



NEWS

GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY
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Canyon Lake will benefit from two studies approved by GBRA Board

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SEGUIN – Several projects focused on Canyon Lake, including an Economic Benefit Study and a Water Quality and Regional Wastewater Feasibility Study, were among the main topics at the regular monthly meeting of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) Board of Directors held yesterday in Seguin.

“Water is second only to air in terms of our survival,” said GBRA general manager Bill West, “and Canyon Lake is the only water supply reservoir in the Guadalupe River Basin. I cannot overemphasize the importance of these projects. The results will provide valuable information for the efficient management of this resource for all those who depend on it.”

Directors approved a \$10,000 amendment to this year’s budget to begin an Economic Benefit Study of the entire Canyon Lake area. The initial funding will cover the immediate preparation of the Request for Proposal and Scope of Work.

Once a contract is awarded, the overall study should be completed within one year at a cost of approximately \$100,000. Study areas include flood control and water supply reliability, operating scenarios, upstream and downstream recreation, public safety, public access at ramps and marinas, economic issues, environmental issues and comparison to other Texas water supply lakes. According to West, “the study will quantify the many benefits of this major economic generator --Canyon Lake.”

Opportunities for public input will be provided through a Lake Advisory Committee consisting of four members selected by Comal County, one member selected by GBRA who will serve as the committee chair, one member from the Water Oriented Recreation District

(WORD), one member of a lake-wide organization selected by the County; one member selected by the Corps of Engineers, one member of a Comal County municipal water customer of GBRA selected by GBRA, one member selected by the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce and one member from the Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce.

In a second project directly related to Canyon Lake, the GBRA Board approved a Regional Facility Planning Grant of \$65,000 from the Texas Water Development Board. West said GBRA has been pursuing this grant application for almost one year and is delighted to have received TWDB approval for the project.

The TWDB commitment will be matched by GBRA with funds and in-kind services totaling \$60,000. Comal County will co-sponsor the project and provide in-kind services of \$5,000.

The total project cost of \$130,000 will be used to fund a study to protect the quality of water in Canyon Reservoir by investigating the impacts of the growth and development in the surrounding area.

According to West, there have been 8,690 lots platted within Comal County in the past several years. A substantial number of these are within the immediate reservoir watershed. The study will support efforts to analyze land uses, land development and population densities, identify areas currently served by wastewater plants and septic tanks, and investigate opportunities for a regional wastewater treatment facility to serve the area.

As part of this project, GBRA directors also authorized West to enter into a contract with PBS&J of Austin, Texas in the amount of \$115,000 for consulting environmental services needed to conduct the study. This amount is included in the total project cost.

Services provided by PBS&J will include a GIS data library, coordinating and providing information to the steering committee, website posting and public information, analyzing and developing plans, and modeling the scenarios for the regional wastewater treatment feasibility study.

Work on this study will begin immediately and should be completed in August 2002 with a final report issued in October 2002. Questions about the Canyon Reservoir study should be directed to Debbie Magin, GBRA director of water quality services at 830-379-5822.