



NFWF

# Business Plan for the Great Migrations and Crucial Corridors Initiative

A 10-year plan to conserve Western North America's  
most critical wildlife linkages

Phase I: Corridors of the Great North



November 2012

Photos: pronghorn by C.Vynne, Dagnon Ranch by J.Haug, Lynx by F.Schulz

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## What is a business plan?

A business plan serves two broad, primary functions. First, it provides specific information to those (e.g., prospective investors) not familiar with the proposed or existing business, including its goals, the management strategy and financial and other resources necessary to attain those goals. Second, a business plan provides internal guidance to those who are active in the operation of the business, allowing all individuals to understand the direction and path of the business. The plan helps keep the business from drifting away from its goals and key actions through careful articulation of a strategy.

In the context of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's conservation efforts, business plans represent the strategies necessary to meet the conservation goals of the Keystone Initiative. Each business plan emphasizes the type(s) and magnitude(s) of the benefits that will be realized through the Initiative, the monetary costs involved, and the potential obstacles (risks) to achieving those gains. Each of the Foundation's business plans has three core elements:

**Conservation Outcomes:** A concrete description of the outcomes to which the Foundation and grantees will hold ourselves accountable.

**Implementation Plan with Strategic Priorities and Performance Measures:** A description of the specific strategies that are needed to achieve our conservation outcomes and quantifiable benchmarks by which we will measure success and make it possible to adaptively manage in the face of unexpected or unintended outcomes.

**Funding and Resource Needs:** An analysis of the financial, human, and organizational resources needed to carry out these strategies.

The strategies and activities discussed in this plan do not represent solely the Foundation's view of the actions necessary to achieve the identified conservation goals. Rather, it reflects the consensus or majority view of the many federal, state, academic or organization experts that we consulted with during plan development.

In developing this business plan, the Foundation acknowledges other planned conservation activities that may indirectly benefit keystone targets. This business plan is not meant to duplicate ongoing efforts but, rather, to invest in areas where management, conservation, or funding gaps might exist in those broader conservation efforts. Hence, the aim of the business plan is to support the beneficial impacts brought about by the larger conservation community.

## Conservation Need

Among Earth's most stunning, yet imperiled, biological phenomena is long-distance migration. Terrestrial migrations of large mammals in Western North America are iconic events of ecological significance. Migrants serve as seasonally abundant predators and prey, and the migrant and its habitats are intricately co-evolved to the seasonal movement and important services that one provides to the other. While the plight of endangered species often grabs headlines, long distance migration events have quietly disappeared, primarily due to habitat degradation and fragmentation. Most of the large carnivores and ungulates in the western United States need migration and movement corridors to survive. Even though species like grizzly bear, elk, Canada lynx, wolverine, and bighorn sheep have vast landscapes of core habitat in National Forests and Parks in which to roam, they still depend upon seasonal habitat and movement corridors through less protected lands, particularly along valley bottoms. Threats in these areas drive unsustainable levels of mortality and block movement that is critical to population persistence.

From the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, to the Western Governors Association, States, and Federal Agencies, corridors and connectivity has been elevated as a priority theme in strategic plans and planning processes, collaborations, and scientific prioritization efforts. Few organizations, however, have been dedicated to funding the implementation of corridor plans and planning processes. The time is right to conserve the spectacular phenomena that remain: within the last decade the scientific community has developed superb tools to identify and map the detailed movements of animals. With the guesswork about where to focus our efforts removed, we can deliver results by targeting the most critical bottlenecks and key linkages. An aim of this program is to take the rapidly developing science of connectivity conservation and landscape permeability and deliver conservation of crucial corridors through strategic implementation.

