Wildlife Habitat Linkage Assessment Form

Terrestrial Road Crossings

How to Use This Form

- Consider how wildlife moves across the landscape and what barriers present themselves along the way.
- As conditions allow, we recommend walking the linkage. If you choose to drive, pull over in safe locations to document conditions.
- Bring a print-out of the map with your linkage and edit the oval based on your observations of where wildlife can move.
- If you identify distinct, separate areas within the linkage, fill out one form for each distinct area.
- Include details and descriptions in the notes sections.

Make sure you **take photos** along the way, **fill out this form**, and **draw on your map.**
When you return home, fill out the digital PDF form accessible through https://followtheforest.org/programs/

Preparer's name(s): _____   Date: _____

Location: Town of _____   Road section: _____

Potential Linkage ID: _____   Linking Core Forest ID #(s): _____

Is there protected land within the linkage? (refer to online map)   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Is this linkage: ☐ funneled into a pinch point   -or-   ☐ an area where wildlife movement is spread out?

If there are multiple pinch points, please fill out one form for each.

ROAD CONDITIONS   Speed limit: _____mph   How many lanes?   ☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 4

Road surface: ☐ Paved   ☐ Gravel   ☐ Dirt   ☐ Other: _____

Traffic: ☐ None   ☐ Little   ☐ Fairly Busy   ☐ Very Busy

DEVELOPMENT

Amount of development (houses, other structures):   ☐ None   ☐ Little   ☐ Scattered   ☐ Dense

Would wildlife need to travel close to buildings, possibly using backyards?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

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Signs of Wildlife. *Feel free to include photos of the road kill or tracks when you submit.*

Did you observe any road kill?   ☐ Y   ☐ N   Did you observe any tracks in the snow or mud?   ☐ Y   ☐ N

ROADSIDE VEGETATION (within approximately 50 feet).

Circle what you observe on either side of the road within the linkage. **Please elaborate in the space below.**

Forest   **Wetland**: forested or herbaceous   **Vernal Pool**   **Farmland**: hay, corn, or pasture   **Open Field**   **Lawn**   **Powerlines**   **Water**   **Other**

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Is the tree canopy closed (could squirrels cross)?   Y   N   Are there dense patches of plants?   Y   N

Has there been: mowing   brush clearing   pruning   tree clearing

BARRIERS TO WILDLIFE PASSAGE - Do any of these impede wildlife movement?

Steep Embankments   **Fences**   **Retaining walls**   **Guardrails**   **Drainage Ditch**   **Fast Running Water Parallel to the Road**

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CULVERT OR BRIDGE   Does the linkage include?   Bridge(s)   Culvert(s)   **If yes, see below.**

Bridge underpass or Culvert: _____ height _____ width   Approximate depth of the water: _____ feet
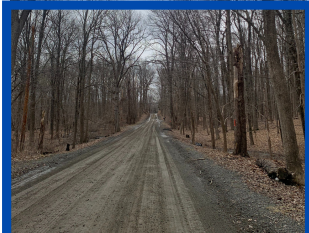
Is the water moving: not at all   slowly   rapidly

Could it be passable by: moose   bear   deer   bobcat   fisher   small critters

Does the culvert have a large drop off that would impede wildlife movement (perched culvert)?   Y   N

How did you assess the linkage: walking   driving   both   other: _____

RATING THE LINKAGE: Circle a linkage score based on all the information you collected, and describe your choice. Pictures are included as examples, but other factors may play into the linkage score.

EXCELLENT

Linkage presents few barriers to wildlife passage with largely undisturbed forest on both sides.

GOOD

Some obstacles, forest is slightly compromised on one or both sides. Shows promise as linkage.

FAIR

Many obstacles, forest is significantly compromised, but certain sections show promise as linkage.

POOR

Forest fragmentation and barriers to passage make this a tenuous or inadequate linkage.

Challenges and Solutions to Promote Safe Wildlife Crossing

How can wildlife passage be improved? ☐ land protection ☐ reduce speed limit ☐ wildlife bridge/overpass

☐ culvert ☐ habitat restoration ☐ other: _____

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