



Region 5 Barrier ID: W214 (Barrier).

Barrier Name: US-101 Santa Clara River Conejo Grade.

Linear Infrastructure: US-101.

Geographic Area: Along US-101 from Thousand Oaks to Ventura.

Length: 43.15 km (26.81 mi).

Target Species: Mountain lion (*Puma concolor*), deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), spotted skunk (*Spilogale gracilis*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*).

Connectivity Concerns: US-101 bisects a critical wildlife linkage between the Santa Monica and Sierra Madre ranges at the Santa Clara River and Conejo Pass, both roadkill hotspots where multiple mountain lions have been killed. A future Caltrans project to widen US-101 from Moorpark Road (Thousand Oaks) to SR-33 (Ventura) will add HOV/express bus lanes and modify bridges and culverts. This section of highway runs mostly through flat terrain, except for the Conejo Pass, which rises 700 feet over 2.25 miles and is surrounded by largely undeveloped Conejo Hills—offering key opportunities for conservation.

The project crosses several streams and two critical wildlife linkages (Santa Clara River and Conejo Grade), with six existing wildlife crossings. Without mitigation, the project risks worsening habitat fragmentation, reducing crossing functionality, and increasing noise, light, and other disturbances that could significantly hinder wildlife movement.

Remediation Goals: Find areas of highest usage/risk to wildlife. Expand and enhance existing infrastructure such as culverts and creek bridges, add new undercrossings and wildlife exclusion fencing. removal of problematic fencing, and the addition of directional fencing. Use program funds to reduce the number of wildlife/vehicle collisions and improve connectivity among habitats that have been disrupted by roads plus add a new dedicated crossing structure in the Conejo Grade.



Figure: US-101 Santa Clara River Conejo Grade is a Region 5 wildlife connectivity barrier.