



**For immediate release:** 11/19/10

**Contact:** Dorothy Jankowsky, [Dorothy@jhalliance.org](mailto:Dorothy@jhalliance.org)

**Wildlife crossings expert Jon Beckmann to speak at Conservation Alliance's  
Annual Meeting and holiday gathering on Dec. 2**

(JACKSON, WYO.) When little old ladies need help crossing the street, they know who to turn to. But who's going to help thousands of elk get where they need to go?

On Dec. 2, find out how we can all help protect wildlife while increasing safety for motorists. Come to "Safe Passages," a talk by wildlife crossings and road ecology expert Jon Beckmann, 7:30 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 170 N. Glenwood.

"Wildlife don't just stay in one place. They need to be able to move safely between summer and winter range, and to take care of their daily needs, like finding food, water and shelter," said Louise Lasley, public lands director for the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance.

"But it's hard enough for people to get across the roads in Jackson Hole, let alone moose, elk, deer and other wildlife. And with several major highways here slated for expansion in the next 10 years, it's about to get even harder."

According to the Wyoming Department of Transportation, within the next decade, about one-quarter of the state highways in Teton County are up for reconstruction and expansion, including the planned widening of Jackson South Highway from two lanes to five. What will this mean for driver safety and wildlife?

Road kills already take a toll on the valley's wildlife, not to mention on motorists and their vehicles. For example, WYDOT reports that between 1995 and 2004, there were 202 documented crashes in the seven-mile stretch of the Jackson South Highway from the southern end of South Park Loop Road to Hoback Junction. Ninety-three of these crashes (almost half) involved animals.

"Wider roads, more cars and higher traffic speeds all increase the potential for wildlife-vehicle collisions," Lasley said. "That's why the Alliance has begun working on a campaign to promote safe wildlife crossings. With seed money from a 1% for the Tetons grant that we received in June, we hope to put Jackson Hole on the road to some transportation solutions that uphold our community's priorities, such as protecting wildlife and community character, while ensuring driver safety."

“We also hope Jon’s presentation will help our valley learn from other communities that are working to protect wildlife and their habitat from traffic and over-development,” added Cindy Harger, the Alliance’s interim executive director.

The evening of Thursday, Dec. 2, will begin with the Alliance’s annual membership meeting at 6 p.m., followed by light holiday refreshments at 7 p.m., and a presentation and question and answer session with Beckmann from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. The public is invited to attend any and all of the evening’s events. A suggested donation of \$5 to cover speaker costs is encouraged.

Beckmann is co-editor of the recently released book, “Safe Passages: Highways, Wildlife and Habitat Connectivity.” An Associate Conservation Scientist for the Wildlife Conservation Society and an affiliated professor at Idaho State University, he has many years of experience in wildlife research and conservation.

Attendees of Beckman’s Dec. 2 presentation who’d like more information are welcome to join a follow-up discussion on Friday, Dec. 3, 10 a.m. to noon at the Teton County Commissioners’ chambers, 200 S. Willow.

**Details in Brief:**

*What:* Conservation Alliance Annual Meeting featuring guest speaker and wildlife crossings expert Jon Beckmann

*When:* Thursday, Dec. 2, 2010, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. (annual membership meeting 6-7 p.m., light refreshments 7-7:30 p.m., speaker 7:30-8:30 p.m.)

*Where:* St. John’s Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 170 N. Glenwood, Jackson

*Cost:* \$5 suggested donation to cover speaker costs

*Contact:* Dorothy Jankowsky, Communications Director, [Dorothy@jhalliance.org](mailto:Dorothy@jhalliance.org) or (307) 733-9417

###

*The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to responsible land stewardship to ensure that human activities are in harmony with the area's irreplaceable wildlife, scenic and other natural resources.*