

FUSE, Inc.

Friends United for a Safe Environment
Post Office Box 85
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September 21, 2006

Mr. E. G. Rod Pitman, Chairman
Texas Water Development Board
PO Box 13231
Austin, TX 78711-3231.

Dear Chairman Pitman and Other Members of the Board:

We in Friends United for a Safe Environment (FUSE, Inc.), a Texas nonprofit organization, have studied the impact of the draft 2007 State Water Plan and state our strenuous opposition to the inclusion of the proposed Marvin Nichols reservoir in it. We conclude that the reservoir is a pernicious feature of that plan, in just about every meaning of that word--injurious, damaging, possibly fatal to some people and wildlife, even wicked.

As we have said before, and we've seen no evidence to change our minds, **any plan that includes the Marvin Nichols scheme constitutes rampant regional imperialism, a taking of land from individuals in one region for the aggrandizement of profiteers in another region, whose eyes are locked on the bottom line, the people be damned.** Blinded by dollar signs that stretch into the billions, engineers and politicians in both regions see a gold mine for themselves, caring not whether the plan benefits residents of either region. Unfortunately, this sad state of affairs has not changed over the past several years, and the cast of actors has changed but little..

The human toll, not to mention wildlife, the economy, and the environment generally, would be intolerable. All would suffer, which is the reason the wiser leaders of the Region D Water Planning Group in Northeast Texas have come out so strongly against the building of Marvin Nichols. This is true statemanship, and we would hope that the Texas Water Development Board would follow suit and place its weight on the side of justice, fairness, and good common sense. We are reminded of the human costs of the huge Chinese dam we have heard so much about recently.

There are too many feasible and attractive alternatives that would provide adequate water to Region C without destroying and placing in mitigation well over 100,000 acres of farm land, ranches, and some of the last remaining hardwood timberland in Texas. It is time to take a hard clear-eyed look at the real reasons behind the promotion of the Marvin Nichols reservoir--and reject it. **Dedicated conservation is a fair, practical, and urgent alternative to building new reservoirs--and history and future generations will look back on this time and ponder why the reservoir was even seriously considered.** They probably will find the answer to be greed by a handful of schemers.

For these and other reasons, we urge that the proposed water plan be amended to remove any vestige of Marvin Nichols reservoir.

Yours for a safe and just environment,



BARRY BLACKMON
President, FUSE, Inc.



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