



National Insecurity — Part 1: A Culture of Federal Corruption and Collusion

Each day brought new headlines: instant-replays detailing the gory results of our government's inaction. At their core, every report emphasized a continued escalation of violent, ostensibly drug-related gang wars that have moved from border towns and farms on our side of a half-heartedly defended, "Swiss-cheese" fence into urban cities nationwide. Foreign thugs, primarily from Mexico, scare away or kill American property owners and their livestock, then use the stolen land to establish safe-houses on American soil for various noxious enterprises.



In the process, these thugs create something else: "safe-routes" for drug-distribution, human trafficking — and gateways for transporting enough rudimentary materials to carry out a limited radiologic, biologic, or chemical terror attack capable of killing thousands within minutes.

Evidence of corruption and collusion are pervasive. FOX News' Jana Winter reported April 19 that Arizona's Cochise County Sheriff Larry Dever had confirmed that the federal government is pursuing a no-apprehension policy for illegals who cross the border. [According to the FOX News exclusive](#), Sheriff Dever was literally "flooded with calls and emails from local and federal agents who back his claims that the U.S. Border Patrol has effectively ordered them to stop apprehending illegal immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexican border."

The next day, [in the top story](#) April 20 in the *Washington Times*, readers saw the results of that policy: Veteran journalist Jerry Seper exposed how violent drug gangs not only are expanding into the United States, but doing so with a "disparate band of criminals known as Los Zetas." Their signature style is to decapitate and dismember victims — quite enough to qualify them as terrorists in most people's minds. Los Zetas' tentacles reach from New York to California to Maryland and Texas. Seper explained how the group originally was "trained as an elite band of Mexican anti-drug commandos, [then] evolved into mercenaries for the infamous Gulf Cartel bringing a new wave of brutality to Mexico's escalating drug wars."

So here is a highly trained, foreign fighting force that switched sides and moved its operation into American cities. Thanks to a combination of federal dithering, half-measures, and something that looks suspiciously like collusion with environmental extremists (a.k.a. "eco-activists"), we have the mother of all national security problems without our new "citizens" having to submit to a single grope by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

The ostensible effort to "save" wetlands at the expense of American lives and the nation's defense infrastructure exemplifies the symbiotic relationship between the federal government and leftist extremists with respect to border control. The evidence for outright collusion between the federal



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government and eco-activists appears in two different forms. Judicial Watch, a nonpartisan watchdog organization, exposed one of those scenarios this week when it revealed how the U.S. government is prioritizing environmental “preservation” over national security by banning the Border Patrol from wildlife refuges that are heavily transited by Mexican drug- and human-smugglers.

It turns out that this was nothing new: Border Patrol agents have been prohibited for years by the Interior Department and the U.S. Forest Service from actively patrolling such areas *because it threatens natural resources*: “Motorized vehicles, road construction and the installation of surveillance structures required to adequately secure the vast areas are forbidden,” according to the Judicial Watch blog, “because it could endanger the environment and its wildlife.” Meanwhile, Mexican drug cartels and human smugglers (like the Los Zetas commandos) regularly use the sprawling, unmanned, and federally “protected” land to enter the United States. (The term *federally protected* means areas placed off-limits for their historical or scenic value, for their at-risk environmental status, or for defense-related infrastructure.)

An irate Republican House issued a [press release](#) announcing a legislative effort to prohibit *any* federal agency — *especially* the Department of the Interior — from using environmental regulations to hinder the Border Patrol agents. The measure would essentially ensure that the Border Patrol, not federal land managers, has operational control of the nation’s borders, inasmuch as these areas have become the paths-of-choice for illicit operations.

The Republican House press release explains:

Federal land managers are using environmental regulations to prevent Border Patrol from accessing portions of the 20.7 million acres along the U.S. southern border and over 1,000 miles of the U.S.-Canada border. Border Patrol agents are consistently unable to use motorized vehicles to patrol these areas or place electronic surveillance structures in strategic areas. As a result, our federal lands have become a highway open to criminals, drug smugglers, human traffickers and potentially terrorists. This has led to escalated violence and also caused destruction of the environment.

Ironically, states Judicial Watch, these operations not only endanger American lives but cause environmental damage. In a blog exposing the latest evidence of complicity between the federal government and environmental extremist groups, Judicial Watch notes: “As a result of [the Department of the Interior’s] actions these federal lands have become an unpatrolled highway that’s open to criminals, drug smugglers, human traffickers and terrorists who endanger American lives and cause severe environmental damage, the lawmakers say.”

All of which leads a person to wonder: Just how serious are the eco-activists about clean air, fresh water, or any other talking point in their environmental hyperbole?

More egregiously, “Interior [Department] officials charge the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) millions of dollars for conducting preapproved Border Patrol operations on its land. Since 2007, [Homeland Security has paid](#) the Interior Department more than \$9 million to mitigate the ‘environmental damage’ of protecting the border.”

A second form in which collusion appears was revealed April 21 by Chuck Sylvester, landowner and co-founder of LawUSA, of LaSalle, Colorado, to the *Greeley Tribune*. This strategy centers on what appears to be a joint effort by the federal government and eco-activists to control land and water resources, be they private or public, and effectively shut down private, domestic enterprises “such as timber harvest,



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energy exploration and ... cattle grazing.” Sylvester explains the sleight of hand used by the government to wrest control from private landowners in the Midwest and South: the Equal Access to Justice Act.

“Here’s how it works,” stated Sylvester: “The federal government gives eco-activists money to ... file a lawsuit against the federal government [to force a stoppage of resource production]. The feds [then] respond to the eco-activist suit by asking, ‘How much do you want?’ and quickly write a check for [that] amount, which oftentimes includes attorney fees at \$650 an hour. In contrast, the resource provider (i.e., landowner) is forced to respond [or lose everything] on their own dime.”

Just six days before Sylvester’s comments in the *Greeley Tribune*, on April 15, the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands and the Security, Homeland Defense, and Foreign Operations Subcommittee [held a joint oversight hearing](#) entitled “*The Border: Are Environmental Laws and Regulation Impeding Security and Harming the Environment?*” to examine (again) this very issue.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) is the highly respected investigative arm of Congress. It surveyed federal officers who said they continued to encounter “delays and restrictions in their patrolling and monitoring operations” on federally protected lands (that’s those areas declared “off-limits”). In one case, land managers took more than four months to conduct a required “historic property assessment” before granting the Border Patrol permission to move surveillance equipment.

[Another GAO report](#), also announced on April 15, “Border Patrol Operations on Federal Lands,” laid out an all-too-familiar scenario in which rabid environmentalism again trumped public safety: “A popular smugglers’ corridor ... a 2,300-acre San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge, used by an illegal immigrant who murdered an Arizona rancher last spring.”

And on it goes: congressional investigations, reports, legislative proposals and predictable outrage, and revisiting the same questions, again and again, while the nation slides further into harm’s way and, inevitably, into a quasi-socialist quicksand, where private property and entrepreneurship are the primary things at risk.

Should another terrorist attack take place, will it be too late to rein in an overbearing bureaucracy and reconfigure two of the primary agencies charged with the nation’s security, DHS and TSA, into a respected, credible force? That is the question taken up in [Part II of this report on national insecurity](#).

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