

Act Now Comal Alamo, Austin, and Lone Star chapters of the Sierra Club **Bexar Audubon Society** Bexar and Travis-Austin Green Parties **Bexar Grotto Boerne Together Bulverde Neighborhood Alliance** Bulverde Neighborhoods for Clean Water Cibolo Center for Conservation Citizens for the Protection of Cibolo Creek **Comal Conservation Comfort Neighbors** Congregation of Divine Providence **Environment Texas** First Universalist Unitarian Church of SA **Fitzhugh Neighbors** Friends of Canyon Lake Friends of Castroville Regional Park Friends of Dry Comal Creek Friends of Government Canyon Fuerza Unida Green Society of UTSA **Guadalupe Riverkeepers Guadalupe River Road Alliance Guardians of Lick Creek** Hays Residents for Land & Water Protection Headwaters at Incarnate Word Helotes Heritage Association **Hill Country Alliance** Kerr County Water Alliance Kendall County Well Owners Association Las Moras Springs Association Leon Springs Business Association Llano River Watershed Alliance Native Plant Society of Texas -- NB Native Plant Society of Texas - SA Northwest Interstate Coalition of Neighborhoods Pedernales River Alliance - Gillespie Co. **Preserve Castroville** Preserve Lake Dunlop Association Preserve Our Hill Country Environment River Aid San Antonio San Antonio Audubon Society San Antonio Conservation Society San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance San Marcos River Foundation Save Barton Creek Association Save Our Springs Alliance Scenic Loop/Boerne Stage Alliance Securing a Future Environment (SAFE) **SEED Coalition** Signal Hill Area Alliance Solar San Antonio **Texans for Environmental Awareness Texas Cave Management Association** Trinity Edwards Spring Protection Assoc. Water Aid - Texas State University Watershed Association Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation

> PO Box 15618 San Antonio, Texas 78212

April 30, 2025

The Honorable Will Metcalf, Chair The Honorable Lulu Flores, Vice-Chair The Honorable Members Cole, DeAyala, Kerwin, Martinez Fischer, Orr, Vasut, and Ward Johnson House Committee on Culture, Recreation & Tourism

## Re: House Bill 5259, An Act Relating to a Wildlife Corridor Action Plan Developed by the Parks and Wildlife Department and Certain Other Duties of the Department Relating to Wildlife Corridors

The <u>Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance</u> (GEAA) appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments on behalf of our sixty-two member groups that are allied in advocacy for the preservation of our ground and surface water resources in twenty-one counties within Central and South Texas. We support House Bill 5259.

Texans experience thousands of wildlife-vehicle collisions every year. Wildlife crossings are a proven solution that protect both animals and people. HB 2529 would help expand these efforts statewide, ensuring thoughtful, data-driven planning for safer roads and healthier ecosystems. Many states already have wildlife corridor plans. This would be the first step for Texas in developing one.

Texas is #1 in the nation for animal-vehicle collisions, costing the state an average of \$917 million annually and 30 fatalities annually. Wildlife corridors over or under highways are highly effective, reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions by as much as 97%.

Other Western and Southwestern states – Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming – have passed similar bills or executive orders on wildlife corridors. The UT Center for Transportation Research estimates there are more than 100 road segments where crossing benefits, from avoided injuries and avoided property damage, would outweigh project costs.

San Antonio's Robert L.B. Tobin Land Bridge at the Phil Hardberger Park is one example of a successful wildlife corridor that provides countless benefits to wildlife, motorists, and city residents. Texas needs many more such corridors. As such, we urge you to support HB 5259.

Thank you for your consideration. Please consider GEAA as a resource that is at your disposal. We look forward to working with you on this issue.

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Rachel Hanes, Policy Director Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance