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New letter asks Mexican officials to help stop border wall construction

As Trump visits the border for the last time in his presidency, groups say they want Mexico to stand against more wall.

by [Alisa Reznick](#)

President Donald Trump was in Texas Tuesday afternoon touting the construction of his administration's 30-foot steel bollard wall. It's his final trip to the U.S.-Mexico border while in office, and the visit coincides with a [letter](#) asking Mexican officials to help stop construction.

President-elect Joe Biden will come into just over 450 miles of the new border wall, and building contracts for hundreds more are still active. On the campaign trail he pledged not to build more, but [questions remain](#) about how the nearly \$1.4 billion approved by Congress for border barriers will be spent in 2021.

Alejandro Olivera, a senior scientist and Mexico representative with the Center for Biological Diversity, said in the borderland's sensitive desert environments, water pumping for wall construction is depleting resources both the U.S. and Mexico rely on.

"They are shared within the two nations, so they are pumping the water that should be considered and discussed with the Mexican government before they do these kinds of activities," he said.

Olivera said Trump's wall also severs wildlife corridors and endangers species that Mexico has invested money to protect. It also cuts off access to cultural sites and ancestral homeland for Indigenous people on [both sides](#) of the border.

His organization is one of a few dozen environmental and Indigenous groups from Mexico and the U.S. that signed onto the letter this week. And while Mexican officials have been quiet about the wall throughout Trump's presidency, Olivera said he's hoping the Biden administration provides an opportunity to change that.

"We are requesting to stop the border wall construction and to remove it in places that already have been affected," he said.