## Conservation Outcomes

*Our overall goal is to secure the continent's most critical linkages, demonstrate effective corridor implementation, and deliver tangible benefits to species populations.*

This business plan maps out a 10-year effort intended to complement ongoing work by agencies and private organizations to conserve spectacular migration routes and critical linkages for wildlife throughout the western United States. Through implementation of this program, we expect to secure the continent's remaining spectacular terrestrial mammal migrations and conserve a suite of highest priority corridors critical to maintaining populations of wide-ranging species (Table 1). Through the first phase of this initiative, we anticipate protecting four at-risk long-distance migration spectacles for pronghorn and mule deer, three of the country's highest priority movement opportunities for rare grizzly bear, wolverine, and lynx, and to have provided safe passage for people and wildlife by reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions in more than six conflict zone hotspots.

**Table 1.** The portfolio of Phase I linkage considerations.

<b>Linkage</b>	<b>Long-distance migration</b>	<b>Sensitive population</b>	<b>Priority linkage site</b>	<b>Road ecology issue</b>	<b>Key strategies</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Path of the Pronghorn, WY</b>	✓	pronghorn	✓	✓	Easements, retrofit fencing, highway overpass, mitigate energy development	Active
<b>Cabinet Yaak Corridors, MT/ID</b>		brown bear	✓	✓	Highway safety, outreach to avoid unnecessary mortality, habitat protection, population enhancement	Active
<b>Road Ecology of US-20, ID</b>	✓	pronghorn	✓	✓	Highway crossing structures	Potential
<b>Lynx lifeline of the Columbia Highlands, WA</b>		lynx	✓	✓	Highway crossing structure, range riders, easements, habitat restoration, tribal capacity-building	Active (developmental)
<b>Wolverine of the High Divide, ID/MT</b>		wolverine	✓	✓	Habitat management, carnivore conflict reduction, mitigate road impacts	Active (developmental)
<b>Pinedale Anticline, WY</b>	✓	mule deer	✓	✓	Easements	Potential
<b>Long-distance migration of the glaciated plains, MT</b>	✓	pronghorn			Fencing retrofit, mitigate railway and reservoir barriers	Potential (also under Northern Great Plains keystone)



## Selection of Focal Areas

*Selected linkage areas will deliver conservation of highest priority corridors, while impacting key issues such as roads and wildlife*

The overall program, Great Migrations and Crucial Corridors, is a framework for a set of sub-programs (linkages) that will be pre-approved by the Foundation's board of directors. Thus, grants made under this program will be made under approved and open 'linkage' areas. We anticipate being able to roll up outcomes from each of the priority linkages to protect or improve the permeability of 10-15 crucial corridors of western North America.

We propose using a predetermined set of criteria to select a portfolio of linkages that will together contribute to overall connectivity objectives for the western United States. This set of criteria will be applied to regions that NFWF either proactively explores or that come to us as candidate linkages for consideration. The criteria for selection of these sub-program focal areas are as follows:

1. The linkage protects a high priority migration event and one or more species populations (eg. Path of the Pronghorn) *or* conserves a documented, high priority dispersal route for one or more species of concern (e.g. Cabinet Yaak Wildlife Corridors for grizzly bear)
2. The focal species population or migratory event is nationally significant.
3. The linkage is geographically explicit, delimited, and defined by the focal species' need; emphasis of program in first few years of development (2012-2015) will be on the U.S. side of the Great North LCC - [www.greatnorthernlcc.org](http://www.greatnorthernlcc.org).
4. The linkage has been identified as a regional priority.
5. There are defined on-the-ground actions that will deliver results and 'move the needle' in 3-5 years and these actions build on NFWF's core competencies of serving as a neutral convener, being partnership oriented, and providing thought leadership on topical issues.
6. A tangible degree of threat to species movement in the linkage is apparent and likely to impede connectivity in the next 5 years without conservation action.
7. NFWF direct funding or potential for leverage is likely to have significant impact.

Each of the above criteria is necessary for the linkage to be adopted. We anticipate, however, that there will be significantly more programs that meet the criteria than we will have the funds or capacity to approve for inclusion in this program. Additional 'key ingredients' that we anticipate being a part of the suite of approved linkages include:

1. The linkage proposal has strong support from federal, state, and private organizations.
2. The linkage bridges multiple jurisdictions.
3. NFWF's involvement and focus on the linkage will, as much as possible, allow for "completion of the job" of maintaining or enhancing connectivity goals for the target species populations.
4. The conserved linkage is relevant in a changing climate.

5. Conservation of the linkage will contribute to the conservation of other imperiled species (not required, but desirable).

Identification of the focal linkages and their associated plans will be done over the next 4-6 years, which will allow for the recognition and inclusion of new information and lessons learned from implementation of other areas that we will identify and fund in the first years of this program.

## Implementation Plan

Our focus is on the implementation of conservation projects that will facilitate movement at priority sites for species of high conservation value. We will develop this program by identifying and approving sub-programs (hereafter referred to as ‘linkages’), each of which will have approved goals, strategies, and budgets. Project applications will be accepted for approved and active linkage areas only. Successful applications will demonstrate a convincing ability to deliver measurable outcomes for target species: pronghorn, mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, caribou, grizzly bear, lynx, and wolverine. While the first set of priority programs are included in this business plan (Table 1), the Foundation will consider other areas for investment as resources allow.

As linkages are identified and outcomes are defined, we will develop the relevant strategies for achieving outcomes according to a rigorous analysis of the threats and needs on a case by case basis. In general, though, we know and anticipate that we will focus resources on the following thematic areas of emphasis for implementing conservation actions:

*Road ecology and design:* Help ensure safe passages for wildlife and people by improving problem areas at roads and highways with crossing structures, signage, and/or fencing; inform road design and development at the planning phase, linking all activities to measurable outcomes.

*Railways:* Identify problem areas and address attractants of railways that are often lethal for grizzly bears, pronghorn, and other species of concern.

*Energy and Infrastructure development:* Integrate conservation strategies into plans for infrastructure development related to energy exploration and extraction. Find pro-active solutions that manage activity levels with critical timing periods for wildlife; mitigate as necessary.

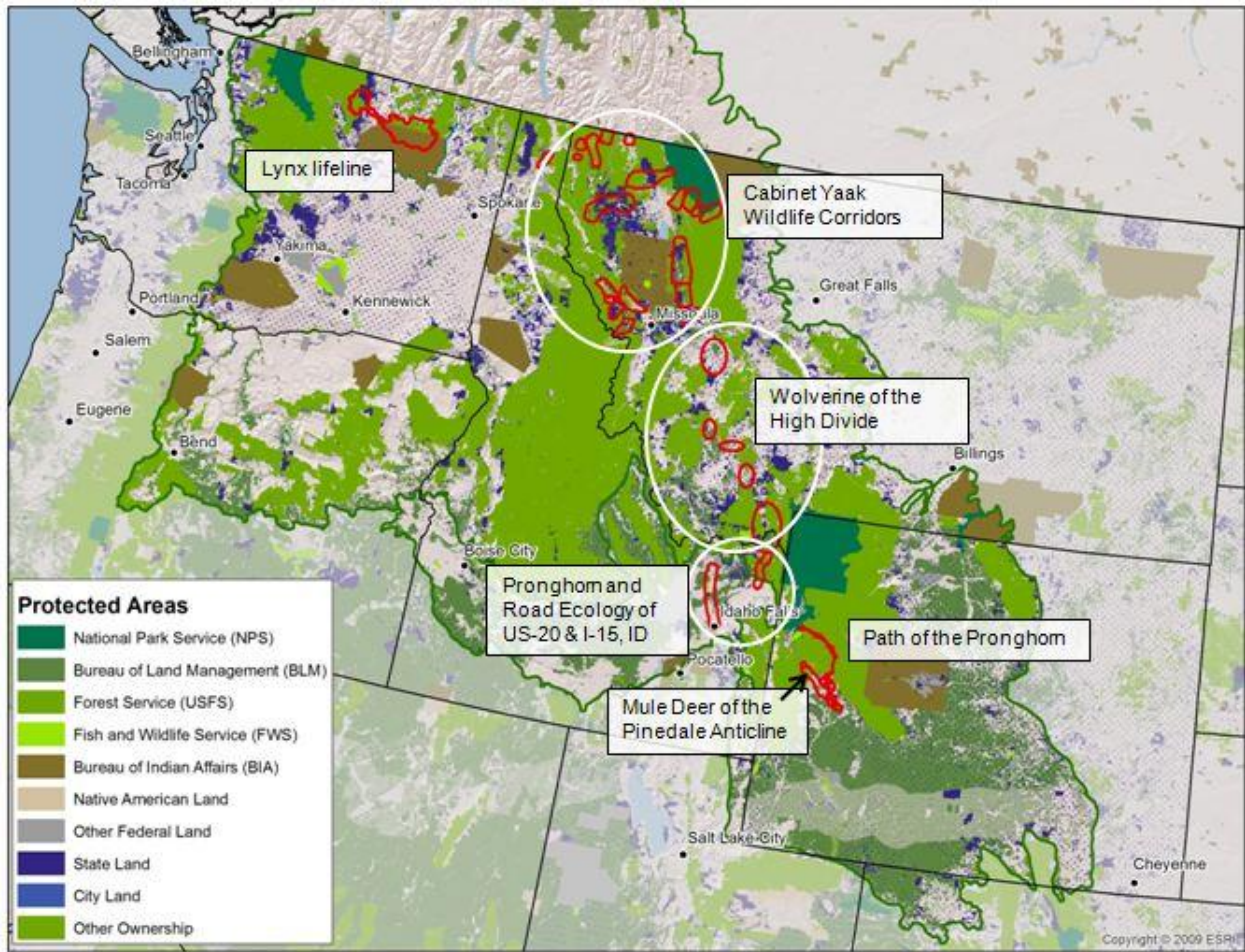
*Habitat Improvement:* Remove or retrofit physical barriers to movement (e.g. fencing); enhance native vegetation at critical linkage sites.

