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TEXAS CHAPTER
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MEXICO CHAPTER

The Honorable Ted Cruz
167 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tony Gonzales
2239 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

April 8, 2026

Dear Senator Cruz, Senator Cornyn, and Representative Gonzales,

On behalf of the members of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, the Southwest Section of The Wildlife Society, and The Wildlife Society, we write in continued opposition to **border wall construction and associated development activities along the Texas-Mexico border**. Collectively, our organizations represent more than 10,000 wildlife professionals across Texas, Mexico, the southwestern United States, and beyond. We work to empower those members as they advance conservation through science, community, and professional excellence.

On February 17, 2026, the Secretary of Homeland Security waived federal resource protection laws in the Big Bend Sector to expedite the construction of border barrier structures. This region is biologically, economically and culturally significant, not just to Texans, but nationally and internationally. It includes, but is not limited to: Big Bend Ranch State Park, Big Bend National Park, Black Gap Wildlife Management Area, the designated Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, Seminole Canyon State Park, Amistad National Recreation Area, Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuges, Las Palomas Wildlife Management Areas, the Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge. It also includes several Mexican federal conservation areas.

The natural resources of this region provide critical support to local economies, generating hundreds of millions of dollars in outdoor recreation spending. These lands support populations of state-listed species like the coatimundi (*Nasua narica*), ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), black bear (*Ursus americanus*), Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*), as well as economically important wildlife like the bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and mountain lion (*Puma concolor*). Research has documented that Big Bend's population of these charismatic mammals depends on having

open connectivity across the U.S.–Mexico border. Waiving protections from laws like the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act for border security measures means there is no opportunity to assess impacts to these species and their habitats. It also eliminates the role of conservation professionals in designing mitigation measures that could avoid or reduce impacts while still achieving border security objectives.

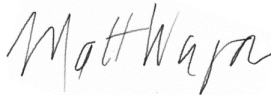
Should projects of this nature be initiated in this ecologically sensitive region at any point in the future, we urge that **border infrastructure be subject to appropriate environmental review under laws such as the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act**. These projects should also **incorporate science-based mitigation measures**—such as **maintaining wildlife connectivity, designing for permeability, avoiding high-value conservation areas, and implementing site-specific modifications**—through early coordination with qualified wildlife professionals. Our membership stands ready to assist in this work, offering technical expertise to support informed, science-based planning and implementation of these activities.

We thank you for your attention to this issue, and look forward to serving as a resource should you have any questions about this or other wildlife policy issues.

Sincerely,



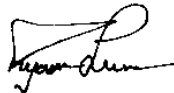
Dr. Edward B. Arnett, CWB®
CEO, The Wildlife Society



Dr. Matt Wagner
Executive Director, Texas Chapter of The
Wildlife Society



Dr. Luis Antonio Tarango Arámbula
President, The Wildlife Society Mexico
Chapter



Dr. Ryan Luna
President, Southwest Section of The
Wildlife Society

Additional resources:

[Texas Chapter 2017 Resolution](#)

[TWS Western and Southwestern Section 2018 Joint Letter on Ecological Impacts of Border Wall Proposal](#)

[“Wildlife and the Wall” short film](#)