

Regional water planning group votes to protect flows into Caddo Lake

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The Region D Planning Group for water management in Northeast Texas voted unanimously Wednesday to adopt provisions recommended by Caddo organizations seeking to assure adequate flows to Caddo Lake.

New language was added to the current draft of the regional water plan for Northeast Texas. It states that water that is needed in rivers, streams and lakes in the Cypress River Basin for recreation and fish and wildlife should be protected. The language states that these in-stream flows should be addressed before any new reservoirs in the basin are proposed or before any new transfers of water out of the basin are proposed.

"This action sends a clear message to the Dallas -Fort Worth area, which continues to look to Lake O' the Pines for its water supply in the future," stated Doug Parker, president of the Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas. "Water may be available to share with our neighbors to the west, but the region will first demand that water needed for Caddo Lake and our rivers and streams in the area is protected."

Dan Fulghum, president of the Louisiana Greater Caddo Lake Association, added his praise for the decision of the water planning group saying, "The lake can only remain healthy for all if the source is managed properly. We feel minimum standards for proper flows must be enacted or all will suffer, most of all the lake itself."

Rick Lowerre, with the Caddo Lake Institute, said "The Region D Planning Group showed leadership by setting a good precedent for other regional groups in Texas. The Region D Group recognized that it is not just water for cities, farmers and industries that is needed. The group recognized that we need to maintain adequate water in the lakes, rivers and streams to support many other activities and the ecology of the river basin."

In addition to the two GCLAs and CLI, the proposal was submitted by the city of Uncertain, the Caddo Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, and the Friends of the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge

The Region D Group is the water planning organization for Northeast Texas. It was created under Texas law and it develops regional water plans that become part of the larger statewide water plan. That statewide plan is the water management policy for the state management agencies.