*Habitat Protection:* Protect priority properties and critical linkages.

*Human-carnivore conflict:* Improve communities’ ability to live safely with wildlife. Recognizing that many of the key linkage areas most in need of protection are valley bottoms that are settled by people, enabling coexistence with carnivores is a high priority. Outreach programs, range riders, electric fencing, and proper waste disposal may all help eliminate human-caused mortality to wildlife.

*Capacity Building and Critical Research:* As a national organization, NFWF may help transfer lessons learned and best practices between regions. A small amount of the program budget will thus be devoted to research that is critical for delivering outcomes, and to transferring this information between priority linkages.

While NFWF intends to take the program to scale nationally, we will start by building from our baseline of corridor programs in the northern Rockies to expand to other areas of the Great North landscape (Table1, Fig. 1). The USFWS, recognizing that conservation “challenges transcend political and jurisdictional boundaries and require a more networked approach to conservation” has created Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. Among these, they recognize the Great North Landscape as representing “one of the most relatively intact and functional ecosystems in the United States with diverse groups of species and important conservation and restoration opportunities....The United States’ greatest communities of free-roaming bison, elk, deer and other ungulates, wolves and bears and diverse salmon and trout populations are hallmarks of the Great Northern geographic area.” The following map and tables summarizes the current portfolio of linkages under consideration within the Great North Landscape Conservation Cooperative geography.



**Fig. 1.** Map of active and potential focal linkages that are the initial focus of the Great Migrations and Crucial Corridors Initiative (Phase 1, 2009-2014). Proposed linkages are under consideration because of partner interest and conservation opportunity. Area of emphasis is the US portion of the Great North Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GNLCC, US Fish and Wildlife Service). While we intend to scale up the program beyond this region, we are using the GNLCC as a focal area for the first stage of implementation.



## Linkage: Path of the Pronghorn

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**Focal Species:** Pronghorn; also benefitting greater sage grouse, mule deer.

**Goal:** To maintain the viability of the Path of the Pronghorn sub-herd by increasing its size and lowering annual human-caused mortality during migration.



