

Summary of Speaker Comments at the December 5, 2005 RCWPG Meeting

Comments Regarding Action Items

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

Action Item A: Resolution in Recognition of George Shannon's Contributions

No public comments were made regarding this action item.

Action Item B: Final 2006 Region C Water Plan

1. Beth Johnson, representing the Sierra Club and TCONR

M. Johnson requested that the planning group take a roll call vote on this action item. She wanted to see a list of the individuals who voted and who voted which way. Ms. Johnson commented that if the planning group members agree with the plan, then they shouldn't have a problem with this request. She disagreed with the intent of Senate Bill One saying that the strategies should not be based on cost and not as a rubber stamp for existing plans. She stated that in her opinion a new reservoir would do more harm than good, create more uncertainty, and introduce risk. She thought that the planning group should have the higher burden of proof for new reservoirs. She noted that the group was leaving 700,000 acre-feet per year from its own strategies and another 700,000 acre-feet per year in alternative strategies but recommending new reservoirs anyways. In her opinion, the new reservoirs are risky and are not needed.

2. Kevin Mercer, General Manger for the Denton County FWSD #7 and Board member of UTRWD

Mr. Mercer recognized the Region C planning group for their hard work in developing the regional water plan. The plan presents reasonable strategies. He appreciates the incorporation of comments from the UTRWD and the inclusion of Lake Ralph Hall. This lake is a very important element of UTRWD's water supply plan. UTRWD fully supports the Region C water plan and urges the planning group to adopt the plan.

3. Dale Edelbaum

Mr. Edelbaum read statements 9, 10, and 11 from the attached handout provided to the RCWPG. The points made are that the new reservoirs would bring the total supply to three times the amount needed, Marvin Nichols Reservoir would have stunning negative impacts, and Lake Fastrill would destroy bottomland hardwoods. Mr. Edelbaum asked the planning group to vote against the recommended new reservoirs.

4. Jerry Valdez, government relations consultant

Mr. Valdez thanked the Region C planning group for developing a plan that provides adequate supply to the Dallas – Fort Worth area. He urged adoption of the plan.

5. Rita Beving, Dallas Sierra Club

Ms. Beving told the planning group that today's vote will put lives on hold with the recommended new reservoirs. She stated that there are many reasons to vote no. Ms. Beving proceeded to read comments 1, 2, 3, 4, and 12 from the same handout as Mr. Eddelbaum. The main points of these statements are that the new reservoirs are unneeded, the purpose of the new reservoirs is to meet excess supply above the projected demand, and the plan leaves existing supplies unused from portions of its own recommended strategies. Ms. Beving told the group that a "yes" vote for the plan today will put many Texans livelihoods and families at risk.

6. Tony Almeida, Dallas Chamber of Commerce (Air quality)

Mr. Almeida thanked the Region C planning group for their hard work. The economies of the Metroplex would be devastated without adequate water supplies. He supports the recommended strategies, and sees Region C as a leader for future conservation and recycled water. He supports the connection of existing supplies and development of new lakes in the Sulphur River Basin. He referred to the lack of rain since July, indicating that North Texas may be in the start of a new drought and without adequate water the economies will be impacted.

7. Tim Keleher, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Keleher told the group that he supported the Initially Prepared Plan. Today, he stands in support of the final plan that the group is considering for adoption. He understands that there are challenges in meeting future water needs. He commented that the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce is working with the Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce advocating a plan to address the water needs of this region.

8. Chrissy Runyen, Dallas resident.

Ms. Runyen stated that the proposed Lake Fastrill will threaten the Big Thicket, two National wilderness facilities, a proposed National Wildlife Refuge, Sabine Lake, reintroduction of the black bear into East Texas, Columbia shuttle debris site, and the Texas State Railroad. All of these negative impacts will come to pass if Lake Fastrill is built. It will also impact residents of East Texas and hold them hostage during the study period. Lake Fastrill is not needed. Please vote no to the Region C water plan if Lake Fastrill and other new reservoirs are included.

9. Jan Sanders, Dallas resident

Ms. Sanders told the story of the sorcerer and the apprentice. The apprentice used some of his wisdom to ease his workload by making brooms haul buckets of water. The problem was that he didn't know how to turn it off. Ms. Sanders stated that the planning group didn't know how to turn the power off and is recommending more dams. She stated that the group would be robbing the livelihood of the landowners and the environment by including new dams. In her opinion, the justifiable need is missing. She asked the planning group to remove the unneeded reservoirs and work harder on conservation. She told the planning group not to rob Peter to pay Paul.

10. Wes Reed, Fannin County landowner

Mr. Reed spoke against the Lower Bois d'Arc Creek Reservoir. He is a fourth generation land owner of a cattle operation in Fannin County and the construction of Lower Bois d'Arc Creek Reservoir would impact his property and operations. His family has maintained the wildlife and habitats along Bois d'Arc Creek, and his property is a release site for injured wildlife. There are ranchers and farmers that would be impacted by the lake. Construction of the lake would result in a loss of wildlife habitats and livelihoods for a lot of people.

11. Bill Madden

Mr. Madden thanked the planning group for their hard work. He commented that Region C has been in a drought since the summer (2005). He stated that this could be the most severe drought this area has seen since the 1950s. The Forest Service has issued burn bans, an indication to the seriousness of the drought. If a reservoir is in the future, it is 30 to 50 years out. Now is the time to implement and support this plan. This message should be carried throughout the State.

12. Ann Drumm, Dallas resident

Ms. Drumm referred to the recent update of a book by Peter Gleick on water conservation published through the Pacific Institute. Mr. Gleick has published several books on water conservation and efficiency for use in California. Ms. Drumm offered to provide a copy of this book to any planning group member that wanted a copy. She said that North Texas has the potential to satisfy its needs through conservation and improved efficiencies.

13. Jan Hart-Black, Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Hart-Black stated that she was a supporter of long-term water planning. She urged the RCWPG to approve the plan. New reservoirs, conservation, and reuse will be needed in the future. Region C will require additional supplies to meet needs and growth.

Action Item C: Newsletter

No public comments were made regarding this action item.

Action Item D: Officer Elections

No public comments were made regarding this action item.

General Comments

Beth Johnson signed up to speak but passed on her opportunity to speak to the planning group during the general comment portion of the meeting.