



Research, part of a Special Feature on [Effects of Roads and Traffic on Wildlife Populations and Landscape Function](#)

Cost–Benefit Analyses of Mitigation Measures Aimed at Reducing Collisions with Large Ungulates in the United States and Canada: a Decision Support Tool

*Marcel P. Huijser*¹, *John W. Duffield*², *Anthony P. Clevenger*¹, *Robert J. Ament*¹, and *Pat T. McGowen*¹

ABSTRACT. Wildlife–vehicle collisions, especially with deer (*Odocoileus* spp.), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), and moose (*Alces alces*) are numerous and have shown an increasing trend over the last several decades in the United States and Canada. We calculated the costs associated with the average deer–, elk–, and moose–vehicle collision, including vehicle repair costs, human injuries and fatalities, towing, accident attendance and investigation, monetary value to hunters of the animal killed in the collision, and cost of disposal of the animal carcass. In addition, we reviewed the effectiveness and costs of 13 mitigation measures considered effective in reducing collisions with large ungulates. We conducted cost–benefit analyses over a 75-year period using discount rates of 1%, 3%, and 7% to identify the threshold values (in 2007 U.S. dollars) above which individual mitigation measures start generating benefits in excess of costs. These threshold values were translated into the number of deer–, elk–, or moose–vehicle collisions that need to occur per kilometer per year for a mitigation measure to start generating economic benefits in excess of costs. In addition, we calculated the costs associated with large ungulate–vehicle collisions on 10 road sections throughout the United States and Canada and compared these to the threshold values. Finally, we conducted a more detailed cost analysis for one of these road sections to illustrate that even though the average costs for large ungulate–vehicle collisions per kilometer per year may not meet the thresholds of many of the mitigation measures, specific locations on a road section can still exceed thresholds. We believe the cost–benefit model presented in this paper can be a valuable decision support tool for determining mitigation measures to reduce ungulate–vehicle collisions.

Key Words: *animal–vehicle collisions; cost–benefit analysis; deer; economic; effectiveness; elk; human injuries and fatalities; mitigation measures; moose; roadkill; ungulate; vehicle repair cost; wildlife–vehicle collision*

INTRODUCTION

Wildlife–vehicle collisions affect human safety, property and wildlife. The total number of large mammal–vehicle collisions has been estimated at one to two million in the United States and at 45 000 in Canada annually (Conover et al. 1995, Tardif and Associates Inc. 2003, Huijser et al. 2007b). These numbers have increased even further over the last decade (Tardif and Associates Inc. 2003, Huijser et al. 2007b). In the United States, these collisions were estimated to cause 211 human fatalities, 29 000 human injuries and over one billion US dollars in property damage annually (Conover

et al. 1995). In most cases, the animals die immediately or shortly after the collision (Allen and McCullough 1976). In some cases, it is not just the individual animals that suffer. Road mortality may also affect some species on the population level (e. g., van der Zee et al. 1992, Huijser and Bergers 2000), and some species may even be faced with a serious reduction in population survival probability as a result of road mortality, habitat fragmentation, and other negative effects associated with roads and traffic (Proctor 2003, Huijser et al. 2007b). In addition, some species also represent a monetary value that is lost once an individual animal dies (Romin and Bissonette 1996, Conover 1997).

¹Western Transportation Institute, Montana State University, ²University of Montana, Department of Mathematical Sciences

Although this paper focuses on collisions with large ungulates, this group is not necessarily the most abundant or the most important species group hit by vehicles. Species groups most often reported in roadkill surveys include amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals (Seibert and Conover 1991, Holsbeek et al. 1999, Ament et al. 2008, Gryz and Krauze 2008). The relative proportion at which these species groups are recorded in roadkill surveys in different countries varies substantially: 1.8%–70.8% for amphibians, <0.1%–7.4% for reptiles, 3.1%–52% for birds, and 4.2%–87.2% for mammals (Seibert and Conover 1991, Kratky 1995, Holsbeek et al. 1999, Gryz and Krauze 2008, Hobday and Minstrell 2008). A review by Seiler (2003) showed that the numbers of road-killed birds and mammals in various countries are typically estimated at multiple millions per year. Surveys that include invertebrates indicate that mortality rates of invertebrates due to collision with vehicles are far higher than for vertebrates: in one study, 86% of all observations related to invertebrates (Seibert and Conover 1991). However, mitigation measures are most often implemented for species that are large enough to pose a threat to human safety or species whose population survival probability is severely affected by roads and traffic (e.g., Mansergh and Scotts 1989, van der Ree et al. 2009). In addition, data collected by law enforcement agencies (crash data) and transportation agencies (carcass data) are typically limited to large mammals (Huijser et al. 2007a).

Over 40 types of mitigation measures aimed at reducing collisions with large ungulates have been described (see reviews in Hedlund et al. 2004, Knapp et al. 2004, Huijser et al. 2007b). Examples include warning signs that alert drivers to potential animal crossings, wildlife warning reflectors or mirrors (e.g., Reeve and Anderson 1993, Ujvári et al. 1998), wildlife fences (Clevenger et al. 2001), and animal detection systems (Huijser et al. 2006b). However, the effectiveness and costs of these mitigation measures vary greatly. When the effectiveness is evaluated in relation to the costs for the mitigation measure, important insight is obtained regarding which mitigation measures may be preferred, at least from a monetary perspective. Nonetheless, very few cost–benefit analyses exist (but see, e.g., Reed et al. 1982), and although this may seem surprising, wildlife–vehicle collisions, at least until recently, are not always included in safety analyses by transportation agencies, let alone in cost–benefit analyses (Knapp and Witte 2006).

Transportation agencies in the United States and Canada typically do not have access to basic cost and benefit data, and do not have comprehensive analysis tools available to them (Knapp and Witte 2006). Over the last decades, the dominant practice for transportation agencies has been to install wildlife warning signs when (variable) thresholds were reached for ungulate–vehicle collisions (Knapp and Witte 2006). However, the implementation of these signs has typically not been based on a cost–benefit analysis. In addition, such thresholds typically relate to relatively short road sections (e.g., 0.25 or 0.50 miles (402 m or 805 m)), whereas ungulate–vehicle collisions typically need to be analyzed and mitigated at a larger spatial scale. Finally, anecdotal information and crash and carcass data summaries are also used to justify more substantial mitigation measures such as wildlife fencing combined with safe wildlife crossing opportunities, but decisions to implement such mitigation measures are rarely based on cost–benefit analyses (Knapp and Witte 2006; Pat Basting, Montana Department of Transportation, pers. comm.; Doug Herbrand, Ontario Ministry of Transportation, pers. comm.).

In this paper, we compare the monetary costs and benefits of a range of mitigation measures aimed at reducing collisions with large ungulates. In the United States, most of the wildlife–vehicle collisions reported by agencies involve deer (*Odocoileus* spp.). In addition, the vast majority of all animal–vehicle collisions that result in human injury (86.9%) or human fatality (77%) involve deer as well (Conn et al. 2004, Williams and Wells 2005). The numbers vary between regions: in California, deer amount to 54.4% of the reported animal–vehicle collisions, in Maine 81.2% (Huijser et al. 2007b). In certain areas, e.g., Maine, collisions with moose (*Alces alces*) are relatively numerous (15.1%) (Huijser et al. 2007b). Of all the claims submitted to a major auto insurance company in the United States (national market share about 17.5%) in 2006–2007 for vehicle repair as a result of a collision with deer, elk (*Cervus elaphus*), or moose, 99.2% related to deer, 0.5% to elk, and 0.3% to moose (*n* is approximately 180 000) (Dick Luedke, State Farm Insurance, pers. comm.). In British Columbia, Canada, 85.6% of all reported animals killed by traffic were deer (78.6%) or moose (7.0%) (Sielecki 2004). In the Ottawa-Carleton area, Canada, 93.1% of all reported animal–vehicle collisions involved deer (92.2%) or moose (0.9%) (Tardif and Associates Inc. 2003). For this paper,

we conducted separate analyses for the costs and benefits of mitigation measures aimed at reducing collisions with deer (white-tailed deer (*O. virginianus*) and mule deer (*O. hemionus*) combined), elk, and moose.

Our cost–benefit analyses do not include passive-use costs. Passive or nonuse values are generally based on existence or bequest motives and include values in addition to those that arise directly due to the collision (Krutilla 1967, Daily et al. 1997). In this context, passive values could include the value individuals (even those who perhaps never drive the road section of interest) place on having viable populations of certain species and well-functioning ecosystems as a result of the reduced road mortality and a certain amount of connectivity for wildlife associated with a mitigation measure. Connectivity across roads for wildlife is also in the interest of human safety as animals are more likely to break through a barrier (e.g., wildlife fencing) if safe crossing opportunities are not provided or if they are too few, too small, or too far apart. Even if wildlife fencing is combined with safe crossing opportunities for wildlife, animals may still end up in between the fences, caught in the transportation corridor, and these animals pose a risk to human safety. For these reasons, it is considered good practice to accompany absolute barriers, such as wildlife fencing, with safe crossing opportunities for wildlife and escape opportunities for animals that end up in between the fences. For this paper, we addressed the importance of safe crossing opportunities for wildlife by reviewing the individual mitigation measures for their potential barrier effect on the movements of large ungulates.

The results of our economic analyses apply to the United States and Canada, but not necessarily to other countries or regions, because we used species characteristics and economic data from these two countries. Furthermore, we realize that the results of the analyses are directly dependent on the parameters included in the analyses and the assumptions and estimates required to conduct the analyses. Nonetheless, the results of the cost–benefit analyses allow for much needed direction for transportation agencies and natural resource management agencies in the implementation and further research and development of mitigation measures aimed at reducing collisions with large ungulates.

METHODS

Cost–Benefit Analyses

We estimated the effectiveness of 13 types of mitigation measures for reducing collisions with large ungulates such as deer, elk, and moose, and whether these mitigation measures still allow animals to cross the road (Table 1). Of the 13 measures listed, only wildlife fencing is an absolute barrier for large ungulates. In addition, we estimated the costs (in 2007 US\$) of these mitigation measures per year over a 75-year period (Appendix 1, Table 1). The costs included design, construction or implementation, maintenance, and removal efforts. The 75-year period is equal to the longest lifespan of the mitigation measures reviewed (i.e., underpasses and overpasses). In the 75th year, no new investments were projected (only maintenance and removal costs) for the following mitigation measures: wildlife fence alone (Fig. 1); wildlife fence, gap, and crosswalk; wildlife fence, underpasses, and jump-outs (Figs. 2 and 3); wildlife fence, and under- and overpasses (Fig. 4); wildlife fence and animal detection systems (Fig. 5); elevated roadway; and road tunnel. Jump-outs are earthen ramps that allow animals that are trapped in between the fences in the road corridor to walk up to the top of the fence and jump down to safety. Well designed jump-outs are low enough to allow animals to jump to safety, and high enough to discourage them from jumping up into the road corridor.

