



# PROJECTS and PAYCHECKS

# STATE EXAMPLES

## On the Road to Recovery 2009

(As of December 31, 2009)

**Number of Recovery  
Projects:**  
59

**Total State  
Expenditures:**  
\$83,502,695.90

**State Web Site for  
More Information:**  
<http://www.wyoming.gov/recovery/Pages/home.aspx>

**AASHTO Recovery  
Web Site:**  
[recovery.transportation.org](http://recovery.transportation.org)

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*A one-year report on **state transportation successes** under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*

February 2010



"During the economic downturn experienced in Wyoming, the ARRA funds for highways were a welcome investment, both in creating and retaining construction and related jobs, and in helping to address highway conditions and projects that otherwise would have not been funded."

— John Cox, Wyoming Director of Transportation

## Highway 789 Wildlife Crossing Carbon County, Wyoming

**Value: \$1.1 million improvement to roadway, incalculable**

After successfully carving 65 projects from the state's \$157.6 million in highway stimulus funds, the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) is realizing big payoffs from modest investments. Perhaps no single American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) project in the state illustrates this concept better than a \$1.2 million effort to construct a wildlife underpass on Wyoming Highway 789 near Baggs in Carbon County in south central Wyoming.

Beginning in mid-June, Prime Contractor Hout Fencing of Worland, Wyoming, oversaw grading, milling plant mix, placing crushed base and pavement, and other work on 4.5 miles of roadway. The portion of the project of greatest interest to many, however, is the installation of a concrete box culvert specially designed to aid wildlife crossing. Since opening in October, the underpass has served a variety of animals transiting the highway including mule deer, elk, bobcat, and coyote.

A camera system installed to track wildlife users at the facility has captured images of 3,279 mule deer—a significant number since the system was not functioning for



View, facing west, of the game camera and well-defined deer trail through the underpass.



View, facing west, of the deer trail through the underpass.



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## Highway 789 Wildlife Crossing Carbon County, Wyoming *(continued)*

approximately 12 days in late November because of equipment problems. Commenting about the number of users, WYDOT Wildlife Specialist Tom Hart states that “the actual number of crossings is likely substantially higher.” In one 13-day period in early December, for instance, the equipment recorded more than 1,100 crossings of deer migrating to winter feeding grounds.

In recent years WYDOT has begun installing wildlife facilities at strategic locations both to help animals cross highways and to improve roadway safety. This technology has proven effective in different locations in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Commenting on results at Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada, Wendy Francis of the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative states that “the combination of fencing and underpasses is an extremely effective tool in reducing vehicle wildlife collisions and preserving the ability of animals to move across busy highways.” A 2007 report to Congress by the Federal Highway Administration indicates that appropriately placed wildlife crossing structures can reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions by more than 80 percent.

These reductions are vital not only to human and animal safety, but also to wildlife as an economic resource. Wildlife viewing is integral to Wyoming tourism, the state’s second leading industry. According to the Wyoming Business Council, travel and tourism is a \$2.9 billion industry and supported 30,540 jobs statewide in 2008.

This underpass will improve human and animal safety and provide wildlife with a connection to needed habitat for years to come. Data collected at this site concerning animal use will help WYDOT design improved crossing facilities in the future.



Coyote using the crossing at night.



Orderly mule deer making an early morning crossing.



Morning rush hour.