

# CENTER for LARGE LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

## 2020 Summer Newsletter

### Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

Some say that 2020 is the year of four pandemics: COVID-19, racism, economic upheaval, and climate change. Each of these challenges is uniquely impacting our lives, and all of these pandemics are interrelated with Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized peoples disproportionately bearing the burden of each. While the Center for Large Landscape Conservation cannot singularly solve all or any of these pandemics, we can and must address the environmental causes and work to lessen the consequences wherever possible.

The challenges facing our nation and the world today are woven together through complex, deep-rooted, and unjust factors—and the ramifications are coming to a collective head. The cacophony of change is upon us. *How will we respond?*

The Center for Large Landscape Conservation is moving forward in several ways. **The Center was founded on the principle that intact and connected nature is vital for all life on Earth.** Healthy landscapes are fundamental to preventing emergent diseases, building resilience to climate change, providing people with a sustainable resource base to maintain their livelihoods, and protecting the ecological processes that conserve the biosphere of the planet.

At an institutional level, we've [written and published about this interconnectedness for the US National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences and its journal Environmental Health Perspectives](#). We also just contributed to new [global guidance](#) for national park and protected area management in a time of COVID-19. Our organization is unique because health—including environmental health, community health, and human health—is a pillar of our conservation action.

We're also looking at our own organizational design and footprint, seeking new methods of accomplishing our work in ways that address inequality in multifaceted ways. It's time to adapt to a changing world. We know the environmental sector is by no means free from the burden of culpability. Any process for moving forward must include a combination of reconciliation of the past and a re-imagination of the future. As we at the Center work to listen, learn, unlearn, and change, we envision a world that is healthier healthier at the landscape level, and equitable across communities—now and in the future.

We look forward to sharing more about this journey with you.

Warm regards,

Gary Tabor, on behalf of the entire staff and board



**BREAKING NEWS: Wildlife Crossings Receive Funding in INVEST Act**

On June 18, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure included \$300 million in the INVEST in America Act to support efforts to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Along with the \$250 million for wildlife crossings included in the companion Senate bill, S. 2302, this is a significant step toward providing critical funding to improve connectivity for America's wildlife, and make roads safer for people and animals.

The House leadership has signaled it will consider the \$494 billion highway reauthorization bill as part of H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act, a \$1.5 trillion plan to rebuild America's infrastructure slated for three days of floor debate next week.

Renee Callahan, Senior Policy Officer for the Center for Large Landscape Conservation, has worked closely with conservation partners to achieve inclusion of wildlife-related funding in the 2020 transportation package. We are thrilled to see ten years of the Center's work come to fruition.

"Nationally, Americans spend over \$8 billion on wildlife-vehicle collisions through lost lives, property damage and lost wildlife every single year. The good news is that wildlife crossing structures with fencing have been proven to reduce motorist crashes involving wildlife by up to 97%. By dedicating funding for wildlife infrastructure, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has taken a critical step toward making our nation's highways safer for people and wildlife, all while saving taxpayer money: a rare win-win-win." –Renee Callahan, Senior Policy Officer

[View the full press release](#) for more information, as well as a summary of wildlife provisions in H.R.2.

## Program Updates

### Community Resilience Program

The Center is honored to be invited to collaborate with Tribal communities as they work to prepare for climate change and achieve conservation goals. The Center is committed to building partnerships with Tribal Nations in ways that uphold tribal sovereignty, respect traditional knowledge, and build coalitions to protect nature and all it provides. As part of this, the Center is proud to support CSKT's effort to revitalize their climate adaptation plan--expected to be released later this year. The Fort Belknap Indian Community is working to build adaptive capacity in the Little Rocky Mountains under a new partnership between the Center and FBIC called the Little Rockies Forest Resilience Project. The project will make forests more resilient to drought, fires, and climate changes, safeguarding the health of nearby communities and protecting irreplaceable cultural sites in the process. *(Image: Little Rocky Mountains)*



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### Corridors and Crossings Program

Our continued partnership with state agencies on wildlife and transportation issues will result in safer roads for people and wildlife in Montana, and improved habitat connectivity across one of the largest nearly intact temperate ecosystems on Earth. Since the Montana Wildlife and Transportation Summit in 2018, the Corridors and Crossings (C&C) team (in its capacity as a member organization of Montanans for Safe Wildlife Passage) has continued to work with Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) to advance wildlife and transportation safety issues in Montana. Two staff from the Center, Laramie Maxwell and Liz Fairbank, have been selected to serve on committees tasked with aligning science and implementing solutions for reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions.



Stemming off of this committee work, MDT and FWP just released an inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement that outlines commitments for coordinating on wildlife and transportation issues. [Read the press release and view the MOA here.](#) *(Image: Elk on Highway, (C) FHWA)*

### International Connectivity Program

The 130 country members of the UN Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) endorsed a resolution to adopt the first ever definition of 'ecological connectivity' as "the unimpeded movement of species and the flow of natural processes that sustain life on Earth." The February endorsement marks the first adoption of a definition by a multilateral environmental agreement, an important step in standardizing connectivity best practices. The definition will help partners around the world work together to create more connected and resilient landscapes. The Center proposed the language, serves as a member of official working groups, and joined the IUCN Delegation to the Convention's 13th Conference of the Parties to advise on connectivity-related agenda items and resolutions. *(Image: CMS Logo)*



## In The News

### From Our Press Room

- [INVEST Act Press Release](#)
- [Read the Center's COVID-19 response](#)
- [Podcast featuring Gary Tabor and other experts discussing global 30x30 initiatives](#)
- [Op-Ed by Gary Tabor: "Virus gives chance to look at whole planet's health"](#)

### Around The Web

- [Interior announces \\$24.7 million in support for habitat conservation in the west](#)
- [Include the true value of nature when rebuilding economies after coronavirus](#)
- [Opinion: If you care about the planet, you must dismantle white supremacy](#)
- [COVID-19 Should Make Us Rethink Our Destructive Relationship With the Natural World](#)
- [The Great American Outdoors Act passes Senate with bipartisan support](#)

## Partner Highlights

### African Conservation Centre

This quarter we are excited to highlight African Conservation Centre (ACC) as a valued partner in our work. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, ACC's mission is to conserve biodiversity in East Africa and beyond with a focus on applying scientific and indigenous knowledge, improving livelihoods, and achieving good governance through development of local institutions. In February 2020, ACC, the Center, and many other partners co-hosted the three-day workshop "Designing Linear Infrastructure for Sustainable Outcomes," that was attended by nearly 70 participants from five countries. Looking forward, ACC will be a key leader in an emergent network of partners working to safeguard biodiversity from the impacts of linear infrastructure in Africa.



AFRICAN  
CONSERVATION  
CENTRE

For more information about African Conservation Centre, visit <https://www.accafrica.org/>.

## The Center for Large Landscape

The Center for Large Landscape Conservation is the hub of a growing global movement to reverse the fragmentation of the earth's landscapes and restore nature's resilience to climate change.

We network and collaborate with experts, practitioners, and local communities. The work of landscape conservation restores human connection, civility, and respect. It is essential to our survival and the quality of our lives. Learn more at [largelandscapes.org](http://largelandscapes.org).

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