

DHS seeks to condemn nature preserve land

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The Department of Homeland Security has sued The Nature Conservancy to condemn land in a South Texas nature preserve for the border fence.

The conservancy's Lennox Foundation Southmost Preserve, which includes more than 1,000 acres along the Rio Grande near Brownsville, is home to a rare grove of native sabal palms, a South Texas native plant nursery for reforestation projects and habitat for the endangered ocelot and jaguarundi.

The government offered the conservancy \$114,000 for a strip of land that would leave three-quarters of the preserve, including the property manager's home, in the no-man's land between the fence and Mexico, according to court records filed earlier this month.

The Nature Conservancy's preference is no fence and no compensation, but the offer failed to take into account the impact to the rest of preserve, Laura Huffman, The Nature Conservancy's state director, said Monday.

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