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New survey looks at wildlife and highway crossings

Toronto, Ontario – Migrating wildlife coexisting with high-speed highways is the focus of a new competition, of interest to Canadians and Americans. The first-ever competition of its kind, *ARC: The International Wildlife Crossing Structure Design Competition*, will be presented in Washington, D.C. on January 23.

The goal of the challenge, issued to landscape architects, transportation and structural engineers, and ecologists worldwide, is intended to solve a worsening dilemma of dangerous collisions between wildlife and vehicles. The creators and sponsors chose a site along the heavily-travelled West Vail Pass on Interstate Highway 70 near the ski centre of Vail, Colorado. I-70 bisects a critical habitat of a thick mountain forest heavily populated with species such as black bears, cougars, bobcats, lynx, coyote, elk, deer and marten. In five designs, landscape architects have created large, landscaped convex arcs which appear as natural habitat, allowing the wildlife to safely move over the highway. The designs can be viewed at [ARC](#). Each of the five finalists will be awarded US\$15,000, with the overall prize design taking home \$40,000.

While the competition focuses on the Colorado area, the applications are useful to Canada, which has long dealt with the problems of wildlife and vehicle collisions. The system of crossings near Banff, Alberta is viewed as among the world's best and most successful, with 41 crossing structures now along 75 kilometres of highways, including six overpasses.

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