



**U.S. Customs and
Border Protection**

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20229

December 11, 2025

Chairman Bernard Barcena Jr.
Lipan Apache Tribe of Texas
P.O. Box 5218
McAllen, TX 78502

Email bbarcena@lipanapache.org
Sent via Mail and Email

RE: Border Barrier System and Waterborne Barrier System Construction in Webb and Zapata Counties, Texas - Request for Input

Dear Chairman Barcena Jr.:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is planning to construct border barrier and waterborne barrier system near the Rio Grande River, in Webb and Zapata Counties, Texas.

On December 10, 2025 the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a waiver covering certain laws, regulations, and other legal requirements to ensure the expeditious construction of the planned barriers and roads. Consistent with section 102(b)(1)(C) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996, as amended, 8 U.S.C. § 1103 note, CBP seeks your input on the project's potential impacts to the environment, cultural resources, quality of life and commerce, including socioeconomic impacts.

The planned action includes the construction and maintenance of approximately:

- 108 miles of primary border barrier.
- 153 miles of waterborne barrier system.
- Barrier system attributes for both border barrier and waterborne barrier, which may include, as appropriate to U.S. Border Patrol's operational needs, fiber optic cables, lighting poles, artificial lighting, power cables, surveillance cameras, access and patrol roads and utility shelters along the international border.

A map of the project areas and Spanish-language materials can be found on CBP's Environmental Management Webpage in the Documents Open for Comment section at: <https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>. Los materiales en español están disponibles en línea en: <https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>.

Chairman Barcena Jr.

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CBP is currently engaged in project planning and invites you to participate in the public review and comment process. Helpful comments are fact-based, include links to data or research, and provide specific information concerning potential impacts on biological, cultural, and natural resources. If you are providing a comment about a specific area, please specify that in your comment.

CBP will be accepting comments until January 12, 2026. Comments can be emailed to CBP at LaredoComments@cbp.dhs.gov. Please include “Laredo Border and Waterborne Barrier System Construction” in the subject of your email. Comments received in response to this letter, including names and addresses of those who comment, will become part of the public record.

Comments may also be submitted to CBP by calling (833) 412-2056 or to the following address:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters
Program Management Office Directorate
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. 6.5E, Mail Stop 1039
Washington, DC 20229-1100
ATTN: Michelle Barnes

We appreciate your feedback and assistance in the evaluation of this project.

Sincerely,



Paul Enriquez
Infrastructure Portfolio Director
Program Management Office Directorate
U.S. Border Patrol

Enclosure:

Handout 1 - Border Barrier System and Waterborne Barrier System Construction in Webb and Zapata Counties, Texas



Border Barrier System and Waterborne Barrier System Construction in Webb and Zapata Counties, Texas

Description of the Project

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is seeking input on the planned action to construct and maintain border barrier and waterborne barrier system.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

CBP is planning to construct border barrier system and waterborne barrier system in Webb and Zapata Counties, Texas. The planned action includes the construction and maintenance of:

- Approximately 108 miles of primary border barrier system;
- Approximately 153 miles of waterborne barrier system and associated roads near the Rio Grande River; and
- Barrier system attributes for border barrier and waterborne barrier.

BORDER BARRIER SYSTEM

The border barrier design will feature 30-foot-high barrier made of six-inch-squared diameter steel bollards, spaced approximately four inches apart with anti-climb features. Other components of the planned project include:

- **Access Roads:** Existing or newly constructed roadways will be used to access the project sites and staging areas.
- **Drainage Gates:** Manually operated drainage gates ranging from 8- to 10 feet in width will be installed to manage water flow within drainages.
- **Erosion and Drainage Control:** Earth retaining systems and erosion control may be needed to control grades, which could include items such as concrete or block walls, erosion control mats, low water crossings, roadside ditches, or riprap.
- **Fiber Optic and Power Cables:** Attributes will be powered by grid power. The fiber optic and power cables will be installed

underground adjacent to the patrol road.

- **Handholes:** Handholes will be installed and placed at the base of every light pole or as needed to meet electric pull distance requirements. Handholes will include sliding cover plates to access fiber optic cables and other utilities.
- **Lighting and Lighting Poles:** Luminaries immediately adjacent to a Port of Entry will be LED, 4000K CCT (± 300 CCT), 70+ CRI. The lighting could provide 3-foot candles (fc) average along the area cleared for the border barrier and roads. Light trespass beyond the specified illuminated area shall be no more than 0.1fc at ground level at a distance equal to the width of the area cleared for roads. Shielding may be installed to control possible spillage of light. All light poles would be mounted on reinforced concrete pedestals at a minimum height of 3 feet above finished grade. The minimum diameter of pedestal would be 18 inches and would be rigidly connected to the light pole foundation. The light poles would be a minimum of 6 inches in diameter at the base of the pole and coated black to resist corrosion. Light would be powered by grid power connected through an underground conduit. Infrared illuminators may be used in place of LED lighting in rural areas.
- **Maintenance:** Routine vegetation removal along the border barrier, maintenance of the patrol road, or repair of the barrier will be conducted as needed.
- **Patrol and Maintenance Road:** A Functional Class-1 (FC-1) or FC-2 road will be constructed to accommodate a 12-foot-



wide maintenance road and up to a 24-foot-wide patrol road.

- **Surveillance Cameras:** Cameras will be affixed to the light poles and spaced out based on viewshed requirements. A Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) feed will be utilized.
- **Shelters:** Shelters will be needed to house fiber optic cables and CCTV equipment. Shelters will be placed along the existing border barrier. Shelter dimensions will be 30 x 30-feet, with a height of 9 feet. Placement of the shelters would be within 25 miles of a Port of Entry.
- **Staging Areas and Laydown Yards:** Adjacent areas will be cleared and used to store construction materials and equipment.
- **Water:** Water is anticipated to be needed for construction and dust suppression activities to maintain air quality near the project.

WATERBORNE BARRIER SYSTEM

The waterborne barrier system will feature a string of 4- to 5-foot diameter continuous buoys and the system attributes described above. Other components of the planned project include:

- **Anchors:** Anchors will be deployed to secure the waterborne barrier into the riverbed.
- **Boat Ramps:** Existing boat ramps will be used to access the waterborne barrier.
- **Bridges:** Bridges may be constructed to permit access to the land barrier from the riverine.
- **Buoy Identifiers:** The barrier may include illuminators, signs, or reflectors to provide clear identification of the waterborne barrier in all conditions.
- **Shields:** Protection mechanisms will be installed to protect linkages between the buoys.

A Story Map of the project and Spanish-language materials can be found on CBP's

Environmental Management page in the Documents Open for Comment section at: <https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>.

Get Involved!

CBP invites you to participate in the comment period for the planned action to construct new barrier system in Webb and Zapata Counties, Texas.

Specifically, CBP is seeking input regarding the project's potential impacts to the environment, culture, and commerce, including socioeconomic impacts and quality of life. Comments will be accepted until **January 12, 2026**.

How to Provide Comments:

- **Call:** (833) 412-2056
- **E-mail:** LaredoComments@cbp.dhs.gov
- **Mail:**

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Program Management Office Directorate
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. 6.5E
Mail Stop 1039
Washington, DC 20229-1100
ATTN: Michelle Barnes

Please reference "Laredo Border and Waterborne Barrier System Construction" in your response.