



## JOINT NEWS RELEASE



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# CAMERAS DOCUMENT OCELOT USING WILDLIFE CORRIDOR ON FM 106 IN CAMERON COUNTY

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*(Photo credits: TxDOT/USFWS)*

**LOS FRESNOS** – On January 25, 2020, remote cameras captured the first-ever ocelot using one of the wildlife crossings under FM 106 (General Brandt Road) in Cameron County. The five-year-old male ocelot, known as OM331, crossed from north to south using one of the eight wildlife crossings that lead to Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge.

Wildlife crossings are structures that allow animals to cross human-made barriers safely and include: underpass tunnels, viaducts, and overpasses or green bridges. Ocelots are critically endangered with a reported estimated population of 80 individuals left in South Texas. The use of wildlife crossing structures to provide safe passage under roadways is crucial to reducing ocelot mortalities and supporting ocelot conservation in South Texas.

Seven years ago, USFWS and TxDOT came together to develop plans to build eight underpass crossings on FM 106 during a roadway improvement project just east of Rio Hondo, TX. Construction started in November 2015, and the underpass crossing structures were completed in July 2019. The eight wildlife crossing underpasses have been monitored by remote still cameras since the project began in 2013.

Ocelots are not the only wildlife to benefit from the crossings. Other Texas native species including armadillos, javelin, bobcats, long-tailed weasels, alligators and tortoises [have used the underpass wildlife crossings](#). But this is the first documented use of an ocelot using an underpass crossing in the United States. TxDOT and USFWS look forward to further collaborations that help protect natural Texas treasures and increase safety on our Texas roadways.

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