

# ***Lake Texoma***

We Need Your Help to  
Achieve Effective Planning  
and Development

# Lake Texoma Association

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- The Lake Texoma Association (LTA is) celebrating over 50 years of promoting and protecting Lake Texoma.
- The LTA
  - Is a nonprofit organization functioning much like an area-wide chamber of commerce promoting the entire Lake Texoma area, both Oklahoma and Texas.
  - Membership consists of over 500 Lake Texoma business owners and corporations as well as small mom and pop businesses, individuals and retirees who all share the common goal of keeping Lake Texoma a safe and fun place to enjoy.
  - Functions with a volunteer base, an Executive Director and one assistant, Officers and a Board of Directors.
  - Provides representatives to key federal, state and local committees, continually monitors legislation, studies and events that would have an effect on Lake Texoma and provides recommendations or takes action consistent with its mission.
  - Provides an open forum for interested persons to discuss and obtain updated information on political and community issues.
  - Contacts are maintained with several other national, regional, state and local organizations that share a common interest in Lake Texoma.

## Lake Texoma Assoc. – cont'd

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- Membership attends boat, sport, and travel shows in cities located in Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas. At these shows volunteers distribute literature and answer questions about the many facilities and recreational opportunities Lake Texoma has to offer.
- Maintains a well used internet web site and distributes thousands of brochures and flyers promoting Lake Texoma and its associated enterprises.
- It is a lot of work but well worth the effort.
  - In recent years the Lake Texoma area has experienced a marked increase in visitation, recreation and also in individuals permanently relocating to the area.
  - These increases have allowed area businesses to expand and property owners to see an increase in property values.
  - Oklahoma and Texas State, County and local government tax revenues have also benefited greatly from the Lake Texoma economic engine.

# Lake Texoma – An Economic Engine

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- Up to 10 million people travel locally and from all over the nation to enjoy the beauty and outdoor recreation provided by Lake Texoma and dedicated federal, state and local areas.
- In 1999 Texoma ranked first among Corps of Engineers lake projects nationwide, with visitors spending over 90 million hours at the lake.
- Their recreational activities contribute greatly to the economy of the entire lake area and to the benefit of local and regional businesses, cities and individuals.
- Lake Texoma is truly a major economic engine and can be significantly improved with the proactive support of the Texas and Oklahoma Congressional Delegations, area businesses and organizations.
- Lake Texoma has billions of dollars of infrastructure, wildlife and fisheries already in place, hundreds of millions of economic benefit dollars from annual recreational activities and millions of dollars of proposed developments.
- For example, in 2003, Texas ranked third behind Florida and California in the sale of boats, motors, trailers and accessories. Texas boaters spent \$887 million on those items in 2003. Lake Texoma is one of the largest lakes in Texas and would include a significant share of the \$887 million spent by Texas boaters.
- Over \$30 million is spent annually for angling alone in both states that border Lake Texoma.

# Lake Texoma – An Economic Engine cont'd

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- According to Oklahoma and Texas State Tourism and Travel reports, the total Lake Texoma economic engine spending for surrounding Oklahoma and Texas Counties in 2003 resulted in;
  - \$230.7 million for Travel Related Expenditures
  - \$43 million for travel related Payroll/Earnings
  - \$15.7 million for State Tax Receipts
  - \$4.2 million for Local Tax Receipts
  - These spending categories have increased ranging from 44 to 65% in the 1994 to 2003 time period.
  - In addition, federal taxes and fees are paid for auto and boat fuel and numerous other products and services.
- **Note: the above annual income is derived from persons traveling to the Lake Texoma area**
- **The total estimated annual income produced by Lake Texoma has been estimated as high as \$600 million.**

# Lake Texoma – An Economic Engine cont'd

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- The Lake Texoma boating industry is valued at \$600 million.
- There are 23 marinas/resorts that provide 5,545 wet boat slips with over 1,100 available for immediate rental.
- The private wet boat slips have grown more rapidly to over 1,500 which represent 27% of the total wet slips available on Lake Texoma.
- The Lake Texoma economic engine compares favorably with other very large industries in the North Texas and Southern Oklahoma areas in terms of revenue and employment levels.
- Most federal, state and local governments, businesses and individuals would compete aggressively to obtain and retain this level of economic development and annual benefits.
- We need to keep the economic engine fueled and ecosystem reasonably protected to ensure future recreation and development and the economy.

