



New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF  
**TRANSPORTATION**  
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE

31 August 2022

# Implementation of the 2019 Wildlife Corridors Act

Presented by:

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# Action Plan Team Members

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# Overview

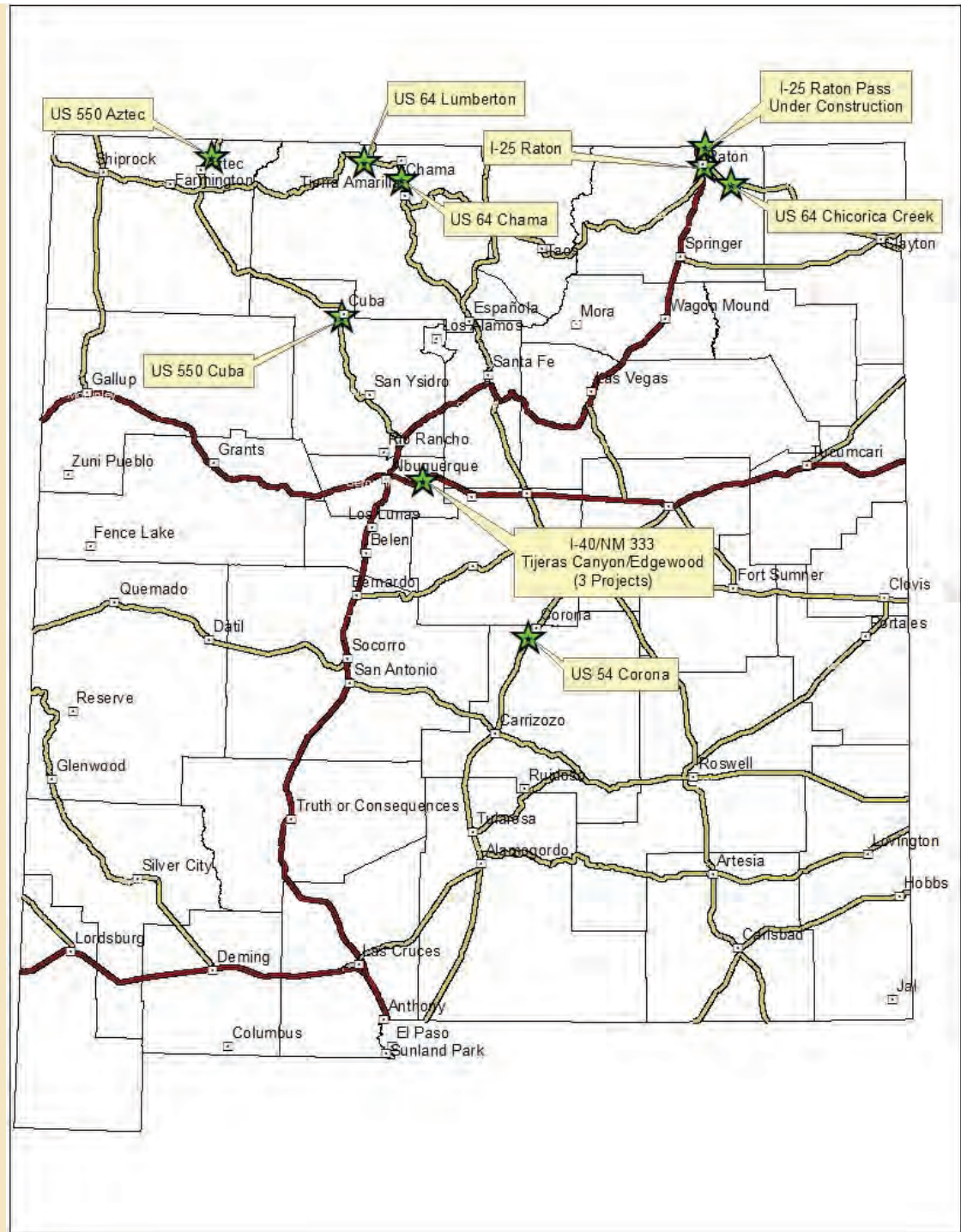
- History of Past Actions
- Wildlife Corridors Act
- Creation of WCAP
- The Top 11 Priority Areas (top 5 hotspots and 6 wildlife corridors)
- What's Next



Photos: M. Watson

# History of Past Actions

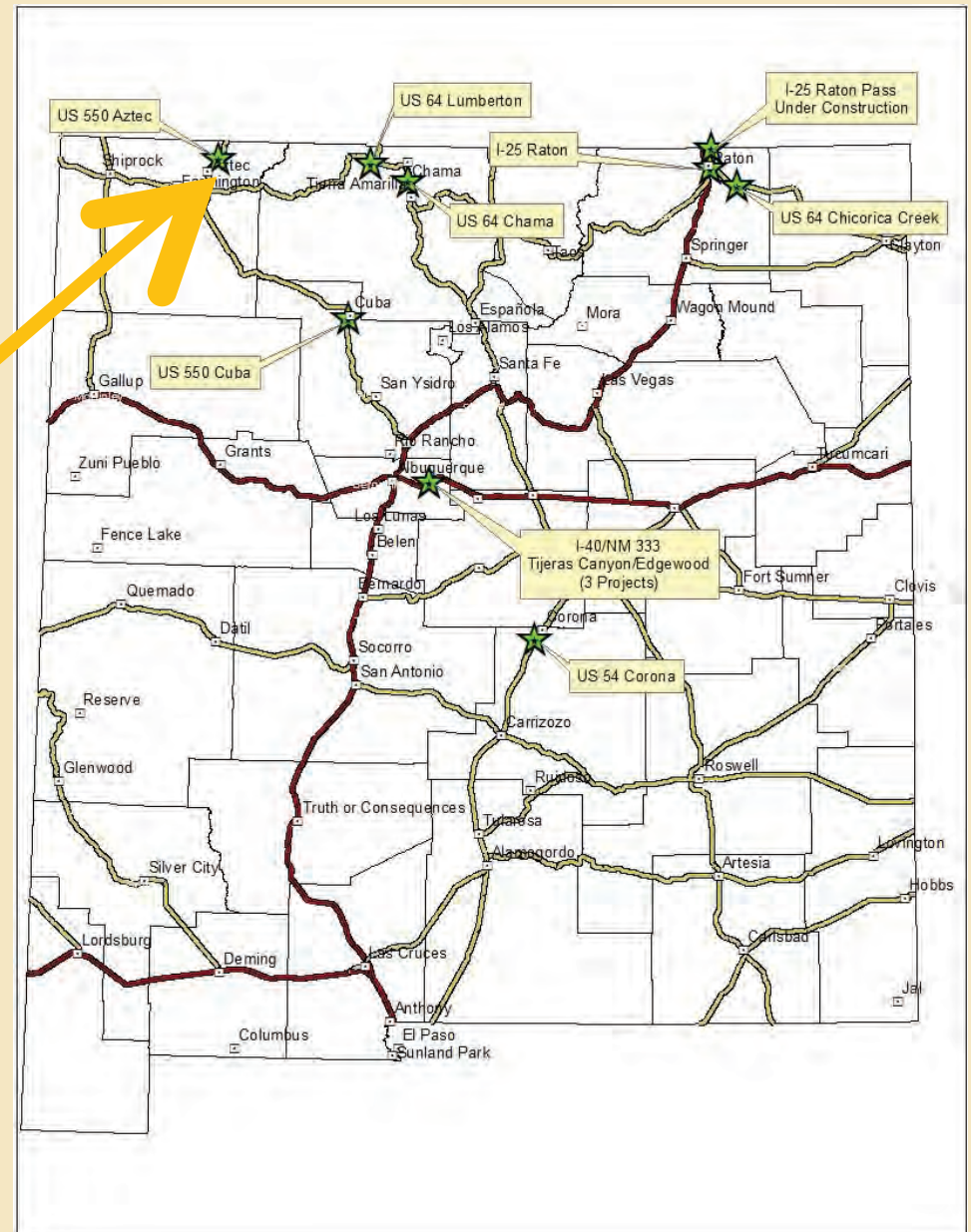
## Wildlife- Vehicle Collision Mitigation Projects in New Mexico



