

LAKE TRAVIS

KEEP IT CLEAN, CLEAR, BEAUTIFUL

THE PROTECT LAKE TRAVIS  
ASSOCIATION  
253 VENTURE  
LEANDER, TEXAS 78645

February 9, 1988

1987 was a busy year for the PLTA. There were hearings to establish rules to prevent applicants for new sewage treatment plants from discharging into any of the six Highland Lakes. This amounted to three hearings, each one for two different lakes. With the exception of a "grandfather clause" that was protested vigorously, we got these rules approved. The LBJ MUD hearing was a success because the MUD will now go to irrigation on land that was bought as a result of a bond election and bond sales. The Kingsland MUD hearing was a partial success because even though a permit renewal was granted, a requirement is that a land irrigation feasibility study must be made during the next three years. The Marble Falls permit renewal hearing was started twice and during the first part of this February, it is to continue. We have found suitable land for irrigation and property owners who will agree to leasing their land for a long term. The City has yet to accept these accomplishments. Therefore, we intend to continue with firm, accurate, and meaningful evidence from about 15 witnesses that disposal of the treated and chlorinated effluent on the land is the best way for health, economical, and environmental reasons.

As you will remember, Marble Falls wants to continue discharging the effluent into Lake Marble Falls and increase the flow from 470,000 gallons per day to 1,500,000 gallons per day. Due to the fact that this Lake is immediately upstream from Lake Travis and that the sewage outfall is very close to the dam that separates these lakes and that the detention time in Lake Marble Falls is quite short, this pollution is quickly transferred to our Lake. People who live in and around this discharge on Lakes Travis and Marble Falls have testified that:

1. Lake clarity has declined from over 8 feet to only 4 feet,
2. Scum appears on the lake surface,
3. Algae growth has advanced to unsightly proportions,
4. Live bait perch on trot lines do not now survive in these waters,
5. Yellow-orange foam appears at times, and
6. a waxy residue is now on the lake bottom.

It is only a matter of time before this degradation will become apparent on the lower end of Lake Travis. Scuba divers say in only a 10-year period on the lower end of Lake Travis that clarity went from 70 feet to 25 feet. Such pollution must be stopped. Water borne virus in the millions on a daily basis from this Marble Falls plant can cause gastro-intestinal illnesses and/or hepatitis.

In order to produce these results outlined above, and to become trained and educated on such matters, and to put together an unbelievable amount of evidence, I have been to numerous meetings at the Lower Colorado River Authority, attended every day of the previously mentioned hearings, visited with Texas Water Commission personnel, held conversations with EPA representatives in Dallas, made many calls to over 26 land owners in the Marble Falls area, showed a movie, "Water Passages" to many groups, spoke to several environmental groups, attended a two day river symposium and a three day lakes management meeting, conducted executive committee meetings (6 per year), directed a financial manager, wrote and pasted up for printing all of the newsletters in the past 30 months, attended an extension agent's meeting on sewage disposal, worked with news media including interviews with at least 4 newspapers on different occasions and 2 local TV stations and spoke on a local talk show radio station, wrote numerous letters requesting help and information, interviewed, selected, and hired experts to represent us at hearings, etc. Conservatively I have spent a minimum of 10 hours per week doing these things for over a year. Many have contributed to our cause and I feel a personal obligation to these people to get them a nickel's work of result for five cents of contribution.

The punch line is that we need your money again. The Marble Falls hearing is not going to be short; that means a lot of dollars. Times are bad; there are no loose dollars. But, if we do not win this hearing, Lake Travis is doomed. This is the most urgent appeal I have ever made for help. We have had to ask each of our paid consultants to agree to be paid as money is available. They will do an excellent job for us; therefore, please try to help.

Send us your Safeway receipts! Remember Safeway will pay one percent of the gross amount to non-profit corporations. We have some receipts now that we are converting to cash, and we thank you for taking the time to send them in to us. Just send to the letterhead address.

