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AN ACT

RELATING TO WILDLIFE; AMENDING THE WILDLIFE CORRIDORS ACT TO  
CREATE THE WILDLIFE CORRIDORS FUND; REQUIRING ANNUAL  
REPORTING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 17-9-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2019,  
Chapter 97, Section 1) is amended to read:

"17-9-1. SHORT TITLE.-- Chapter 17, Article 9 NMSA 1978  
may be cited as the "Wildlife Corridors Act"."

SECTION 2. A new section of the Wildlife Corridors Act  
is enacted to read:

" WILDLIFE CORRIDORS FUND--CREATED--PURPOSE.--

A. The "wildlife corridors fund" is created as a  
nonreverting fund in the state treasury. The fund consists  
of appropriations, gifts, grants, donations, income from  
investment of the fund and any other money distributed or  
otherwise allocated to the fund. The department of  
transportation shall administer the fund, and money in the  
fund is appropriated to the department of transportation for  
the purposes set forth in Subsection B of this section.  
Disbursements from the fund shall be made by warrant of the  
secretary of finance and administration pursuant to vouchers  
signed by the secretary of transportation or the secretary's  
authorized representative.

1           B. Money in the wildlife corridors fund shall be  
2 used:

3                   (1) to provide safe road crossings for  
4 wildlife and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, including  
5 the projects contained in the wildlife corridors project list  
6 prepared as a part of the wildlife corridors action plan  
7 pursuant to Section 17-9-3 NMSA 1978;

8                   (2) for costs related to:

- 9                           (a) project feasibility studies;  
10                           (b) planning, construction,  
11 retrofitting and maintenance of wildlife road crossing  
12 infrastructure;  
13                           (c) roadkill tracking and studies;  
14                           (d) animal detection systems;  
15                           (e) signage;  
16                           (f) exclusionary fencing;  
17                           (g) wildlife jump outs; and  
18                           (h) private land conservation efforts;

19                   (3) to provide matching money as required by  
20 federal grant programs relating to wildlife corridor  
21 projects; and

22                   (4) for administrative and personnel  
23 expenses related to the purposes of the fund as set forth in  
24 this subsection.

25           C. The department of transportation shall:

1 (1) consult with the department of game and  
2 fish concerning the distribution of money from the wildlife  
3 corridors fund for the purposes set forth in Subsection B of  
4 this section and, if the money is distributed to a project on  
5 or adjacent to lands owned by Indian nations, tribes or  
6 pueblos, consult with the appropriate tribal government; and

7 (2) consider distributing money from the  
8 fund to projects to fill funding gaps for wildlife road  
9 crossings and connectivity that are not otherwise budgeted or  
10 required for projects under other federal or state  
11 obligation.

12 D. By October 1, 2024, and by October 1 of each  
13 year thereafter, the department of transportation shall  
14 provide a report to the governor and the legislative finance  
15 committee regarding:

16 (1) an aggregate accounting of all money  
17 expended from the wildlife corridors fund during the prior  
18 fiscal year; and

19 (2) a listing of all projects receiving  
20 funding from the fund and the amount of funding for each  
21 project during the prior fiscal year."

22 SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the  
23 provisions of this act is July 1, 2023. \_\_\_\_\_