

# New study reveals habitat that could increase jaguar numbers

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This week, a new, peer-reviewed scientific study finds that there is far more potential jaguar habitat in the U.S. than was previously thought. Scientists identified an area of more than 20 million acres that could

support jaguars in the U.S., 27 times the size of designated critical habitat.

The results, published in the journal *Oryx*, are based on a review of 12 habitat models for jaguars within Arizona and New Mexico, conclusively identifying areas suitable for the recovery of these wild cats. Based on the expanded habitat area, the authors conclude that findings uncover new opportunities for jaguar conservation in North America that could address threats from habitat loss, climate change, and border infrastructure.

Bryan Bird, Director for Southwest Programs at Defenders of Wildlife and one of the study's co-authors, issued this statement:

"This fresh look at jaguar habitat in the U.S. identifies a much larger area that could support many more of these big cats. This expanded area of the Southwest is 27 times larger than the current designated [critical habitat](#). We hope these findings will inspire renewed cooperation and result in more resident jaguars in the U.S."

**More information:** Eric W. Sanderson et al. A systematic review of potential habitat suitability for the jaguar *Panthera onca* in central Arizona and New Mexico, USA, *Oryx* (2021). [DOI: 10.1017/S0030605320000459](#)

Provided by Defenders of Wildlife

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