Thanks,

*Cecil Laws*

Cecil Laws

## A LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PROTECT LAKE TRAVIS ASSOCIATION

The Protect Lake Travis Association has been in existence some 6 years. It was formed by a small group of citizens who wanted to help prevent what they saw as a real and potentially hazardous situation; pollution of the Highland Lakes. In that six years, the Executive Committee of the PLTA, and especially President Cecil Laws, has spent many hours meeting with LCRA officials and appearing before hearings of the Texas Water Commission to prevent the approval of permits which would allow municipalities and industry to pour sewage into the waters upstream from Lake Travis. The PLTA was highly instrumental in the establishment of rules by which the Texas Water Commission (TWC) protects Lake Travis from future pollution. All new applicants for sewage disposal are prevented from discharging effluent into Lake Travis or any of the Highland Lakes. However, the pre-existing sewage disposal plants continue to ask the TWC to allow them to increase their discharges--and huge increases are being applied for. Thus, your association has spent thousands of dollars to hire expert witnesses to testify at the TWC hearings in order to have these applications denied.

The PLTA now has almost 500 members. We appreciate those members who keep up their dues and send in additional contributions to help defray the costs of hiring expert witnesses for hearings. However, the association is now at a crossroads. The past hearings have been a very expensive proposition and the amount of work that needs to be done in the next few years, as Austin sees a renewed economic climate, cannot be totally handled by the nine Executive Committee members. The PLTA cannot hope to accomplish its goals without fund raising efforts or participation from its members. We need your help as a volunteer, as a financial resource, and/or as a new-member recruiter!!

Our everyday lives are full of obligations to our family, work, and a myriad of other worthy causes. However, the quality of the life we enjoy in Austin is threatened unless we ALL work together to sustain it. In joining the Protect Lake Travis Association you pledged to give \$10 per year to help uphold the ideals of a clean environment and responsible disposal of the waste that we all produce. YOUR Executive Committee is now asking for help that is desperately needed to pursue these ideals. This is what we need you to do right now ... ENLIST A NEW MEMBER. Our number one goal from this newsletter is to acquire a new member from each and every existing member. SO PASS THE ENCLOSED MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION ALONG TO A FRIEND--AND GET US A NEW MEMBER NOW!

Please read the attached newsletter thoroughly, and if you feel that you might be able to contribute your time, talent, money, or know of someone who would like to help and/or join the PLTA, please let one of the members of the Executive Committee know. Their names and phone numbers are noted in the newsletter.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT !!

THE PLTA NEWLETTER  
SUMMER 1988

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NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELECTED

Members of the PLTA 1988-1989 Executive Committee were recently elected by the membership. Nine persons are now on the committee, (last year's committee consisted of six) which will give us the ability to reach existing members more easily, to attract new members, and to be more effective in our fund raising efforts. Results of the balloting are as follows:

Cecil Laws, 24; Taylor Ollman, 21; Sam Warrington,

John Strickland, 18; Susan Young, 19; Joe Adams, 18; Debra McNelly, 17; Bob Vann, 18; Chris Bosch, 17

The three new members of the committee bring their diversified levels of experience and an infusion of new enthusiasm for the efforts of our association. They are Debra McNelly, Bob Vann, and Chris Bosch.

Officers were elected by the Executive Committee during its special called meeting on July 6, 1988 to

Cecil Laws, President  
253 Venture  
Leander, Texas 78645  
(512) 267-1918

Sam Warrington, V.P.  
6813 Commanche Trail  
Austin, Texas 78732  
(512) 266-2573

Debra McNelly, Secretary  
16064 Pool Canyon Road

Austin, Texas 78734  
(512) 266-3122, Evening  
(512) 266-2481, Day

Janet Hagy, Treasurer  
15306 Rainbow Two  
Austin, Texas 78734  
(512) 346-3782

Each one is dedicated to furthering the cause of keeping our Highland Lakes clean and clear. Please feel free to contact any of them if you have questions or would like to lend extra support to their efforts.

