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News > Headline News > 01/11/2011

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### Helping Bambi cross the road

01/11/2011

TORONTO -- Here's a statistic you probably hadn't thought about yet today.

In the United States, crashes between animals and motor vehicles have increased by about 50 percent in the last 15 years.

The American Federal Highway Administration estimates that there are up to two million vehicle-animal collisions a year.

With the aim of decreasing that number, an organization called ARC: The International Wildlife Crossing Structure Design Competition is sponsoring a contest that will yield a revolutionary new way for animals to get across highways safely.

On Sunday, Jan. 23, ARC will be announcing the winner of the competition and that winner will win \$40,000 and -- perhaps of greater importance -- the winning designers will be leaders in this fast-growing field.

The competing designs are really cool. They're designed to lure deer, elk, buffalo, all critters big and small -- up the ramp and over the highway so they don't meet their maker. Or a class-8 Pete.

Check them out at [www.arc-competition.com/finalists.php](http://www.arc-competition.com/finalists.php).

Among the five finalists is the Canadian firm Janet Rosenberg & Associates of Toronto.

Canadians have long been international leaders when it comes to getting animals across highways safely.

In fact, the system of 41 crossings and six overpasses along 75 km of highway near Banff is viewed as among the world's best and most successful.

Alberta wildlife ecologist and research scientist Tony Clevenger, who is one of the world-renowned jurors for the competition, says ARC is intended to inspire imitation worldwide.

"Banff is the world leader in wildlife crossings but they're in a static mould and the price of the structures keeps going up and up. The ideas brought forward in this competition are making us think about how to build these structures in new ways."

Parks Canada has expressed interest in the contest finalists to help in the

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design of new wildlife crossings over key sections along the Trans-Canada Highway through the Canadian Rockies.

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