



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

April 29, 2022

**RE: Notice of Scoping: Environmental Assessment
Laredo Border Barrier and Related System Elements**

To Whom It May Concern:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is seeking input on potential environmental impacts and project alternatives for the proposed border barrier system projects in the United States Border Patrol (USBP) Laredo Sector in Webb and Zapata counties, Texas. The information provided will inform the development of an Environmental Assessment (EA).

In fiscal year 2020, Congress appropriated funds for the construction of barrier system in high priority locations on the Southwest border. Pub. L. 116-13, Div. D, Title II, § 209 (Dec. 20, 2019). Consistent with the *DHS Border Wall Plan Pursuant to Presidential Proclamation 10142* (June 11, 2021), CBP is conducting environmental planning concerning the proposed construction. The development of the EA will not entail any construction of new border barrier or permanent land acquisition.

The environmental planning effort will include the preparation of an EA consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The action to be analyzed is the proposed construction of up to approximately 69 miles of new border barrier and related system elements within the USBP Laredo Sector. More information about the proposed action and maps of the areas of proposed action are included in an attachment to this letter. These materials are also available online in English and Spanish:
<https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>.

Los materiales en español están disponibles en línea en:
<https://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-management>.

CBP is seeking public input and comments on the proposed action and alternatives, and environmental issues to be addressed in the EA. The most helpful comments are those that include data or information that could help inform CBP's analysis of potential impacts.

Per DHS Directive 023-01, Revision Number 01 (Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act), CBP will post a copy of the Draft EA for review and comment on [CBP.gov](https://www.cbp.gov).

CBP will be accepting comments until June 13, 2022. Comments can be emailed to CBP at LaredoComments@cbp.dhs.gov. Please include "Laredo Environmental Planning" in the subject of your email. Comments received in response to this letter, including names and addresses of those who comment, will become a part of the public record.

You may also provide comments, questions, or concerns by calling 1-800-561-5109 or by mail:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. 6.5E Mail Stop 1039
Washington, D.C. 20229-1100

We appreciate your feedback and help with evaluating the potential impacts of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Enriquez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Paul Enriquez
Real Estate and Environmental
Infrastructure Portfolio Deputy Director
Program Management Office Directorate
U.S. Border Patrol

Enclosures:

Laredo Border Barrier Description of the Proposed Action



Laredo Border Barrier Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would include the construction, operation, and maintenance of new border barrier in the United States Border Patrol (USBP) Laredo Sector in Webb and Zapata counties, Texas. The project would consist of constructing approximately 51 miles of new border barrier system in Webb County, Texas and approximately 18 miles of new border barrier system in Zapata County, Texas. The enclosed maps provide an overview of the locations of the proposed new border barrier and related system elements.

The primary goal of the border barrier and associated border security elements is to gain operational control of the border. The barrier provides persistent impedance of illegal cross-border activity, which offers USBP agents sufficient time to respond to and resolve threats.

The design of the border barrier could include 30-foot high, six-inch square steel bollards spaced approximately four inches apart and fitted with a five-foot anti-climb plate. Other components of the proposed border barrier system could include the following:

- **Up to 150-foot-wide enforcement zone.** On the river side of the barrier, an enforcement zone up to 150-feet wide could accommodate a Functional Class-2 (FC-2) patrol road and detection systems. The enforcement zone could include removal of structures and obstructions, vegetation clearing, earth retaining systems, erosion control, and drainage improvements required to construct the barrier and associated border security elements.
- **Up to 50-foot-wide maintenance road.** The easement on the land side of the barrier wall could include an FC-2 maintenance road, lights with cameras, vegetation clearing, remote video surveillance systems (RVSS) towers, and utility corridor with communications fiber and electrical systems.
- **Lighting.** All luminaires would be LED, 4000K CCT (+/- 300 CCT), 70+ CRI. The lighting could provide three-foot candles (fc) average along the enforcement zone. Light trespass beyond the specified illuminated area shall be no more than 0.1 fc at ground level at a distance equal to the enforcement zone width on both sides of the

enforcement zone. Shielding may be installed to control spillage of light beyond the enforcement zone. All light poles shall be mounted on reinforced concrete pedestals at a minimum height of three feet above finished grade. The minimum diameter of the pedestal shall be 18 inches and shall be rigidly connected to the light pole foundation. The light poles shall be a minimum of six inches in diameter at the base of the pole and shall be coated or painted black to resist corrosion. Light would be powered by grid power connected through underground conduit.

- **RVSS towers.** RVSS towers would be 120-feet tall and spaced based on viewshed requirements set by USBP Laredo Sector.
- **Gates.** The barrier could include automated slide gates for access to the riverside of the barrier. Within the Laredo Sector, the barrier could include vertical lift gates where necessary to mitigate Rio Grande flood water impacts. The gates would be operated by USBP.
- **Cameras.** Cameras could be affixed to light poles and spaced based on viewshed requirements set by USBP. A Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) feed would be delivered to the nearest USBP station or shelters along the border barrier alignment.
- **Shelters.** Shelters are needed to house CCTV equipment. Shelter dimensions are 14 ft x 14 ft. Height is approximately 10 ft. The shelters would be built approximately 28 feet perpendicular to the border barrier on the maintenance road. One shelter is anticipated to be needed in the Laredo Sector. Placement of the shelter would be within 50 miles of a port of entry.



- **Erosion control and drainage.** Earth retaining systems and erosion control may be needed to control grades and could include items such as concrete or block walls, erosion control mats and/or riprap. Drainage improvements are anticipated to include, but not be limited to, concrete low water crossings, reinforced concrete pipe culverts, reinforced concrete box culverts, bridges drainage gates and associated scour protection that may include concrete slope protection, grouted rip rap, and sheet piles.
- **Access Roads.** The projects would include improvements to available access roads to FC-2 access road standards.

A preliminary conceptual site layout of the proposed border barrier system is depicted in **Figure 1** below.

Additionally, road improvements would be constructed based on state and local requirements.

Water is anticipated to be needed for construction and dust suppression in order to maintain air quality.

Water is expected to be permitted with local irrigation districts or obtained from local landowners with water rights.

Laydown yards would be used to stage materials and for temporary concrete batch plants and aggregate sorting operations. In addition, laydown yards would include temporary work trailers for the contractors that have temporary utility hookups. Locations of laydown yards would be determined by the construction contractor and are anticipated to be required every five miles.

Construction of the proposed new border barrier system would be expected to take up to five years. Maintenance to the proposed border barrier system would be expected upon completion of construction. Maintenance activities could include routine upgrades, clearing of debris from the barrier, opening flood gates, repair, and maintenance of the patrol road and barrier that would not result in a change in their functional use (e.g., resurfacing a road or replacing a gate component or lock). 🚫

Figure 1. Preliminary Conceptual Site Layout of Proposed Border Barrier











