

A Border Wall Does Not Belong in Big Bend National Park

Pro-Park. Pro-Security. Non-Partisan. Now and Forever.



Core Message: Strong Border Security and Strong Conservation Can Coexist Here

- Border security is a **widely shared value**, strongly supported by [Keep Big Bend Wild](#).
- The question is **not whether to secure the border**, but **how to do so in a way that protects one of America's most iconic national parks** and Texas' largest state park, just upriver.
- Big Bend National Park represents a **national treasure**, and decisions about security infrastructure should reflect its ecological, cultural, and economic importance, as well as border security.



- While specific design plans for the border wall have not been released, and may not be prior to construction, **a permanent physical barrier in the national park would irreparably degrade, if not destroy, the wild character of this remote park and disconnect the "Big Bend" of the Rio Grande from the park that bears its name.**

Existing Border Security in Big Bend Is Effective Without a Wall

- The NPS and US Border Patrol have a **long history of close, effective cooperation** in the Big Bend region.
- Joint patrols, aerial and electronic surveillance, and coordinated response strategies **already provide robust border security in this area** without the need for permanent physical barriers.
- Border Patrol leadership has repeatedly noted that **terrain, remoteness, and natural barriers** make **technological surveillance** more appropriate here than a permanent border wall.
- **Migrant crossings in the Big Bend sector, and especially in the national park, are the lowest of any sector of the border**, raising questions about whether a wall here would meaningfully improve security.

A Wall Would Permanently Damage What Makes Big Bend Valuable

- Big Bend is defined by its **vast, uninterrupted landscapes, dark skies, and sense of wildness**—qualities that cannot be restored once disrupted.
- A border wall would fragment habitat for species such as **black bears, mountain lions, and migratory birds**, many of which rely on crossborder movement for survival.
- The Rio Grande corridor is a **critical ecological artery**, and a wall would sever natural processes that have shaped the region for millennia, and increase damage from flooding.
- Construction would require **roads, staging areas, lighting, heavy equipment**, and possibly borrow pits and **construction camps** for years, causing long-term scars beyond the footprint of the wall itself.

A Wall Here Would Be Costly and Inefficient

- The Big Bend region's remoteness, **rugged mountains, deep canyons, and river floodplains** make construction extremely expensive and logistically challenging.
- Flooding events along the Rio Grande have historically **destroyed or damaged river-side infrastructure**, requiring costly repairs and creating safety hazards.
- Given the low crossing numbers, the **costbenefit ratio** of a wall in this location is especially poor compared to other security investments.

Local Communities and Visitors Would Bear the Burden

- Big Bend National Park and Big Bend Ranch State Park draw visitors from around the world, supporting **gateway communities** such as Terlingua, Study Butte, Marathon, and Alpine.
- A wall would diminish the parks' appeal, severely harming **local tourism economies** that rely on their wild, open character and recreation on the Rio Grande.
- There is limited water, power, and landfill capacity, as well as grocery stores and medical facilities, making the support of a 300-500 person construction camp an almost impossible burden for the area to handle.
- Residents and visitors alike value Big Bend as a place of **solitude, natural beauty, and freedom**—qualities incompatible with industrial-scale border infrastructure.

The Decision Should Reflect Texas Pride and National Values

- National parks are protected for the benefit of the American people because they represent **the best of America's natural and cultural heritage**.
- Big Bend – "**Texas' Gift to the Nation**" – is one of the most remote, pristine, and ecologically significant parks in the national park system. Protecting it is a **national responsibility**, not just a regional preference.
- **Security and conservation are not competing goals**; thoughtful coordination can uphold both.

Your Voice Matters

- **Decision-makers respond when they hear from enough of the people they represent.**
- **Call** the office of your US Senators and House member in their DC offices, and if you vote in Texas, call Governor Abbott and your state legislators. [5Calls.Org](https://www.5calls.org) makes it easy. Search for the "Big Bend" script. Call daily, or as often as you can!
- **Sign the petition** at [change.org](https://www.change.org). Search for "Big Bend".
- **Speak up** at public meetings or virtual town halls.
- **Share information** with friends, neighbors, and community groups.
- **Post and repost media coverage and your thoughtful opinion** on social media.
- Short, respectful messages are powerful. **Avoid partisan rhetoric.**
- You don't need to be an expert—just **speak from your experience, your values, and your heart.**
- Support Keep Big Bend Wild or any allied group, as there are many working to stop the wall at Big Bend.

Stopping the Wall Cannot be the End of Our Work

- The **best way to ensure the still-undeveloped portions of this extraordinary landscape (4/5 of the park) are protected for future generations would be to give them the highest level of protection for public lands we can -- federal wilderness designation.**
- While DHS can still waive the protections of wilderness and other laws, the **higher profile would make it much more difficult for a future Administration to defy the will of the public.**
- Republican and Democratic Presidents since Richard Nixon have recommended wilderness for Big Bend, and it's time for Congress to finally act.
- **Keep Big Bend Wild is here to protect Big Bend National Park's wild character now, and for future generations.** Please **support our efforts; it's free**, although we appreciate tax-deductible donations that will further this important work.

