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NEWS RELEASE

WILDLIFE-VEHICLE ACCIDENT PREVENTION PROGRAM WELCOMES FUNDING CONTRIBUTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

KAMLOOPS, B.C. (Mar. 18, 2005) –The Wildlife-Vehicle Accident Prevention Program (WVAPP) is pleased to acknowledge a contribution of $4,830 from the Government of British Columbia. The funds will be used to support a Public Awareness Campaign about wildlife-vehicle collisions and how these collisions can be anticipated and avoided.

Approximately 17,000 animals are killed annually on BC's highways. Also, in a typical year, three people are killed, and 250 people are injured due to collisions with wildlife.

WVAPP program initiatives include locating billboards with a safety message near high-risk highway locations, placing signs in rest stop areas, distributing informational brochures, and placing safety notices in newspapers and magazines around the province.

"We are pleased that the BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection supports our efforts to make the highways safer for both people and wildlife," said Gayle Hesse, Coordinator, Wildlife-Vehicle Accident Prevention Program. "We look forward to expanding our public awareness programs regarding the dangers of wildlife-vehicle collisions and how drivers can avoid them."

WVAPP welcomes contributions from government, corporate citizens, the general public, and charitable foundations to support its public education programs, which promote human and wildlife safety on BC's highways.

The Wildlife-Vehicle Accident Prevention Program reminds drivers that spring is a very high-risk time for wildlife-vehicle collisions. Wildlife is attracted to roadsides in the spring for several reasons. Residual roadside salt deposits, left after snowmelt, attract wildlife to the road. Early vegetation growth in roadside ditches, and the birth of young animals, leads to an increased wildlife presence near the road

WVAPP "Hints for the Highway" while driving this spring are:

- Slow Down and Obey all Posted Signs – collision avoidance is improved at lower speeds.
- Drive Defensively – actively watch for animals, particularly between 7:00 pm and midnight.
- Be Alert – animals are unpredictable, often travel in groups, and may bolt unexpectedly.
- Use Your Vehicle – clean your headlights, use your high beams when safe, wear your seatbelt.

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For more information, please contact:
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