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Trump's Border Wall Would End Jaguar Recovery, Bulldoze Sky Island Mountains

Thousands Send Comments Opposing Trump's Latest Border Wall Plan

TUCSON, Ariz.— The Trump administration's latest border wall [plan](#), which would wall off the last jaguar migration paths and bulldoze Arizona's Sky Island mountains, has drawn opposition from thousands of people across the country.

The Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club and Sky Island Alliance submitted more than 8,200 comments from people opposing Trump's waiver of dozens of environmental and public health laws and calling for an immediate halt to wall construction.

"These walls will destroy Arizona's spectacular Sky Island mountains and be a death sentence for jaguars in the United States," said Laiken Jordahl, borderlands campaigner with the Center for Biological Diversity. "The public has spoken loud and clear against Trump's disastrous border wall. They're demanding that Trump restore justice to the borderlands and stop ripping this beautiful region apart with his wall of hate."

Trump wants to build 74 miles of border walls in remote, mountainous terrain that corresponds with the remaining corridors jaguars use to move back and forth between the United States and a small breeding population of jaguars in Sonora, Mexico. Many other species use these remote areas to migrate across the landscape. A 2017 [Center report](#) identified 93 threatened and endangered species along the 2,000-mile border that would be harmed by Trump's wall.

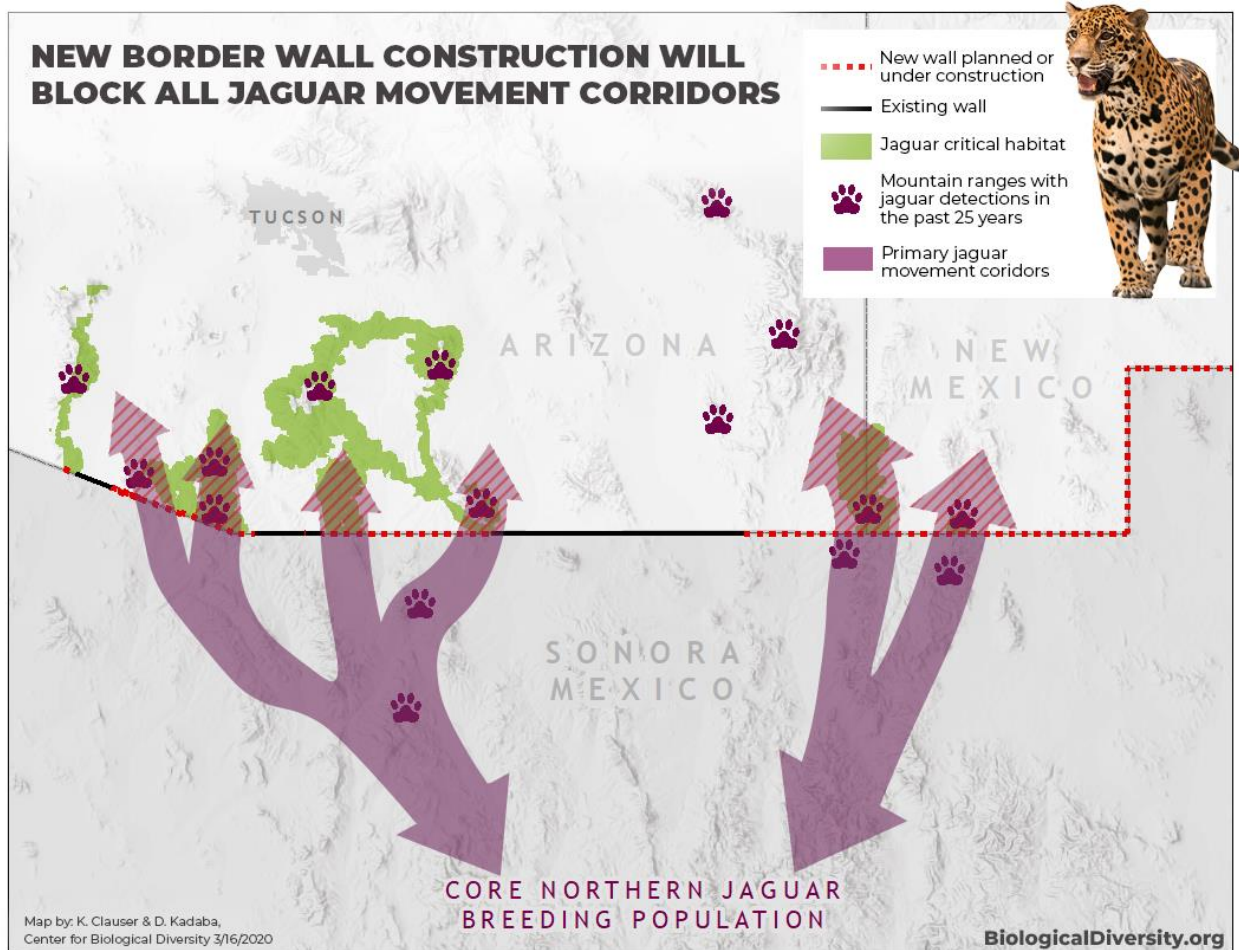
"Border wall construction is stripping border communities of their rights to environmental and health protections, and destroying land, wildlife habitat and neighborhoods in the process," said Dan Millis with the Sierra Club. "Trump's walls are being built without regard for 65 laws that protect public health, clean air and water, endangered species and cultural resources across border states. This excessive use of waivers is just another example of this administration's abuse of power and complete disregard for communities and the environment."

Wall construction has accelerated across the borderlands despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Hundreds of miles of new construction have been [announced](#) in recent months, including through the remote [Cabeza Prieta Wildlife Refuge](#), Tinajas Altas Mountains and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument.

“These walls are being built with a complete disregard for law and science, cutting off vital pathways that wildlife need to move around to reach food, water, and mates,” said Emily Burns with Sky Island Alliance. “Further wall construction would stop wildlife in their tracks, putting animals like box turtles, pronghorn, coatis, pygmy owls and black bears at risk — and ending the recovery of iconic species such as jaguar and ocelots in the U.S.”

This week, the Center and allies [sued](#) to challenge Trump’s transfer of \$7.2 billion from the Department of Defense for wall construction. These groups have also asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review federal court rulings allowing the Trump administration to waive laws to speed border-wall construction from the Pacific Ocean to the Rio Grande Valley.

Beyond jeopardizing wildlife, endangered species and public lands, the U.S.-Mexico border wall is part of a larger strategy of ongoing border militarization that damages human rights, civil liberties, native lands, local businesses and international relations. The border wall impedes the natural migrations of people and wildlife that are essential to healthy diversity.



[Image is available for media use.](#)

The Center for Biological Diversity is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.7 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.

The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3.5 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person's right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action.

Sky Island Alliance is a regional nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the diversity of life and lands in the Sky Island region of the U.S. and Mexico. Sky Islands are mountain ranges primarily in Arizona and Sonora that rise out of arid grasslands and desert seas and provide vibrant habitat for plants and wildlife. Since 1991, we have engaged volunteers to study where wildlife species travel across our landscape to help protect pathways for jaguar, ocelot, mountain lion, bobcats, black bear, and many other species that need wild open space to roam between the U.S. and Mexico. We rally communities to heal springs and streams, improve habitat for native species, and develop a deeper connection to the region and its innate capacity to sustain and enrich our lives.