# History of Past Actions: U.S. 550 Animas River Bridge to CO



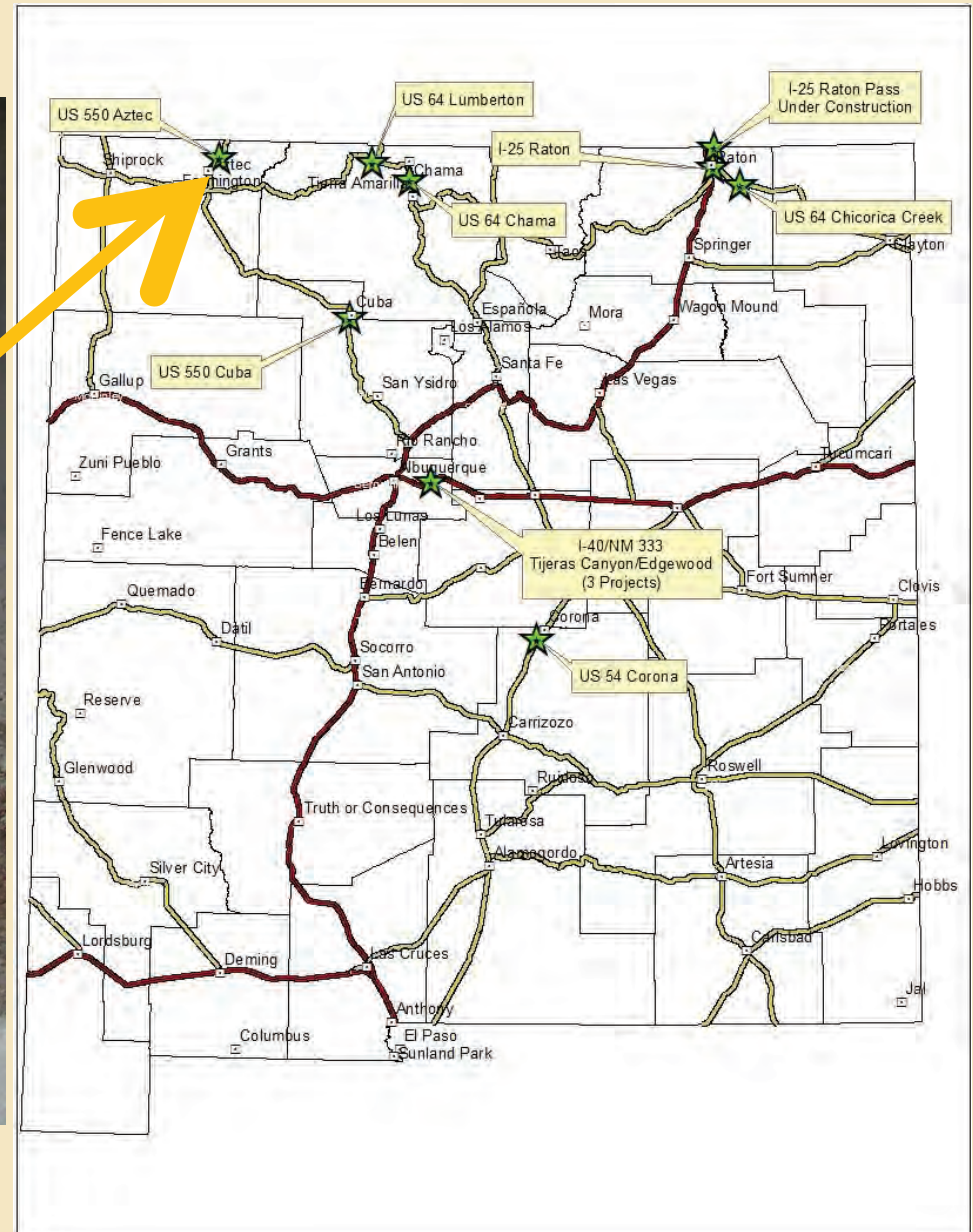
Before



# History of Past Actions: U.S. 550 Animas River Bridge to CO



After



## History of Past Actions: Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Project

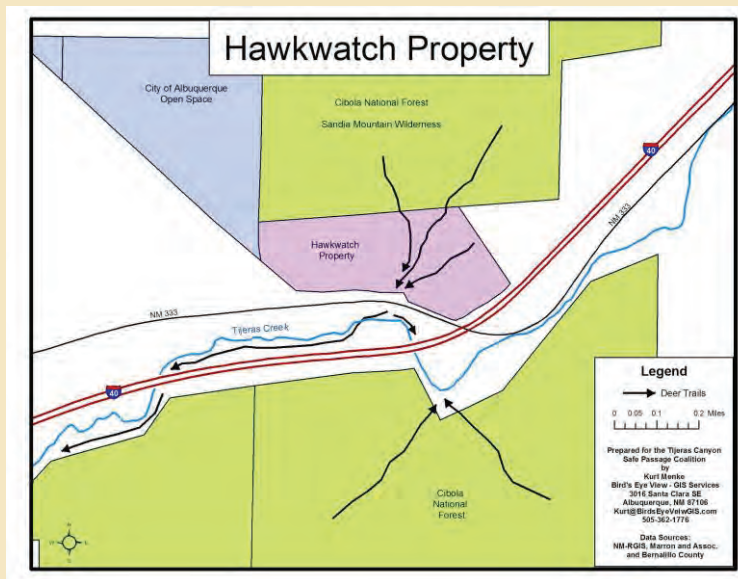


The Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Project and at-grade wildlife crosswalk

# History of Past Actions: Purchase of the Hawkwatch Property

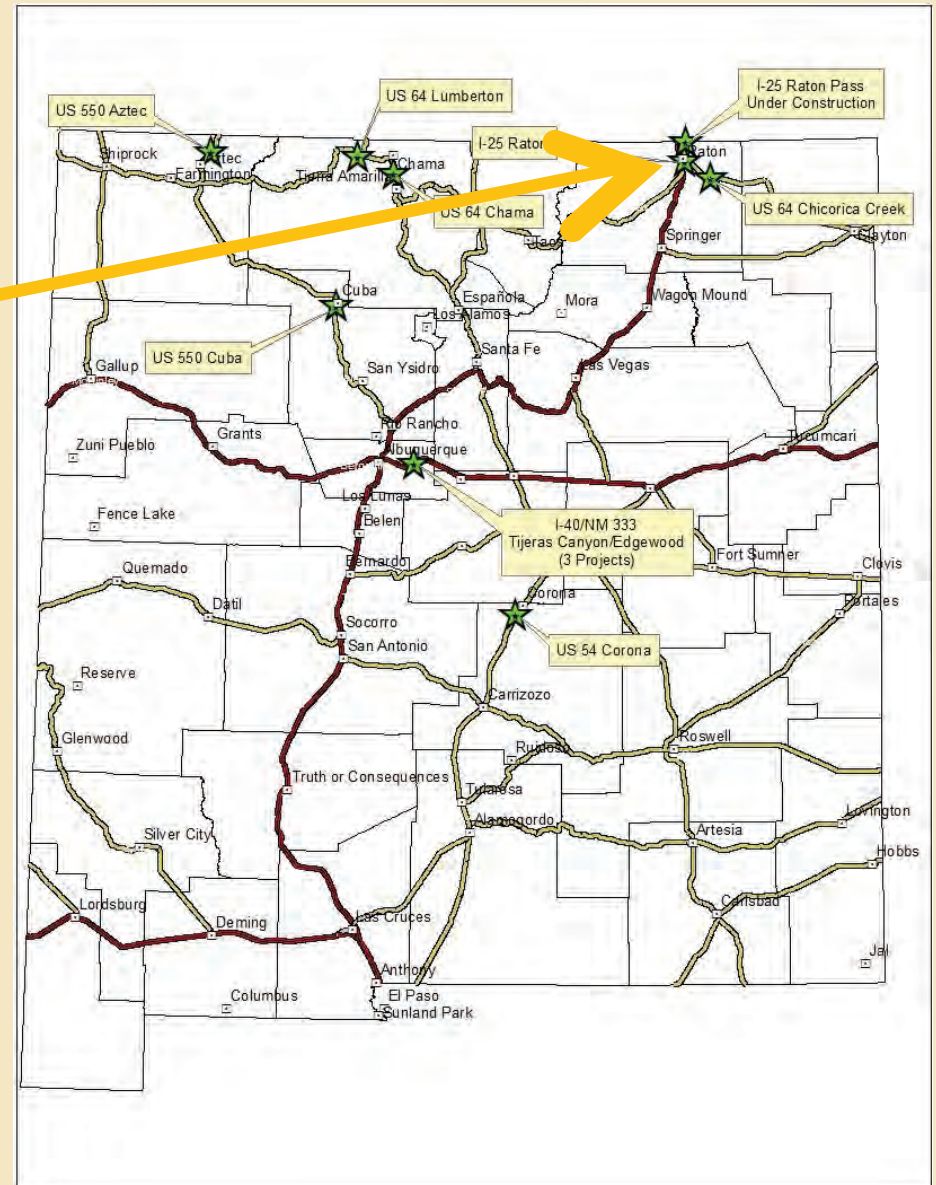


Photo and Map: Kurt Menke



The Hawkwatch Property purchased as Albuquerque Open Space and managed as a wildlife corridor.

# Ongoing Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Mitigation



# New Mexico Wildlife Corridors Act (SB228)

Sponsored by Senator Mimi Stewart and Representatives Joanne Ferrary and Georgene Louis; Signed by Governor Lujan-Grisham 28 March 2019

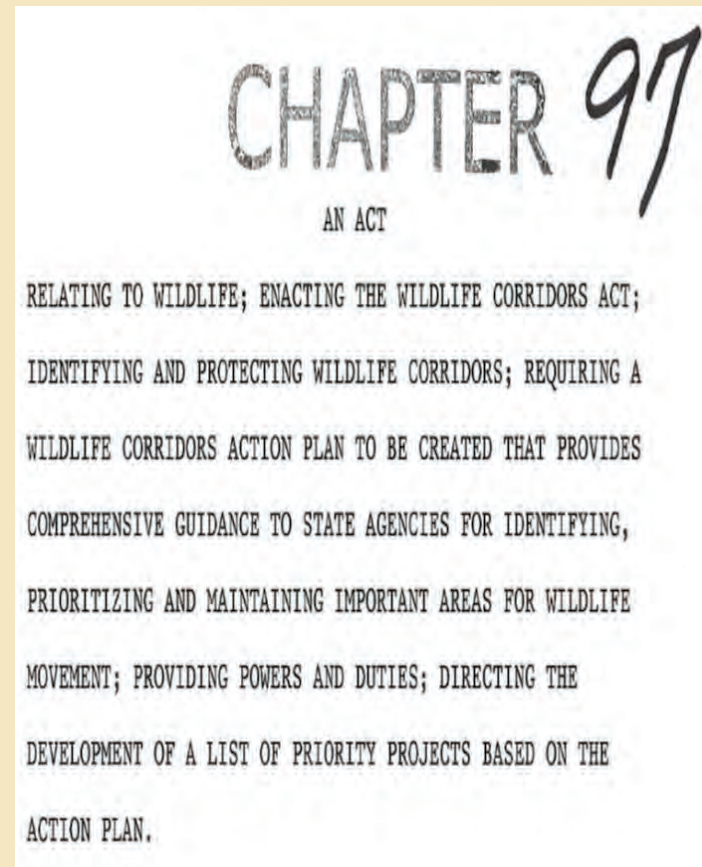
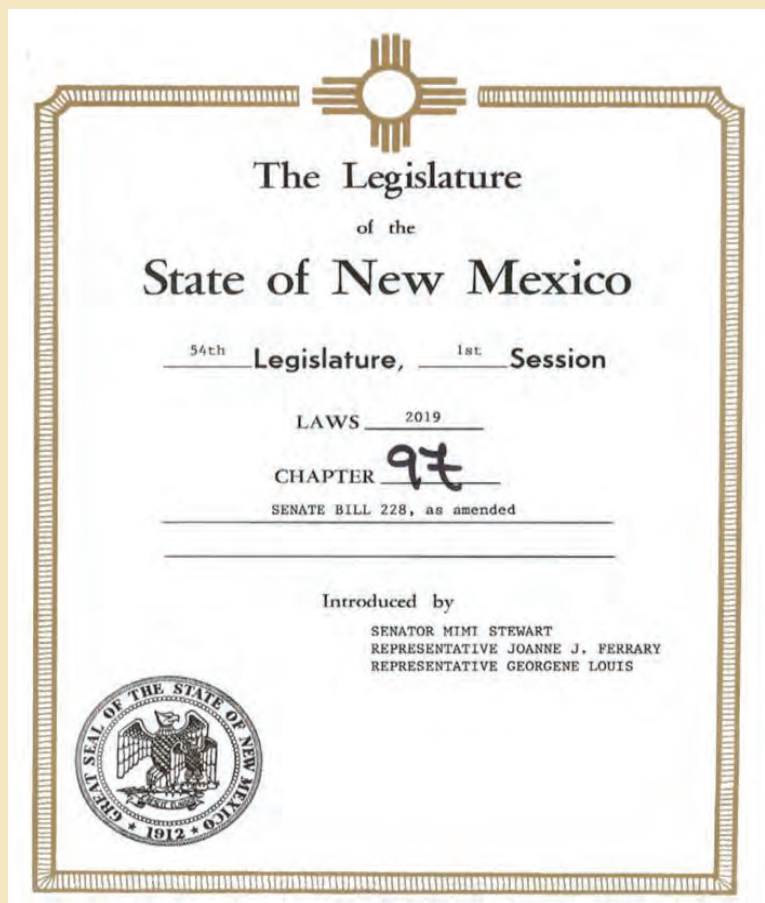


Photo credit: NMDOT & AGFD

# The Wildlife Corridors Action Plan

- Identifies highway segments where we can promote motorists' safety and crash reduction
- Identifies wildlife linkages across the state for large mammals and species of concern
- Encourages NMDOT and NMDGF to use the best available science, and collaborate with Tribal governments, non-government organizations, federal land management agencies, private landowners, and the public to identify mitigation actions

