

The Wildlife Crossing

A FWS newsletter to facilitate collaboration between the Michigan Ecological Services Field Office and Michigan's transportation agencies

Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake - Oakland County



Wildlife Crossing Tunnel - City of Brampton

Deer Crossing - MLive



Snapping Turtle on Road - FWS



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding for Wildlife Crossing Projects

FHWA recently opened the application period for [Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program grants](#). The goal of these grants is to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and improve habitat connectivity. Both construction and non-construction projects (planning, research, etc.) are eligible for funding under this program. Applications for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 are due September 4, 2024. Applications for fiscal year 2026 will be due on August 1, 2025. Check out the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for more information! There is also a new resource to assist in finding other federal funding opportunities for these types of wildlife crossing projects. Authored in partnership by ARC Solutions, National Parks Conservation Association, and Wildlands Network, the [Wildlife Infrastructure Funding Guide](#) is an in-depth document that provides information such as eligibility details, selection criteria, and set-asides. It also provides examples of successful projects from the previous funding cycle. If you are working on a road project that could be used to improve habitat connectivity or reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, make sure to check out this guide! The [Midwest Conservation Blueprint](#) has also offered to provide support through materials such as reports or maps to transportation agencies applying for grants for these types of projects. If you are interested in their support, please reach out to [our office](#)!

Hungerford's Crawling Water Beetle - FWS



Discovery of a New Population of Endangered Beetles

[Hungerford's crawling water beetle](#) (HCWB) is a federally endangered, aquatic beetle that is less than 5 mm long. They are only found in the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan (NLP) and the Bruce Peninsula of Ontario. A new population of this rare beetle was recently discovered in Robinson Creek, less than 2 miles south of Roscommon. Based on this discovery, the range of the species has been expanded to include portions of Roscommon and Ogemaw Counties. This beetle may be of interest to road agencies in the NLP, as they are sometimes found near stream crossings and in plunge pools below culverts. There are known HCWB populations in 12 streams in the NLP, and additional undiscovered populations may exist. Road projects that impact potentially occupied streams should consider HCWB during project planning. Interested in where these beetles are found in Michigan? Then check out the map and spatial files in the [HCWB Survey Protocol](#)!

Protections for Migratory Birds and Eagles

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 is a law that implements four international treaties meant to ensure the sustainability of protected migratory bird species. Under this law, it is unlawful to take, capture, kill, or possess migratory birds, their nests, eggs, and young. For projects that contain habitat suitable for nesting by migratory bird species, we recommend scheduling construction activities or removing potential habitat or nesting structures before birds initiate spring nesting or after the breeding season has ended to help avoid the potential take of migratory birds, eggs, young, and/or active nests. Generally, we recommend that any habitat disturbance occur before April 15 or after August 15 to minimize potential impacts on migratory birds. If you have questions about migratory birds or potential impacts to birds from road projects you should reach out to the [Midwest Region Migratory Birds Division of FWS](#).

In addition, bald eagles, golden eagles, and their nests are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act). The Eagle Act prohibits, except when authorized by an Eagle Act permit, actions that would pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb an eagle. The Eagle Act's implementing regulations define disturb as "to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, (1) injury to an eagle, (2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or (3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior." If a road project may impact bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Eagle Act may be required. For more information on eagles and conducting activities in the vicinity of an eagle nest, please visit our [Eagle Management webpage](#).



Bald Eagle - FWS



Golden Eagle - FWS



Sandhill Crane - FWS



Which Determination Key Should I Use?

Determination keys (Dkeys) are a great tool to make Section 7 consultation faster and easier! Many road projects in Michigan have obtained a concurrence letter by using a Dkey. If you are considering using a Dkey for your next project, it is important to know which of the Dkey options would work best for you. For most transportation projects, we recommend using the [All-Species Michigan Dkey](#) since it will assist you in making determinations for all species in your project area. The range-wide bat Dkey is integrated within the Michigan Dkey, so you should usually complete the Michigan Dkey instead. However, some federally funded transportation projects may prefer to use the [FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Consultation for Transportation Projects Dkey](#). The FHWA Dkey may be the best option for federally funded transportation projects that only wish to consult on listed bats and have made no effect determinations for all other species. This Dkey may also be preferable if your project will have adverse effects to federally listed bats and you wish to mitigate for those impacts through the use of the [Range-Wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat In-Lieu Fee Program](#). Please reach out to [our office](#) if you are unsure which Dkey is appropriate for your project!