Pronghorn at Trapper's Point, WY (Photo: Jeff Burrell, WCS)

**Conservation Challenge:** A small sub-herd of pronghorn that summer in and around Grand Teton National Park conduct the longest terrestrial migration in the lower 48 states. As snows begin to fall each autumn, some 300-500 animals depart the high valleys of the Park for the Green River Valley, approximately 125 miles southwest. On their migration to the Green River Basin of Wyoming, which covers an area of 15 million acres – approximately the size of Delaware, Massachusetts and New Hampshire combined, the pronghorn must pass through subdivisions, negotiate fencing, and cross a busy highway. Once the pronghorn arrive at their wintering grounds, they find sagebrush in the valley that provides some of the highest quality wildlife habitat in the West. In addition to the pronghorn, the area also supports the largest sage grouse population in the state, the second largest herd of mule deer, as well as populations of elk. Wintering grounds in the Valley for the various ungulates are crucial, as it is available winter forage that is often the limiting factor in their survival. Adding to the stress of the migration itself (which the females do while quite pregnant – with twins – each spring), the wintering grounds have been rapidly developed as natural gas fields.

### Key Strategies

- Modify fences that form barriers to successful migration.
- Construct a crossing structure and associated improvements at a central migratory bottleneck.
- Secure easements from interested private landowners within the pronghorn corridor.
- Implement required and voluntary Best Management Practices in resource development areas that improve pronghorn access to winter forage and quality of forage.
- Mitigate gas field development and operation impacts on winter range.

**Please see our website for a copy of the Path of the Pronghorn business plan:**

[http://www.nfwf.org/Content/ContentFolders/NationalFishandWildlifeFoundation/GrantPrograms/Keystones/WildlifeandHabitat/Pronghorn\\_Biz\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.nfwf.org/Content/ContentFolders/NationalFishandWildlifeFoundation/GrantPrograms/Keystones/WildlifeandHabitat/Pronghorn_Biz_Plan.pdf).

## Linkage: Cabinet Yaak Wildlife Corridors

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**Focal Species:** This initiative is targeted to help secure and maintain populations of grizzly bear, while also facilitating movement for wolverine, elk, bighorn sheep, fisher, lynx and moose.

**Goal:** To protect and maintain movement opportunities for large predators and other wide-ranging mammals in the Cabinet Yaak region of Idaho and northwest Montana.



**Conservation Challenge:** The North American range of grizzly bears has contracted in the past century and a half because of human-caused mortality, habitat loss, and population fragmentation. In the conterminous US, 98% of their range has been lost. Whereas bears in the Yellowstone Ecosystem have recovered extremely well, the smaller Cabinet Yaak population, which is the focus of this business plan, remains tenuous. Assuring the further recovery of the grizzly bear depends upon success in building healthy populations in the Cabinet Yaak, which is in turn dependent on the willingness of local communities to tolerate and adapt to the bears' presence, protection of key parcels in movement corridors, and direct management of bears to speed population growth rates.

### Key Strategies

- Develop detailed wildlife corridor conservation strategies in 11 regions (1,080,000 million acres) of public/private land between: Glacier National Park; Missoula, Montana; Bitterroot National Forest; and McArthur Lake, Idaho.
- Support the evaluation of wildlife crossings on highways and roads to identify future transportation improvements needed in this area.
- Build local capacity to expand land protection and habitat restoration capabilities.
- Promote efforts to maintain a grizzly bear population in the Cabinet Yaak area of Montana.
- Engage in outreach to increase knowledge on how to live safely with grizzlies.