# Managing Lake Texoma Change

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- Managing change is required to meet existing and future challenges and to facilitate resolution of issues.
- Effective planning and development requires a reasonable amount of factual information as a basis for sound decision making.
- Effective lake planning requires comprehensive Corps of Engineers plans and facts in order to consider cumulative and related initiatives and effects around the lake.
- In other words a systems approach to planning is essential.
- Lake Texoma area businesses, land developers, governments and individuals need updated Corps plans and information that affects the future economical and environmental viability and development of Lake Texoma.
- Investors are very reluctant to make significant investments without sound business strategies and plans that are based upon focused Corps Lake Texoma plans and factual information.

# Managing Lake Texoma Change – cont'd

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- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for management and operation of Lake Texoma and the adjacent federal recreational areas and lands along the shoreline.
  - The Corps developed a Master Plan for the overall management of Lake Texoma with supporting plans such as the Operations Plan, Shoreline Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.
  - These integrated plans provide the foundation and body of fact based information for effective and cohesive short and long range economic and environmental planning and development for Lake Texoma.
  - **Corps Plan Updates**
    - **The Master Plan was last updated in 1978**
    - **The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in 1976**
    - **The Shoreline Management Plan in 1996.**
  - The EIS is almost thirty years old, is based on obsolete technology and does not include the major new policies, standards and in depth research now required by the federal Clean Air and Water Acts, National Environmental Policy Act and Corps of Engineers.

# Managing Lake Texoma Change – cont'd

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- The Corps of Engineers policy and regulations require updating these plans every 5 years.
- The required planning updates were apparently not completed due to shortages of funding, staffing or other reasons such as stopping the planning processes when significant issues arose.
- The result is that updated core Master and EIS Plans have not been available for almost 30 years to provide essential short and long term planning and development for Lake Texoma.
- Federal, business and individual decisions are being made on materially deficient information causing significant problems.
- Resolution of issues can be facilitated by using fact based information and structured stakeholder participation instead of personal opinions and power plays.
- For example, the Corps Master Plan provides the zoning for federally owned land adjacent to the shoreline. The Corps land zoning requires a reasonable balance between levels of recreational use, development and protection of the lake and lake shore environment.

# Managing Lake Texoma Change – cont'd

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- Developers, marinas and outdoor recreation enthusiasts are competing for increasingly scarce water front land and locations.
- The Corps planning and zoning approach is similar to those used by cities where development is balanced with environmental requirements.
- The Corps Lake Texoma Environmental Impact Statement and Master Plan need to be updated to provide factual information and current zoning requirements around the lake.
- The cumulative effects of excessive water and chloride removal from Lake Texoma and the Red River have continued to be major problems for all stakeholders and are increasing with new proposals and plans.
- Requests for federal legislation to reallocate Lake Texoma water from hydroelectric to municipal water use is expected to greatly increase due to water shortages and water use plans.
- Proposed plans to remove excessive amounts of chlorides and water from the Red River and tributaries can cause irreversible damage to the Lake Texoma Economic Engine and Ecosystem.

# Managing Lake Texoma Change – cont'd

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- Evaluation of the cumulative effects of proposed excessive water and chloride removal from Lake Texoma is essential.
- For example, modeling of significantly reduced lake levels due to reduced river inflows and lake water removal can indicate the positive and negative effects on the economy and ecosystem.
- There simply isn't enough water in the Red River and Lake Texoma to satisfy hydroelectric power and multiple water supply requirements without finding other water sources, water recycling and significant water conservation results by all users.
- Another example is the balance of commercial marina boat slips and the use of private boat houses/slips along the shoreline. An updated EIS and Shoreline Management Plan could help in resolving these issues and balancing development and environmental requirements.
  - Each marina is a concession that must be approved by the Corps of Engineers considering the number of boat slips, services provided, competition, etc.
  - Marinas are located in areas zoned for high-density recreational use.

