



Panthera Statement on Proposed U.S.-Mexico Border Wall And Impact on Wild Cats and Other Wildlife

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New York, NY—In the wake of President Trump’s executive order advancing his administration’s intention to erect a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, Panthera, the global wild cat conservation organization, issued the following statement:

Panthera opposes the construction of a border wall that would disturb the natural movement and dispersal patterns of wildlife, including cougars, ocelots and jaguars, between Mexico and the United States. Fencing has already broken natural connections between wild cat populations in some areas of the border. Further fortification, as proposed by the Administration, would fragment wildlife populations already under pressure.

“Apex predators like wild cats are among the first species to disappear when humans disrupt and fragment natural landscapes, leading to impoverished ecosystems with impacts on both wildlife and people,” said Dr. Luke Hunter, President of Panthera. “The unique habitats of the borderlands were once inhabited by five species of wild cats. Only two, the cougar and bobcat, are still relatively secure on both sides of the border.”

Panthera’s CEO Dr. Alan Rabinowitz, who envisions a single connected jaguar population throughout its remaining range, added: “Largest of American cats, the jaguar once roamed a connected landscape from the southern United States to Argentina. Large-scale development and agriculture have shrunk the jaguar’s range by over 40%, and this iconic species no longer has resident breeding populations in the United States. In contrast, Mexico has promoted a safe haven of critical jaguar habitat only 100 miles from the border—a few days walk for a wandering cat. The protection of this source population has resulted in some dispersing male jaguars moving into the US. The only hope for natural re-colonization in the U.S., however remote, hinges on maintaining this core population to the south, and its connectivity.”

“Populations of wild cats need freedom to roam,” Rabinowitz continued. “It’s imperative that populations of jaguars, bobcats, cougars, and ocelots are not further threatened by an insurmountable barrier that disrupts their natural movement patterns. Panthera calls upon the President and his administration to work with scientists to reduce serious wildlife impacts of a border wall and to conduct the necessary environmental impact assessments without delay.”

About the Jaguar Corridor

Panthera’s Jaguar Corridor Initiative is the only conservation program to date which seeks to protect jaguars across their entire six million km² range. In partnership with governments, corporations and local communities, Panthera’s Jaguar Corridor Initiative is working to preserve the genetic integrity of the jaguar by connecting and protecting core jaguar populations in human landscapes from northern Mexico to northern Argentina. [Learn more.](#)

About Panthera

Panthera, founded in 2006, is devoted exclusively to preserving wild cats and their critical role in the world’s ecosystems. Panthera’s team of leading biologists, law enforcement experts and wild cat advocates develop innovative strategies based on the best available science to protect cheetahs, jaguars, leopards, lions, pumas, snow leopards and tigers and their vast landscapes. In 50 countries around the world, Panthera works with a wide variety of stakeholders to reduce or eliminate the most pressing threats to wild cats—securing their future, and ours. Visit panthera.org.