# The Act Identifies Six Large Mammal Focal Species

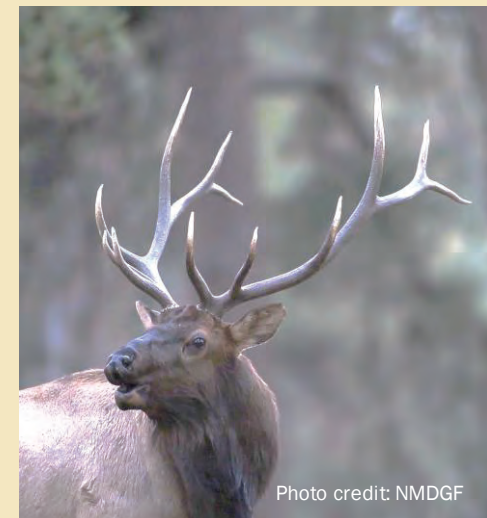
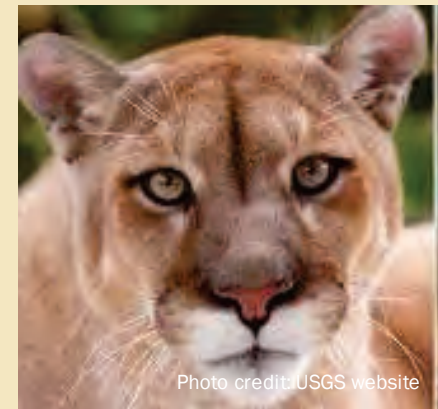
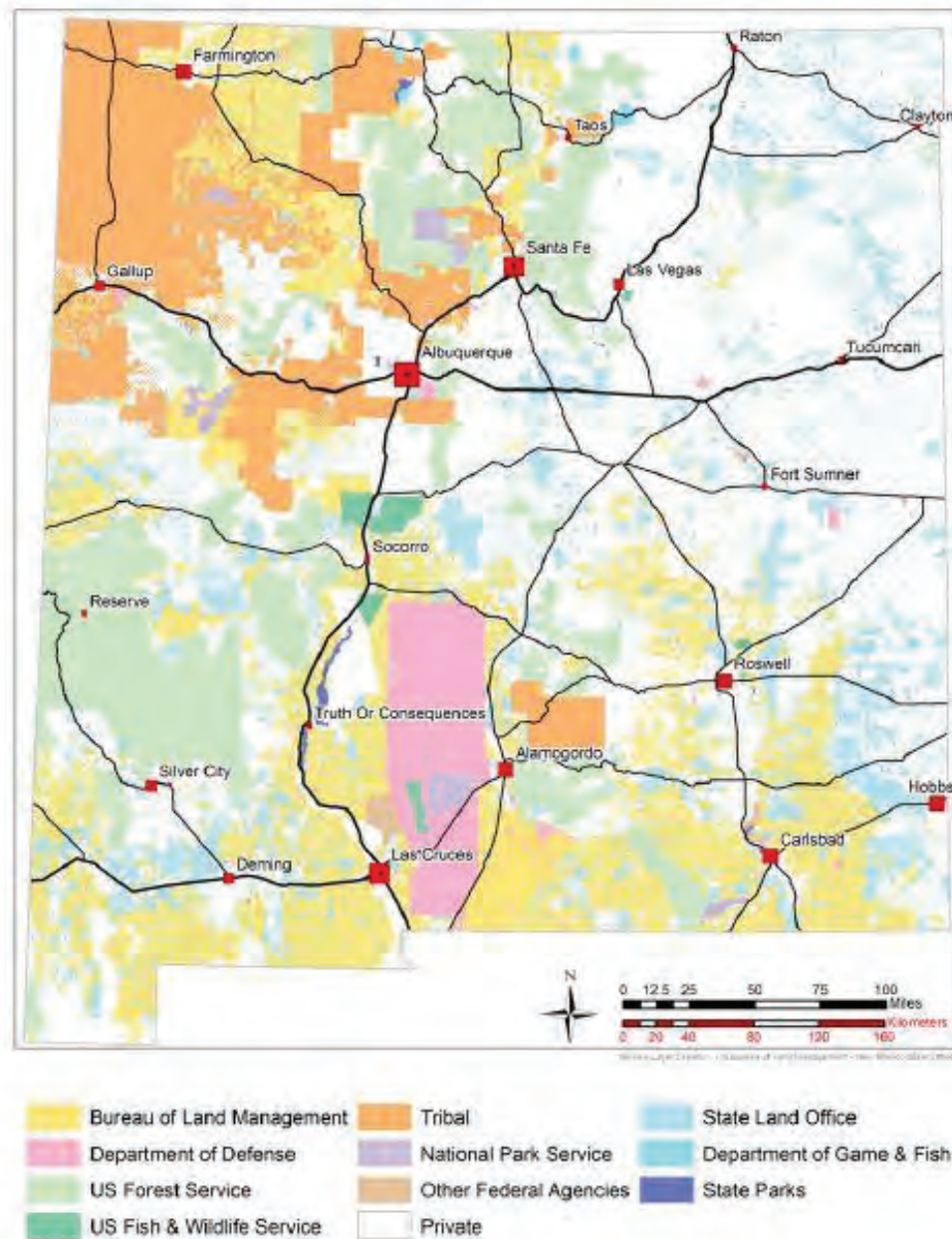


Photo credit: NMDGF



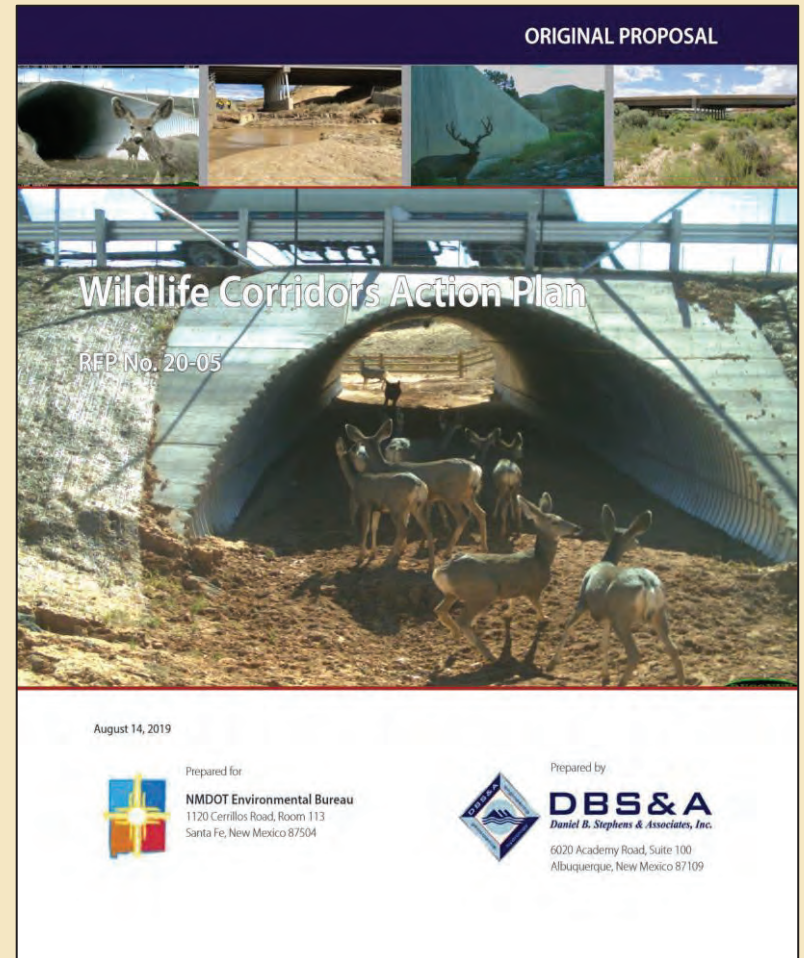
**Private Landowners:**  
As stated in the Act, involvement with project implementation is on a voluntary basis.

Figure taken from State Wildlife Action Plan for New Mexico (NMDGF 2017)

# Wildlife Corridors Action Plan Proposals



Photo: Jim Hirsch, NMDOT



Daniel B. Stephens and Associates (Albuquerque) and subcontractors selected

# Action Plan Tasks Completed

**Task 1: Data Gathering**

**Task 2: Data Analyses**

**Task 3: Field Reconnaissance of Priority Areas**

**Task 4: Benefit-cost Analysis**

**Task 5: Action Plan Development**

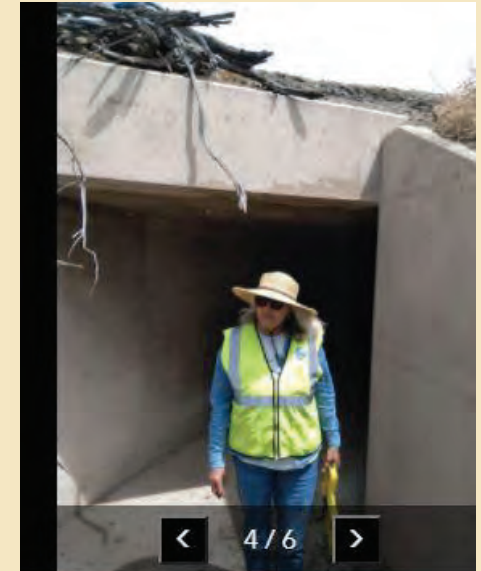
**Task 6: Public Involvement**

**Task 7: Wildlife Corridors Project List**



# Field Reconnaissance of Priority Areas

ArcGIS Survey 123 pictures, map, details, designed by AZDGF



Possible Wildlife Crossing: ChadL - 09/15/2020 09:22

Atrium Present	No
Average Slope From Entrance to Exit	Flat - 0% to 10%
Bottom of Structure	Natural
Compatible with Wildlife Crossing	
Crash Hotspot Name	US 550 North of Cuba
Date and Time	9/15/2020 9:22
Development Disturbance Occurs	Daily
Development Type	Residential
Distance of Fence from Structure	20.00
Drainage Structure Notes	
Drainage Structure Type	
Existing Structure Present	Yes
Existing Structure Type	CMP
Fence Across Entrance	Yes
Fence End Type	
Fence Height (in)	
Fence Type	Barbed

