NO BIG BEND WALL

Fact Sheet

Get up to speed on the proposed border wall situation in the Big Bend Region of Texas

This information is provided by nobigbendwall.org • Updated June 29, 2026

2026 Timeline

- **February 3: Plans for 175 miles of border wall in the Big Bend Sector** are announced by Customs and Border Protection. The planned wall route follows the Rio Grande river from Fort Quitman outside Sierra Blanca to Colorado Canyon in Big Bend Ranch State Park.
- **February 10: First No Big Bend Wall coalition meeting**. Rapid mobilization follows.
- **February 17: DHS waives 28 laws** aimed at protecting environmental and cultural resources, including the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.
- **February 18: The CBP border wall plan expands to include Big Bend National Park**, Black Gap WMA, Seminole Canyon State Park and Historic Site, Amistad National Recreation Area and the Wild & Scenic portion of the Rio Grande.
- **March 5: The CBP map reverts back to "detection technology" in Big Bend National Park** after mounting bipartisan opposition and the firing of Kristi Noem. Upstream, Big Bend Ranch State Park and 175 miles of private land are still slated for a physical wall.
- **March 23: Local CBP chief announces Big Bend Ranch State Park will also receive detection technology** instead of a steel wall.
- **April 22: CBP re-introduced plans for a physical barrier, vehicle gates, and a prominent "technology and patrol road" in Big Bend National Park**. This reversed a quiet March update that had previously scaled the park's plans down to non-invasive "detection technology."
- **June 2026:**
    - **Bollard Arrivals & "Man Camps":** Physical staging officially began. Steel bollards were shipped and stacked south of Van Horn, Texas
    - **Local Pushback:** Led by regional activists, including NBBW, construction contractors have run into friction with local water boards, county commissioners, and judges who used local and county regulatory laws to deliberately slow down staging operations and water permit approvals.

By The Numbers:

- **175 miles of land** along the Rio Grande river are currently slated for a steel border wall
- **342 miles of land** are slated for a mix of detection technology, steel road barriers, surveillance towers and lighting

- **$7.4B in contracts awarded** for construction across 5 counties in the Big Bend sector
- **~$14.3M:** average cost per mile of border construction across the Big Bend sector
- **$4M:** Presidio County annual budget; $22K median household income

Common Sense Border Security:

In February, former DHS Secretary Kristi Noem waived 28 protectionary laws and fast-tracked the border wall by saying the Big Bend Region is an "area of high illegal activity." This is a verifiably false statement.

- The Big Bend sector is the largest in the United States, yet has the lowest number of migrant encounters.
- The Big Bend sector, the least populated part of the entire border, is the quietest of Border Patrol's nine U.S.-Mexico border sectors. 1.3% (3,096) of Border Patrol's 237,538 migrant apprehensions in 2025 took place in the sector, which incorporates over 25% (517) of the border's 1,950 miles.
- The number of Big Bend sector encounters has steadily declined over the last 5 years.
- The remote and mountainous desert environment serves as a natural deterrent.
- Five regional sheriffs released a joint statement saying against the wall
- A bipartisan coalition of fourteen county judges representing the entire Texas / Mexico border request better communication and transparency from DHS

Potential Impact of Steel Walls

- **Indigenous Culture:** The La Junta Archeological District around Presidio contains the remains of pithouse villages dating back 800 years. These significant sites, in addition to countless Native American graves and early historic cemeteries, would be permanently damaged by a wall.
- **Flooding and Pollution:** A 2026 study by Rio Grande International Center found that border wall and buoys in Texas pose a threat to human life and property by increasing flooding intensity and capturing debris that threatens bridges and drinking water.
- **Dark Skies:** Lights associated with walls and detection technology could endanger the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve, the largest dark sky area in the world.
- **Wildlife:** The Big Bend region functions as a north-south wildlife corridor and a habitat for many endangered species, including birds, bats and fish. Steel bollard walls result in an 86% reduction in wildlife crossings.
- **Tourism:** Tourism to Big Bend National Park contributes $56.8 million to the local economy, which is dependent on visitors.