We also estimated the benefits generated by the 13 mitigation measures. The benefits are a combination of the effectiveness of the mitigation measures in reducing collisions with large ungulates and the costs associated with the average collision. The cost of a collision with a large ungulate typically increases with the size and weight of the species. For this analysis, we estimated the costs for the average collision with a deer, an elk, or a moose (Appendix 2, Table 2). Some mitigation measures take considerable planning and installation time. For such measures, we did not project any benefits in the first year of the cost–benefit analyses. This delay in the start of the benefits applied to all mitigation measures, except seasonal signs, vegetation removal, population culling, relocation, and anti-fertility treatment.

For our cost–benefit analyses, all costs and benefits are in real terms (i.e., constant 2007 US\$).

Table 1. The estimated effectiveness, present value costs (in 2007 US\$, 3% discount rate), and costs per percent reduction of mitigation measures aimed at reducing collisions with large ungulates over a 75-year time period. The measures are ordered based on their estimated effectiveness. If a measure is estimated to be 86% effective, it means that ungulate–vehicle collisions are estimated to reduce by 86% as a result of the implementation of that mitigation measure (e.g., a reduction from 100 collisions to 14 collisions).

Mitigation measure	Effectiveness	Crossing opportunity?	Source	Present value costs (US\$)	Costs per percent reduction (US\$)
Seasonal wildlife warning sign	26%	Yes	Sullivan et al. (2004): 51%; Rogers (2004): 0%	\$3728	\$143
Vegetation removal	38%	Yes	Jaren et al. (1991): 56%; Lavsund and Sandegren (1991): 20%	\$16 272	\$428
Fence, gap, crosswalk	40%	Yes	Lehnert and Bissonette (1997): 42%, 37%	\$300 468	\$7512
Population culling	50%	Yes	Review in Huijser et al. (2007a)	\$94 809	\$1896
Relocation	50%	Yes	Review in Huijser et al. (2007a)	\$391 870	\$7837
Anti-fertility treatment	50%	Yes	Review in Huijser et al. (2007a)	\$2 183 207	\$43 664
Fence (incl. dig barrier)	86%	No	Reed et al. (1982) 79%; Ward (1982): 90% Woods (1990): 94%–97%; Clevenger et al. (2001): 80%; Dodd et al. (2007): 87%	\$187 246	\$2177
Fence, underpass, jump-out	86%	Yes	Reed et al. (1982) 79%; Ward (1982): 90% Woods (1990): 94%–97%; Clevenger et al. (2001): 80%; Dodd et al. (2007): 87%	\$538 273	\$6259
Fence, under- and overpass, jump-out	86%	Yes	Reed et al. (1982) 79%; Ward (1982): 90% Woods (1990): 94%–97%; Clevenger et al. (2001): 80%; Dodd et al. (2007): 87%	\$719 667	\$8368
Animal detection system (ADS)	87%	Yes	Mosler-Berger and Romer (2003): 82%; Dodd and Gagnon (2008): 91%	\$1 099 370	\$12 636
Fence, gap, ADS	87%	Yes	Mosler-Berger and Romer (2003): 82%; Dodd and Gagnon (2008): 91%	\$836 113	\$9610
Elevated roadway	100%	Yes	Review in Huijser et al. (2007a)	\$92 355 498	\$923 555
Road tunnel	100%	Yes	Review in Huijser et al. (2007a)	\$147 954 696	\$1 479 547

Accordingly, as we excluded inflation effects in our benefit and cost streams over time, we also used real (as opposed to nominal) discount rates. Presenting the analysis in nominal terms with inflation included in future values and an inflation component in the discount term would be mathematically equivalent. In order to correctly compare benefit and cost elements, which are distributed asymmetrically

over time, we computed present discounted values and amortized these into equivalent annual terms. The typical pattern for the mitigation measures we examined is that costs are largely construction oriented in the present (e.g., an investment in a fence with an underpass in the first year of a 75-year period) whereas benefits are distributed more uniformly over the life of the project (i.e., a certain

Fig. 1. A 2.4 m (8 ft) high large-mammal fence, with smaller mesh sizes toward the bottom, on U.S. Highway 93 on the Flathead Reservation, Montana, USA (copyright: Marcel Huijser).



reduction in collisions and associated costs each year). In this situation, the cost–benefit analysis is sensitive to the discount rate chosen. The discount rate simply corrects for the time value of money. For example, if an individual can earn a fixed 3% interest on savings or investments, then a dollar today is worth US\$1.03 one year from now. Conversely, a dollar promised to be paid one year from now is worth only (discounted to) about US\$0.97 today.

Following the guidance provided in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-94

(U.S. OMB 1992) and other federal guidelines (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2000), we conducted the analyses for real discount rates of 7%, 3%, and 1%. The 7% rate is required by OMB for federal benefit–cost analyses and is based on a shadow price of capital theory; specifically (at least in 1992) 7% is OMB’s estimate of the real after-tax return on investment in the private sector (essentially the opportunity cost of instead investing in public projects). A more widely accepted discount parameter for at least intra-generational accounting is choosing a social discount rate based on the rate at which individuals translate

Fig. 2. A large-mammal underpass (7–8 m (23–26.2 ft) wide, 4–5 m (13.1–16.4 ft) high) along U.S. Highway 93 on the Flathead Reservation, Montana, USA (copyright: Marcel Huijser).



consumption through time with reasonable certainty (e.g., a consumption rate of interest theory). For this, historical returns on safe assets such as U.S. Treasury securities are used (post-tax and corrected for inflation), with empirical estimates for rates in the 1% to 3% range (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2000). For inter-generational discounting (for which a project with a lifespan of 75 years would obviously qualify) other theories based in part on ethical considerations that explicitly trade-off the well-being of current and future generations come into play, and rates of 0.5% to 3% are plausible. As an example from the economics literature, a recent

survey of several thousand economists on the issue of an appropriate discount rate for the problem of global warming indicated a wide-range of opinions on the appropriate rate, rates declining over the time period of the analysis from about 4% to 0% for the very long term, and a long-term average rate of 1.75% in real terms (Weitzman 2001). Sumaila and Walters (2005) provide an alternative framework for intergenerational discounting and an overview of the recent literature on this issue.

After estimating the costs for each mitigation measure, and after correcting for the discount rate,

Fig. 3. A short section of perpendicular fence to guide animals on top of a jump-out along a 2.4 m (8 ft) high fence along U.S. Highway 93 on the Flathead Reservation, Montana, USA (copyright: Marcel Huijser).

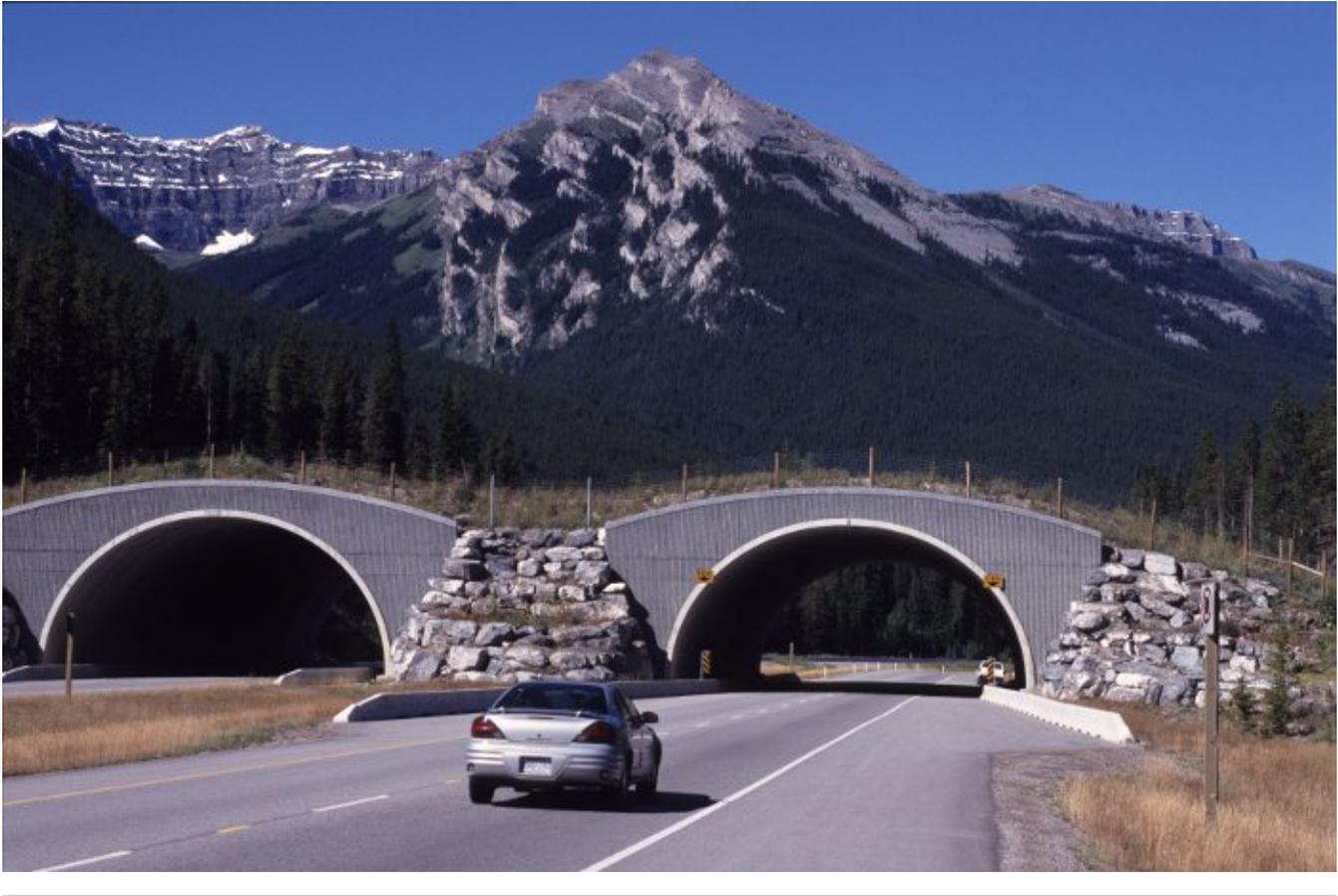


we calculated how much benefit (in 2007 US\$) each mitigation measure needs to generate over a 75-year period in order to break even and have the benefits exceed the costs (threshold values). Equation 1 shows our methods for estimating costs:

$$A_j = \left[\sum_{t=1}^n \frac{c_{tj}}{(1+d)^t} \right] \left[\frac{(1+d)^n \cdot d}{(1+d)^n - 1} \right] \quad (1)$$

