



Ten quick facts about highway wildlife crossings in the park



Photos of wildlife using animal underpasses and overpasses. These images were taken by remote sensing cameras.
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- In response to growing traffic volumes, collisions and wildlife roadkill, the 83 km section of Trans-Canada Highway in the park began to be upgraded from two lanes to a four lane divided highway in 1981.
- To date, there are 22 wildlife underpasses and two wildlife overpasses along a 45 km section of fenced and twinned Trans-Canada Highway that runs from Banff National Park's east entrance to Castle Junction.
- Highway fencing in Banff National Park has reduced wildlife-vehicle collisions by more than 80% and for elk and deer alone, by more than 96%.
- Wildlife crossings are designed to connect vital habitats and allow safe movement of animals across busy roads.
- There is no other location in the world with as many and different types of wildlife crossings as in Banff National Park. It also has the world's longest, year round monitoring program and largest data set on wildlife use of highway crossings.
- Eleven species of large mammals have used the 24 wildlife crossings between the park's east gate and Castle Junction more than 186,000 times since 1996 (as of April 2009). This includes: grizzly and black bears, wolves, coyotes, cougars, moose, elk, deer, bighorn sheep, and more recently, wolverine and lynx.
- There is a "learning curve" for animals to begin using wildlife crossings after construction. For wary animals like grizzly bears and wolves, it may take up to five years before they feel secure using newly built crossings. Elk were the first large species to use the crossings, even using some while they were under construction!
- Grizzly bears, elk, moose and deer prefer wildlife crossings that are high, wide and short in length, including overpasses. Black bears and cougars prefer long, low and narrow crossings.
- DNA research is now underway to identify individual animals using the crossings. DNA hair samples are collected using barbed wire strung across the wildlife crossing structures. The data will reveal adult male and female movement across roads, as well as dispersal, survival and reproduction of young. This will answer how wildlife crossings help to sustain healthy wildlife populations into the future.
- More crossings will be built as the remaining two-lane 33 km section of highway from Castle Junction to the British Columbia border is twinned.



Black bear leaving hair sample on barbed wire
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