# Managing Lake Texoma Change – cont'd

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- Marina businesses and investors must consider the level of infrastructure investment and operations expenses versus the short and long term business income.
- There are 23 Marina/Resorts around Lake Texoma that have a total of 5,545 wet boat slips.
- These marinas/resorts and their boaters are a major source of revenue to lake area businesses as well as state and local tax income.
- Unfortunately, the marinas have over 1,000 vacant wet boat slips causing short and long term business problems.
- At the same time, the Corps has approved over 1,500 “private” wet boat slips around Lake Texoma that are only allowed to be established in different less dense recreational areas designated (zoned) areas and not close to concession marinas in the Corps Shoreline Management Plan.

# Managing Lake Texoma Change

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- **Some developers around the lake are trying to greatly expand the numbers and locations of so called private boat slips, some in environmentally critical areas.**
- **These large community type “private” boat houses**
  - **Include 10 to 20 wet boat slips and clusters of proposed private boat houses totaling over 150 boat slips.**
  - **Can house boats up to 50 feet long**
  - **Are essentially “private marinas” that compete with “commercial” type marinas for higher profit boat slips, but do not provide lower profit fuel and boat sewage pumpout services.**
  - **Several are or proposed to be located close to existing commercial marinas.**
  - **Many are the same types of structures and hold the same types of boats.**
  - **Are held to lower standards for management, safety, fire, electrical and environment than commercial marinas.**
  - **They pay less than \$25 per year to the Corps and contribute little to the local economy and taxes.**
  - **The Corps of Engineers lacks staffing to provide fire and safety, and electrical inspections for the existing private boat houses much less the additional boat houses requested.**

# **Managing Lake Texoma Change – cont'd**

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- **Some lake front developers and home owners are trying or have recently clear cut trees and vegetation on environmentally sensitive Corps land along the lake shoreline without permits. While some environmentalist do not want any vegetation removed in any area.**
- **An updated EIS and Shoreline Management Plan can obtain the facts necessary for effective zoning and management of shoreline trees, vegetation and environmental buffer areas. This type of factual study and planning has been effective on other Corps managed lakes.**
- **The updated Corps EIS and planning and zoning processes with factual information and stakeholder participation can help facilitate resolution of these types of issues.**
- **An updated EIS can also determine the top 20 recreational requirements and assist in tailoring future federal, state and local plans to meet customer requirements and economic development.**
- **Effective leadership and legislation requires focusing on planning and action such as updating the Lake Texoma EIS and Master Plan with resolution of most issues rather than fighting for years about 50 different individual problems one at a time.**

# Lake Texoma Plans, Development and Relationships

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- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the principal authority and is responsible for managing Lake Texoma. The Corps has a Lake Texoma Master Plan and a set of supporting plans such as the Environmental Impact Statement and Shoreline Management plans for planning, development and operations of the federal Lake Texoma waters and adjoining federal lands.
- These Corps plans provide the backbone for other similar Lake Texoma federal, state, county, local, business and individual plans.
- Key Point: The Lake Texoma Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the entire lake is an essential link and first step in the critical path to update the Corps Master Plan and Shoreline Management Plan.
- The EIS and its body of fact based information must be updated in order to update the Master Plan and Shoreline Management Plan due to previously identified significant impacts in the required federal process. We consider the EIS results to be a significant and positive step forward for overall Lake Texoma development and economic viability.
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# Lake Texoma Plans, Development and Relationships- cont'd

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- A large number of related plans rely on information and planned actions identified in the Corps of Engineers plans.
- Conversely, changes in related plans should be updated and reflected in the Corps plans every five years according to their own policy and regulations.
- These plans provide key information to decision makers at all levels in Corps and related plans by other organizations.
- **U.S. Government Plans**
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**
  - **Master Plan (should include Lake Texoma watershed plan)**
    - Status - last updated 1978, waiting on Corps funding
  - **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for entire federal Lake Texoma area**
    - Status - last updated 1976, waiting on Corps funding
  - **Shoreline Management Plan**
    - Status - last updated 1996, waiting on EIS and Corps funding