The first term is simply the present value of costs over the period t equals 1 to n with discount rate d and annual costs (c_{tj}) in year t for mitigation measure j . The second term is an amortization factor (the share that yields the annual equivalent of a fixed

Fig. 4. Wildlife overpass in Banff National Park, Alberta, Canada (copyright: Marcel Huijser).



sum over some time period, as in the annual payments on a 30-year mortgage); the product of the two terms equals A_j , which is the amortized real annual cost over period n for technology j . Annual benefits are given by Eq. 2:

$$B_j = r_j k \sum_{i=1}^m \alpha_i c_i + \sum_{i=1}^m v_{ij} \quad (2)$$

Annual benefits are the sum of the reduction in direct collision costs for species i (equals 1 to m) and any annual nonuse or passive-use values v_{ij} for these species. With respect to direct collision costs, r_j is

the reduction in wildlife–vehicle collisions from mitigation measure j (r is a ratio) and k is the initial pre-mitigation level of wildlife–vehicle collisions per kilometer per year for the road section of interest. The term rk accordingly is the reduction in the number of wildlife–vehicle collisions. The average species-weighted average cost per collision is the summation of the share of collisions (α_i) due to species i times species-specific collision costs c_i . The summed product of the reduction in collisions and the average cost per collision ($\alpha_i c_i$) gives the benefits associated with a given mitigation measure. Setting annual benefits for mitigation measure j equal to annual costs and solving for k yields the breakeven level of pre-mitigation collisions, which we designate k_j^* , above which annual benefits will exceed costs, e.g., net benefits are positive, as shown in Eq. 3:

Fig. 5. Animal detection system along U.S. Highway 191 in Yellowstone National Park, Montana, USA (copyright: Marcel Huijser).



Table 2. Summary of estimated costs (in 2007 US\$) for the average deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collision.

Description	Deer (US\$)	Elk (US\$)	Moose (US\$)
Vehicle repair costs per collision	\$2622	\$4550	\$5600
Human injuries per collision	\$2702	\$5403	\$10 807
Human fatalities per collision	\$1002	\$6683	\$13 366
Towing, accident attendance, and investigation	\$125	\$375	\$500
Hunting value animal per collision	\$116	\$397	\$387
Carcass removal and disposal per collision	\$50	\$75	\$100
Total	\$6617	\$17 483	\$30 760

$$k_j^* = \frac{A_j - \sum v_{ij}}{(r_j \cdot \sum \alpha_i \cdot c_i)} \quad (3)$$

As one would expect, the number of collisions required is directly proportional to the mitigation measure cost A (the higher the costs, the more collisions needed to justify) and inversely proportional to the benefit (reduction in collisions) achieved by the mitigation measure. To the extent there are annual passive-use benefits (v_{ij}), these reduce annual costs. For the simplified case of a single species and no passive-use values, the breakeven value is simply (Eq. 4):

$$k_j^* = \frac{A_j}{r_j \cdot c_i} \quad (4)$$

Note that the right-hand term is simply total annual costs of the mitigation measure divided by the benefits (avoided costs) per collision. If one

expresses r_j in terms of percent reduction, then A_j/r_j is the cost of a 1% reduction in collisions. It is useful to compute this unit cost (cost per 1% reduction) in the following section in comparing the costs of different mitigation measures. The next two sections provide a summary of the effectiveness and costs of the mitigation measures, and the costs associated with deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collisions.

Effectiveness and Costs of Mitigation Measures

We reviewed approximately 40 different types of mitigation measures or combinations of mitigation measures that aim to reduce collisions with large animals (deer and larger) (for full review see Huijser et al. 2007b). Based on the available data, 13 of these measures were considered effective in reducing collisions with large animals (effectiveness >0%) (Table 1). For example, if there were 10 reported collisions with large ungulates per kilometer per year on a road section, then the implementation of a combination of wildlife fencing, underpasses, and jump-outs is estimated to reduce these collisions by 86% to 1.4 reported collisions per kilometer per year (Table 1). If more than one estimate was available for the effectiveness of each of the 13 mitigation measures reviewed, the mean was calculated. As the

effectiveness of some of the mitigation measures is highly variable or based on only one study, additional studies may lead to an adjustment of these values at a later time. Mitigation measures considered ineffective (effectiveness estimated at 0% (Huijser et al. 2007b)), lacking effectiveness data, or having insufficient data were excluded from the cost–benefit analyses in this paper.

Each mitigation measure's suitability depends on the species concerned, the specific objectives of a project, and local circumstances. This paper does not discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each mitigation measure, but it is important to be aware that some mitigation measures may only be suited for very specific circumstances. For example, population culling, the relocation of individuals or infertility treatment of individuals may only be practical and effective for relatively small and closed populations (Seagle and Close 1996, Rudolph et al. 2000). Furthermore, such measures are typically applied to deer rather than other species. See Huijser et al. (2007a) for a discussion on other considerations.

The estimated costs for each of the mitigation measures over a 75-year period vary greatly, as did the costs per percent reduction in collisions (Table 1). Appendix 1 provides a rationale for the estimated costs of the individual mitigation measures.

Cost Estimates for Deer-, Elk-, and Moose–Vehicle Collisions

The justification for the cost estimates for deer-, elk-, and moose–vehicle collisions is in Appendix 2. The total estimated costs for the average deer-, elk-, and moose–vehicle collision is summarized in Table 2. As we calculated the costs for an average collision, the costs of collisions that result in human injuries or fatalities, in addition to property damage, are higher than this average. Similarly, the costs of collisions that result in property damage only are lower than these average costs. The advantage of using the costs of an average collision is that no assumptions have to be made whether a particular accident (past or future) did or will result in human injuries or fatalities; this is averaged out. Most of the costs are associated with human injuries and fatalities (deer: 56.0%; elk: 69.1%; moose: 78.6%) rather than vehicle repair costs (deer: 39.6%; elk: 26.0%; moose: 18.2%). Based on a total estimate of one to two million collisions with large mammals

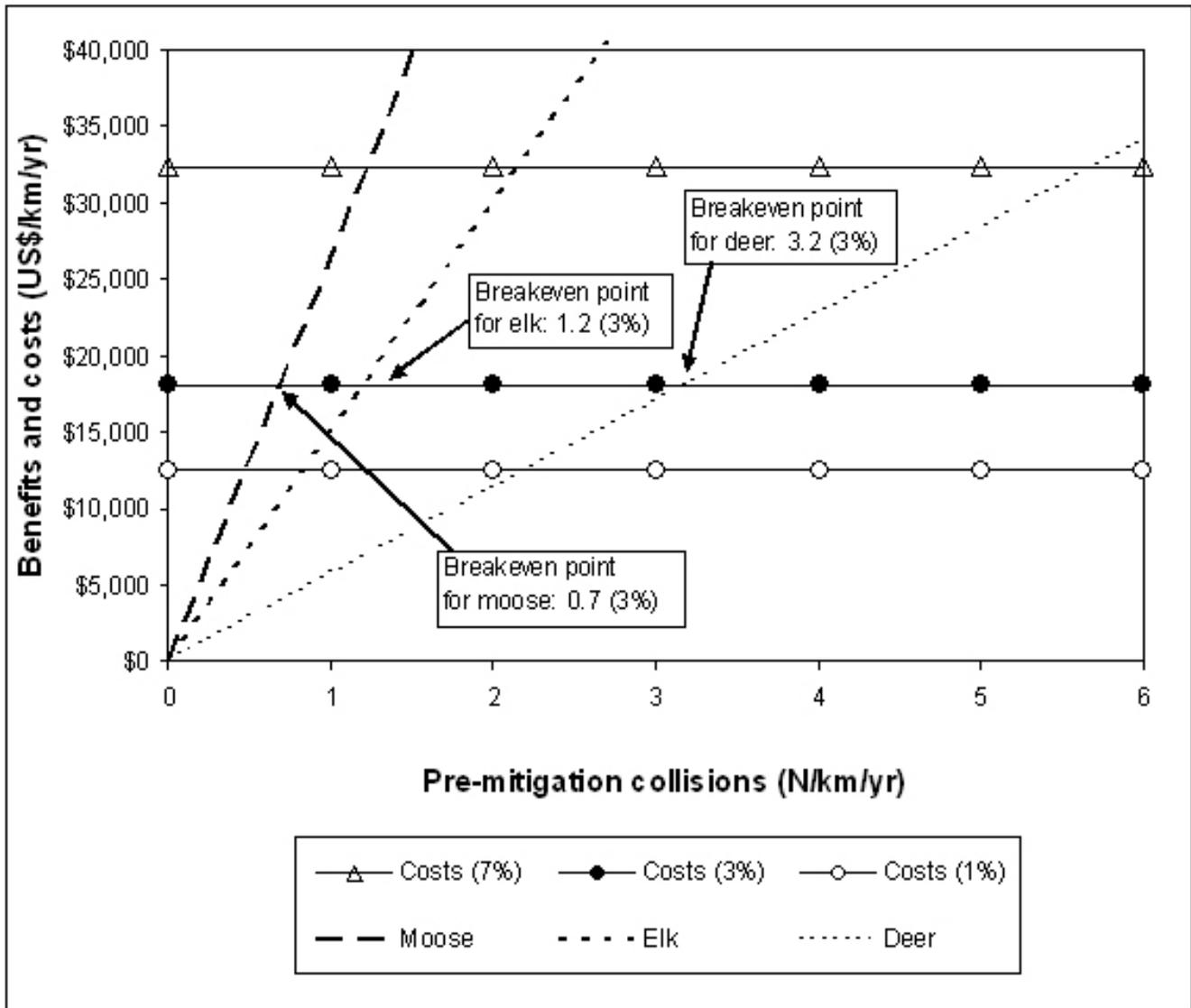
per year in the United States (Huijser et al. 2007b) and the estimate that 99.2% of all reported wildlife–vehicle collisions related to deer, 0.5% to elk, and 0.3% to moose (see introduction), the total estimated annual costs associated with ungulate–vehicle collisions is estimated at US\$6 247 759 000–US\$12 495 518 000. In Canada, with an estimated 45 000 large mammal–vehicle collisions, the estimated annual costs are US\$281 149 155 (Tardif and Associates Inc. 2003). Although we acknowledge that there is geographical variation in the body size of deer, elk, and moose, and thus in the costs associated with a collision, the estimates presented in this manuscript are typically based on average values for large geographical areas (e.g., a nation) or the results of several studies in different geographical areas, resulting in estimates for the United States and Canada combined rather than estimates for a particular region.

