Reconcile border wall catastrophe

* Jan 29, 2021

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DEAR EDITOR:

We celebrate that one of President Biden’s first actions in office was to pause border wall construction at our nation’s southern boundary. The impacts of this wall have been and will continue to be devastating to ecosystem integrity, innumerable species, waters, soils, and borderland human communities. Obstructed migration routes, depleted essential water supplies, and destroyed mountains, riparian habitats, giant saguaros, and sacred Indigenous sites are just some of the atrocities resulting from wall construction.

Now we ask that President Biden continue with his promise to rectify the problems resulting from the wall by taking the following actions:

1. Defund the border wall by cancelling all awarded but not yet completed construction contracts.
2. Divert any remaining funds toward mitigation of harm toward border communities and the environment and toward wall removal.
	1. Take immediate action to restore fragile and ecologically sensitive areas that have been negatively impacted by wall construction.
	2. Begin removal of the wall in its entirety beginning with 30-foot tall sections that most obstruct wildlife corridors for all species (not just mammals) and impede necessary border crossing for human populations separated from family, employment, and resources.
	3. Withdraw any condemnation lawsuits that have been filed against property owners who have not agreed to their lands being purchased by the U.S. government.
	4. Return properties to landowners that have been purchased or condemned but upon which the wall has not been constructed.
	5. Commit to and move toward responsible, humane border management, and promote unity and harmony between Mexico and the United States.
		1. Restore the rule of just and appropriate law to the Borderlands.

The border wall constitutes a travesty when one considers the plethora of federal laws waived, disregarded or undermined; the exorbitant expenditure of taxpayer funds; the tally of wildlife deaths from thirst, starvation, heat, and physical impact with the wall; and the wanton destruction of landscapes known for their exceptional biodiversity, endangered species and importance to Indigenous communities.  Words cannot express what a few photographs reveal, so if you are not yet convinced take a moment to visit [biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/border\_wall/borderviews.html](http://biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/border_wall/borderviews.html) and see for yourself.  The wall is an assault on ecosystems and species from the Ferruginous Pygmy Owls to the Northern Jaguars to reptiles, amphibians and *Homo sapiens*.

Thank you, President Biden, for taking steps to mitigate and/or reverse the tragic harm caused by the Border Wall.

Respectfully,

Robyn Cascade

Northern San Juan chapter

Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Ridgway