

Courts Rule for Neches Refuge



A February announcement by the U.S. Supreme Court that it would not hear the lawsuit against the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge is a tremendous victory for conservation in Texas! With the settling of the suit, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can move forward with acquiring land and developing the Refuge!

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's June 2006 decision to create the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge was heralded as one of the great Texas conservation victories of the decade. The City of Dallas and the Texas Water Development Board filed suit hoping to overturn the refuge and make way for a reservoir Dallas had in its plans for fifty years from now, called Fastrill. Federal Judge Jorge A. Solis ruled in favor of the refuge in July of 2007. In March 2009, a three-judge panel affirmed the lower court's decision, concurring with Judge Solis that the Neches Refuge was properly established. Dallas and TWDB asked the Supreme Court to hear the case, but in February 2010 the Supreme Court denied the request.

The ruling sparked jubilation among conservationists, sportsmen, and many other Texans who care about the state's amazing outdoors. The Neches River National Wildlife Refuge is exceptional wildlife habitat -- one of the most important wildlife areas left in Texas. Thousands of Texans wrote letters or signed petitions in support of its creation.

The City of Dallas has numerous water supply options to tap for the relatively-small amount of water Fastrill would have provided (on 3% of Dallas projected demand in 2060).

Texas Conservation Alliance and its member organization, Friends of the Neches River, generated huge support for the Neches River Refuge! They and many other groups look forward to seeing land added to the refuge.

Congratulations to all who worked so hard to make this happen!



**For more information,
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