



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

J.R. "JOEY" HOPKINS  
SECRETARY

FHWA WILDLIFE CROSSINGS PILOT PROGRAM  
2024 GRANT APPLICATION  
NCDOT REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

The [Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program | FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#) is a competitive grant program that awards grants to eligible entities for projects with the goal of reducing Wildlife Vehicle Collisions (WVC) while improving habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species.

In support of NCDOT's ongoing and longstanding coordination, incorporation and construction of wildlife crossings on transportation facilities in North Carolina, and our joint Wildlife Stewardship [MOU](#) with the NC Wildlife Resource Commission, the NCDOT requests your support for the following projects:

**US 64 Washington County: Wildlife Fencing to Reduce Wildlife Vehicle Collisions (64 SAFETY)** – This project proposes to upgrade the existing wildlife underpasses with appropriate wildlife fencing for approximately 7 miles of US 64. The fencing will reduce WVC in an area with critically endangered red wolf, black bear, and white-tailed deer populations and improve habitat connectivity for all species within this corridor.

**US 64 Dare County: The Red Wolf Essential Survival Crossings Under Evacuation Route (RESCUER)** - RESCUER proposes to reduce WVC and improve habitat connectivity for the entire length of US 64 within the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge (ARNWR). This project is critical for the continued existence of the only wild population of the critically endangered Red Wolf in the world. This project is a joint application with the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Red Wolf Recovery Program and ARNWR. It is supported by Wildlands Network, the Center for Biological Diversity, and coalition partners through a \$2 million fundraising challenge to match a \$2 million anonymous donor.

Over the last 10 years vehicle strike mortalities have been the leading cause of mortality in Red Wolves. Installing wildlife fencing to reduce WVC along with multiple wildlife underpass structures to provide habitat connectivity for species including the critically endangered Red Wolf, black bear, white-tailed deer, meso-mammals, small mammals, and herpetofauna is an essential mitigation measure to address impacts from US 64 through ARNWR. Specific to this funding opportunity, this first phase addresses one of

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the WVC hotspots and is a main area of concern along US 64 identified by both Huijser and Begley (2023) based on all Red Wolf vehicle strike mortality data and previous WVC studies conducted on US 64.

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