

Construction information:

Michael Comeaux, Public Information Officer, Caltrans – District 7 at Michael.Comeaux@dot.ca.gov

Mountain lion and wildlife research:

Jeff Sikich, Biologist, National Park Service at jeff_sikich@nps.gov

Seth Riley, Branch Chief for Wildlife, National Park Service at Seth_Riley@nps.gov

Ana Cholo, Public Affairs Officer, National Park Service, ana_cholo@nps.gov

Philanthropy and donations:

Brian Dulski, Senior Director of Philanthropy, National Wildlife Federation, at DulskiB@nwf.org or (618) 975-6734

Or donate online at <https://savelacougars.org/giving/>

Docents and volunteers:

Kate Ekman, Volunteer Coordinator, National Wildlife Federation at ekmank@nwf.org

School programs

Courtney Sullivan, Director, Regional Education Programs, National Wildlife Federation at sullivanc@nwf.org
or 206-577-7175

Other questions

Korinna Domingo, Urban Wildlife Program Manager, National Wildlife Federation at domingok@nwf.org or (818) 415-0920
Beth Pratt, California Regional Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation & leader #SaveLACougars campaign, at prattb@nwf.org or (209) 620-6271

Media inquiries and speaker bookings:

Nadia Gonzalez, Puente Strategies at (310) 409-8931 and nadia@puentestrategies.com

What are the websites and social media accounts for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing?

Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing

Website: 101wildlifecrossing.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/101wildlifecrossing>
Twitter: [@101wildcrossing](https://twitter.com/@101wildcrossing)

Caltrans District 7

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CaltransD7>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CaltransDist7>

#SaveLACougars Campaign for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing

Website: <https://savelacougars.org/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/p22mountainlionofhollywood>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/P22ofHollywood>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p22mountainlion/?hl=en>

How can I stay connected to the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing?

Sign up for the Caltrans email list for construction updates by emailing Michael.Comeaux@dot.ca.gov

[Construction Updates](#)

Sign up for general information for the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing at 101wildlifecrossing.org

[General Information](#)

Sign up for #SaveLACougars campaign information and events at www.savelacougars.org

[Campaign Information](#)

About The Artist

Obi Kaufmann

Growing up in the East Bay as the son of an astrophysicist and a psychologist, Obi Kaufmann spent most of high school practicing calculus and breaking away on weekends to scramble around Mount Diablo and map its creeks, oak forests, and sage mazes. Into adulthood, he would regularly journey into the mountains, spending more summer nights without a roof than with one.

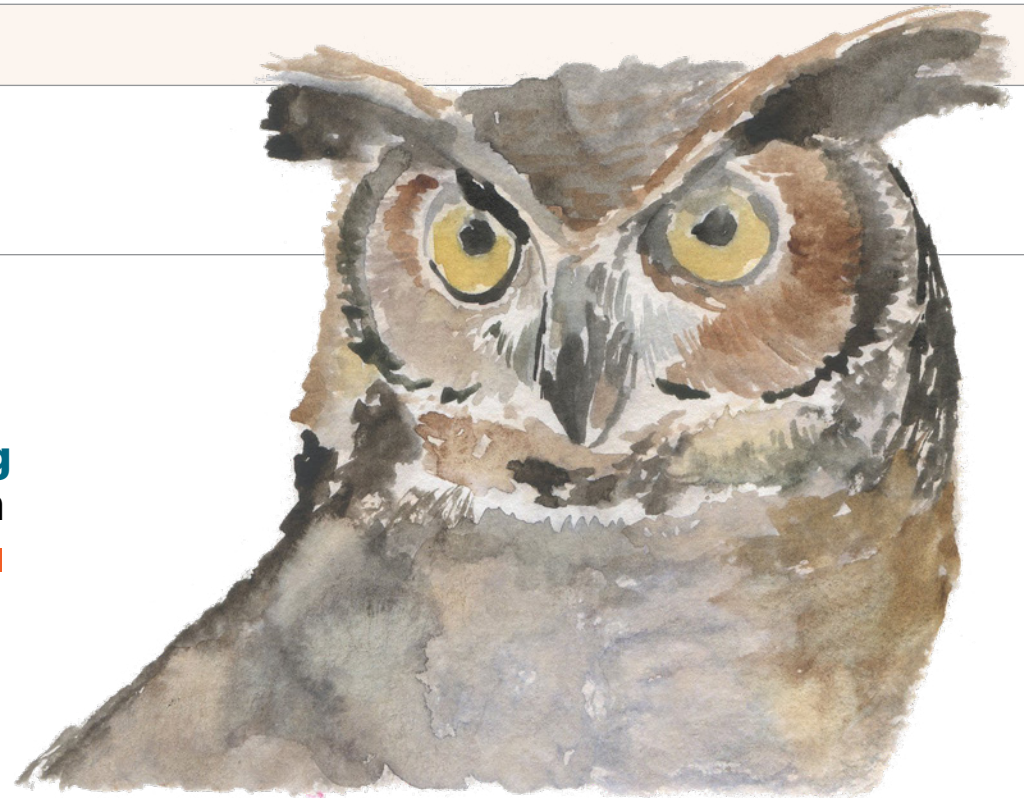
He is the author of *The California Field Atlas* (2017, #1 San Francisco Chronicle Best Seller), *The State of Water: Understanding California's Most Precious Natural Resource* (2019), and *The Forests of California: A California Field Atlas* (2020), all published by Heyday. When he is not backpacking, you can find the painter-poet at home in the East Bay, posting trail paintings at his handle [@coyotethunder](https://www.instagram.com/coyotethunder) on Instagram. His website is coyoteandthunder.com.

Document Design:

Jesse Hopkins

Jesse Hopkins Design

www.jessehopkinsdesign.com



**Visit www.101wildlifecrossing.org
for the most updated information**