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A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CECIL LAWS

There is a new threat on the horizon. Johnson City has applied for a permit to increase its discharge of treated sewage into the Pedernales River from 127,000 gallons per day to 303,000 gallons per day at a 10/15 level. This will ad considerably to the degradation of Lake Travis. A quick review of the map showS that the mileage from Johnson City to the main recreational areas of Lake Travis is about the same as the distance from Marble Falls. However, due to the relatively narrow channels of the Pedernales, the pollution will reach the waters of Lake Travis sooner than that now

making its way from Marble Falls. The treated sewage, furthermore, has no restriction on nutrient loadings (nitrogen and phosphorus). These fertilizers are known to promote the growth of unsightly algae.

The Protect Lake Travis Association is "dead in the water" relative to pursuing threats like this in the near future. Any water quality endeavors requiring expenditures for professional fees is something we cannot afford until our past debts dealing with Texas Water Commission hearings on the

Lake Marble Falls application are paid off. These debts, consisting of attorney's fees and fees to water quality specialists, have risen to around \$16,000. Yes, it is expensive to defend our lakes from bureaucracies that only seek to further their own purposes. But, unless we defend them the powers that be will wait, as is their normal procedure, until it is too late and the cost of clean-up threatens us as a tax increase.

Our Executive Committee has proposed several fund raising ideas which are outlined in this newsletter.

Each one needs the support of our members to be a success. We have asked very little of our membership in the past, but now we need your help in a very tangible way. Please read over the list of proposed fundraisers. If you have a special talent in one of these areas we would like to know. We are forming telephone committees to help communicate more effectively with all of you. Also, if you know of anyone who might wish to be a part of our organization, give them the membership application on this newsletter. Thank you in advance for your response to this request for your help.

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## OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING fund raising ideas were presented at the last executive meeting. Your help is needed to make them a success. If you have talents in any of these areas, or have ideas of your own that you think would be of interest, please call a member of the executive committee and let them know.

**THIS IS AN URGENT REQUEST FOR YOUR HELP !!**

**GARAGE SALE**

This should be held at a central location. For example, the intersection of Highway 620 and RR 2222. Of course, merchandise will be needed, as well as volunteers to sort, label, and sell it. Contact Sam Warrington at (512) 266-2573

**PHONE COMMITTEE**

Because our members list in many different areas a phone committee will help us keep in touch with as many people

as possible. We need volunteers who will be responsible for calling 15 fellow members to inform the of fundraisers, meetings, etc. Our initial contacts will be to encourage our current members to invite their friends and neighbors to join the PLTA. Contact Jack Strickland at (512) 258-9959.

**CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BANKS**

Most banks have in their budget money to be made available to worthy civic groups. A letter with PLTA credentials, accomplishments, photos of awards, etc. will be produced to prove that our cause is sincere. We need volunteers who know th appropriate personnel at local banks and would be willing to present our request to them. Contact Marion Strickland at (512) 258-9959

**CONTRIBUTIONS FROM**

**FOUNDATIONS, ETC.**

Similar to item above. If you know officers of foundations or other organizations that contribute to causes such as ours, please contact John Strickland at (512) 258-9959

**WATER QUALITY BOOKLET**

This item is to be produced as an educational tool on lake quality, showing the threats of pollution, ways to eliminate these threats, actual facts about decline of water quality in Lake Travis, current polluters, a glossary of terms, and present rules and regulations put in place by PLTA that have helped reduce pollution potential. Advertisements are to be sold for this publication. Volunteers are needed to produce the booklet and to sell ads. Contact Bob Vann at (512) 226-2500.

**FLYERS & HANDOUTS**

We need to make items of this nature available at lakeside gathering places such as boat launches, marinas, Aqua Fest, popular parks, and swimming areas. We need volunteers to help write and distribute this material which will educate the actual users of the lake as to the potential danger that pollution will have unless everyone cares enough to help. Contact Chris Bosch, (512) 478-6678.

**LOCAL LEADER ENDORSEMENTS**

Local leaders in all walks of life (Civic leaders, educators, professionals, entertainers, etc.) can be of great value when they are made aware of worthy causes. Austin's beauty and lifestyle attract many celebrities. If you or someone you know is in contact with someone of this nature, please contact Cecil Laws at (512) 267-1918, 253 Venture, Leander, Texas 78645

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### I WANT TO HELP AS A VOLUNTEER

- Garage Sale
- Phone Committee
- Contact Banks
- Contact Foundations, Etc.