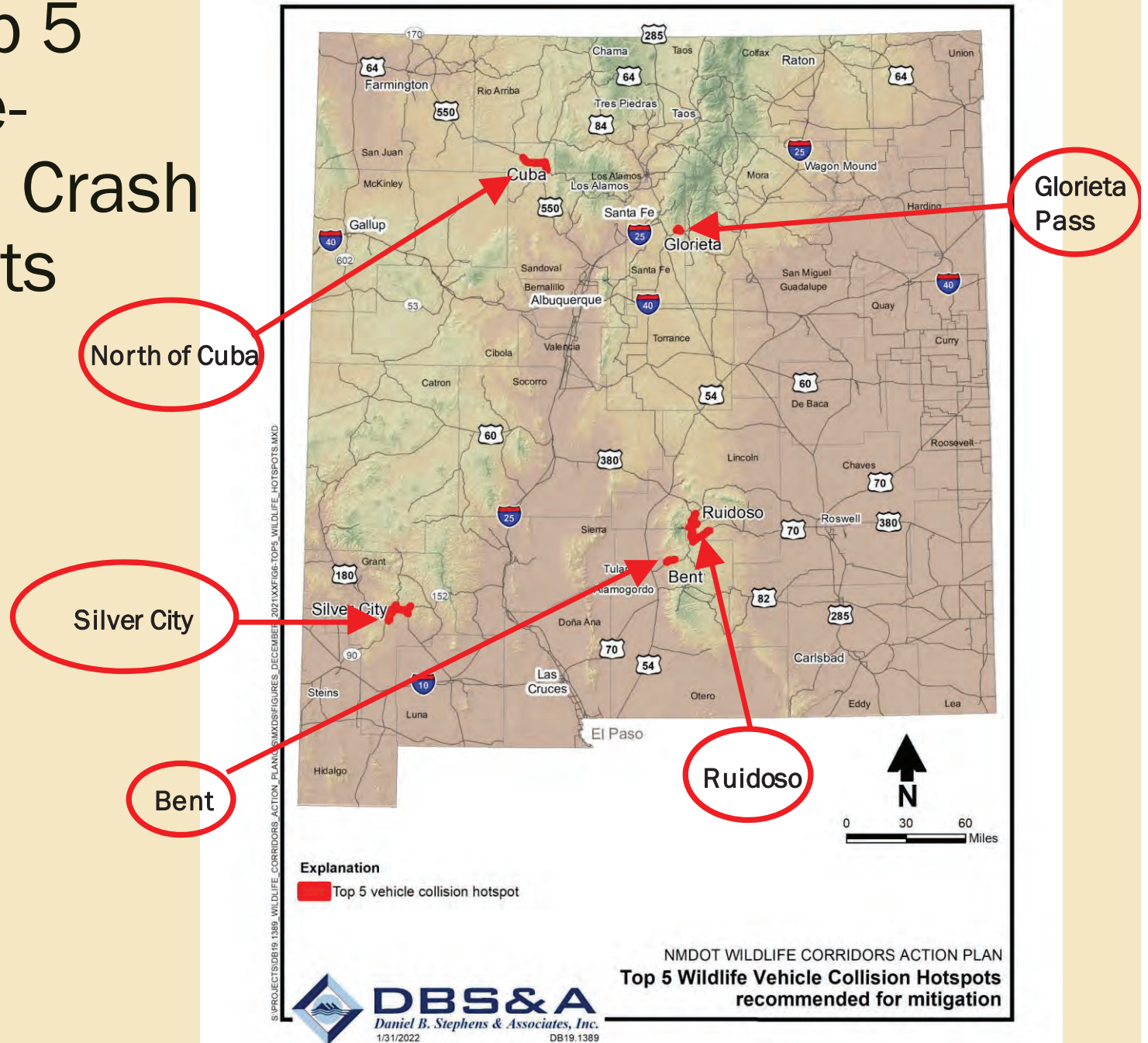
# Crossing Structure Examples



# Other Mitigation Features

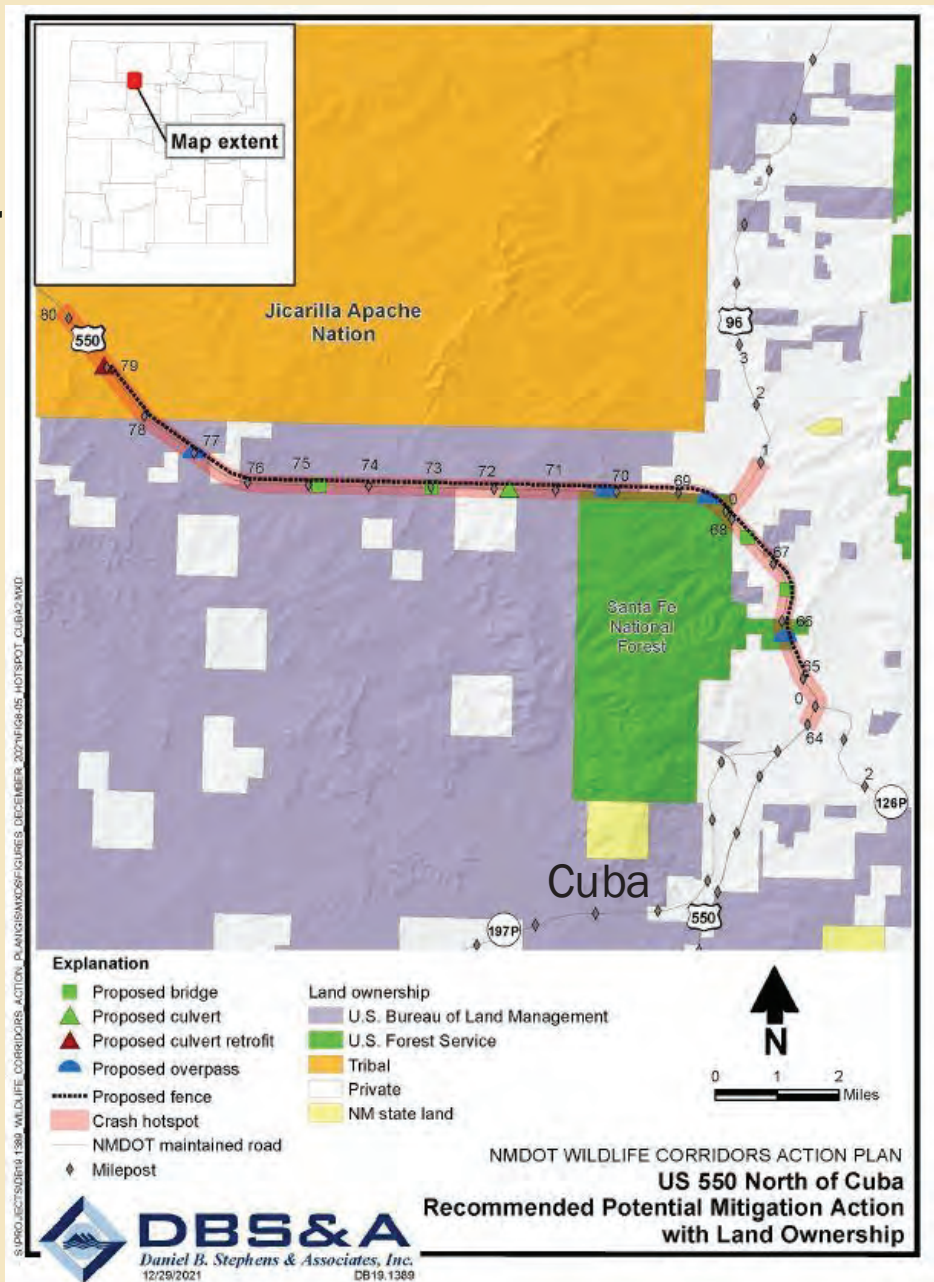


# The Top 5 Wildlife-Vehicle Crash Hotspots



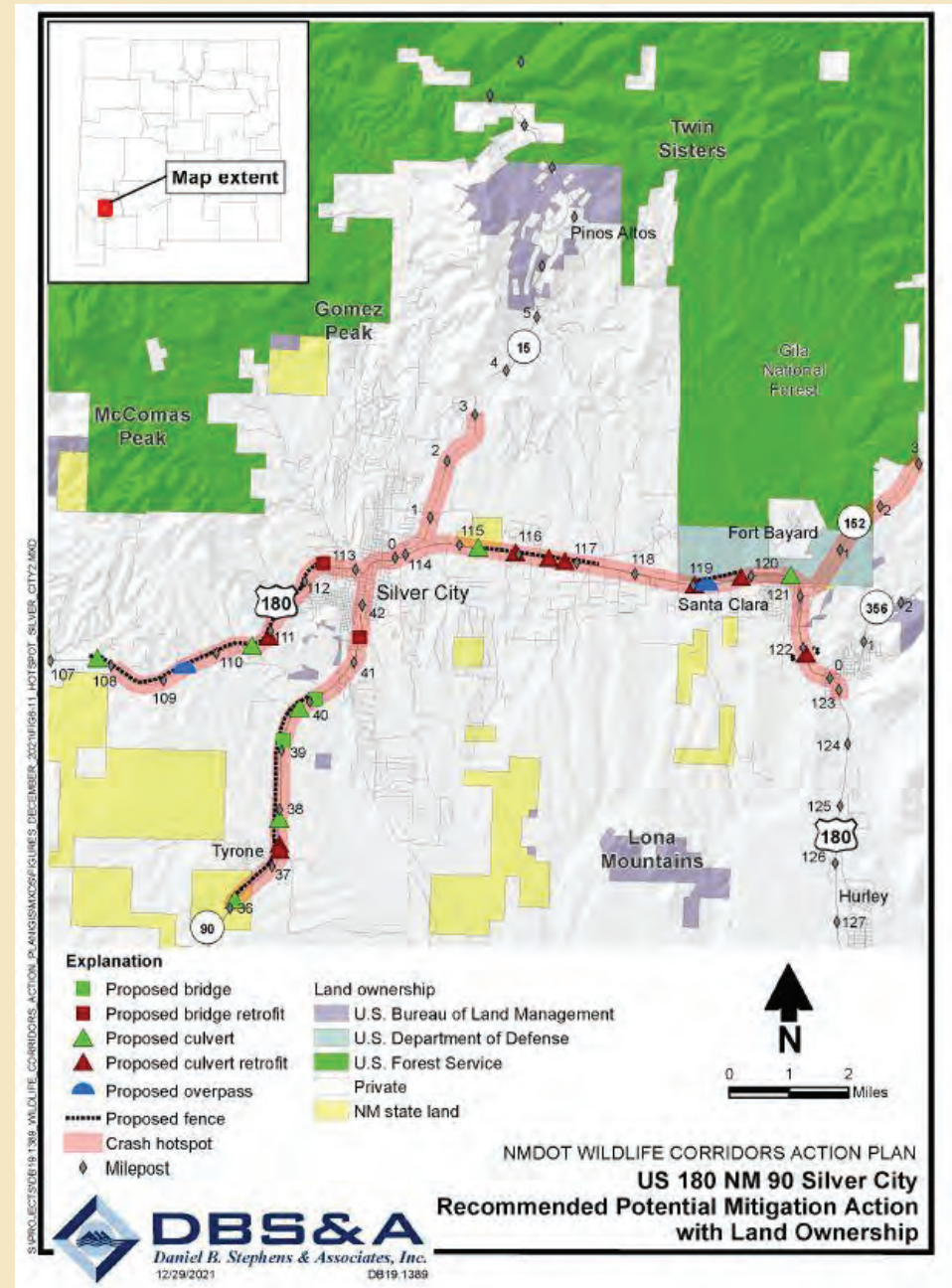
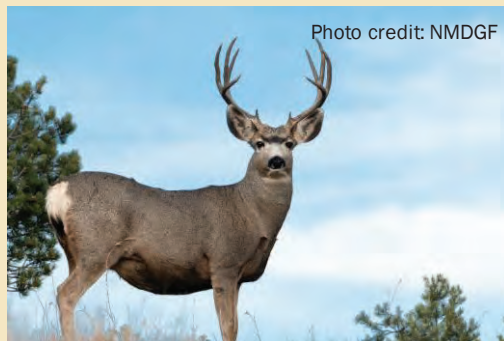
# US 550 North of Cuba WVC Hotspot

- \*17-mile hotspot
- \*Priority species: Elk, deer
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 4 Overpasses
  - 4 Span bridges
  - 1 Arch culvert
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$45,206,312**



# US 180 & NM 90 Silver City WVC Hotspot

- \*27-mile hotspot
- \*Priority species: Deer
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 2 Overpasses
  - 2 Span bridges
  - 4 Box culverts
  - 3 Arch culverts
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$39,431,000**



# US 70 & NM 48

## Ruidoso WVC

### Hotspot

- \*34-mile hotspot
- \*Priority species: Deer
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 2 Overpasses
  - 8 Span bridges
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$30,668,000**

