

## **Summary of Speaker Comments at the March 22, 2004 RCWPG Meeting**

### **Comments Regarding Action Items**

The following public comments were provided to the RCWPG regarding the following Action Items:

#### Action Item A: Approval of Screening Criteria to Evaluate Water Management Strategies

1. David Nabors

Mr. Nabors claimed that the RCWPG was trying to throw the public off course. Mr. Nabors asked the RCWPG to consider all of the water available in Texas before adding new water management strategies – building more lakes. He believed adding 10% surplus water supplies was a bad idea. He also noted recent news article(s) in a Dallas paper stating that the population projections are “out of whack.” Mr. Nabors said that the RCWPG was telling Dallas they were out of water when they really are not.

2. Beth Johnson

Ms. Johnson provided written comments on the screening methodology. She asked the RCWPG some questions based on the written comments, including whether or not a project would be considered if the public wants to pursue it but the water purveyors do not. She stated that she believed the memo emphasized big new water projects. She asked about the use of 90,000 acre-feet per year from Lake of the Pines. She told the RCWPG that she hoped they would reallocate the water dedicated to hydropower in Lake Texoma. She asked, “What does proven technology mean?” and, “What does able to be implemented mean?” Ms. Johnson suggested that comparative cost data be developed prior to choosing feasible strategies.

#### Action Item B: Approval of Supplemental Funding

No public comments were made regarding this action item.

#### Action Item C: Inclusion of Return Flows in Water Availability Models

1. Norman Johns, National Wildlife Federation

Dr. Johns told the RCWPG that he agreed with them on this issue. He stated that use of WAM Run 3 without return flows only confuses the issue as it does not represent reality. He told the group that the National Wildlife Federation models the full water rights with return flows. Dr. Johns noted that the National Wildlife Federation was also drafting a letter regarding their thoughts on what qualitative environmental analysis meant.

## General Comments

The following public comments were provided during the general comment period of the meeting:

1. David Nabors, Region D landowner

Mr. Nabors told the group that he was not an adversary. Mr. Nabors asked the group to study all of the lakes in Texas and all of the groundwater in the state before constructing new reservoirs. He stated that the RCWPG needed to prove that the water needs are for the people and not for the consultants. He stated that there is a surplus of water across the state that is available for use. He asked why Anna and Melissa (should have been Athens, not Melissa) couldn't pay for their costs associated with the amendment. It was his understanding that the RCWPG voted to have entities pay for amendments they requested. Mr. Nabors sees a need for better communication with the regions and state agencies. He noted that 150,000 acre-feet of water was available in Lake Texoma. Mr. Nabors stated that Marvin Nichols was unlikely to be built and that additional reservoirs could not be built in Texas. He told the RCWPG that they were depending too much on computer models instead of using their common sense.

2. Beth Johnson, Freelance Issue Advocacy

Ms. Johnson reviewed her understanding of what took place at today's meeting. She stated that none of Congressman Sandlin's seven items had been approved. Ms. Johnson stated that she did not believe the screening memo had been voted on or agreed to. She suggested that Section I of the water management strategy screening memo had not been approved because it was not specifically mentioned in today's meeting. Ms. Johnson also suggested that the 10% surplus water supply was not approved as part of the screening memo because it was not specifically discussed. Ms. Johnson stated that the system operation in the Sulphur Basin was unclear. She stated that there was no discussion as to what the RCWPG would do if the public wanted to pursue a project but the water purveyors did not want to pursue that project. Ms. Johnson also noted that cost comparison was not included as part of the screening memo. She stated that the group did not discuss or agree to the third section regarding implementation in the screening memo.

3. Red Birdsong

Mr. Birdsong wanted to give his time to Ms. Johnson. Jim Parks explained to him that was not allowed. Jim gave Mr. Birdsong the option to speak or to pass on the opportunity. Mr. Birdson said that the group was not listening. Mr. Birdsong stated that the RCWPG was only interested in building Marvin Nichols and that it wouldn't happen.

4. Norman Johns, National Wildlife Federation

Dr. Johns noted that the agenda was not truly set up for public to discuss agenda items. Regarding the freshwater inflow needs of Galveston Bay (Danny Vance's presentation), he stated that the RCWPG should support efforts to refine the science and not disregard the results of the previous study. He agreed that the studies were not perfect. He mentioned the restoration of the Florida Everglades and an area in

California. He stated that the 5 million acre-feet is a scare tactic and that no one was advocating that as a goal for instream flow needs to the Galveston Bay. Dr. Johns also noted that the commercial data are the best of what are available today. According to Dr. Johns, the bay studies were on the “cutting edge of science.”