

May 28, 2019

Paul Enriquez  
Acquisition, Real Estate and Environmental Director  
Border Wall Management Office  
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave3. 6.5E Mail Stop 1039  
Washington, DC 20229-1100

Re: Comment on Proposed Pima and Cochise Counties Border Infrastructure Projects

Dear Mr. Enriquez: The Friends of Ironwood Forest is a small non-profit organization dedicated to conservation of the natural and cultural resources of Ironwood Forest National Monument near Tucson, Arizona.

Although we are located more than 100 miles away from the "Pima and Cochise Counties, Arizona Border Infrastructure Projects", we are compelled to comment on projects that will further fragment and degrade our Sonoran Desert ecosystem.

The 18 to 30 foot concrete filled 6 inch steel bollards will create an insurmountable barrier for all terrestrial wildlife except small reptiles and rodents. In Pima County iconic species, including Desert Bighorn Sheep and Sonoran Pronghorn, may be blocked from seasonal sources of water and forage with fatal consequences in a harsh desert environment. In Cochise County the wall will eliminate any possibility of endangered Jaguars and Ocelots re-colonizing historic habitat in Arizona.

Construction of new roads will destroy vast swaths of desert vegetation and the creatures that depend on it for cover and forage. Increased lighting could spread destruction far beyond new roads by affecting flight patterns of bats that are major pollinators of Saguaros, Organ Pipe Cacti, and several species of Agaves.

Our Sonoran Desert is suffering death by 1,000 cuts. Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and the Cabeza Prieta Wildlife Refuge were set aside "in perpetuity" to protect unique and biologically diverse desert habitat. The proposed "Border Infrastructure Project" will do serious and permanent damage to the natural heritage of all Americans.

We respectfully request the project be re-evaluated with full consideration given to negative environmental impacts.

Sincerely,

Bill Thornton  
Friends of Ironwood Forest