RESULTS

Illustration Output Cost–Benefit Model

Figure 6 shows the threshold values (in 2007 US\$) for a specific mitigation measure: fencing with underpasses and jump-outs. For this specific mitigation measure, there is an initial construction cost in the first year of US\$416 191, with annual maintenance of US\$1500 per year and fence removal and replacement in year 25 and 50 of US\$107 500 and removal less salvage in year 75 of US\$26 500 (all costs in 2007 US\$ per kilometer) (see Appendix 1 for justification). The present value (3% discount rate) of this mitigation measure is US\$538 273 and annual amortized value per kilometer is US\$18 123. The annual amortized values at 7% and 1% are US\$32 457 and US\$12 437, respectively. These annual costs at the three discount rates are shown as horizontal lines (Fig. 6). The lines representing the costs associated with pre-mitigation collisions with deer, elk, and moose cross the horizontal lines representing the annual amortized values at the break-even points. For 3% discount rate, the break-even point for deer, elk, and moose is 3.2, 1.2, and 0.7 collisions per kilometer per year, respectively (Fig. 6). If more collisions occur, then implementing fencing with underpasses and jump-outs generates economic benefits in excess of costs. Similarly, if fewer collisions occur then the implementation of this mitigation measure has costs in excess of benefits.

Fig. 6. The number of deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collisions per kilometer per year (dotted lines) needed to reach the threshold values (7%, 3%, and 1% discount rate) (in real 2007 US\$) (solid lines) for fencing with underpasses.



Another way to look at the same data is in terms of the actual “product” or output of the mitigation measures, which is the number of collisions avoided per kilometer per year (Fig. 7). From this perspective, the average benefits per collision avoided are constant (horizontal lines in Fig. 7) and depend on the species: deer US\$6617, elk US\$17 483, and moose US\$30 760 per kilometer per year.

Average costs per collision avoided, however, decline with the number of collisions avoided, illustrating the spreading of fixed costs that underlies the economics of these mitigation measures. The break-even point for deer, elk, and moose is at 2.7, 1.0, and 0.6 collisions avoided per kilometer per year, respectively (Fig. 7). If more collisions are avoided, then fencing with

underpasses and jump-outs generates economic benefits in excess of costs. Similarly, if fewer collisions are avoided then this mitigation measure has costs in excess of benefits. Note that the break-even values divided by the reduction achieved by the specific fencing with underpasses mitigation measure of 0.86 (or 86%) yields the break-even point in terms of pre-mitigation collisions (Fig. 6).

Threshold Values for the Mitigation Measures

The minimum amount (in 2007 US\$) that a mitigation measure needs to generate in order to reach the break-even point increases with the discount rate (Tables 3 and 4). However, this value is not dependent on the discount rate for mitigation measures that require the same investment every year (i.e., for vegetation removal and anti-fertility treatment) (Table 3). These dollar-value thresholds were translated into break-even points for deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collisions per kilometer per year (Tables 3 and 4). If a road section has costs or wildlife-vehicle collision numbers that exceed these threshold values, then the benefits of that mitigation measure exceed the costs over a 75-year time period (measured in 2007 US\$). For example, if a road section averages 0.1 deer-vehicle collisions per kilometer per year, and if the collisions are concentrated in certain times of the year, a seasonal warning sign would be economically feasible (because the threshold value of <0.1 (3% discount rate) is exceeded), but this measure is only estimated to reduce collisions by 26% (see Table 1). If a road section averages 4.4 deer-vehicle collisions per kilometer per year, a combination of wildlife fencing, under- and overpasses, and jump-outs would be economically feasible (because the threshold value of 4.3 (3% discount rate) is exceeded), and this measure is estimated to reduce collisions by 86% (see Table 1). Naturally, other mitigation measures that have threshold values lower than 4.4 deer per kilometer per year would also be economically feasible. Note that the threshold values presented in Tables 3 and 4 are based on a series of assumptions and estimates and that they should be taken as indicative values rather than exact values.

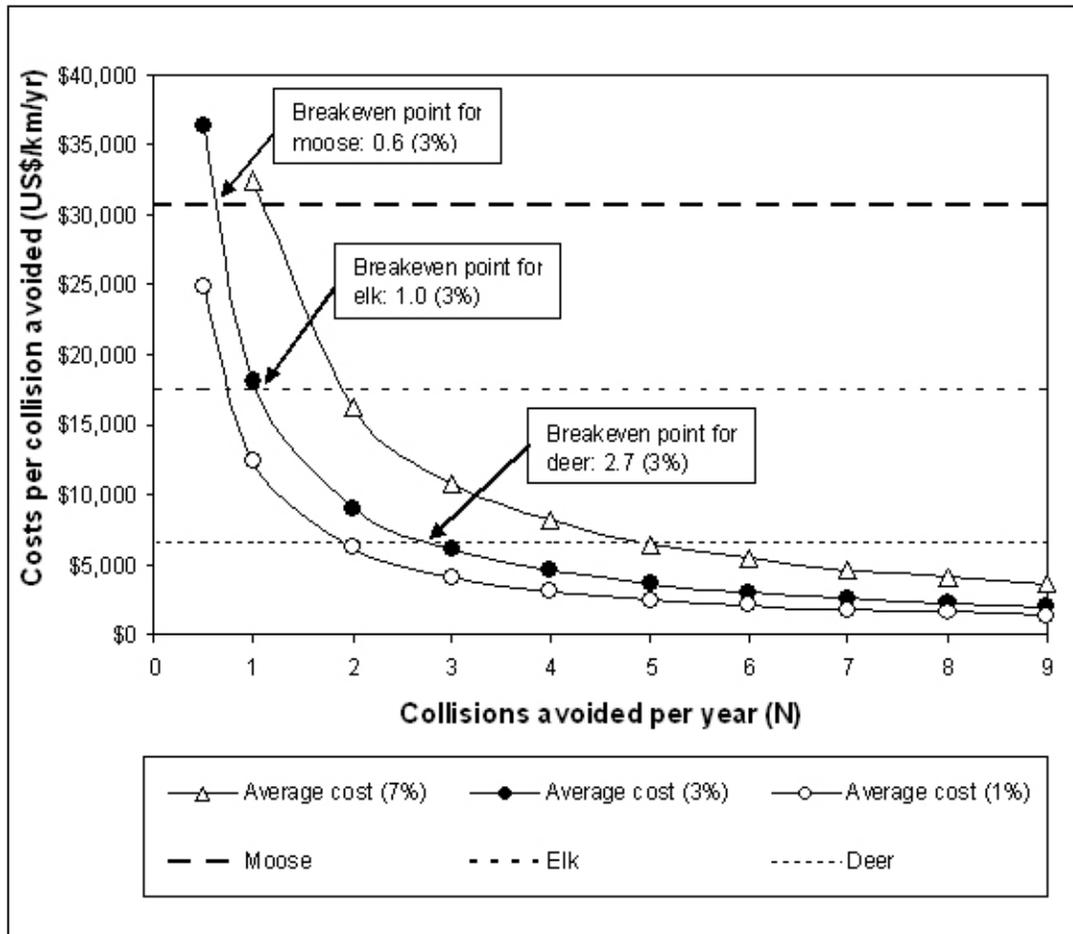
Real-World Examples

The costs associated with deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collisions for 10 road sections in the United States and Canada varied between US\$3636 and US\$46 155 per kilometer per year (Table 5). Even though some of the road sections only have data for a relatively short period, and the search and reporting effort varies for the different road sections, the average costs are higher than the threshold values for some of the mitigation measures (see Tables 3 and 4), indicating that the benefits of implementing such mitigation measures over the full length of the road sections concerned exceed the costs, and that these measures would be economically feasible. When comparing the costs per kilometer per year to the threshold values in Tables 3 and 4, please note that these threshold values are based on a divided four-lane road, and that two-lane roads have lower threshold values for some of the mitigation measures (e.g., those that include under- or overpasses). A more detailed cost analysis for one of the road sections in Table 5, MT Hwy 83, showed that, even though the average costs per kilometer per year may not meet the thresholds of many of the mitigation measures, certain locations on a road section can still exceed these thresholds (Fig. 8). For example, the benefits of animal detection systems as a stand-alone mitigation measure exceed the costs on 4.2% of the 76.9 km (47.8 miles) road section. Similarly, this percentage is 9.4% for wildlife fencing with gaps and animal detection systems in these gaps and jump-outs: 16.3% for wildlife fencing with under- and overpasses and jump-outs; and 26.8% for wildlife fencing with underpasses and jump-outs (Fig. 8).

DISCUSSION

The costs associated with deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collisions are substantial. Most of the costs are associated with human injuries and fatalities (deer 56.0%; elk 69.1%; moose: 78.6%) rather than vehicle repair costs (deer: 39.6%; elk: 26.0%; moose: 18.2%). Of the approximately 40 different types of mitigation measures reviewed, only 13 were considered to be effective in reducing collisions with large ungulates. However, the degree of effectiveness and the costs of these 13 mitigation measures vary greatly and, consequently, there are substantial differences in the threshold values

Fig. 7. The average costs per collision avoided per year for deer, elk, and moose for the mitigation measure fencing with underpasses (solid lines) (at 7%, 3%, and 1% discount rate) and the costs associated with the average deer-, elk-, or moose-vehicle collision (dotted lines) (all in real 2007 US\$).



between the individual mitigation measures above which the benefits of a mitigation measure exceed the costs. Collision and carcass data from 10 road sections throughout the United States and Canada showed that some road sections easily meet the threshold values for some of the mitigation measures. This means that the benefits of implementing such mitigation measures over the full length of the road sections concerned exceed the costs and that the implementation of mitigation measures would be economically feasible. However, when calculating the average costs of wildlife-vehicle collisions over relatively long road sections, potential concentrations of wildlife-

vehicle collisions are ignored. Therefore, it is important that more detailed analyses are carried out at a finer spatial scale (e.g., at 0.1–1.0 km or 0.1–1.0 mile resolution) to identify road sections where the benefits of mitigation measures may exceed the costs. Previous cost-benefit analyses estimated that wildlife fencing and wildlife fencing in combination with underpasses required 7.5 and 11.3 deer-vehicle collisions per kilometer per year, respectively, at a discount rate of 6% (Reed et al. 1982). These thresholds are higher than in our study, primarily because Reed et al. (1982) did not include the costs associated with human injuries and fatalities.

Table 3. Threshold values for individual mitigation measures that are estimated to reduce collisions with large ungulates by $\leq 50\%$ (see Table 1 for estimated percentages).