Photo by Jamie Scarrow

**Please see our website for a copy of the Cabinet Yaak Wildlife Corridors business plan:**

[http://www.nfwf.org/Content/ContentFolders/NationalFishandWildlifeFoundation/GrantPrograms/Keystones/WildlifeandHabitat/Northern\\_Rockies\\_Corridor\\_Business\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.nfwf.org/Content/ContentFolders/NationalFishandWildlifeFoundation/GrantPrograms/Keystones/WildlifeandHabitat/Northern_Rockies_Corridor_Business_Plan.pdf)

## Linkage: Lynx Lifeline

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**Focal Species:** Lynx, an ESA threatened species; also benefitting sharptail grouse, badger, burrowing owl, mountain goat, golden eagle, gray wolf, grizzly bear, black bear, elk, mule deer, moose.

**Goal:** Maintain connectivity for lynx and other wide-ranging species in a vital corridor in north-central Washington State.

**Conservation Challenge:** Populations of lynx remain in three parallel north to south mountain ranges: the Cascades, Kettle Range, and Rocky mountains. Maintaining east-west connections between these populations and suitable habitat is a high priority for ensuring this species' persistence.



Scientists have evaluated options for maintaining connectivity between the Cascades and the Rockies in this transboundary region. The highest priority linkage available to maintain this landscape scale connection ties the forested habitat of the North Cascades eastward through the Okanogan Valley to the Kettle River Range. From the Kettle River Range, models suggest multiple options for maintaining connections with the Rockies including northward connections through British Columbia. Therefore, landscape scale success to achieve connectivity between the Cascades and Rockies can be achieved by initially focusing investments to ensure linkage between the Cascades and Kettle River Range, while coordinating with transboundary partners on the full corridor function.

This multi-year public-private effort will build on existing partnerships to maintain and improve functional connectivity including habitat protection of key private lands through conservation easements, creating permeability under Highway 97, restoring habitat on public and tribal lands, acquisition of water rights, and coordination with partners in British Columbia.

### Key Conservation Strategies

- Protect corridor habitat from development through acquisition of conservation easements from willing owners of critical private lands;
- Manage fire and vegetation to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic fires to existing lynx core and functional dispersal habitat, while restoring structure and function across the landscape;
- Manage winter recreation use within priority areas to assure compatibility with lynx needs;
- Providing safe passage through a series of underpasses and associated fencing on Highway 97 north of Riverside;
- Research and monitor lynx populations and habitat relationships to inform management options including potential augmentation of the Kettle Range population. Also needed is further connectivity analysis to assist in prioritizing actions amongst multiple linkages from the Kettles to the Rockies.

**The business plan for this region is under development. For more information, please contact Carly Vynne at [carly.vynne@nfwf.org](mailto:carly.vynne@nfwf.org).**

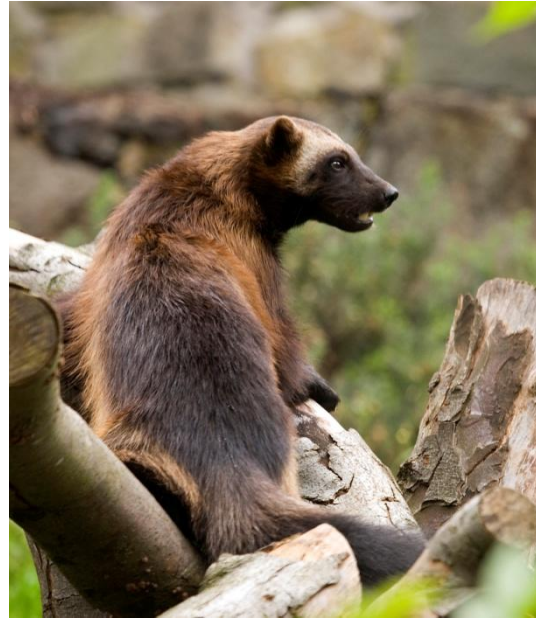
## Linkage: Wolverine of the High Divide

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**Focal Species:** Wolverine, an ESA Candidate species; also benefitting cougar, lynx, black bear, grizzly bear, gray wolf, elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, moose.

**Goal:** Enable persistence of wolverines in the northern U.S. Rockies by conserving connectivity that facilitates successful dispersal. This corridor links the Greater Yellowstone, Salmon-Selway, and Crown of the Continent Ecosystems; enabling a connected network of public-private natural areas that will facilitate dispersal and gene-flow of numerous wildlife species at the landscape scale.

