

Consensus Request for Action Regarding Ecological Impacts of Border Security Operations

To: Elected Officials; Local, State and Federal Agencies

November 29, 2007

As a broad collaborative of non-partisan public and private stakeholders invested in the protection of the ecological resources of the U.S. - Mexico borderlands, we are submitting this consensus-driven request for immediate action on your part to abate the ecological consequences of current and proposed tactical border security infrastructure on sensitive cross-border ecosystems and wildlife linkages.

Over the past three years more than 40 conservationists, educators, scientists, and state and federal agency representatives have worked together to identify the most critical wildlife linkages crossing the Arizona border. See "Stakeholder Recommendations" at: [http://www.twp.org:80/cms/File/Border Stakeholder Recommendations 6-07.pdf](http://www.twp.org:80/cms/File/Border_Stakeholder_Recommendations_6-07.pdf)

This group has consistently recommended various alternatives to impermeable fencing in these extremely sensitive ecosystems to protect endangered and other species that depend upon these linkages for access to the food, habitat and mates necessary for long-term survival of populations. In addition, unimpaired movement of wildlife across the US-Mexico border may become increasingly necessary due to global climate change. Yet some of these same wildlife areas are now proposed for impenetrable fencing or are already fenced. Much of this construction is taking place without sufficient Environmental Impact Statements or meaningful public comment and participation as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

We recognize that national security must be a high priority in this process. However, we assert that effective security can be accomplished without permanently degrading the ecological health of the region. While it is clear that comprehensive reforms are needed to deal with the root causes of undocumented border crossings, we call for the following immediate actions to protect border ecosystems and especially cross-border wildlife linkages:

- a. Do not use impermeable barriers in internationally-significant, transboundary ecosystems and wildlife linkages. In these areas, employ the full suite of alternatives, including "virtual fencing" technologies, vehicle barriers, and other creative security solutions.**
- b. Apply and implement environmental laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in order to fully understand and address environmental impacts and provide opportunities for public input relating to border security infrastructure and operations.**
- c. Ensure adequate capacity within our Universities, State & Federal Agencies, and other non-governmental organizations to conduct credible scientific research and monitoring in order to determine and mitigate the ecological consequences of existing and proposed border security operations.**

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request for action.

(See reverse for endorsements)

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Endorsed by:

National and International Organizations

Wildlands Project • Defenders of Wildlife • Sierra Club • The Wilderness Society
The Wildlife Society • National Wildlife Federation • Natural Resources Defense
Council • National Audubon Society • Earthjustice • American Rivers • National
Parks Conservation Association • National Wildlife Refuge Association • The
Philadelphia Zoo • The Rewilding Institute • Endangered Species Coalition
Center for Biological Diversity • Groundwater Awareness League

State and Regional Organizations

Sky Island Alliance • SW Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance • Naturalia, A.C. • Grand Canyon Wildlands
Council • Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project • Wild Utah Project • Arizona
Native Plant Society • North American Butterfly Association, International
Butterfly Park • Arizona Audubon Council • Huachuca, AZ Audubon Society
Desert Rivers Audubon Society • Friends of the Jaguar • Borderlands Jaguar
Detection Project • Northern Jaguar Project • Valley Nature Center (Texas)
No Border Wall (Texas) • Rio Grande Valley Native Plant Project (Texas)
Border Ambassadors (Texas)

Academic Institutions and Scientists

School of Natural Resources, University of Arizona • Jessica Piekielek,
Researcher, University of Arizona • Laura Lopez-Hoffman, Researcher,
University of Arizona • Melanie Culver, Assistant Professor, School of Natural
Resources, University of Arizona • Lisa Haynes, Wildlife Biologist, School of
Natural Resources, University of Arizona • Ronald Kearns, Retired Wildlife
Biologist, United States Fish and Wildlife Service • Dr. Brian Miller, Wind River
Ranch Foundation • Dr. Michael Soulé, Professor Emeritus, University of
California, Santa Cruz • Dr. Paul Beier, Professor of Conservation Biology and
Wildlife Ecology, School of Forestry, Northern Arizona University • Dr. Reed F.
Noss, Professor of Conservation Biology, University of Central Florida