Threshold values	Disco- unt rate	Seasonal sign	Vegetation removal	Fence, gap, signs, crosswalk, jump-outs	Population culling	Relocation	Anti-fertility treatment
US\$/km/yr	1%	\$114	\$530	\$8153	\$3040	\$12 652	\$71 110
US\$/km/yr	3%	\$121	\$530	\$10 116	\$3099	\$12 764	\$71 110
US\$/km/yr	7%	\$140	\$530	\$14 972	\$3215	\$13 164	\$71 110
deer/km/yr	1%	<0.1	0.2	3.1	0.9	3.8	21.5
deer/km/yr	3%	<0.1	0.2	3.8	0.9	3.9	21.5
deer/km/yr	7%	<0.1	0.2	5.7	1.0	4.0	21.5
elk/km/yr	1%	<0.1	<0.1	1.2	0.4	1.5	8.1
elk/km/yr	3%	<0.1	<0.1	1.5	0.4	1.5	8.1
elk/km/yr	7%	<0.1	<0.1	2.1	0.4	1.5	8.1
moose/km/yr	1%	<0.1	<0.1	0.7	0.2	0.8	4.6
moose/km/yr	3%	<0.1	<0.1	0.8	0.2	0.8	4.6
moose/km/yr	7%	<0.1	<0.1	1.2	0.2	0.9	4.6

Although it may appear attractive to implement mitigation measures that have relatively low threshold values, not all mitigation measures reduce wildlife–vehicle collisions substantially. Therefore, whereas mitigation measures with relatively low threshold values and with limited effectiveness may be considered for road sections with relatively few wildlife–vehicle collisions, mitigation measures with higher threshold values and higher effectiveness may be considered for road sections that have relatively many wildlife–vehicle collisions.

Wildlife fencing as a stand-alone mitigation measure has relatively low threshold values and reduces wildlife–vehicle collisions substantially. However, we strongly advise against increasing the

barrier effect of roads and traffic without providing for safe crossing opportunities at appropriate intervals (see, e.g., Bissonette and Adair 2008, Huijser et al. 2008). The reason wildlife fencing has relatively low thresholds is that connectivity for wildlife (a passive-use cost) was not included in our cost–benefit analyses. However, depending on the species and local population structure, connectivity across the landscape, including roads, can be critical for the long-term population viability of the species concerned, and perhaps especially for species that may not be frequently hit by cars and that have low population density in the area (e.g., Jaeger and Fahrig 2004). Future cost–benefit analyses may include a monetary value for having viable populations of different species, as well as other passive-use values.

Table 4. Threshold values for individual mitigation measures that are estimated to reduce collisions with large ungulates by $\geq 80\%$ (see Table 1 for estimated percentages).

Threshold values	Discount rate	Fence	Fence, underpass, jump-outs	Fence, under- and overpass, jump-outs	ADS	Fence, gap, ADS, jump-outs	Elevated roadway	Road tunnel
US\$/km/yr	1%	\$5223	\$12 437	\$15 975	\$35 279	\$25 634	\$2 233 094	\$3 328 567
US\$/km/yr	3%	\$6304	\$18 123	\$24 230	\$37 014	\$28 150	\$3 109 422	\$4 981 333
US\$/km/yr	7%	\$8931	\$32 457	\$45 142	\$41 526	\$34 437	\$5 369 961	\$9 246 617
deer/km/yr	1%	0.9	2.2	2.8	6.1	4.5	337.5	503.0
deer/km/yr	3%	1.1	3.2	4.3	6.4	4.9	470.0	752.8
deer/km/yr	7%	1.6	5.7	7.9	7.2	6.0	811.6	1397.4
elk/km/yr	1%	0.4	0.8	1.1	2.3	1.7	127.7	190.4
elk/km/yr	3%	0.4	1.2	1.6	2.4	1.9	177.9	284.9
elk/km/yr	7%	0.6	2.2	3.0	2.7	2.3	307.2	528.9
moose/km/yr	1%	0.2	0.5	0.6	1.3	1.0	72.6	108.2
moose/km/yr	3%	0.2	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.1	101.1	161.9
moose/km/yr	7%	0.3	1.2	1.7	1.6	1.3	174.6	300.6

Wildlife fencing in combination with underpasses and jump-outs, or a combination of under- and overpasses and jump-outs, have thresholds low enough to be met at many road sections that have a concentration of collisions with large ungulates. Although the costs for an individual wildlife overpass is typically many times that for a wildlife underpass (estimated at 10 times higher costs, see Appendix 1), wildlife overpasses only increase the threshold values by 28.4%, 33.7% or 39.1% (at 1%, 3%, or 7% discount rate, respectively) when used sparingly in large-scale mitigation projects (in this case once every 24 km, see Appendix 1).

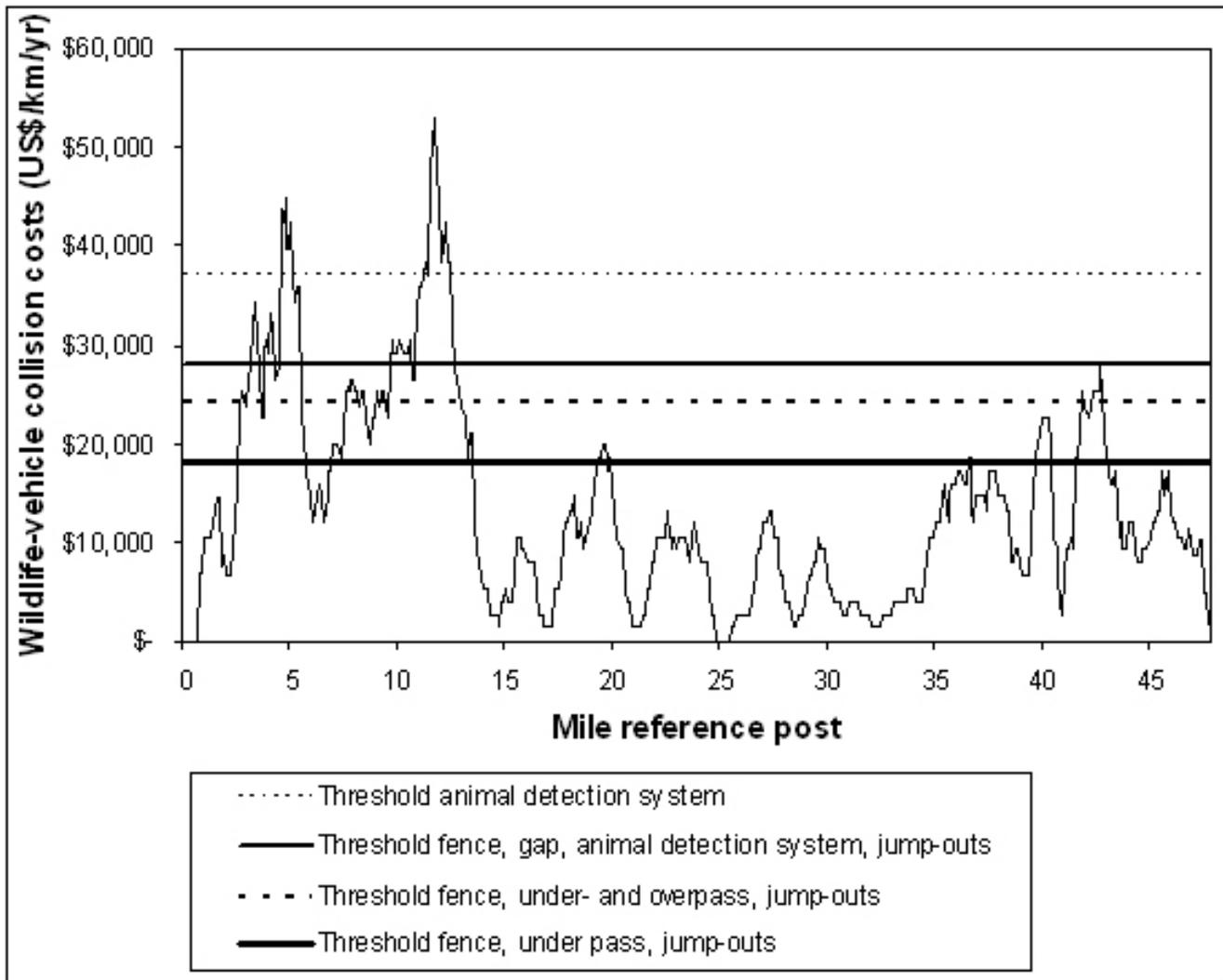
Animal detection systems as a stand-alone mitigation measure, and wildlife fencing combined with both jump-outs and animal detection systems

installed at gaps, have higher thresholds than wildlife fencing in combination with under- and overpasses and jump-outs, but they still are low enough to be met at many road sections that have a concentration of collisions with large ungulates. Nonetheless, although the data on the effectiveness of animal detection systems are encouraging, the estimate of the effectiveness of this mitigation measure are not nearly as robust as that for wildlife fencing in combination with under- and overpasses. Therefore, animal detection systems should still be considered experimental (see Huijser et al. (2006a) for a discussion on the relative strengths and weaknesses of animal detection systems and wildlife fencing in combination with under- and overpasses).

Table 5. The cost of deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collisions for selected road sections in the USA and Canada (all in 2007 US\$). R = research project, HM = highway maintenance reports, AR = highway accident reports, PWI = park warden incident reports, MSR = meat salvage reports.

Road section	Road length (km)	Data collection and year	Collisions/km/yr (costs in 2007 US\$)	Total cost/km/yr (US\$)	Source
SR260 (Christopher Creek section), Payson, AZ, USA	7.2	R, HM, AR (2002–2003)	2.64 elk (\$46 155)	\$46 155	Dodd et al. 2007
I-90 (309.0–330.9) (four-lane), Bozeman Pass, MT, USA	35.2	R, HM (2003)	3.38 deer (\$22 365) 0.21 elk (\$3671) 0.06 moose (\$1845)	\$27 881	Hardy et al. 2006
I-80/90 (50.0–70.0), Indiana Toll Road (four-lane), IN, USA	32.2	HM (2005)	2.89 deer (\$19 123)	\$19 123	Sedat Gulen, Indiana DOT, pers. comm.
Alaska Hwy 1 (58.0–79.0) (two-lane), AK, USA	33.8	AR, MSR (2006)	0.56 moose (\$17 226)	\$17 226	Rick Ernst, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, pers. comm.
I-95 (near Medway) (four-lane), ME, USA	32.2	AR (2005)	0.06 deer (\$397) 0.53 moose (16 303)	\$16 700	Duane Brunell, Maine DOT, pers. comm.
Hwy 1, Banff National Park (Phase 3b) (two-lane), AB, Canada	28.1	AR, R, PWI (2005)	0.60 deer (\$3970) 0.32 elk (\$5595) 0.07 moose (\$2153)	\$11 718	Shelagh Wrazej, Parks Canada, pers. comm.
Route 169 (1.0–61.0) (two-lane), Laurentides Wildlife Reserve, QC, Canada	61.0	HM, AR (2003)	0.33 moose (\$10 151)	\$10 151	Yves Leblanc, Tecsalt Inc., pers. comm.
I-90 (55.0–70.0) (four-lane), Snoqualmie Pass, WA, USA	24.1	HM (2005)	0.70 deer (\$4632) 0.25 elk (\$4371)	\$9003	Victoria Fursman, Washington DOT, pers. comm.
MT Hwy 83 (two-lane), MT, USA	76.9	HM (1998–2003)	1.19 deer (\$7287) 0.01 elk (\$176)	\$7463	Huijser et al. 2006b
Highway 93 S (two-lane), Kootenay National Park, BC, Canada	34.2	AR, PWI (2005)	0.41 deer (\$2713) 0.03 moose (\$923)	\$3636	Shelagh Wrazej, Parks Canada, pers. comm.

Fig. 8. The costs (in 2007 US\$) associated with wildlife–vehicle collisions (deer and elk) along the two-lane MT Hwy 83 (mile reference posts 0.0–47.8) per year (average 1998–2003), and the threshold values (at 3% discount rate) that need to be met in order to have the benefits of individual mitigation measures exceed the costs over a 75-year time period. Note that the costs at each 0.1 mile concerned and five adjacent 0.1 mile units were summed (0.6 mile = 1 km) to estimate the costs per kilometer.



Elevated roadways and road tunnels have very high threshold values, suggesting that these measures are unlikely to be implemented based on an economic analysis of deer-, elk-, or moose–vehicle collisions alone. Elevated roadways or road tunnels appear to be put in place primarily because of landscape characteristics (e.g., the presence of a mountain or a canyon), ecosystem processes (e.g., the flow of large amounts of water in rivers), and perhaps

concerns for specific threatened or endangered species (e.g., Evink 2002, Huijser et al. 2007b). This also illustrates another limitation of our cost–benefit analyses; it is primarily focused on the costs and benefits of collisions with large ungulates and the impacts on human safety. If other parameters are included it may change the threshold values substantially.

The threshold values for the individual mitigation measures are based on the mitigation of relatively long road sections (e.g., at least several kilometers or miles). This is especially important for the mitigation measures that include safe crossing opportunities (one safe crossing opportunity per 2 km, see Appendix 1). In this context, it is also critical to consider the habitat and home range of the species concerned to prevent individual animals from simply walking to the beginning or end of a mitigated road section to cross the road there, potentially reducing the effectiveness of the mitigation measure (see, e.g., Huijser et al. 2008).

The costs associated with collisions with large ungulates are a current estimate and may be subject to change when additional studies are conducted. The same is true for the costs (e.g., price of fuel, concrete, and steel) and effectiveness of the individual mitigation measures. In addition, mass production, the use of less expensive materials and construction techniques, and incorporating mitigation measures early in the planning of road (re-) construction projects may further reduce the costs for mitigation measures. Furthermore, there may be biases in our estimates for the costs of collisions with large ungulates. For example, the cost estimates for deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collisions only relate to the collisions reported to the insurance industry or to law enforcement agencies, and one could argue that unreported collisions are likely to be less costly than reported collisions. Therefore, we may have overestimated the average costs of a collision with a deer, elk, or moose. On the other hand, insurance industry reports and police accident reports may underestimate ungulate-vehicle collisions by about 50% (Tardif and Associates Inc. 2003, Riley and Marcoux 2006), and law enforcement agencies may only record a fraction (14%) of the deer-vehicle collisions reported to the insurance industry (Donaldson and Lafon 2008). Furthermore, in most states and provinces in the United States and Canada, no accident report is filled out by law enforcement agencies if the estimated vehicle damage is less than US\$1000 (Huijser et al. 2007b). The most conservative approach would be to only include collisions that were reported to the insurance industry or law enforcement agencies and screen the data for potential duplicates. However, based on the studies cited above, it is clear that such an approach may lead to a serious underestimation of the actual costs of collisions with large ungulates, and one may choose to include carcass reports,

recognizing that although this may overestimate the average costs associated with a deer-, elk-, or moose-vehicle collision, it may still underestimate the actual number of ungulate-vehicle collisions by about 50%. Crash and carcass data collection can be much improved (see also Huijser 2007b), which would greatly benefit the accuracy of cost-benefit analyses that evaluate the economic feasibility of mitigation measures.

CONCLUSION

We believe that the cost-benefit model presented in this paper can be a valuable decision-support tool for transportation agencies and natural resource management agencies when deciding on the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce ungulate-vehicle collisions. The tool allows for the selection of the appropriate road sections as well as the type of mitigation measure. The results suggest that there must be many road sections in the United States and Canada where the benefits of mitigation measures exceed the costs and where the mitigation measures would help society save money and improve road safety for humans and wildlife. Mitigation measures that include safe crossing opportunities for wildlife may not only substantially reduce road mortality, but also allow for wildlife movements across the road. This connectivity is essential to the survival probability of the fragmented populations for some species in some regions.

Responses to this article can be read online at:
<http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art15/responses/>

Acknowledgments:

This effort was funded, in part, by the Wilburforce Foundation. The authors would like to thank the Wilburforce Foundation for their support. In addition, the authors also thank Pat Basting, Duane Brunell, Rick Ernst, Jon Fleming, Victoria Fursman, Yves Leblanc, Dick Luedke, Terry McGuire, Sedat Gulen, Doug Herbrand, Chris Neher, Lloyd Salsman, Rodney van der Ree, Bethanie Walder, Shelagh Wrazej, and three anonymous reviewers for their help, comments, and suggestions.

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Appendix 1. Cost Estimates for Mitigation Measures

[Please click here to download file 'appendix1.pdf'.](#)

Appendix 2. Cost Estimates for Deer-, Elk-, and Moose-Vehicle Collisions

[Please click here to download file 'appendix2.pdf'.](#)

APPENDIX 1. Cost Estimates for Mitigation Measures

We estimated the cost of the mitigation measures listed in Table 1 based on a review of the literature and interviews with researchers, manufacturers, and transportation agency personnel (for more detailed review see Huijser et al. 2007a). The costs were calculated for a motorway (2 lanes in each direction) and standardized as costs per kilometer road length. Unless indicated otherwise, all cost estimates were expressed as US\$ as reported in the cited work. For our analyses we converted all costs to 2007 US\$ using the U.S. Consumer Price Index (U.S. Department of Labor 2008).

Seasonal wildlife warning signs were estimated at US\$400 for a large sign, and US\$80 for two flashing lights (Sullivan et al. 2004). For these analyses we assumed that one sign and associated flashing lights is installed per km per travel direction. This brings the total costs to US\$960 per km (US\$1,053 in 2007 US\$). The projected life span of the signs and warning lights was set at 10 years.

The purchasing cost for an animal detection system was estimated at US\$65,000 per 1,609 m (1 mi) road length (both sides of the road) (Personal communication Lloyd Salsman, Sensor Technologies & Systems, December 2007). However, since roads often have curves and driveways or objects in the right-of-way, the distance between sensors may be shorter than the maximum range of their signal, potentially leading to cost increases. For these analyses we assumed the purchasing costs, including signs and power source or supply, were estimated at US\$75,000 per km road length (both sides of the road). The planning costs were estimated at US\$50,000 and the installation costs were estimated at US\$50,000 per km road length (all in 2007 US\$). Maintenance and operation costs were estimated at US\$14,800 per km per year (US\$10,000 for problem identification and problem solving, parts (US\$3,000), vegetation management (US\$1,500), and remote access to the system (US\$300) (all in 2007 US\$). The projected life span of the signs and warning lights was set at 10 years. System removal costs at the end of the life of the system were estimated at US\$10,000 per km (in 2007 US\$).

Vegetation removal alongside the road, consist of the removal of shrubs and trees to increase visibility for drivers and to reduce the attractiveness for certain species, e.g. moose. The costs were estimated at US\$500 per km per year (US\$530 in 2007 US\$) (Andreassen et al. 2005).

The cost estimates for population culling, relocation and infertility treatment are typically expressed as cost per animal. For the purpose of our cost-benefit analyses we had to translate these costs to costs per km road length. For our analyses we set the treatment area in a zone parallel to, and on both sides, of a road. The width of the zone for each side of the road was based on the diameter of the home range (75 ha) of white-tailed deer in a suburban environment, 978 m (home range size estimated at 43-50-86-144 ha by Kilpatrick and Spohr (2000), Beringer et al. (2002), and Grund et al. (2002)). For both sides of the road this results in a treatment area of 195.4 ha per km road length. Population densities of (suburban) white-tailed deer that are considered a problem have been estimated at 50-88-91 individuals per km² (Porter and Underwood 1999, Kilpatrick

et al. 2001). Assuming a population density of 70 individuals per km², there are 136.8 deer present in 195.4 ha. The cost for culling, relocation, and anti-fertility treatment was set at US\$110 (US\$132 in 2007 US\$), US\$450 (US\$540 in 2007 US\$), and US\$1,128 (US\$1,296 in 2007 US\$) per deer (females only), respectively. The estimate for killing a deer was based on estimates for the use of professional sharpshooters; US\$108-US\$121-US\$194 per deer for conservation officers, park rangers, and police officers, respectively (Doerr et al. 2001). Others estimated these costs at US\$91-US\$310 per deer (DeNicola et al. 2000). The estimate for relocating a deer was based on estimates by Beringer et al. (2002) (US\$387 per relocated deer) and De Nicola et al. (2000) (US\$431 or US\$400-US\$2,931 per deer). The estimate for giving a female deer an anti-fertility treatment was based on estimates by Walter et al. (2002) (US\$1,128 per treated deer) (US\$1,300 in 2007 US\$). Assuming that a population can only be reduced by 50% before the culling, relocation, or anti-fertility treatment efforts become much more labor intensive, the one time culling and relocation of 68.4 deer costs US\$9,029 and US\$36,936 respectively (reduction of 68.4 deer) (in 2007 US\$). Suburban white-tailed deer populations can double their population size every 2-5 years, depending on the circumstances (DeNicola et al. 2000). Assuming a closed population (no immigration from adjacent areas) and a doubling of population size every 3 years, the culling and relocation effort would have to be repeated every 3 years. For the anti-fertility treatment, it was assumed that 80% of the females (80% of 68.4 female deer is 54.7 female deer, assuming an equal sex ratio), would have to be treated annually to stabilize or reduce the population density (DeNicola et al. 2000, Rudolph et al. 2000). This results in an annual cost for anti-fertility treatment of US\$71,110 (in 2007 US\$). Note that if the population is open to immigration from adjacent areas that the effectiveness for the culling, relocation, and anti-fertility treatment efforts will be much reduced or potentially eliminated. For these mitigation measures there were no estimates available for elk and moose. While the costs of these mitigation measures may be much higher per individual elk and moose, and while these mitigation measures may be less suitable or practical for elk or moose, we used the same costs estimates as for deer.

