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Causes lifted on ex-Eagle's wings

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With friends like these

Caddo Lake supporters will soon have a formidable legal war chest, and the town of Linden can save its hospital.

Rock star Don Henley has scheduled benefit concerts in early March in Shreveport and Tyler to help his hometown hospital and the nearby lake.

Friends and colleagues say the East Texas native and former Eagle will donate proceeds from a March 7 show at the Shreveport, La., Municipal Auditorium to help the **Caddo Lake** Institute challenge Marshall's bid to tap nearby **Caddo Lake** as a major industrial water supply.

He will also perform March 9 at the Oil Palace in Tyler on behalf of the Linden Municipal Hospital, a 25-bed facility that faces the prospect of closing after voters refused to support it with a local taxing district.

"He's got tremendous personal involvement with both, and this is a way he can help," said **Dallas** promoter Danny Eaton, who began scrambling to set up both shows within the last few weeks.

Tickets for the Shreveport show go on sale Monday, and tickets for the Tyler show go on sale Tuesday. Both are expected to sell out quickly, Mr. Eaton said.

A second benefit date may be considered in Shreveport if the March 7 show sells out. Each benefit could raise \$ 150,000 or more, he and others said.

Both hospital supporters and lake advocates say the funds are badly needed.

In Linden, where Mr. Henley's mother lives, friends say the 40-year-old hospital is threatened with closure after voters in the town of 2,375 rejected a proposal to create a special taxing district on Feb. 2.

Linden City Council member Richard Bowden said Mr. Henley, a childhood friend, first proposed trying to help the hospital out by paying the fee to bring in a management company that might be able to save the institution. He said Mr. Henley then noted that he

was already doing "a little mini-concert tour" and might be able to arrange a benefit in East Texas on short notice.

"Our mamas are here. We want a hospital," Mr. Bowden said.

At Caddo, concert funds will support a legal battle being waged by lake supporters and the **Caddo Lake** Institute, a nonprofit organization that Mr. Henley founded to help study, protect and promote Texas' only naturally formed lake.

Lake supporters say Mr. Henley's entry into the Caddo fray mirrors a long, high-profile fight that he launched in 1990 that ultimately protected Henry David Thoreau's Walden Woods and Pond in Massachusetts from development.

The Caddo fight began last summer when city officials in Marshall announced plans to sell 5.5 million gallons of water a day from **Caddo Lake** to a new Entergy Corp. power plant being built south of the city.

Marshall officials argued that their plan wouldn't harm the lake because Entergy would bankroll a mitigation fund to buy replacement water when the lake's level fell to the point that water stopped flowing over its spillway.

But lake advocates say a hydrology expert hired by the **Caddo Lake** Institute found that the replacement plan was inadequately funded, would badly tax the shallow lake and could dry up large areas during drought.

Lake advocates tried to get the city to agree to a larger mitigation fund to ensure that money would be available for replacement water, but they were rebuffed.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials warned last fall that Marshall's proposal could harm the world-renowned wetland, one of only 15 in the United States declared wetlands of international significance through the 1971 Ramsar Treaty.

Shreveport also indicated that it might enter the fray if Marshall's plan were approved. Shreveport also has rights to **Caddo Lake** water for its municipal drinking supply, and the Marshall plan was not cleared through an interstate commission set up to oversee waterways along the Red River.

Entergy officials said last month that they have found a less controversial water supply: waste water from nearby Longview.

But Marshall officials continue to seek approval from the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, largely because the city has rights to no other major water source.

A TNRCC official said Friday that Marshall's request is expected to be approved soon because it involves what agency officials consider "a simple amendment" to an existing water right.

The city already has the right to use more than twice as much Caddo water as it now draws for drinking supplies, and is only seeking an amendment to supply industrial customers, said TNRCC official Ted Grounds. "This is something that cities ask for all the time."

But lake advocates vehemently disagree. They say that legal battles are inevitable and that money raised by Mr. Henley's concert will give the lake a fighting chance.

"This is to load up the war chest," said Dwight Shellman, director of the **Caddo Lake** Institute. "We're obviously raising a serious amount of money to be able to take this all the way."

Lee Hancock covers East Texas for The **Dallas** Morning News.

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