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First name: Elora

Last name: Webb

Organization: Conservation Northwest

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

I support the proposed permanent I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Public Safety/Wildlife Closure.

The wildlife crossing structures along I-90 are a major investment in public safety and wildlife connectivity. The crossings are already demonstrating their value, with more than 38,000 medium and large animals documented using the completed structures and wildlife-vehicle collisions reduced to almost zero on the completed portion of the project.

Keeping people out of the areas immediately surrounding the crossings is necessary to ensure that wildlife can safely use these structures. The Forest Service's analysis recognizes that human activity near crossings can reduce wildlife use and compromise their effectiveness.

I urge the Forest Service to finalize the proposed closure as a permanent closure and to clearly state that permanence in the final decision.

I also support an adaptive management approach. The Forest Service should continue monitoring wildlife use and the effectiveness of the closure and use that information to inform future management decisions, including whether modifications to currently exempt roads or trails are warranted based on the best available data.

Please finalize the permanent closure and continue working with WDFW, WSDOT, Tribes, Conservation Northwest, researchers, and other partners to ensure that the I-90 wildlife crossings function as intended for the long term.

Thank you for protecting public safety and wildlife connectivity in the I-90 corridor.

Sincerely,

Elora Webb