



In mid-February this year our local business community was shocked to learn of the construction of a border wall through the Big Bend area of south-west Texas. The planned infrastructure project will blast roads and construct steel barriers through some of the most pristine and loved wilderness areas left to Texas and the greater western United States.

The impact to local recreation businesses will be devastating, as access to the Rio Grande, a principle recreation resource, will be eliminated – essentially ceding all access of the Rio Grande to Mexico.

The lack of access to this crucial water source will likely decimate local wildlife populations, including popular hunting and fishing destinations on both public and private property – another large and important economic driver to the local economy.

The Big Bend sector constitutes 25% of the total southern border and reports only 0.32% of all illegal crossings, according to Fiscal Year 2024 data.

**Considering these facts, this organization puts forth the following statements:**

- We support border security, but demand that our public lands and the outdoor recreation economy surrounding Big Bend National Park and Big Bend Ranch State Park be handled with nuance and a sensible and individualized approach. Specifically, we demand an approach that does not involve the destruction, disruption and access elimination that go hand in hand with the planned border wall construction project. There are more creative and more modern solutions to border security here.
- National Park Act and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: These two pieces of landmark legislation are not lightly applied and constitute the two highest levels of protection that American public land and river corridors can have in the United States. The level of protection and the special character inherent to an area to achieve this designation demand a more nuanced and considerate approach to this national security infrastructure development.

- The damage done by this border wall will be irrevocable. The incursion of roads and infrastructure into the wilderness spaces of Big Bend will forever alter this landscape in a way that there will be no coming back from. This will destroy this landscape for all future generations of Americans to come.
- The planned border wall construction will remove most of the Rio Grande from the public domain, rendering one of Texas' and the Western United State's great recreation resources and natural treasures inaccessible except for those in Mexico.
- The miniscule percentage of total illegal border crossings reported in the Big Bend sector, 0.32%, when viewed in relation to the irreplaceable cultural, economic and public lands resources to be irreparably damaged, lost or destroyed must be taken into consideration.
- As local business and landowners, we feel adequately protected from illegal immigration threats by the current scope the work done by the United State Military, Border Patrol, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, Texas Rangers, and local law enforcement agencies – all of which are stationed in and around our small rural towns. We do not feel threatened and any security issues related to illegal immigration are covered by current law enforcement presence. We also support the continued development of personnel, drone or electronic monitoring systems.
- The public parks and their outdoor recreation economy are worth preserving, if only for their economic importance. Not only is it the most important industry in Southwest Texas but according to the [2025 Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Recreation Plan](#):

“As the Texas population continues to grow, so does the demand for outdoor recreation opportunities. With less than 4% of the state's territory available to the public for outdoor recreation and conservation, Texas recreation providers are presented with a challenge to accommodate the growing demand for outdoor recreation. Between 2013 and 2022, visitation to Texas state parks increased by about 19%, which was in part attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the state recovers from the pandemic, outdoor recreation in Texas remains high, with many state parks struggling to accommodate the inflow of visitors. While placing ever-increasing pressure on the state's limited public lands, a growing interest in outdoor recreation has a positive impact on the Texas economy. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, in 2023, the Texas outdoor recreation economy generated approximately \$52 billion dollars annually and created 411,000 jobs.”

**With the above statements taken into consideration, we put forth these calls to action:**

1. We call on state and federal officials to design a more creative border security solution in this sensitive area, unique border community, cherished National Park, and Texas' largest and most pristine State Parks. The protected areas of Big Bend are the heritage of all Americans and must be protected for future generations.
2. We call on local officials to communicate through their channels that this is not what the local community, Texas or the Nation wants to see done to their public lands and waterways.
3. We call on the local tourism council, who's funds come from receipts generated by tourism businesses, to make a public statement against the slated physical border wall project.
4. We call on our Chamber of Commerce, who's purpose it is to support and represent our business community, to make a public statement against the slated physical border wall project.
5. We call on our local community, on all Texans and all Americans who love wild spaces and our public lands to support us by contacting their representatives and communicating that we demand a different solution to border security in the Big Bend.
6. We call on all local businesses to sign on and join this statement. Our voices, when joined together, are particularly powerful and will make a difference.
7. Get involved! We call on everyone to visit this site for information on local actions and to sign the petition: <https://nobigbendwall.org>

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