



County of Santa Cruz

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Press Release

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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY'S FISH AND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION LAUNCHES COMMUNITY SCIENCE PROJECT

Santa Cruz, CA — The Santa Cruz County [Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission \(FWAC\)](#) has launched [Safe Passage Santa Cruz](#), a new community science project inviting residents to help identify areas in Santa Cruz County where wildlife is frequently killed or injured crossing a road. Using the free [iNaturalist app](#), community members can upload photos and report observations of roadkill, injured wildlife, and other wildlife-road interactions. These observations will help build a countywide dataset used to better understand how roads affect local wildlife, identify collision hotspots, and support future conservation planning.

A [2024 UC Davis report](#) estimates that each year on California roads more than 48,000 deer, close to 100 mountain lions, and thousands of other animals are killed. Safe Passage Santa Cruz aims to improve our knowledge locally so this information can be used to protect wildlife and support safer travel conditions for everyone.

"Santa Cruz County is home to incredible wildlife diversity, and community members can make a meaningful contribution simply by reporting what they observe," said Jenni Gomez, Chair of the Santa Cruz County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission. "Every observation helps build a better understanding of where wildlife-vehicle collisions are occurring, providing valuable information that can inform future planning efforts to improve safety for both wildlife and people."

"The Environmental Health Division is committed to the protection of public health and the environment within Santa Cruz County" said Environmental Health Director Andrew Strader. "Identifying wildlife collision hotspots supports both of these goals."

The Safe Passage Santa Cruz project will be accepting observations through **July 2027**. The FWAC will produce a report summarizing the findings and share it with the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors in 2028. This report is intended to support the County Planning Department in implementing the California Room to Roam Act ([AB 1889](#)), which will require local jurisdictions to incorporate wildlife connectivity into their General Plans.

Community members that wish to provide data for this project are reminded to record observations only when it is safe and legal to do so.

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