**Conservation Challenge:** Wolverines are a candidate threatened or endangered species whose current population numbers approximately 300 individuals. Successful dispersal to find unrelated mates is critical to the persistence of wolverines because suitable habitat exists in island-like fashion where some large mountain ranges naturally support only 5-10 individuals. The Central Linkage Region is the top priority for conserving wolverine corridors because it sits between and thus connects the 3 largest ecosystems of the northern U.S. Rockies – Greater Yellowstone, Salmon-Selway, and Crown of the Continent. This region is recognized as a place where wildlife movements are important by state and federal land and wildlife management agencies and numerous conservation organizations (who frequently refer to it as the “High Divide”). The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has identified the highest priority corridor interlinking these three ecosystems using an extensive wolverine telemetry dataset along with habitat modeling and a prediction of connectivity based on electrical circuit-flow theory. By focusing on three road mitigation projects and private land stewardship in five key areas, connectivity can be maintained and improved allowing wolverine movement among the three major ecosystems. This effort will build upon existing partnerships and make significant progress toward developing a network of public-private natural areas that facilitates wildlife movement and gene-flow at the landscape scale.



### Key Conservation Strategies

- Purchase or swap lands and acquire conservation easements from willing landowners to protect critical linkages in the main corridor from development.
- Improve or establish highway crossing structures at key locations.
- Reduce highway mortality by establishing an ungulate carcass removal program.
- Make additional progress coordinating geographically specific objectives among wildlife and land management agencies to improve wolverine survival, reproduction, and gene-flow.
- Develop incentives for smart-growth in rural counties that includes both economic development and wildlife corridors.

**The business plan for this region is under development. For more information, please contact Carly Vynne at [carly.vynne@nfwf.org](mailto:carly.vynne@nfwf.org).**

## Monitoring and Evaluating Performance

To better demonstrate results and improve the effectiveness of our conservation investments, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation strategy has been incorporated into the entire lifecycle of NFWF's initiatives. At initiative inception, NFWF works with scientists and practitioners to develop a business plan that identifies clear conservation goals, strategies to achieve these goals, and metrics for assessing progress. During proposal review, projects are prioritized based on how well they align with the initiative's priority strategies. At the project level, individual grantees will monitor and provide updates on key project activity and outcome metrics in annual and final reports.

On an annual basis, data across individual projects will be scaled up into an initiative scorecard which will provide a snapshot of progress on the initiative's primary strategies and focal species and habitat outcomes. Every three years, NFWF's in-house evaluator will conduct an assessment to examine the factors that have facilitated and hindered successful implementation of the initiative. Towards the end of the initiative's life cycle, a more comprehensive third-party evaluation may be conducted if resources are available. Findings from all monitoring and evaluation activities will be used to continuously learn from our grantmaking and inform future decision-making to ensure initiative success.

NFWF seeks to affect and measure tangible conservation outcomes for each of its priority initiatives. With the goal of this program to maintain or enhance connectivity for key populations of a variety of species, we recognize that it may be possible to monitor population-level responses directly in some cases and that it may be undesirable or very difficult to measure and attribute such responses in other scenarios. This may be particularly true when we are trying to maintain connectivity rather than restore and/or when we are trying to conserve a critical movement corridor for an extremely wide-ranging or low density species.

In order to ensure reliable, repeatable measurement of results that may be made in a timeframe useful enough to assess progress and adaptively manage the program during implementation, we are proposing to establish an expert-based 'State of the Linkage' assessment. The assessment will use permeability modeling, predefined criteria, and expert assessment to update the linkage status on an annual basis. Following a set of criteria similar to that the IUCN network applies for threatened species ([www.redlist.org](http://www.redlist.org)), predetermined criteria will be applied by experts to assess the status of each linkage areas on an annual basis. The goal, which will be a defined level of connectivity maintained/restored and threats to maintenance of the connectivity abated, will be set at the outset of the sub-program. Because each linkage area is defined based on a species need, securing connectivity for the linkage will be equivalent to securing a given populations' need. Specific species goals and metrics will be included when a monitoring plan is in place or is a priority to fund because the connectivity goals are anticipated to affect a given population status. The conservation outcomes for each linkage area are identified in the respective business plans for those regions and at the end of this document.

