

Hwy. 89 undercrossings built to save animals

Two undercrossings designed to help reduce animal-vehicle collisions on a busy 25-mile stretch of Highway 89 between Truckee and Sierraville have been built.

The \$2.8 million project is the second in a series of planned mitigation and research efforts by the Highway 89 Stewardship Team. The highway goes through the Tahoe National Forest, which covers more than 1,300 square miles of woodland, valleys and lakes, and is home to many different kinds of wildlife, including the Loyalton-Truckee mule deer herd.

Prior to the construction of the undercrossings, more than 1,000 mule deer died in the last 27 years along Highway 89 in the Loyalton-Truckee area.

According to the Western Transportation Institute, every year in the United States roughly 200 people are killed in as many as 2 million wildlife-vehicle collisions at a cost of more than \$8 billion.

In addition to the undercrossings, crews installed 1.3 miles of fencing along both sides of the highway to guide animals to safe passage under the highway.