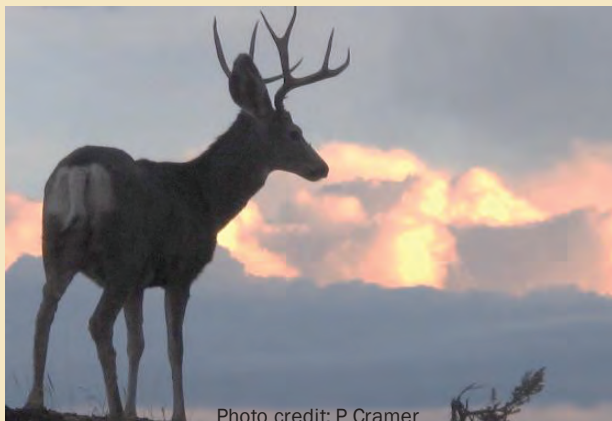
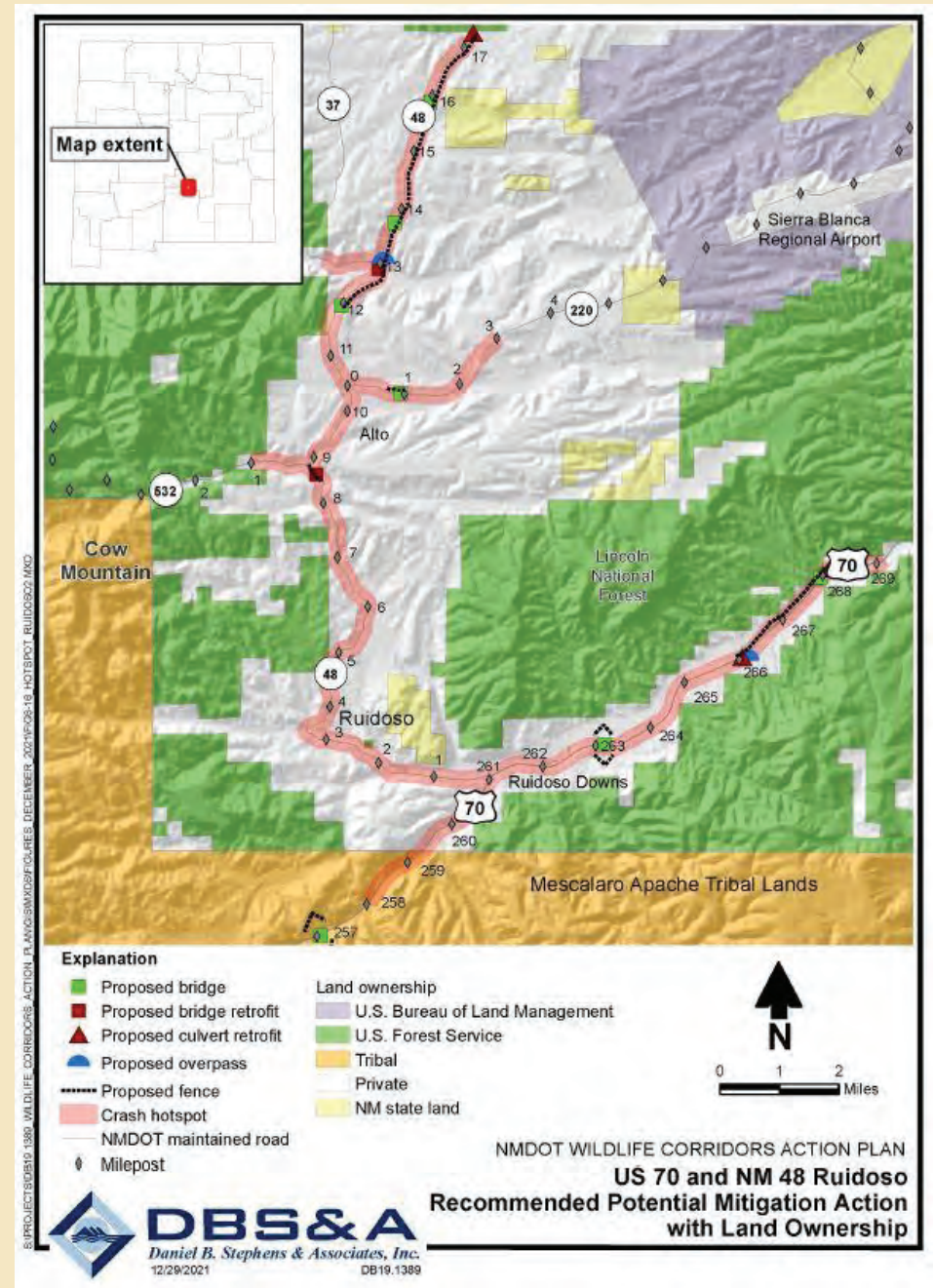


Photo credit: P Cramer



# I-25 Glorieta Pass WVC Hotspot

- \*3-mile hotspot
- \*Priority species: Bear, deer
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 1 Overpass
  - 2 Span bridges
  - 3 Arch culverts
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$21,000,000**

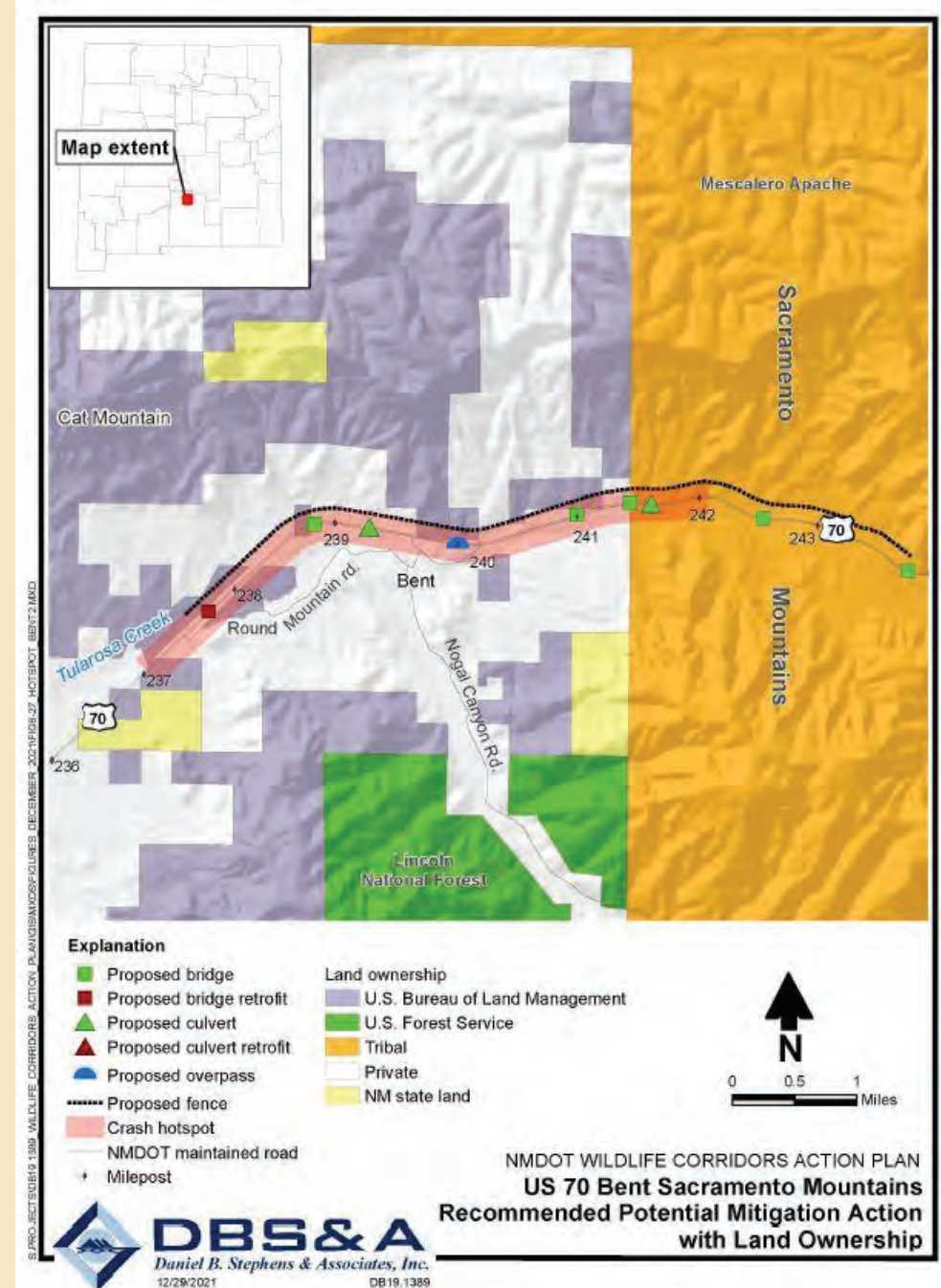


Photo Credit: CDOT, CPW, ECO-resolutions

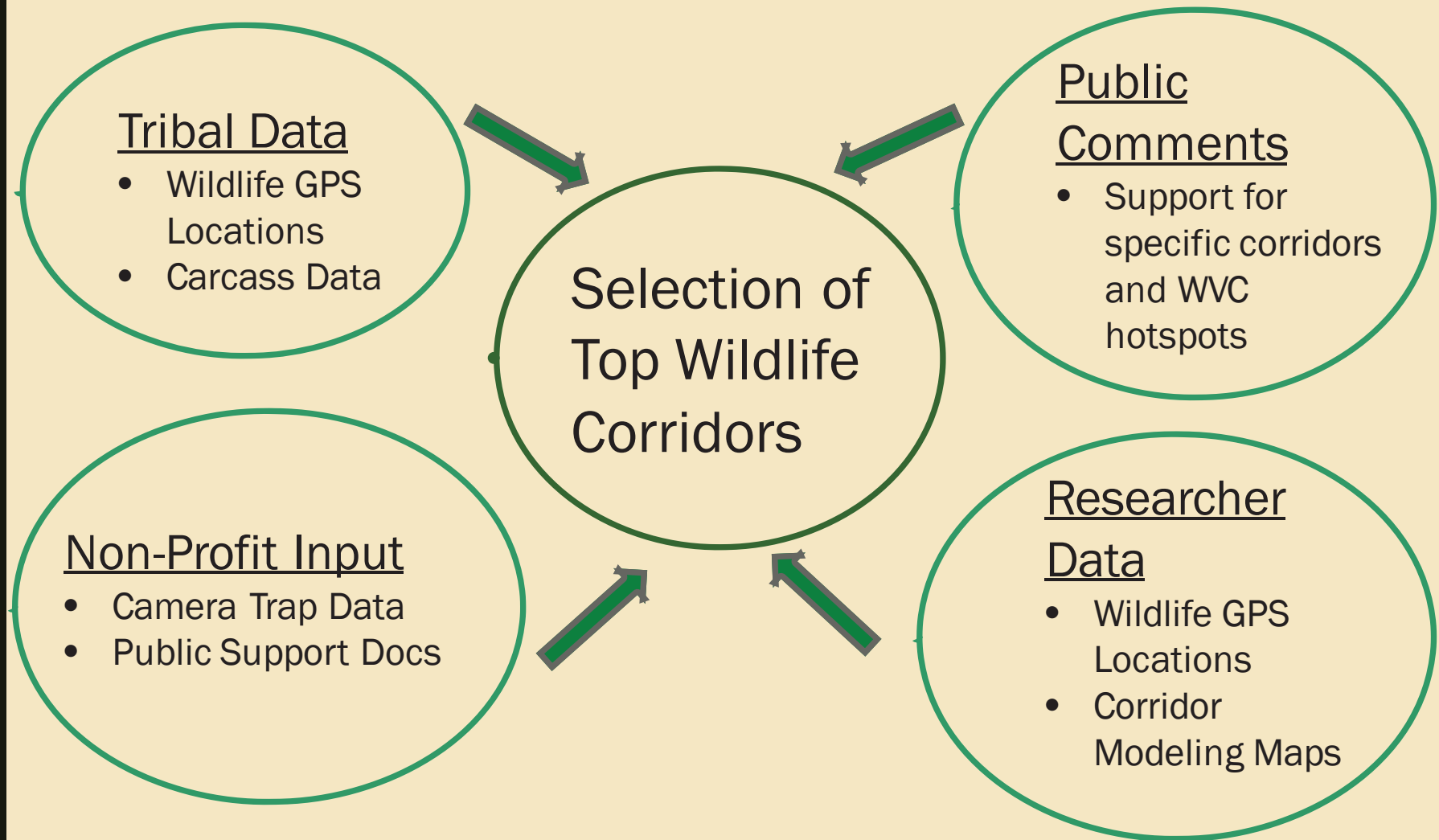


# US 70 Bent Sacramento Mtns WVC Hotspot

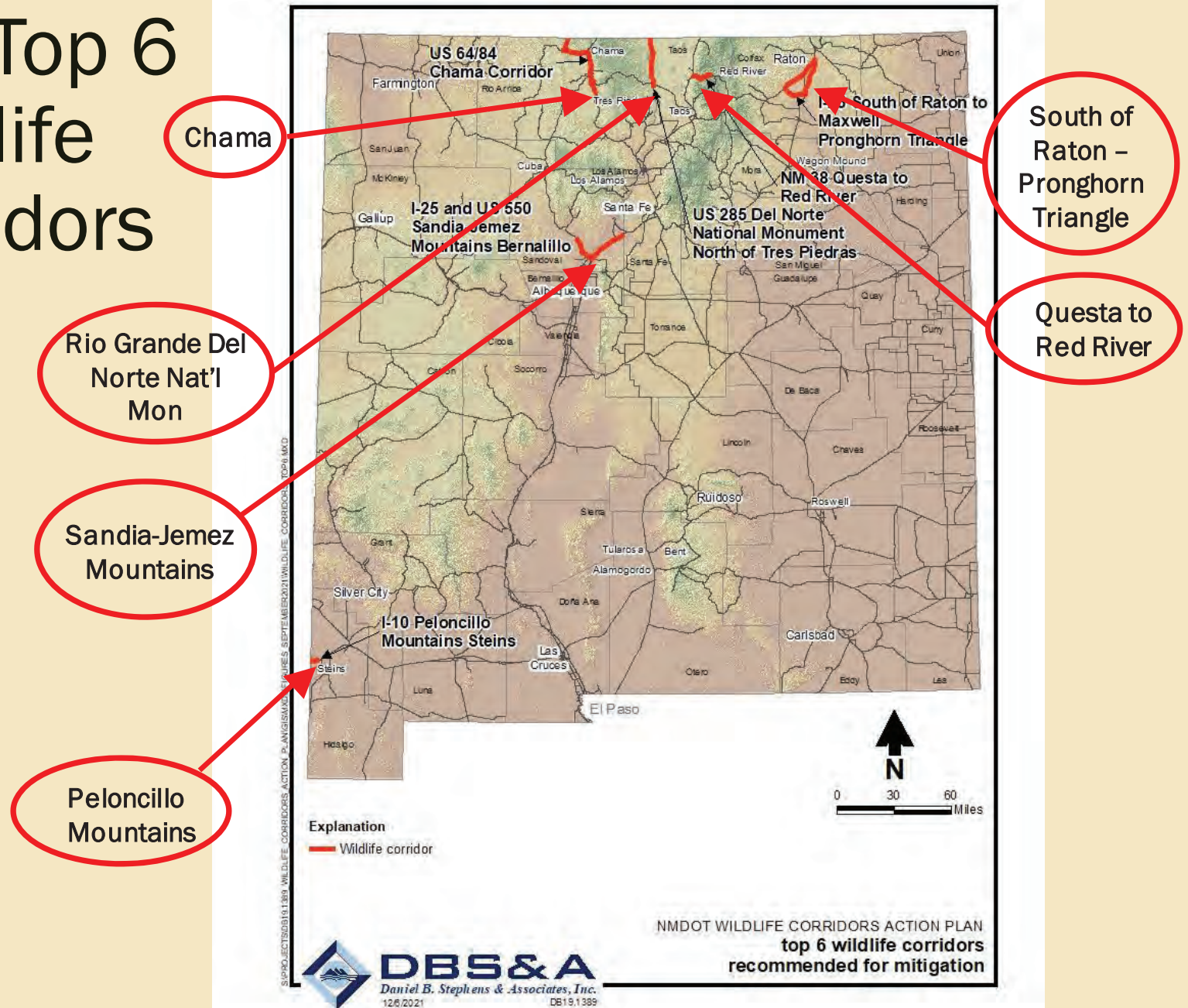
- \*5-mile hotspot
- \*Priority species: Elk
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 1 Overpass
  - 5 Span bridges
  - 2 Arch culverts
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$27,990,000**



# Corridor Prioritization Informed by Researcher, Tribal, Non-Profit and Public Data

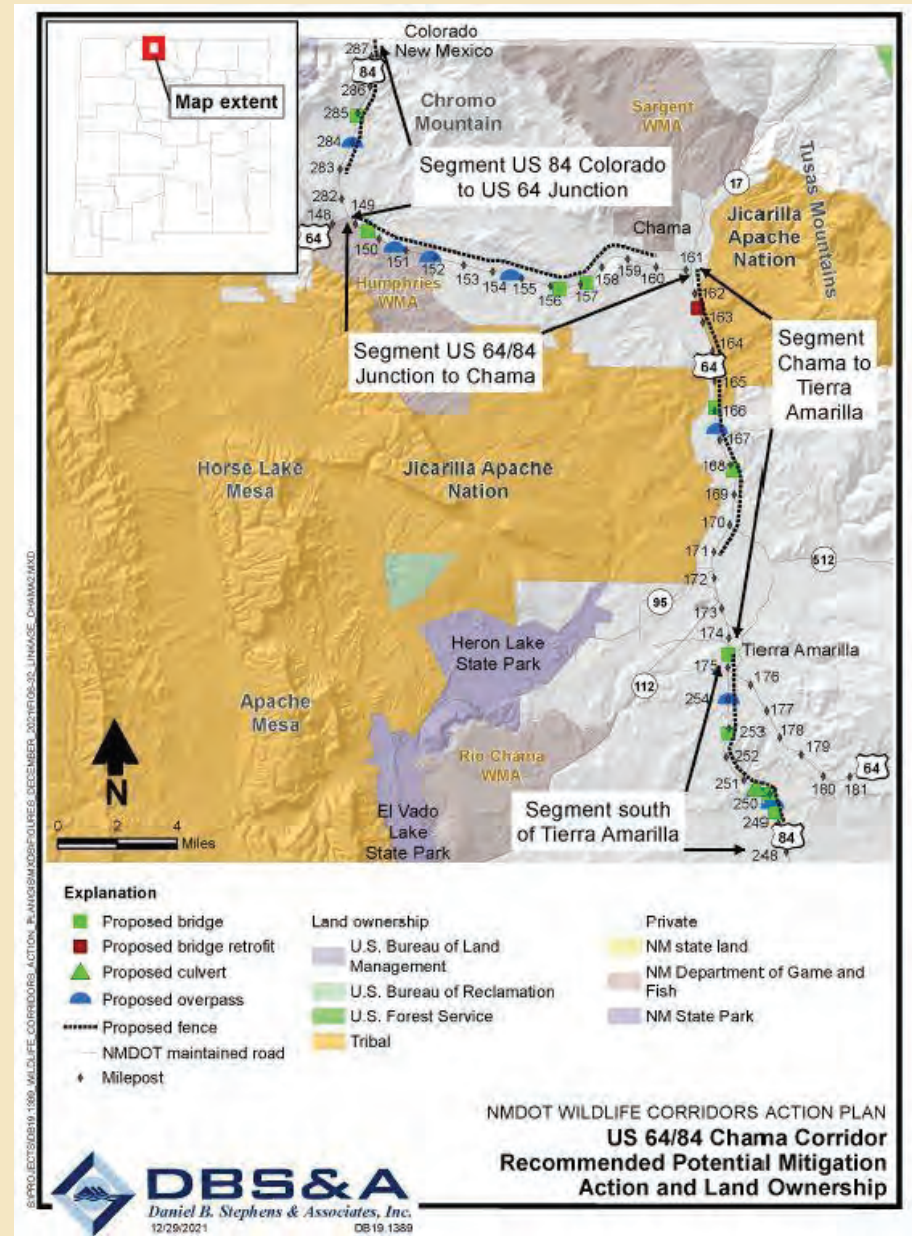
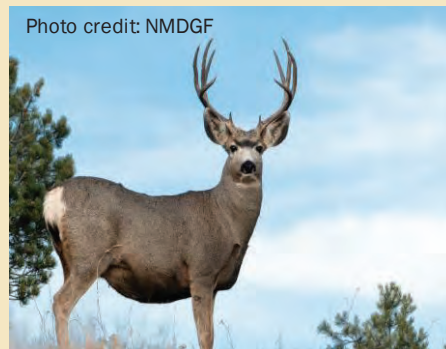
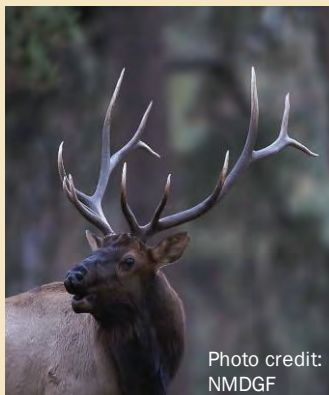


# The Top 6 Wildlife Corridors



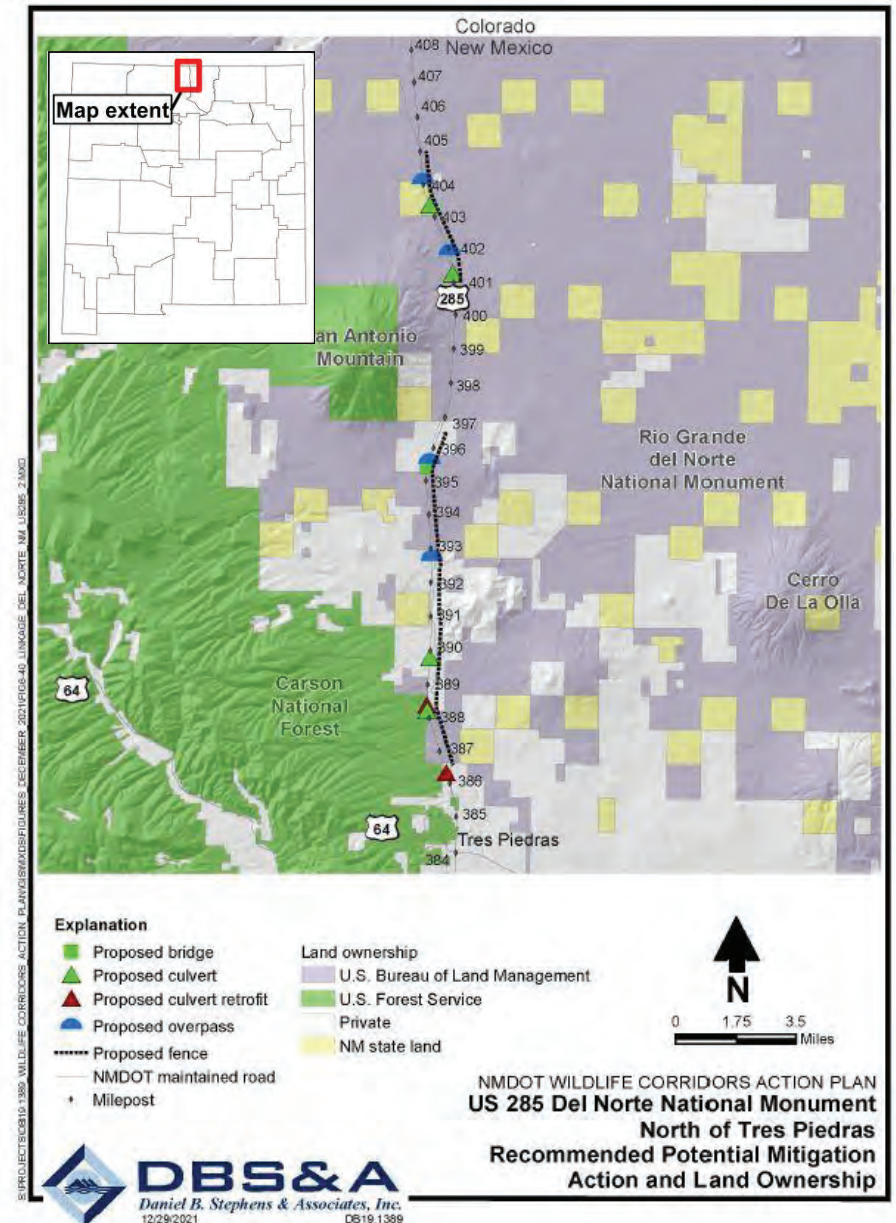
# US 64 & US 84 Chama Wildlife Corridor

- \*38-mile corridor
- \*Priority species: Deer, elk
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 7 Overpasses
  - 10 Span bridges
  - 1 Box culvert
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$50,554,000**