## Funding needs

The initiative budget is estimated to help prioritize efforts and to set fundraising targets. NFWF anticipates contributing ~\$1M in appropriations to this program annually and seeks to raise private funds of \$2+M annually to match the Federal contribution. Detailed budgets and budgets associated with each strategy for approved linkages have been approved by the Wildlife and Habitat subcommittee of the Board of Directors and are available in the respective business plans for those focal areas.

**Table 2.** Budget for Phase I linkage considerations given annual spending scales up to a target of \$3.5M/year for the initiative (\$3.0 from appropriations and new fundraising plus \$500k from alignment with other existing NFWF programs)

Linkage	Status	Timeframe	Budget	Allocated	FY2013 target	FY2014 target	Action items
<b>Path of the Pronghorn, WY</b>	Program is nearing completion	2009-2014	\$4.0M approved	\$2.9M	\$0.2M		Assess remaining opportunities; monitor progress
<b>Cabinet Yaak Corridors, MT/ID (brown bear)</b>	Active	2009-2018	\$12.0M approved	\$3.0M	\$1.0M	\$1.0M	
<b>Road Ecology of US-20, ID (pronghorn)</b>	As part of grant under PoP, WCS approaching States to assess interest in crossing structure	Proposed 2012-2016	TBD	\$75,000	TBD	TBD	Assess opportunities
<b>Lynx lifeline of the Columbia Highlands, WA</b>	Linkage proposal received and site visit completed	Proposed 2012-2017	TBD	0	\$0.3M	\$0.3M	Business plan under development
<b>Wolverine of the High Divide, ID/MT</b>	Linkage proposal received	Proposed 2012-2017	TBD	0	\$0.3M	\$0.4M	Business plan under development
<b>Pinedale Anticline, WY (mule deer)</b>	Site visit completed	TBD	TBD	0	\$0.2M	TBD	Assess opportunities
<b>Long-distance migration of the glaciated plains, MT (pronghorn)</b>	Assessing opportunities	2013-2018	TBD	0		TBD	Assess opportunities
<b>TOTAL</b>			TBD	\$6.0M	\$2.0M	TBD	

## Long-Term Foundation Support

This framework and the associated linkage business plans lay out a framework to achieve outcomes that benefit wildlife over a 10-year period. At that time, it is expected that the conservation actions partners have taken will have brought about new institutional and societal standards and environmental changes that will have set the population in a positive direction such that maintaining those successes or continuing them will be possible without further (or greatly reduced) NFWF funding. To help ensure that the population and other gains made in 10 years won't be lost after the exit of NFWF funding, the partnership must seek development of solutions that are long-lasting, cost-effective, and can be maintained at lower levels of funding in the future or with other secure sources of funds. Therefore, part of the evaluations of this initiative will address that staying power and the likelihood that successful strategies will remain successful into the future.

The adaptive nature of this initiative will also allow NFWF and partners to regularly evaluate the strategies behind our objectives, make necessary course corrections or additions within the 10 year frame of this business plan. In some cases these corrections and additions may warrant increased investment by NFWF and other partners. However, it is also possible that NFWF would reduce or eliminate support for this initiative if periodic evaluation indicates that further investments are unlikely to be productive in the context of the intended outcomes.

### *About NFWF*

*The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation protects and restores our nation's wildlife and habitats. Created by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private contributions. NFWF works with government, nonprofit and corporate partners to find solutions for the most intractable conservation challenges. In 27 years, NFWF has funded more than 4,000 organizations and committed more than \$2 billion to conservation projects. Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org).*