The costs for 2.4 m (8 ft) high wildlife fencing along US Highway 93 on the Flathead Reservation in Montana varied depending on the road section concerned: US\$26, US\$38, US\$41 per m in 2006 (material and installation combined) (Personal communication Pat Basting, Montana Department of Transportation). A finer mesh fence was dug into the soil and attached to the wildlife fence for some fence sections at an additional cost of US\$12 per m (Personal communication Pat Basting, Montana Department of Transportation). For the cost-benefit analyses the cost of wildlife fencing, including a dig barrier, was set at US\$47 per m (US\$48 in 2007 US\$). For both sides of a road this translates into US\$96,000 per km road length (in 2007 US\$). The projected life span of a wildlife fence was set at 25 years. Fences require maintenance, for example as a result of fallen trees, vehicles that have run off the road and into the fence, and animals that may have succeeded digging under the fence (Clevenger et al. 2002). Maintenance costs were set at US\$500 per km per year and fence removal costs were set at US\$10,000 per km road length (all in 2007 US\$).

Safe crossing opportunities and escape opportunities were not included in the cost estimates for wildlife fencing (see previous paragraph), but they are included in the mitigation measures discussed in the next paragraphs. The safe crossing opportunities and escape opportunities focus on serving large animals (deer size and larger).

For our cost benefit analyses we set the number of safe crossing opportunities at one per 2 km (0.5 crossing opportunity per km) (0.3 per mi). This number is based on the actual number of crossing structures found at three long road sections (two lanes in each travel direction) that have wildlife fencing and crossing structures for large animals: 24 crossing structures over 64 km (0.38 structures per km) (Foster and Humphrey 1995); 24 crossing structures over 45 km (0.53 structures per km) (Clevenger et al. 2002); and (17 crossing structures over 31 km (0.56 structures per km) (Dodd et al. 2007). Note that this number is not based on what may be required to maintain viable wildlife populations in a landscape bisected by roads.

For our cost-benefit analyses we used jump-outs or escape ramps as escape opportunities for large animals. The reported costs for one jump-out are US\$11,000 (US\$13,200 in 2007 US\$) (Bissonette and Hammer 2000) and US\$6,250 (2006) (US\$6,425 in 2007 US\$) (Personal communication Pat Basting, Montana Department of Transportation). We set the costs for a jump-out at US\$9,813 (in 2007 US\$) with a projected life span of 75 years.

Wildlife fencing in combination with gaps in the fence and crosswalks painted on the road at such gaps was studied by Lehnert and Bissonette (1997). The cost for a wildlife crosswalk across a four lane road (excluding wildlife fencing and escape from right-of-way measures) was US\$28,000 (US\$36,075 in 2007 US\$) (US\$18,037 per km) (Lehnert and Bissonette 1997). The projected life span of a crosswalk was set at 10 years. The costs for warning signs (76 cm x 76 cm), one for each travel direction, were set at US\$62 per sign with a projected life span of seven years (USA Traffic Signs 2007). For this analyses we included 2 signs per gap (one for each travel direction), resulting in one sign per km. The width of the gap in the fence was set at 100 m (328 ft). However, the length of the fence was not reduced because of the gap as the fence may be angled towards the road to help direct animal movements. The cost for wildlife fencing was set at US\$96,000 per km (see earlier section on wildlife fencing). Fence maintenance costs were set at US\$500 per km per year, and fence removal costs was set at US\$10,000 per km road length. In addition to the gap in the fence a jump-out was provided every 317 m (1,040 ft) (5 per 2 km per roadside; 5 per km; US\$49,065 per km).

The cost for purchasing one section of a break-the-beam animal detection system was set at US\$8,500 (Personal communication Lloyd Salsman, Sensor Technologies & Systems, December 2007). A gap requires a beam at each side of the road (US\$17,000), but the costs for the second beam may be lower as there is only one control station required. The purchasing costs, including signs and power source or supply, were set at US\$13,500 per km (in 2007 US\$). The planning costs were estimated at US\$25,000 and the installation costs were estimated at US\$25,000 per km road length (all in 2007 US\$). Maintenance and operation costs were estimated at US\$11,800 per km per year (US\$10,000 for

problem identification and problem solving, parts (US\$1,000), vegetation management (US\$500), and remote access to the system (US\$300). The projected life span of the signs and warning lights was set at 10 years. System removal costs were estimated at US\$5,000 per km. The width of the gap in the fence with the animal detection system was set at 100 m (328 ft). However, the length of the fence was not reduced because of the gap as the fence may be angled towards the road to help direct animal movements. The cost for wildlife fencing was set at US\$96,000 per km (see earlier section on wildlife fencing). Fence maintenance costs were set at US\$500 per km per year, and fence removal costs was set at US\$10,000 per km road length. In addition to the gap in the fence a jump-out was provided every 317 m (1,040 ft) (5 per 2 km per roadside; 5 per km; US\$49,065 per km).

For the purposes of our cost-benefit analyses for wildlife fencing in combination with wildlife underpasses, we provided a wildlife underpass every 2 km (1.2 mi). The cost for an underpass was set at US\$500,000 (materials and construction). The cost for an underpass (elliptical culvert, about 7 m wide, 4-5 m high) was based on the US\$650,000 paid for three large wildlife underpasses (about 7 m wide, 5 m high) under US Hwy 93 (two lanes) on the Flathead Reservation in Montana in 2006 (US\$668,200 in 2007 US\$) (Personal communication Pat Basting, Montana Department of Transportation); the CanUS\$225,000-CanUS\$250,000 (exchange rate 1.36 CanUS\$ for 1 US\$ in 1996; US\$218,731-US\$243,034 in 2007 US\$) for an underpass (7 m wide, 4 m wide) under the Trans Canada Highway (four lanes) in Banff National Park in 1996 (Personal communication Anthony P. Clevenger, Western Transportation Institute); the US\$Can5,400 per m (road width) (exchange rate 1.36 CanUS\$ for 1 US\$ in 1996; US\$5,428 per m in 2007 US\$) for elliptical culverts (7 m wide, 4 m high) under the Trans Canada Highway in 1996 (Personal communication Terry McGuire, Parks Canada, unpublished data); and the €30,000-€50,000 per m (road width) (exchange rate 0.80 € for 1 US\$ in 2004; US\$41,136-US\$68,560 per m in 2007 US\$) for large underpasses (7-10 m wide) in 2004 in The Netherlands (Kruidering et al. 2005). The planning costs were estimated at US\$50,000 per structure (US\$25,000 per km) (in 2007 US\$). Maintenance and operation costs were estimated at US\$2,000 per structure per year (US\$1,000 per km per year) (in 2007 US\$). The projected life span of an underpass was set at 75 years. Structure removal costs were estimated at US\$30,000 per structure (US\$15,000) per km (in 2007US\$). The length of the fence was not reduced because of the gap as a result of the crossing structure, as the fence is angled towards the road and ties in with the crossing structure. The cost for wildlife fencing was set at US\$96,000 per km (see earlier section on wildlife fencing). Fence maintenance costs were set at US\$500 per km per year, and fence removal costs was set at US\$10,000 per km road length (in 2007 US\$). The number of escape ramps between crossing structures was set at 7 per roadside per 2 km (2 immediately next to a crossing structure (50 m on either side from the center of the structure), and an additional five escape ramps with 317 m (1,040 ft) intervals (7 per km; US\$68,691 per km). The escape ramps on either side of a crossing structure are required because of the continuous nature of the wildlife fencing and the assumption that animals will want to cross the road most often at the location of the crossing structures, as that should be one of the most important criteria for the placement of these crossing structures.

For the purposes of our cost-benefit analyses for wildlife fencing in combination with wildlife underpasses and overpasses, we provided a wildlife underpass every 2 km, but every 12th underpass (once every 24 km) was replaced with an overpass. This resulted in 0.46 underpasses and 0.04 overpasses per km (0.29 and 0.02 per mi). The frequency for wildlife overpasses is based on the actual number of overpasses on a long road section (two lanes in each travel direction) that has wildlife fencing and crossing structures for large animals: 2 overpasses over 45 km (1 every 22.5 km) (Clevenger et al. 2002). For the costs of an underpass, see the previous paragraph. The cost for an overpass was set at US\$5,000,000 in 2007 US\$ (materials and construction). The cost for an overpass (about 50 m wide) was based on the CanUS\$1,750,000 for an overpass (52 m wide) over the Trans Canada Highway (four lanes) in Banff National Park in 1996 (Personal communication Anthony P. Clevenger, Western Transportation Institute) (exchange rate 1.36 CanUS\$ for 1 US\$ in 1996; US\$1,701,242 in 2007 US\$); the €2,200,000 for an overpass (48 m wide) across the four lane motorway A28 (Leusderheide) in The Netherlands in 2004 (exchange rate 0.80 € for 1 US\$ in 2004; US\$4,387,866 in 2007 US\$) (Kruidering et al. 2005). However, depending on the length (road width) and width of an overpass (15-50 m), and depending on the nature of the terrain, the costs for eight wildlife overpasses in The Netherlands ranged between €1,400,000 and €9,100,000 (exchange rate 0.80 € for 1 US\$ in 2004; US\$1,919,691-US\$12,477,993 in 2007 US\$) (Kruidering et al. 2005; Provincie Noord-Brabant 2004). The planning costs were estimated at US\$50,000 per structure (US\$25,000 per km) (in 2007 US\$). Maintenance and operation costs were estimated at US\$2,000 per structure per year (US\$1000 per km per year) (in 2007 US\$). The projected life span of an overpass was set at 75 years. Structure removal costs were estimated at US\$350,000 for an overpass (US\$14,000 per km) and US\$30,000 for an underpass (13,800 per km) (in 2007 US\$). Fencing and escape ramp configuration and costs were identical to the previous paragraph.