# US 285 Rio Grande del Norte Natl. Monument Wildlife Corridor

- \* 25-mile corridor
- \* Priority species: Elk, pronghorn
- \* Project recommendations:
  - 4 Overpasses
  - 4 Span bridges
  - 1 Arch culvert
  - 2 ADS
- \* Estimated project cost:  
**\$28,622,000**

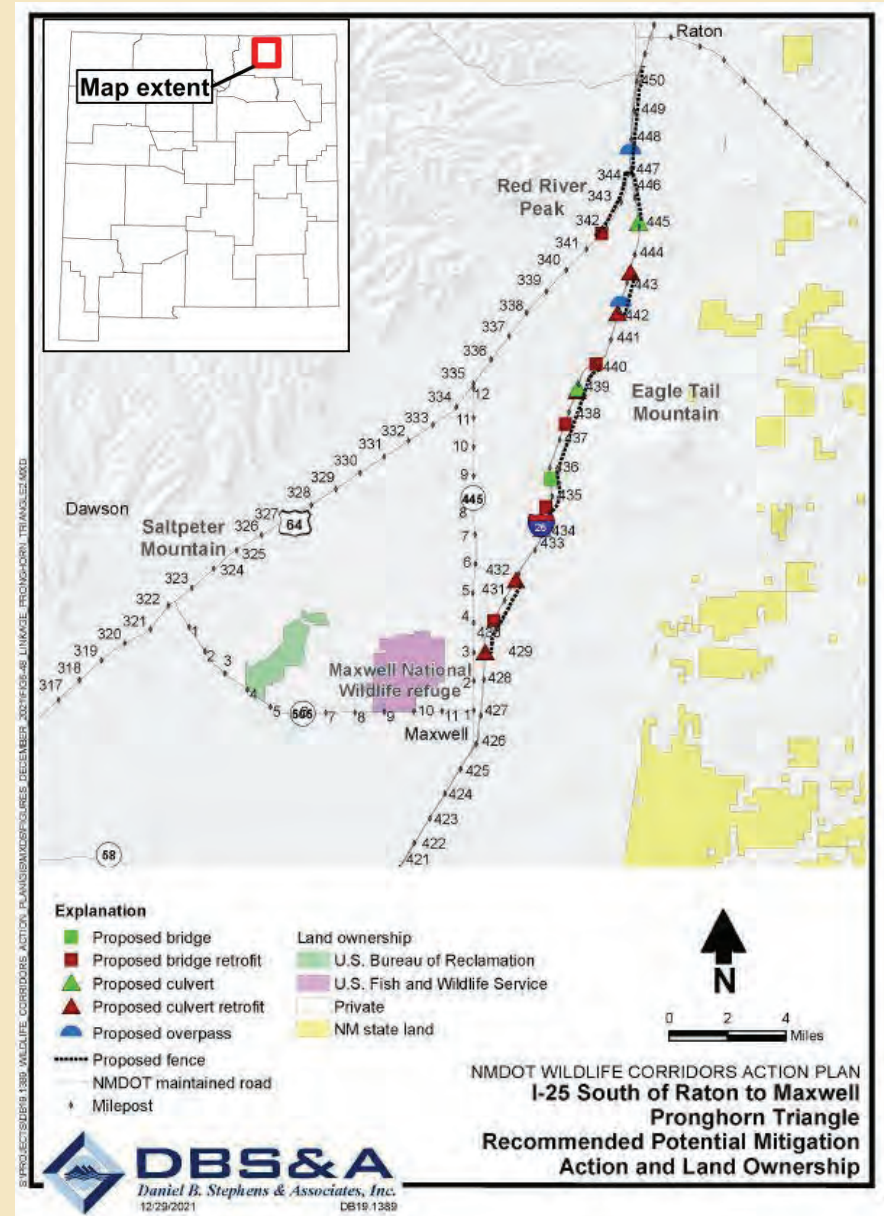


# I-25, US 64, NM 505 & NM 445 Pronghorn Triangle Wildlife Corridor

- \*69-mile corridor
- \*Priority species: Pronghorn, deer, elk
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 2 Overpasses
  - 2 Span bridges
  - 4 Arch culverts
  - Fence modifications
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$31,458,000**



Photo credit: NMDGF



# I-10 Peloncillo Mountains Steins Wildlife Corridor

- \*5-mile corridor
- \*Priority species: Bighorn
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 4 Overpasses
  - 3 Span bridges
  - 2 Arch culverts
  - 1 Box culvert
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$46,174,800**

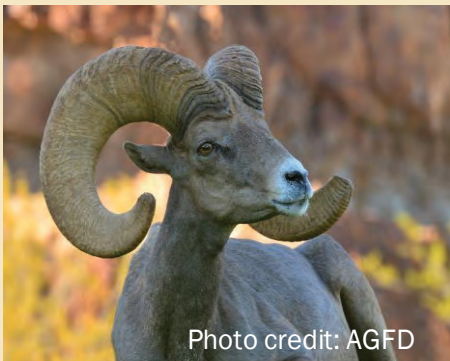
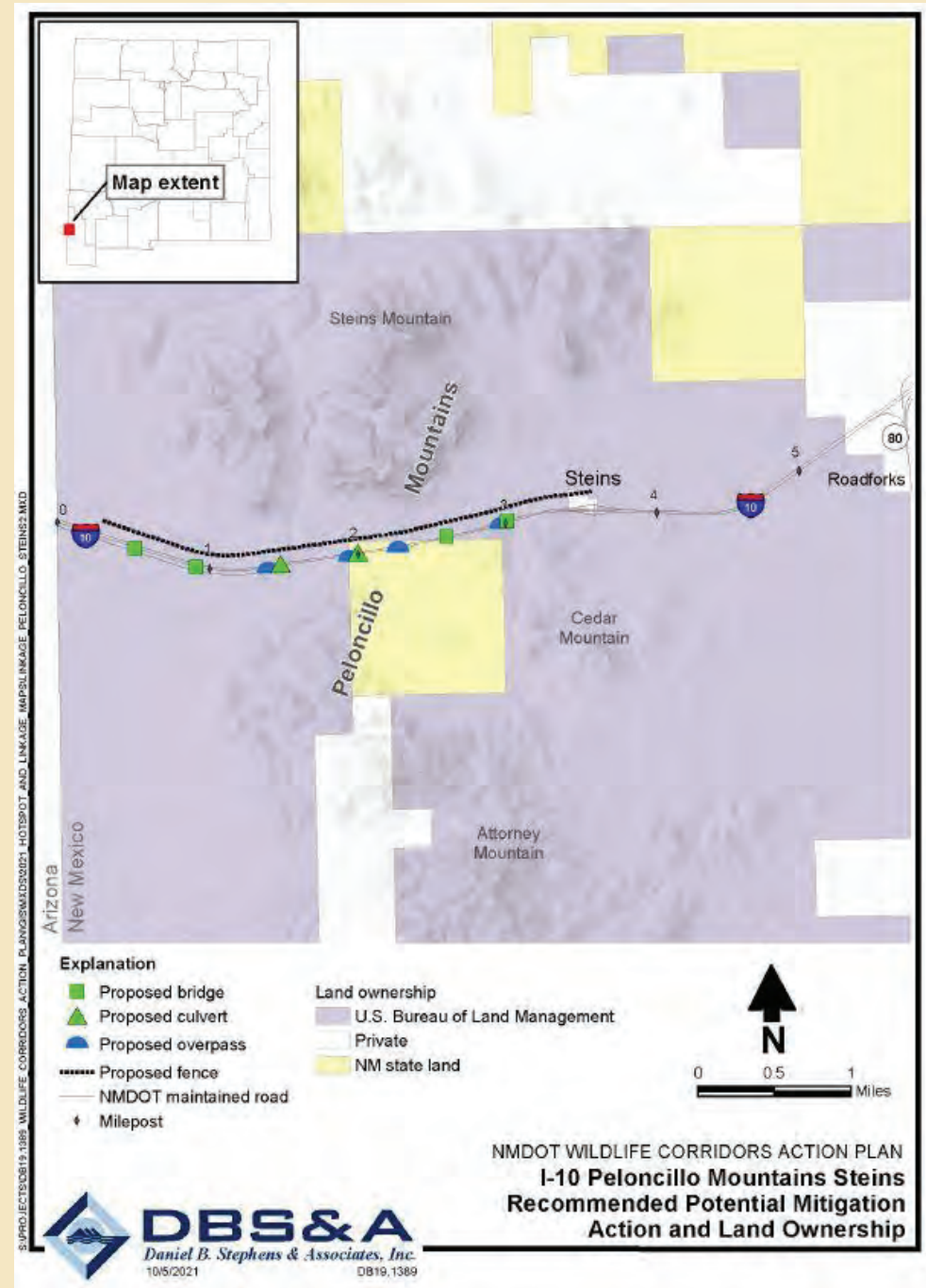


Photo credit: AGFD



# I-25 & US 550 Sandia-Jemez Mountains Wildlife Corridor

- \*36-mile corridor
- \*Priority species: Deer, elk
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 5 Overpasses
  - 1 Span bridge
  - 2 Box culverts
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$49,336,000**

