

Lower Brazos River Coalition Urges Early Progress on Proposed Reservoir

Legislation Intended to Jump-Start Project

ANGLETON, Texas (June 27, 2019) — The Lower Brazos River Coalition urges early progress on the proposed Allens Creek Reservoir now that the Texas Legislature has approved a bill to jump-start the long-delayed project.

The Brazos River Authority, which currently owns 30% of the reservoir project, has sent a draft contract to the City of Houston to purchase the remaining 70% that the City owns – in line with the legislation passed in May. The transaction must be agreed by Jan. 1, 2020, and the river authority is awaiting a response to its June 3 offer.

“The Lower Brazos River Coalition is eager to see speedy movement on this project,” said Matt Sebesta, Chairman of the Coalition and Brazoria County Judge. “The river basin has been waiting for 45 years for it to come to fruition.”

The legislation requires the City of Houston to sell its stake in the proposed off-channel reservoir to the Brazos River Authority – including water permits and responsibility to build the reservoir for a price that is not to exceed \$23 million. The Brazos River Authority is responsible for obtaining federal permits for the project.

“We are vitally interested in seeing this project move ahead in a timely fashion,” said Ivan Langford, general manager of the Gulf Coast Water Authority and Vice Chair of the Coalition. “We need this water to meet the demands of our petrochemical customers, in particular, and to avoid putting them at a competitive disadvantage, especially in times of drought.” The Allens Creek project will also provide a future water supply for fast growing Fort Bend, Brazoria and Galveston counties

The Gulf Coast Water Authority is one of the Brazos River Authority’s largest customers.

The reservoir is currently slated to supply an additional 100,000 acre-feet of firm water a year to users in the Brazos River basin. The site is located south of Sealy, just west of the river.

The Legislature has had an interest in Allens Creek since 1974, and in 1999 it passed a bill instructing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to grant a water right for Allens Creek Reservoir to the Texas Water Development Board.

In 1999 the City of Houston and Brazos River Authority bought the reservoir site. No permitting or field work has been done since then to advance the project.

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ABOUT THE LOWER BRAZOS RIVER COALITION

The Lower Brazos River Coalition (keepbrazosflowing.org) is a grassroots partnership of concerned individuals, organizations, municipalities, ranchers and farmers, environmentalists and conservationists, and businesses and industries seeking fair and effective water supply management of the Brazos River.

The Coalition advocates for close scrutiny of proposals to hold water in upstream reservoirs rather than releasing it for beneficial use downstream - such as for local communities, agriculture, energy, sportsmen, wildlife habitat, environmental flows, and commerce.

The Coalition is a Task Force of the Economic Development Alliance for Brazoria County.

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