The costs for an elevated roadway and road tunnel were set at US\$60,000,000 and US\$115,000,000 per km respectively (in 2007 US\$). These estimates are based on a 200 m long elevated road way that cost CanUS\$12,500,000 (1.06 CanUS\$ for 1 US\$ in 2007; US\$11,792,453 in 2007 US\$) and a 200 m long road tunnel that was constructed for CanUS\$24,000,000 (1.06 CanUS\$ for 1 US\$ in 2007; US\$22,641,509 in 2007 US\$) in 2007 (Personal communication Anthony P. Clevenger, Western Transportation Institute – Montana State University). The planning costs were estimated at US\$1,000,000 per km (in 2007 US\$). Maintenance and operation costs were estimated at US\$1,000,000 per km per year (in 2007 US\$). The projected life span of an elevated roadway and road tunnel was set at 75 years. Structure removal costs were estimated at US\$6,000,000 (elevated roadway) and US\$11,500,000 (road tunnel) per km.

APPENDIX 2. Cost Estimates for Deer-, Elk-, and Moose-Vehicle Collisions

We estimated the cost of the average collision with a deer, elk, or moose (Table 2) based on a review of the literature. Unless indicated otherwise, all cost estimates were expressed as US\$ as reported in the cited work. For our analyses we converted all costs to 2007 US\$ using the U.S. Consumer Price Index (U.S. Department of Labor 2008). The components included in our cost estimate were vehicle repair costs, costs associated with human injuries and fatalities (see also e.g. Bissonette et al. 2008), towing, accident attendance and investigation, the monetary value to hunters of the animal that was killed in the collision, and the cost of disposal of the animal carcass. Passive use costs (see main text of the paper) were not included in our cost estimate.

Vehicle repair costs

In Nova Scotia, the percentage of collisions involving white-tailed deer which resulted in property damage was estimated at 90.2% – 3,524 collisions with property damage out of 3,905 collisions (Tardif & Associates Inc. 2003). In Utah this percentage was estimated at 94% (Romin and Bissonette 1996). There were no similar data available for elk and moose. For these analyses the percentage of collisions resulting in property damage was assumed to be 92% for collisions with deer and 100% for collisions with elk or moose. Current data from a major auto insurance company in the United States showed that in 2006-2007 the average vehicle repair costs were about US\$2,900 for all species combined (Personal communication Dick Luedke, State Farm Insurance). The species specific costs were US\$2,850 for deer ($n = \pm 178,500$), US\$4,550 for elk ($n = \pm 900$), and US\$5,600 (moose; $n = \pm 550$) in 2006-2007 (Personal communication Dick Luedke, State Farm Insurance). Combined with the percentage of chance that a collision results in property damage, the average vehicle repair costs per collision were estimated at US\$2,622 (deer), US\$4,550 (elk), and US\$5,600 (moose) (all in 2007 US\$).

Human injuries

The percentage of white-tailed deer-vehicle collisions resulting in human injuries was estimated at 2.8% in Michigan (12 injuries from 60,875 collisions) (SEMCOG 2007), 3.8% in the US Midwest (4,724 injuries from 125,608 collisions) (Knapp et al. 2004); 4% in Ohio (review in Schwabe et al. 2002), 4% (review in Conover et al. 1995), 7.7% in Ohio (10,983 injuries from 143,016 collisions) (Schwabe et al. 2002); and 9.7% in Nova Scotia (378 injuries from 3,905 collisions) (Tardif & Associates Inc. 2003). Similar data could not be retrieved for elk. The percentage of moose-vehicle collisions resulting in human injuries was estimated at 18% in Newfoundland and Labrador (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 1997); 21.8% in Newfoundland (363 injuries from 1,662 collisions) (Tardif & Associates Inc. 2003); 20% in rural Alaska (Thomas 1995); 23% in Maine (Huijser et al. 2007a); and, 23% in Anchorage, Alaska (158 injuries from 519 collisions) (Garrett and Conway 1999). The ratio of moose-vehicle collisions to human injuries was estimated at 1:0.201 in Newfoundland (Rathey and Turner 1991) and 1:0.304 in Anchorage, Alaska (Garrett and Conway 1999). The ratios are higher than the percentages because more than one person may be present in a car, and multiple people may be injured as a result of one collision. Based on the data presented above, it was assumed that an animal-vehicle collision resulted in an average of 0.05 human injuries for deer, 0.10 for elk, and 0.20 for moose. When these proportions are combined with the relative frequency for each of the three injury categories distinguished in the General Estimates System for animal-vehicle collisions, (51.4% for possible human injuries, 38.4% for evident human injuries, and 10.3 % for

incapacitating or severe human injuries (Huijser et al. 2007a)) and the standard costs associated with each injury category, (US\$24,418 for possible human injuries, US\$46,266 for evident human injuries, and US\$231,332 for incapacitating or severe human injuries (U.S. Department of Transportation 1994, Huijser et al. 2007a)), it results in species specific cost estimates for human injuries (Table A2.1). The average costs of human injuries per collision are US\$2,702 for deer, US\$5,403 for elk, and US\$10,807 for moose (all in 2007 US\$) and these costs include lost earnings, lost household production, medical costs, emergency services, travel delay, vocational rehabilitation, workplace costs, administrative, legal, and pain and lost quality of life (U.S. Department of Transportation 1994).

Table A2.1: Estimated costs (in 2007 US\$) per type of human injury for the average deer-, elk-, and moose-vehicle collision.

Type of human injury	Deer (US\$)	Elk (US\$)	Moose (US\$)
Possible	\$627	\$1,254	\$2,508
Evident	\$887	\$1,775	\$3,550
Incapacitating/severe	\$1,187	\$2,374	\$4,749
Total	\$2,702	\$5,403	\$10,807

Human fatalities

The percentage of white-tailed deer-vehicle collisions resulting in human fatalities was estimated at 0.009% in Ohio (14 collisions with human fatalities from 143,016 collisions) (Schwabe et al. 2002); 0.020% (12 fatalities from 60,875 collisions) (SEMCOG 2007); 0.029% in North America (review in Schwabe et al. 2002); 0.03% in the US Midwest (33 collisions with human fatalities from 125,608 collisions) (Knapp et al. 2004); and 0.05% in Nova Scotia (2 collisions with human fatalities from 3,905 collisions) (Tardif & Associates Inc. 2003). Similar data could not be retrieved for elk. The percentage of moose-vehicle collisions resulting in human fatalities was estimated at 0% in Anchorage, Alaska (0 fatalities from 519 collisions) (Garrett and Conway 1999); 0.26% in Newfoundland (14 fatalities from 5,422 collisions) (Joyce and Mahoney 2001), 0.36% in Newfoundland (6 collisions with human fatalities from 1662 collisions) (Tardif & Associates Inc. 2003), 0.45% in Newfoundland (3 fatalities from 661 collisions) (Rathey and Turner 1991); 0.43% in Maine (Huijser et al. 2007a); and 0.50% in rural Alaska (Thomas 1995). Based on the data presented above, it was assumed that an animal-vehicle collision resulted in an average of 0.0003 (deer), 0.0020 (elk), and 0.0040 (moose) human fatalities. When these proportions are combined with the costs associated with a human fatality (US\$3,341,468 (U.S. Department of Transportation 1994, Huijser et al. 2007a)), it results in a cost estimate for human fatalities of US\$1,002 (deer), US\$6,683 (elk), and US\$13,366 (moose) for each collision (all in 2007 US\$).

Towing, accident attendance and investigation

Not all wildlife-vehicle collisions require the towing of a vehicle, and attendance or investigation by medical personnel, fire department personnel, or police. When they do, the cost for these efforts was estimated to vary between Can\$100 and Can\$550 (Clayton Resources Ltd. & Glen

Smith Wildlife Consultants 1989). Note that the cost for the actual medical assistance is included in the cost estimates for human injuries calculated earlier. Based on the data presented above, it was assumed that the cost of towing, and accident attendance or investigation is US\$500, but these services are only required or provided in 25% (deer), 75% (elk) and 100% (moose) of the collisions. These assumptions result in an average cost for towing, accident attendance and investigation of US\$125 (deer), US\$375 (elk), and US\$500 (moose) for each collision (all in 2007 US\$).

Monetary value of animals

The monetary value of animals can include benefits associated with hunting or viewing the animal or with the passive use values for the existence of the given animal. Passive use values are likely to be location and population specific, and the literature on wildlife viewing values is not extensive. Therefore we only included hunting-related values in our analyses. These values are measured by what the hunter would be willing to pay over and above the costs of the hunt, for example to access a hunting area. For the U.S. and Canada access for hunting on most private and public lands is free. However, what the maximum amount the hunter would be willing to pay for access if necessary is a measure of the net benefit or hunter "willingness-to-pay" for the hunt (Ward and Duffield 1992).

These net benefits are also referred to as "consumer surplus". For the application to collisions, the foregone expected value related to hunting would be the hunting value per animal times the probability that it would have been harvested. The hunting value per animal can be derived from the hunter willingness to pay for a season of hunting divided by the success rate per hunt. There is extensive literature on net economic values for hunting, usually based on travel cost or contingent valuation methods (for example, see Ward and Duffield 1992), but most of these are location (e.g. hunt district or perhaps state) specific. The most comprehensive hunting value estimates have been developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in their periodic national fishing and hunting surveys. The most recent values available for hunter willingness to pay for a season of hunting are for 2001 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2003), and in 2001 dollars averaged US\$377 for deer, US\$579 for moose (just Alaska) and for elk hunting (CO, ID, MT, OR, WY) were US\$380 for resident hunters and US\$556 for nonresident hunters or a weighted average (based on the number of resident and nonresident big game hunters for these states (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2002)) of US\$424. Corrected to 2007 price levels, these values are US\$441 for deer, US\$496 for elk, and US\$678 for moose. Success rates for these species are not reported in each survey year, but were estimated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1998) for 1996 at 0.61 for deer, 0.20 for elk, and 0.14 for moose. This implies the value of a successful hunting season for these species, respectively, as US\$723, US\$2,480, and US\$4,843. Crête and Daigle (1999) provide estimates of 1995-1996 hunting harvest as a share of pre-harvest populations for these species in North America as 0.16 for deer (whitetail and mule deer combined) and elk, and 0.08 for moose. Given this probability that a given animal will be harvested by a hunter, the implied foregone hunting value associated with the average collision is US\$116 for deer, US\$397 for elk, and US\$387 for moose (Table 2).

Removal and disposal costs of deer carcasses

In Canada, the clean-up, removal and disposal costs for animal carcasses were estimated at Can\$100 for deer and Can\$350 for moose (Sielecki 2004). In Pennsylvania, the average for deer

carcass removal and disposal in a certified facility was US\$30.50 per deer for contractors and US\$52.46 per deer for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation in 2003-2004 (Personal communication Jon Fleming, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation). Based on the data presented above, it was assumed that the removal and disposal costs of animal carcasses were US\$50 (deer), US\$75 (elk) and US\$100 (moose) (all in 2007 US\$).