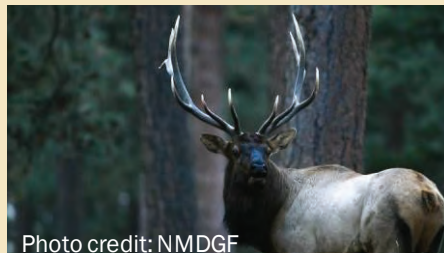


Photo credit: NMDGF

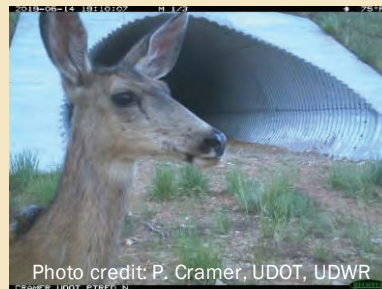
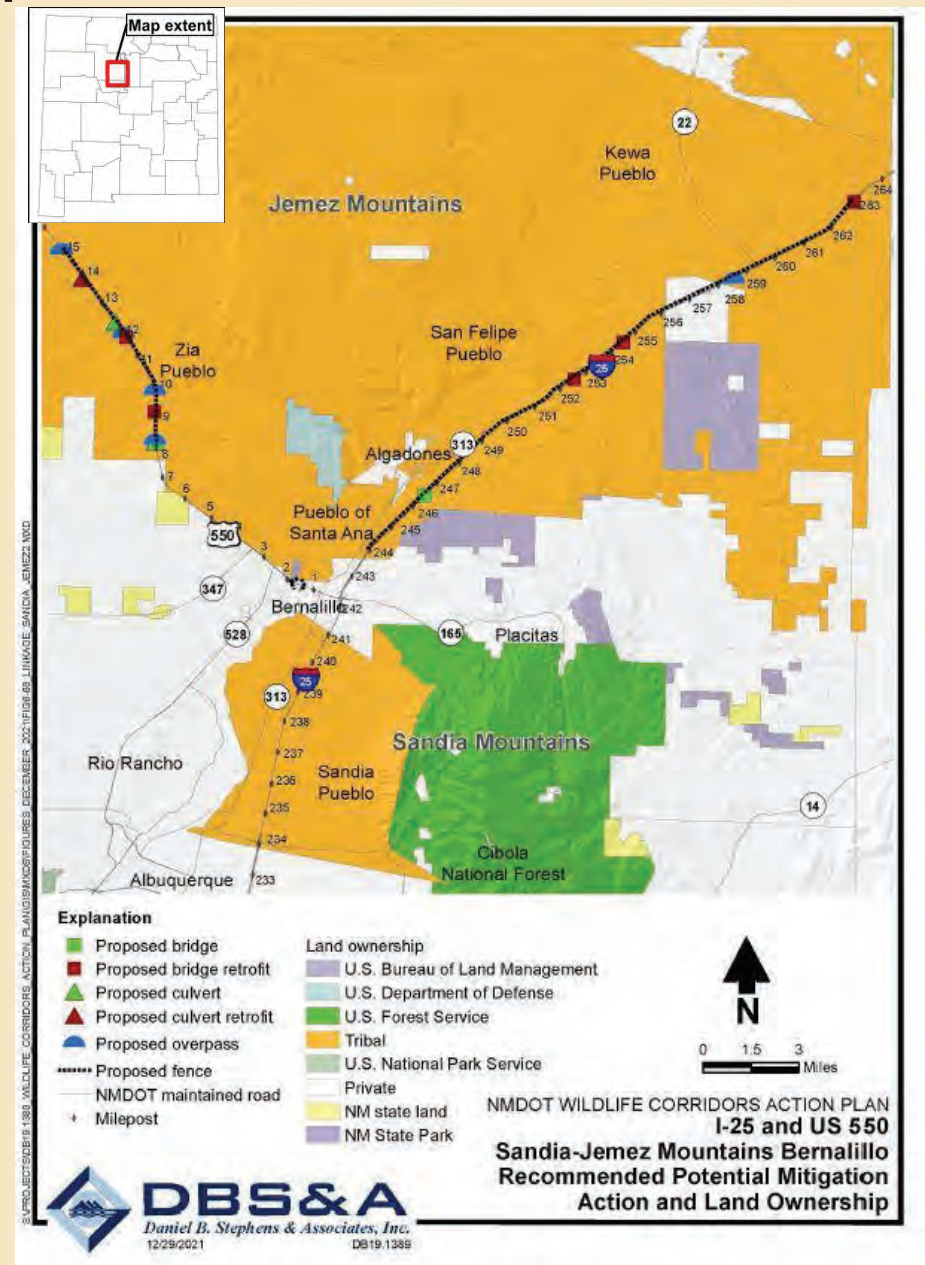


Photo credit: P. Cramer, UDOT, UDWR

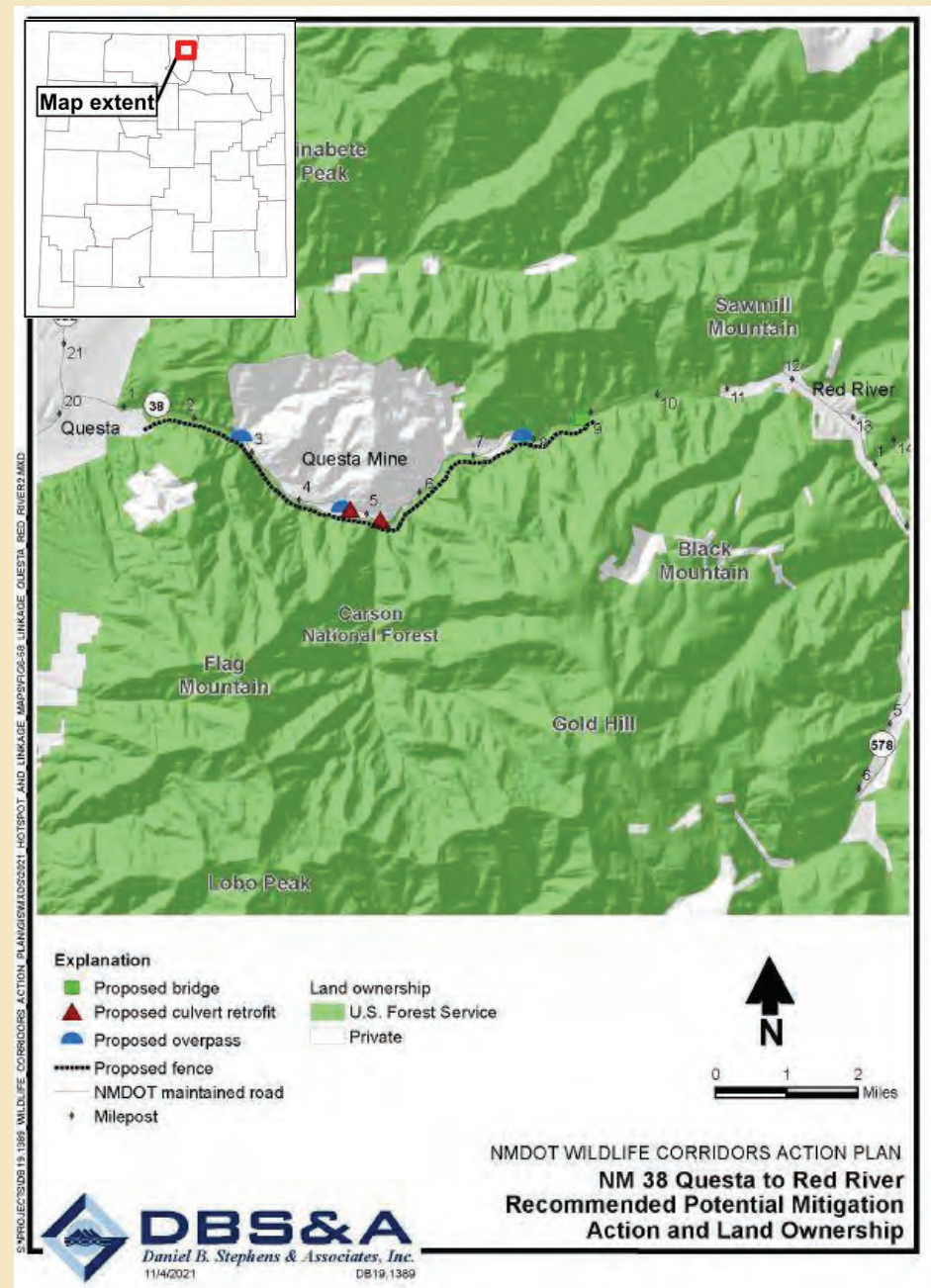


# NM 38 Questa to Red River Wildlife Corridor\*

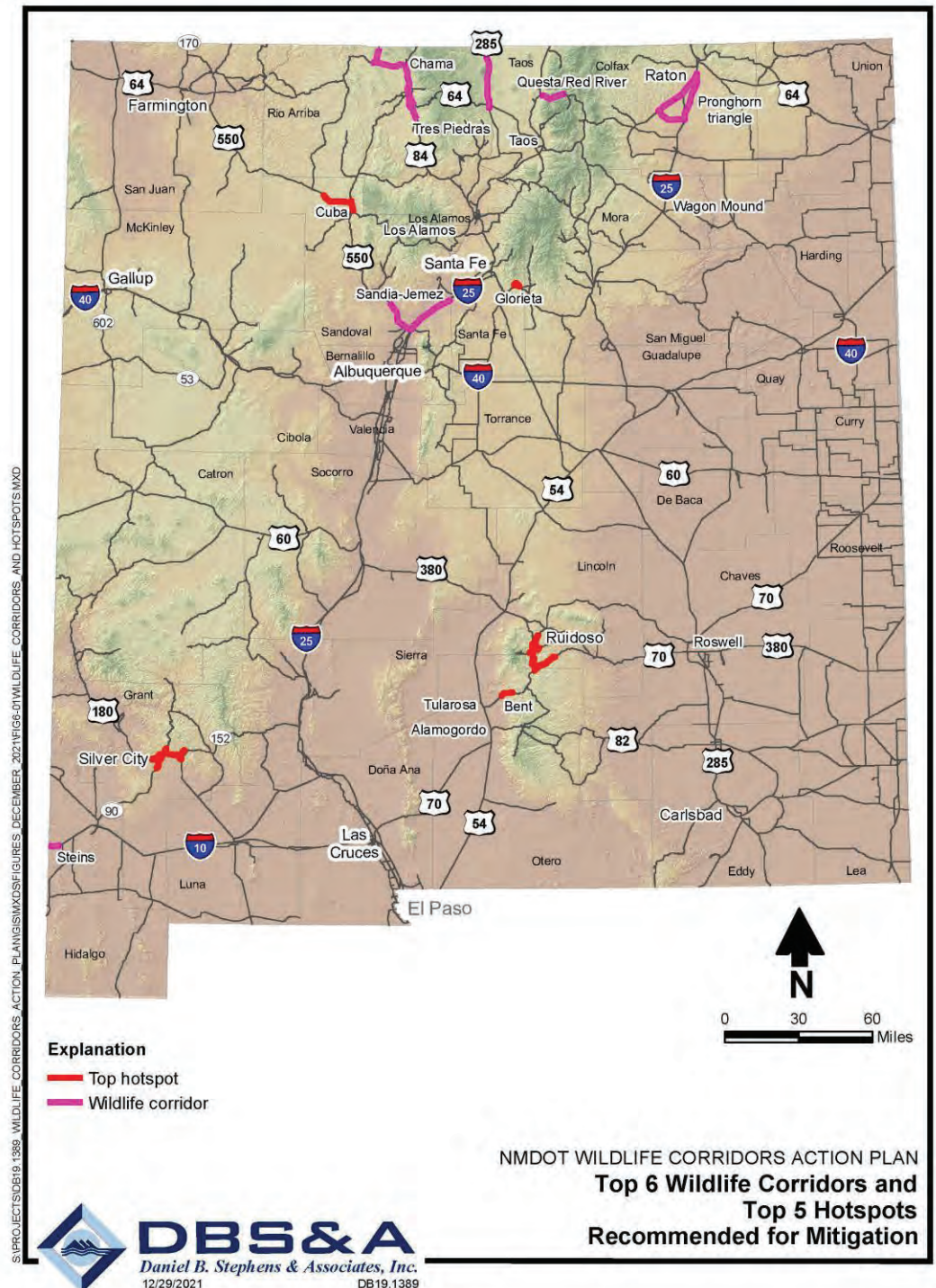
- \*9-mile corridor
- \*Priority species: Bighorn
- \*Project recommendations:
  - 3 Overpasses
  - 1 Span bridge
  - 2 ADS
- \*Estimated project cost:  
**\$17,604,400**



Photo credit: Mark Watson



# New Mexico's Top 11 WVC Hotspots & Wildlife Corridors



# Final Steps...

## Public Involvement 2022

- Draft Action Plan released January 12, 2022
  - Sent Notice Letters to stakeholders, including agencies, non-profits, Tribes
  - Public notices via press releases, social media, websites
- February 2022 – 2 virtual public meetings hosted
- Comment period ended on March 12, 2022
  - Comments submitted via email/written/phone



# Final Steps and What's Next

- March 2022 – Reviewed and responded to comments
- June 2022 - Update and released Final Action Plan
- Ongoing - Secure funds and plan for top projects
  - \$2 million for FY 2023
  - New Mexico Wildlife Safe Passages Coalition
  - Coordination with USFS, BLM, and Jicarilla Apache Nation to design Cuba mitigation project (Phased)
- Ongoing - Continue to update the Action Plan

<https://wildlifeactionplan.nmdotprojects.org/>

# Questions?



Photo: M. Watson