

Longview News Journal

Groups disagree on water reservoir

By [JIMMY ISAAC](#)

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After nearly three rounds of planning during more than a decade, the valley has widened between North Texas and Northeast Texas over the reservoir proposal that separates them.

Northeast Texas planners, known as Region D, are scheduled to meet Thursday in Mount Pleasant to take action on their Initially Prepared Plan, the third revision to the group's 2001 water proposal. It's the latest step ordered by Texas Senate Bill 1, passed 13 years ago to address drought management and water supply issues in Texas through 2060.

C vs. D

Since before 2005, Region D planners have opposed the planned 68,000-acre reservoir on the Sulphur River, known as Marvin Nichols I. The lake would directly impact Titus, Morris, Franklin, Bowie and Red River counties.

Region C, or North Texas water planners consider Marvin Nichols' construction essential to meeting their growing needs. Region C's population eclipsed 5 million people in 2000, and authorities expect that number to grow 250 percent during the next 50 years. Marvin Nichols is among four proposed reservoirs designed to supply water to North Texas.

Region D planners hope to draw state officials' attention toward "using resources other than building a new lake," Walt Sears, executive director of the Northeast Texas Municipal Water District, said Monday. Local leaders suggest that North Texas draw water from Wright Patman Reservoir, Toledo Bend Reservoir and Lake O' the Pines to supply water for North Texas consumers.

Possible fireworks

Sears said today's meeting will be routine, but he expects possible fireworks when a joint study commission of officials from both regions meet March 11 in Richardson. At that meeting, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will likely tell the commission that it wants long-range studies of available water sources before recommending any solution — whether it's Marvin Nichols I or using existing sources — Sears said.

"There could be significant news items in that March 11 meeting," he said.

Regions C and D are among more than 15 regional water planning groups created by

state lawmakers in 1997 to develop strategies for supplying water over the next 50 years.

Region C includes 12 of the 20 fastest-growing communities in Texas, according to Texas Water Matters, a project of the National Wildlife Federation, Environmental Defense and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club.

In 2006, both regions surpassed the statewide average daily municipal water usage by at least 15 gallons per capita. Region C planners said their area had the lowest total per capita water usage in Texas at that time. Region C's proposed Initially Prepared Plan includes water conservation recommendations. Among them is reuse of treated wastewater, which would provide 16 percent of Region C's water supply by 2060. Region C water planners meet March 15 to consider its initially prepared plan. A public hearing is set for 7 p.m. May 25 at Vandergriff Park in Arlington, and planners hope to finally adopt their plan on Oct. 1.

If you go

What: Region D Water Planning Group meeting

When: 1 p.m. Thursday

Where: Mount Pleasant Civic Center, 1800 N. Jefferson Ave.

Cost: Free to the public

Contact: Lou Richards, (903) 639-7538

Region D facts

Counties: Bowie, Camp, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Gregg, Harrison, Hunt, Lamar, Marion, Morris, Rains, northern Smith, Wood, Van Zandt and Upshur

Major cities: Longview (73,334), Texarkana (34,782), Paris (25,898)

Population 2000: 704,000

Est. pop. 2060: 1,213,000

Average Municipal water use: 137 gallons per capita daily in 2000 (statewide average = 160 gpcd)

Total water use 2000: 487,815 acre-feet

Estimated water use 2060: 838,977 acre-feet

Primary rivers: Sabine, Cypress, Sulphur and Red

Major aquifers: Carrizo-Wilcoz, Trinity

Annual precipitation: 40-47 inches

Net evaporation: 16-32 inches

Region C facts

Counties: Collin, Cooke, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Fannin, Freestone, Grayson, western Henderson, Jack, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise

Major cities: Dallas, Fort Worth

Population 2000: 5,254,722

Est. pop. 2060: 13,087,849

Total water use 2000: 1,380,556 acre-feet

Estimated water use 2060: 3,311,217 acre-feet

Primary rivers: Trinity, Red

Major aquifers: Trinity

Annual precipitation: 28-44 inches

Net evaporation: 24-44 inches

Source: texaswatermatters.org

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