



SALT Speakers Series

Wildlife and Highways

How did the bighorn...elk...pronghorn...deer...cross the road?

As any Arizona driver knows, wildlife species face daunting challenges from our transportation infrastructure. On the surface, it seems that building highways could only compound existing problems of mortality, habitat loss, and fragmentation.

But road reconstruction projects also present opportunities for preserving and even restoring the health of our ecosystems. Partnerships among government agencies, conservation groups, universities, and commercial entities have led to research and implementation of long-term connectivity strategies to protect our wild neighbors. These include underpasses and overpasses, as well as shorter-term approaches such as wildlife crosswalks and fence modifications.

Using examples of highways that traverse big game habitats, Scott Sprague of the Arizona Game and Fish Department will discuss the basic challenges, research and mitigation measures that have helped Arizona become a leader in road ecology and wildlife connectivity.

A Senior Project Manager, Sprague has been part of the Wildlife Connectivity & Highways Program for 11 years. Projects include more than 30 existing wildlife crossings and planning for at least 50 more. His master's research at NAU studied the effects of roads on genetic interchange among pronghorn populations in northern Arizona.

Sprague's presentation will be the **December 13 edition of the SALT Speakers Series, at 6:30 PM in the Apache Junction Multi-Generational Center (Rm. B-117), 1035 N. Idaho Rd.** The Series is cosponsored by the Superstition Area Land Trust (SALT) and the Apache Junction Parks & Recreation Department. Talks generally occur on the second and fourth Wednesdays, October through April, and are free and open to the public.

SALT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. You can learn more about us, what we do, and how to join and/or contribute at azsalt.org