

The U.S.- Mexico Environmentally Destructive Border Wall

Famed Butterfly Center Bisected, Wildlife Refuge Spared

By [Center For Biological Diversity](#)

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The spending plan introduced in Congress Wednesday includes \$641 million for border wall construction in the Rio Grande Valley and \$1.6 billion for border enforcement. While the proposed budget prohibits funding new border wall designs, such as Trump's prototypes, it authorizes construction of approximately 33 additional miles of border walls on public and private lands in the coming months, without any meaningful environmental review.

"It's heartening to see Congress reject the worst symbol of Trump's bigotry and racism by prohibiting a concrete wall along the border," said **Paulo Lopes**, a public lands policy specialist at the Center for Biological Diversity. "But jaguars and other wildlife can't get over a wall, no matter what it's made of. Congress should not sanction the building of border walls and fences on public lands or anywhere else."

The first planned sections of the Trump border wall would tear through public lands, ranchlands, national historic sites and the National Butterfly Center in the Rio Grande Valley. Congress only spared the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge from these destructive construction activities.

"Our environment continues to pay a staggering cost for the border wall and the infrastructure that comes with it," Lopes said. "Now that Congress has given Trump this down-payment, he'll only keep demanding more."

A recent [study](#) by the Center identified more than 90 endangered or threatened species that would be threatened by wall construction along the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border.

The Center filed the first [lawsuit](#) against Trump's border wall, and will appeal a recent ruling in a separate [lawsuit](#) that challenges the Trump administration's waiver of dozens of environmental laws to replace border walls near San Diego. The Trump administration is expected to set aside these same laws to speed construction of border barriers in Texas.

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.

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