# Lake Texoma Plans, Development and Relationships- cont'd

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- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
  - Lake Texoma Watershed Plan
  - Environmental plans
    - Fresh and waste water management
    - Environmental protection plans
    - Hazardous materials
    - Petroleum spill recovery plans
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)**
  - Lake Texoma Watershed Plan for fish and wildlife
  - Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge
  - Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge
- **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**
  - Lakes and dams
- **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)**
  - Regional transportation plans
  - Bridges
  - Hiking and biking trails

# Lake Texoma Plans, Development and Relationships- cont'd

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- **U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**
  - Emergency preparedness plans
    - Natural disasters
    - Civil defense
  - Emergency communications
  - Security of federal assets
  - Support of state, county and local authorities
  - **U.S. Coast Guard**
    - Boating and Water Safety
    - Navigation
    - Petroleum spills
- **U.S. Geological Survey**

# Lake Texoma Plans, Development and Relationships- cont'd

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- **Oklahoma and Texas State**

- Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Plans (OK and TX)
- Environmental (DEQ and TCEQ) Plans
- Fish and Wildlife (OK Dept. of Wildlife Conservation, TX Parks and Wildlife Dept.)
- Environmental (OK Dept of Env. Quality, TX Commission on Env. Quality)
- Water (OK Water Resources Board, TX Water Development Board)
- Transportation (OK and TX)

- **City, County and Tribal Plans**

- Types of plans usually mirror most state organizations and provide more detailed plans
- Tribal Plans
- Chamber of Commerce
- Tourism and Economic Development

- **Business Plans**

- Large and medium business plans
- Small and sole proprietor business plans

- **Individual Plans**

- Recreation and tourism
- Quality of life for work and play
- Jobs in area
- Permanent residence

# Federal Funding is Required for Lake Texoma EIS

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- Several federal, state and local organizations, fish, wildlife and environmental professionals, developers and hundreds of people are concerned about Lake Texoma, particularly the need for an updated Environmental Impact Statement.
- The Tulsa District of the Corps of Engineers decided in March of 2005 that a Lake Texoma Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement was necessary after going through a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process including public participation.
- Funding to complete the update Environmental Impact Statement is essential to balance the protection of natural resources and manage economic development in the Lake Texoma area.
- The Corps of Engineers must fund the EIS for the entire lake area to maintain the objectivity of the study, analysis and final decisions.
- Federal funds are not presently identified for the EIS in the current federal budget or appropriations.

# **Federal Funding is Required for Lake Texoma EIS – cont'd**

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- **A comprehensive and up to date Environmental Impact Statement for Lake Texoma requires a substantial federal investment of over one million dollars.**
- **However, it is a sound investment for the future of Lake Texoma considering the billions of dollars of infrastructure, wildlife and fisheries already in place, \$600 millions of economic benefit dollars from annual recreational activities and millions of visitors, and millions of dollars of proposed developments.**
- **Federal funds for the updated EIS need to be made available as soon as possible.**
- **In 2005, the Lake Texoma Association passed a resolution urging the U.S. Congress to provide expedited federal funding for the updated Lake Texoma EIS.**
- **In 2005, the Lake Texoma Advisory Committee passed a resolution requesting federal funding for an updated Lake Texoma EIS.**
- **In 2006, both the Lake Texoma Association and Lake Texoma Advisory Committee have reaffirmed their unanimous requests to provide expedited federal funding for an updated Lake Texoma EIS.**

## **Federal Funding is Required for Lake Texoma EIS – cont'd**

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- We understand that there are other pressing national priorities at this time.
- However, we have been trying to obtain an updated Environmental Impact Statement and Master Plan for over 30 years and look forward to productive progress for most of the Lake Texoma stakeholders.
- Updating the Lake Texoma Environmental Impact Statement and subsequently the Master Plan and Shoreline Management Plan will be a major step forward in balanced planning, developing and protecting the resources and economic engine of Lake Texoma.

## **Federal Funding is Required for Lake Texoma EIS – cont'd**

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- Your active support in providing “expedited” federal funding and completing the Lake Texoma Environmental Impact Statement will be appreciated.
- We are reinvesting for Lake Texoma’s future.