



Neches Wild and Scenic River Initiative

RESERVOIRS PROPOSED FOR THE NECHES

The heart of the Wild and Scenic Rivers program is keeping rivers free-flowing. Designating the Neches River as a National Wild and Scenic River would prohibit construction of reservoirs proposed on the Neches River. Avoiding these reservoirs in turn would protect riverside landowners, the timber and agribusiness industries, sportsmen who hunt and fish along the river, and industries, businesses, and tourism in downstream counties.

The Lower Neches Valley Authority has proposed construction of Rockland Dam, which would flood 100,000 to 125,000 acres of timber, agriculture, and hunting land along the middle Neches. 80% of the water from the new reservoir would be sold outside of the Neches Basin, significantly reducing the flow of the Neches downstream. One reservoir, Fastrill, has been blocked by a national wildlife refuge, but the City of Dallas continues to talk about a reservoir on the river just downstream of the refuge. LNVA also proposes raising Dam B to increase the size of B.A. Steinhagen Reservoir, which would flood Martin Dies, Jr. State Park and the Angelina-Neches/Dam B Wildlife Management Area, known locally as "The Forksö."

Landowners along the river would not only lose the land inundated by the reservoirs. Many thousands of acres would also be taken out of production to "mitigate" the wildlife impacts of the reservoirs. It is estimated that well over 250,000 acres would be taken out of production for Rockland Dam.

Diverting water to other parts of the state would reduce the flow of the Neches, impacting industry, business, and nature downstream.

Plenty of Water in Existing Reservoirs for DFW and East Texas

There is no need for new reservoir development to meet the future water demands of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, or for East Texas. There is more than enough water in reservoirs such as Lake Texoma, Wright Patman, and Toledo Bend to meet future demands to help DFW and North Texas grow. Current supplies in Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend Reservoirs could provide far more than any foreseeable demand for future water in East Texas. Should Southeast Texas ever need additional water from the Neches, it could be drawn directly from the river (as is currently done) without building an upstream reservoir.

Economic Importance of Neches River Flows

The well-watered bottomlands of the Neches provide timber to local mills, terrific hunting opportunities for area residents, and outdoor recreation for East Texans and tourists alike. Industries along the lower Neches rely on Neches River flows to dilute effluent. Preventing new reservoirs protects landowners' families and these valuable economic resources.