

PLTA NEWS

Protect Lake Travis Association

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PLTA ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR July 29, 2006

The Protect Lake Travis Association will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, July 29, 2006 at the Travis County Precinct 2 Satellite Offices at 4501 FM620 located just south of Mansfield Dam. The meeting will start at 2:30 P. M. PLTA will provide an interesting and informative program for this meeting. Topics will include updates on floodplain status, the progress on the equal drawdown resolution and PLTA activities on Lake Travis nonpoint source pollution control. All members, their friends and those interested in PLTA activities are welcome and are urged to attend. The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) and Travis County will have representatives at this meeting.

LAGO VISTA USING NEW WASTEWATER FACILITY

After years of planning and months of delays, Lago Vista is using their new wastewater facility. Conforming to new, very complicated engineering standards, and finding the money for such a long term investment created some of the delays., The end product is a very impressive facility, using the very latest technology, which is capable of handling the growth anticipated for the area. The facility operates in accordance with a renewable permit which expires in December of 2010.

No discharge of pollutants into the waters of the state is authorized under the permit. Sometime in August of this year, there will be a ceremonial capping of the old discharge pipe which ultimately led into Lake Travis. This will herald an end of possible pollution concerns from the old system.

PLTA has watched the development of the new facility and congratulates the Lao Vista administration for their persistence in its completion.

FLOODPLAIN ACTIVITY

**By Lonnie Moore
PLTA Board Member**

For some time, PLTA and other organizations have been informing the public that new Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain maps for Lake Travis would change the floodplain elevation. FEMA delivered preliminary maps to Travis County in February 2006. As anticipated, the new maps show the 100-year floodplain elevation of Lake Travis to be 722 MSL (mean sea level), a six foot increase over the current 716 MSL elevation. FEMA conducted several community coordination meetings in April to discuss the appeals and adoption processes for the maps. Public notice about the maps was published the second and third weeks of June, starting a 90 day appeal period. Any appeals or protests to the maps should be made through the local community to FEMA by September 14, 2006. Final adoption of the maps is expected around April 2007, according to Stacey Scheffel, Floodplain coordinator for Travis County.

The 100-year elevation affects both the need for and the cost of flood insurance. Those property owners with structures lying between the 716 and 722 elevations that are not already covered by flood insurance are strongly encouraged to consider buying the insurance now, under the cheaper rating. That rating will be "grandfathered" as long as the policy is kept in effect.

Also, most communities severely restrict both new construction and major remodeling/rebuilding activities within the floodplain. Those planning to build in the future should consider the effect the new 722 floodplain elevation would have on those plans.

More information, including links to the preliminary maps, can be found on the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition website,

<http://www.tcrfc.org/tdfmap>

An update and discussion will also take place at the PLTA annual meeting on July 29, 2006.

EQUAL DRAWDOWN UPDATE

**Excerpts from a letter to LCRA
By Richard Eason, PLTA Board Member**

I was honored to have the opportunity to be involved in the most recent Water Management Plan Revision Advisory Committee, and, following that, the Lake Recreation Impact Study Advisory Committee (the Committee). The charge for the Committee was to explore ways to rectify the inequality between Lake Travis and Lake Buchanan with regard to when each of these lakes is used to deliver water for downstream needs. The Revised Final Draft Highland Lake Recreation Impact Study (the Report) prepared by Halff Associates was presented to Joe Beal and was followed by a memo from him to the LCRA Board. In the memo, he outlined some of the conclusions of the Report and, without an opportunity for the Committee to review or comment on the contents of the Report, he stated that the staff did not recommend changes to the current reservoir operating procedures.

I contend that the Report is flawed and its conclusions are not supported by the analysis documented in the Report. It is obvious that withdrawing more water more frequently from Lake Buchanan will lower the average level of Lake Buchanan. Similarly, withdrawing less water from Lake Travis will increase the average level on Lake Travis. This would be the result of the equal drawdown or 50/50 operating plan that corrects the severe lake level inequity that has existed for years. The status quo places unfair economic hardship on the Lake Travis interests. We do not ask that Lake Travis interests be placed above those of Lake Buchanan, but that the recreation interests of both lakes be considered on an equal footing.

The lake level choice of 600 feet above MSL (600 MSL) as the upper economic trigger point for Lake Travis appears arbitrary and was not supported in any Lake Recreation Economics Study Advisory Committee Meetings. Four of the ten public boat ramps on Lake Travis are out of the water at lake elevations of 600 feet MSL. Therefore, the chosen trigger point of 660 feet MSL effectively ignores the impact to these four public boat ramps. For Lake Buchanan, only one ramp would be affected by the first trigger level.

We do not consider the matter closed. We would be happy to continue meeting to correct the drawdown inequities.

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Address Correction Requested

Lake Travis is Fun --- Let's Keep It That Way !

In This Issue:

- **Annual Meeting Set**
- **Equal Drawdown Status**
- **Progress on Floodplain**

The purpose of the Protect Lake Travis Association is to protect Lake Travis and its watershed from any events and conditions which could affect the health and safety of area residents, recreational users of the lake, and wildlife, and to protect the aesthetic natural beauty and recreational quality of the area.