

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 1250 (Cortese) – As Amended May 14, 2026

Policy Committee:	Transportation	Vote:	11 - 4
	Water, Parks and Wildlife		9 - 1

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to include in its periodic transportation asset management plan (the TAMP) wildlife connectivity assets (generally meaning physical assets that allow wildlife to safely cross barriers, such as highways) and to adopt related targets. The bill also requires Caltrans and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), by January 1, 2024, to jointly develop and publish, and update at least every other year, an inventory of connectivity needs on the state highway system where the implementation of wildlife passage features could reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions or enhance wildlife connectivity.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Significant annual ongoing costs of an unknown, but substantial amount to Caltrans to include required information in the TAMP and, jointly with DFW, develop and publish the inventory of connectivity needs (State Highway Account).
- 2) According to DFW, all work required by this bill is consistent with, and can be incorporated into, work DFW must do pursuant to prior enacted legislation (AB 2344 (Friedman), Chapter 964, Statutes of 2022) that requires Caltrans, in consultation with DFW and other appropriate agencies, to take actions to address wildlife connectivity needs related to the state highway system.

COMMENTS:

Federal law (23 United States Code Section 101) defines a transportation asset management as a:

strategic and systematic process of operating, maintaining, and improving physical assets, with a focus on both engineering and economic analysis based upon quality information, to identify a structured sequence of maintenance, preservation, repair, rehabilitation, and replacement actions that will achieve and sustain a desired state of good repair over the lifecycle of the assets at minimum practicable cost.

Consistent with federal requirements, Caltrans produced, and updates every four years, a TAMP, which is a fiscally constrained 10-year financial plan that identifies the performance gap to achieving 10-year targets that will improve the transportation system. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) maintains guidelines for production and update of the TAMP.

These guidelines require the California TAMP include primary assets—pavement, bridge, drainage and transportation management system assets—as well as eight supplementary assets on the state highway system: bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, drainage pump plants, highway lighting, office buildings, overhead sign structures, safety roadside rest areas, transportation-related facilities and weigh-in-motion scales. Notable to this bill, CTC guidelines do not require the TAMP include wildlife connectivity assets.

Caltrans, working with DFW, has done much to identify and catalogue barriers to wildlife crossings. The author intends this bill to build upon this work by requiring Caltrans to plan for wildlife connectivity assets as a standard part of transportation asset planning. According to the author:

Wildlife crossings and related infrastructure have been shown to dramatically reduce collisions between vehicles and animals, yet too often these solutions are treated as stand-alone projects rather than incorporated into routine highway planning. SB 1250 makes clear that improving roadway safety means planning ahead by using the same data, engineering, and investment strategies we apply to other highway risks to identify collision hotspots and address them as part of how we build and maintain California's transportation system.

A very long and diverse list of supporters agrees. There is no opposition registered against this bill.

Analysis Prepared by: Jay Dickenson / APPR. / (916) 319-2081