



New Lake Needed to Meet Growing North Texas Water Needs, Protect Against Drought

Hearings Begin on Lake Ralph Hall in Austin

REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT

Austin TX (January 15, 2013) – A hearing begins today in Austin on a pending permit application to approve Lake Ralph Hall, a critically needed new water supply lake that would be Texas' first in more than 20 years.

Lake Ralph Hall is a critical project, necessary for Upper Trinity Regional Water District (UTRWD) and the North Texas region to avoid a future water supply crisis. Upper Trinity serves more than 25 communities in the Denton County area. The State of Texas has confirmed in its Texas Water Plan the need for Lake Ralph Hall, and the water it will provide to UTRWD's customers.

The first of several witnesses are scheduled to testify today before administrative law judges for the State Office of Administrative Hearings. The law judges will hear all sides and make a recommendation to the TCEQ on the merits of the project based on evidence submitted during the hearing.

Tom Taylor, UTRWD's Executive Director, is expected to testify that Lake Ralph Hall is critical to meeting the region's water needs as documented in the Texas Water Plan. During the hearing, Upper Trinity will also present the testimony of several other expert witnesses in support of its application.

A final decision on the Lake Ralph Hall permit will be made by TCEQ to develop Lake Ralph Hall after receipt of the recommendation by the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

The hearing is anticipated to take about two weeks. The Town of Flower Mound is expected to present testimony opposing the project. Flower Mound is the only one of the water district's 25 member cities in Denton and Collin Counties to contest the permit.

"The proposed Lake Ralph Hall is the right size, can be completed in time to protect against a potential water supply crisis and is the lowest-cost source of new water supply available for Upper Trinity customers," Taylor said.

Further, Taylor said "The site of the proposed lake is unique, with no cemeteries, oil or gas wells or pipelines, or transmission lines, and it will make a positive environmental contribution to the area by restoring wetlands and mitigating a long-term soil erosion problem. The lake has strong local support in Denton County where most of the customers live who will use the water - - and in Fannin County where the lake will be built."

Upper Trinity is a regional water district created by the Texas Legislature in 1989 for the benefit of cities and utilities in the Denton County area. Its mandate is to develop regional plans for water supply, and to provide both water and wastewater services on a wholesale basis to cities and utilities within its service area, including all of Denton County and portions of Dallas and Collin Counties. Upper Trinity is a leader in public education regarding water conservation and water quality protection, and regularly conducts programs concerning drought tolerant landscape techniques, landscape practices and more efficient water use. Recently, the Upper Trinity took further action to help protect the watersheds above water supply reservoirs. The Board of Directors created the Upper Trinity Conservation Trust to work with communities, landowners and developers in preservation of watershed and riparian assets. To learn more, please visit www.utrwd.com.

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Additional information about the Lake Ralph Hall project is available at <http://www.lakeralphhallinfo.com/>. For more information, contact Jason Pierce, Upper Trinity Regional Water District, 972-219-1228 or jpierce@utrwd.com.