- Water Quality Booklet
- Flyers & Handouts
- Contact Local Leaders

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION THE PROTECT LAKE TRAVIS ASSOCIATION 253 VENTURE LEANDER, TEXAS 78645

Yes, I care about the Highland Lakes, and would like to become a member of the PLTA.

[ ] Enclosed is my annual membership fee of \$10 per person  
[ ] Enclosed is my additional contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Certificate of Appreciation

Presented to

## Protect Lake Travis Association

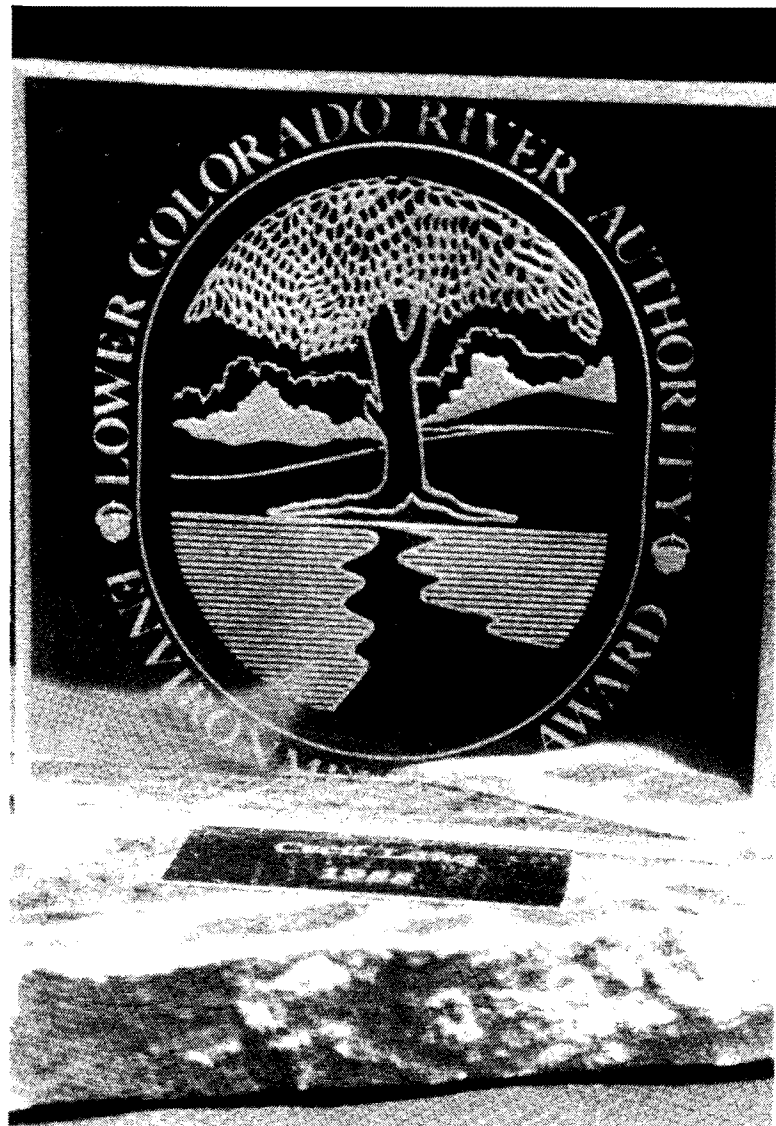
For its diligent planning and execution of water quality studies in the important Lake Travis region.

For its management and protection of water quality in the important Lake Travis region.

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*The PLTA has won several awards since 1985. We thought you would like to see them as well as hear about them. Above is a certificate presented in June 1988 at the LCRA Environmental Awards Banquet. Above right is an award presented to President Cecil Laws by the LCRA commending his work in the environmental field. To the right, is an award that was presented to the PLTA in 1985 by the Sportsman's Clubs of Texas.*



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LEANDER, TX 78645

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