

# ***Smarter Water for North Texas***

**Texas Conservation Alliance TCAatexas.org**



## **SOME QUESTIONS PRESENTERS HEAR FROM AUDIENCES**

### **Who is Marvin Nichols?**

Marvin Nichols (now deceased) was the first chairman of the Texas Water Development Board and was a principal in the engineering firm of Freese and Nichols. Freese and Nichols serves as consultant to the Region C Water Planning Group and will be the engineering firm who designs and oversees construction of Marvin Nichols Reservoir if it is built.

### **Many of the people who live out in the Sulphur River area would like to sell their land, and move to the Dallas area to get a better job.**

Of the people who would have to sell their land for a reservoir, most have said they do not want to. To build a \$3.4 billion project so a few people could sell their land would not be a good economic decision. There are potentially other buyers for their land.

### **What is T. Boone Pickens' plan?**

To pipe water from a section of the Ogallala Aquifer in Roberts and surrounding counties that he says is not connected to the rest of the Ogallala.

### **Do front loading washing machines really use less water?**

Yes.

### **How do I test if my toilet is leaking water?**

Put food coloring in the tank and see if it runs down into the bowl.

### **What native plants are the best to use in my landscape?**

Your county extension agent has a list. Some nurseries also keep a list.

**How do I get in touch with the water development board to tell them what I think?**

Google Texas Water Development Board for the contact info. Probably a more effective way to influence water decisions is to tell your elected officials what you think!

**Who are the people on the water development boards?**

The governor appoints the nine members of the Texas Water Development Board. The members of the Regional Water Planning Groups select new members. Some Municipal Water Districts are elected, some appointed by their member cities.

**Aren't we just putting off the inevitable by fighting the new reservoirs?**

New reservoirs definitely are not inevitable. There are many lower-cost, lower-impact alternatives. The longer we put off starting construction on a new reservoir, the more likely these alternatives are to be used.

Even if our current efforts wind up being only a delay, the delay will save huge amounts of money. Upfront construction costs are enormous – if it is decades before the reservoir's water is sold/used, people must bear those costs on their water bills all those decades without any return on the investment.

**Many land owners would like to sell part of their land to have a large lake that might bring in money from marinas, etc.**

Lakes built near urban areas often spawn significant development. Lakes in rural areas do not. A bait shop and a fish camp – that sort of thing – is usually built. But not enough to generate anywhere near as much revenue as the land's current use is generating.

Local taxes have to go up to compensate for the land taken off the tax rolls. Road maintenance and law enforcement costs escalate. All in all, rarely a good deal economic deal for local communities.

**How would these new expensive projects for Region C affect us?**

Your water rates would go up to pay for them. The harm to the economy in the region where they are built would be felt somewhat by the whole state.

**How can I determine if I am watering my lawn too much?**

Best way is to look at your lawn. If it's healthy, try decreasing the amount gradually. Or just wait till it looks like it needs watering!

Put a can (with a flat bottom) or gauge on your lawn and see how long it takes you to fill an inch. That's roughly the amount your lawn needs each week.

**You (the speaker) seem to be a lobbyist and are just pushing a conservation point of view.**

We're pushing an *ECONOMIC* point of view. But we want the whole economics taken into account -- impacts as well as assets. Not just the construction costs.

**Where is the Sulphur River?**

In the northeast part of the state, east of Dallas. It forms the south boundary of a number of the counties that border Oklahoma on their north boundary.

**Doesn't a pipeline cost as much as a dam and reservoir?**

Sometimes it does. But it takes much less land out of production, hence has much less of the negative economic, social, and ecological impacts associated with a new reservoir.

**What is the issue about Zebra Mussels in Texoma?**

Zebra mussels clog water intake structures and pipes, disrupting the use of lakes for water supply. They also cover docks and other structures. They replace native mussels and crowd out other aquatic organisms. Water managers expect to be drawing water from Texoma again by the end of 2012.

**This is the worst drought in history. How do we ensure having enough water for the future?**

Building a new reservoir doesn't create water – it merely stores it. If we have enough storage, then a new reservoir won't help.

Conserving water, reusing water, and careful allocation of water that is already developed are our best strategies.

**Does this plan include ground water?**

Yes. But ground water is not adequate to supply an urban area the size of DFW. There must be some surface water developed. Our point is that there are now enough lakes.

**You aren't telling the truth. There are areas that need water. NTMWD needs water. New areas need water.**

We didn't say no one needs additional water. We said no one needs additional water *storage*.

The existing reservoirs are adequate if there is intelligent allocation, reuse, sensible conservation, and tapping of unused sources.

### **How much Oklahoma water is in the plan?**

The current plan for Region C shows about 2% of the water coming from Oklahoma by 2030 and 6% by 2060.

### **Why can't you just make the dams taller?**

Sometimes you can, but sometimes there are geographic reasons why not. And it will flood more land if you do. In the case of Wright Patman Reservoir, which is the primary alternative to the proposed Marvin Nichols, the dam is already tall enough – creating additional water supply is just a matter of keeping the lake level higher.

### **Pipelines are expensive and take land, too. You didn't talk about that.**

All uses of resource have some costs and some negative impacts. We're trying to minimize both.

### **Why is Cedar Creek so low?**

The flows into Cedar Creek are low compared to the storage capacity. It would be a great lake to use to store water piped from other sources, rather than building new reservoirs.

### **I had my pool tested and it was leaking a lot of water. You should tell people to check their pools.**

Good point.

### **What organizations belong to the Alliance? Aren't you just an environmental organization.**

Texas Conservation Alliance is dedicated to conserving Texas' natural resources so that future generations will have the resources they need for a safe, prosperous society. There are environmental elements, economic elements, and social elements. There is a list of the Alliance's member organizations on the website, [TCAtexas.org](http://TCAtexas.org).

### **What about the algae bloom at Texoma?**

The experts are saying it will be temporary. Tied to low water levels.

### **How does an aquifer refill?**

By rainfall soaking into the ground.