

INTRODUCTION TO CONNECTIVITY #4

CORRIDOR CONCERNS

In the same ways that linkages support species of conservation concern, they may also increase the movement of unwanted species. For the most part, researchers have not encountered major negative effects of corridors in conservation. However, work is still needed to understand when and where corridors can have unintended negative effects.

Corridors might increase the spread of invasive species.



INVASIVE SPECIES

Although research shows this is possible, invasive species tend to be excellent at moving into new areas regardless of whether there are corridors.

Corridors might increase transmission of disease or parasites by providing a better pathway for their spread.



DISEASE

Although this has been shown to happen in a few cases, this spread is unlikely to have a major impact on species persistence or conservation goals.

Corridors have the potential to make two connected populations grow or shrink at the same time, putting them at risk for simultaneous problems.



POPULATION SYNCHRONY

The consequences of population synchrony are generally untested, and they are likely to be complex beyond the effects of corridors.

Corridors might affect predation rates by forcing prey to move through a small area that makes them easier targets for predators.



PREDATION

There is little evidence to show that corridors universally create bottlenecks for prey and put them in greater danger.

Corridors increase the amount of border between good and degraded habitat, and species tend to behave differently at this edge.



EDGE EFFECTS

This can sometimes create problems, but they can be accounted for when designing linkages.

"Prairie strips growing in wheat" (Photo Credit: Kurt Stepnitz, Michigan State University)