



**RIVERBEND RESOLUTION NO. 20160817-06**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE RIVERBEND WATER RESOURCES DISTRICT (1) SUPPORTING THE SULPHUR RIVER BASIN AUTHORITY'S APPLICATION FOR A GRANT PROPOSAL FOR THE STUDY OF A "BASIN CHARACTERIZATION" AS A PRELIMINARY STEP TO A BASIN-WIDE WATERSHED PROTECTION PLAN AND (2) REQUESTING THAT SULPHUR RIVER BASIN AUTHORITY FORMERLY INCLUDE THE RIVERBEND WATER RESOURCES DISTRICT AS A PARTICIPANT/PARTNER IN THE INITIAL AND FORTHCOMING RELATED STUDIES, AND (3) REAFFIRMING THE DISTRICT'S PREVIOUS REQUEST THAT TEXARKANA AND ITS SURROUNDING MEMBER ENTITIES THROUGH THE RIVERBEND WATER RESOURCES DISTRICT REMAIN LOCAL SPONSORS FOR ANY EXISTING OR NEW WATER REALLOCATED OR DEVELOPED OUT OF LAKE WRIGHT PATMAN.**

**WHEREAS**, Riverbend Water Resources District ("Riverbend") is a conservation and reclamation district created under and essential to accomplish the purposes of Section 59 Article XVI, Texas Constitution, existing pursuant to and having the powers set forth in Chapter 9601 of the Special District Local Laws Code of the State of Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, today, Riverbend works with our local member entity partners on water planning, conservation, and management of shared water resources in which the Cities of Annona, Atlanta, Avery, DeKalb, Hooks, Leary, Maud, Nash, New Boston, Redwater, Texarkana, Texas, and Wake Village, as well as TexAmericas Center, and the Counties of Bowie, Cass, and Red River, are all members; and

**WHEREAS**, Mike Sandefur, President of the Board of Directors for the Sulphur River Basin Authority ("SRBA"), recently made a request to the Executive Director/CEO for a letter of support for the SRBA in its grant application for funds for a "basin charac-



terization” study to the Texas Water Resources Institute associated with Texas A&M University; and

**WHEREAS**, Riverbend wishes to be supportive of addressing and proactive about sedimentation issues occurring within the Sulphur River Basin; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous other attempts to become involved and informed on study activities involving SRBA have previously failed and Riverbend has previously been excluded from studies related to the development of resources within the basin; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2015 Riverbend, through the activities of one of its member entities, the City of Texarkana, Texas, became aware of SRBA’s possible intent to pursue water rights in Wright Patman Lake for any new water developed through reallocation, without any coordination with the City of Texarkana or Riverbend; and

**WHEREAS**, upon discovering SRBA’s apparent intent, Riverbend through the City of Texarkana reached out to SRBA on this matter seeking factual information and clarification of their intent or plans; and

**WHEREAS**, these requests for clarification remain unanswered despite attempts to set a joint meeting of the SRBA Board of Directors, the Texarkana City Council, and Riverbend; and

**WHEREAS**, Riverbend and the City of Texarkana unanimously passed a joint resolution (092515-01, 25 SEP 15) regarding local sponsorship for any existing or new water reallocated or developed out of Lake Wright Patman;

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF RIVERBEND WATER RESOURCES DISTRICT THAT:**

**Section 1.** Riverbend Water Resources District, with cooperation from its member entities, is committed to helping manage and develop the Sulphur River Basin in a responsible manner that fully utilizes existing water resources and ensures that any new development minimizes impacts to private landowners, local economic interests, agricultural and natural resources;

**Section 2.** Riverbend Water Resources District is disappointed and concerned with the long history of SRBA’s complete lack of regard for the local needs of the basin stake-



holders, including its 30-year history of not taking a single preventative or corrective action related to sedimentation throughout the basin. It is apparent that this inaction and complete disregard for its mandated statutory responsibilities, especially “the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the water (of the basin)” as stated in the 1985 establishment legislation;

The legislation also states that the SRBA Board may exercise the powers of control and use of the state’s water in the manner and for providing adequate organization and administration for the preservation of the rights of the people of the different sections of the “basin” (emphasis added) in the beneficial use of water.

For these reasons, Riverbend asks for additional legislative oversights relating to SRBA’s scope of authority and accountability such as adding a requirement that SRBA obtain approval from local stakeholders and/or our water planning group(s) before being permitted to serve as a local sponsor on a water supply project that will be used to supply water primarily outside of the Sulphur River Basin. These protections would help local entities rebuild trust in SRBA and truly come to the table in terms of establishing working partnerships.

**Section 4.** Despite the history of SRBA, Riverbend Water Resources District is encouraged with some of the changes related to transparency and open meetings procedures having taken place within the last few weeks from the newly appointed members of the SRBA.

**Section 5.** Riverbend Water Resources District supports the SRBA’s application for a grant proposal for the study of a “basin characterization” as a preliminary step to a basin-wide watershed protection plan with the stipulation that Riverbend be formally included as a full participant, partner, and/or co-applicant to the initial and forthcoming studies.


**Section 6.** Riverbend Water Resources District requests that SRBA publicly support the City of Texarkana and Riverbend Water Resources District as the water rights holders for any current and future water that may be developed in Lake Wright Patman. This question has been before the SRBA for almost one year without being fully addressed.

**Section 6.** This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its pas-



sage and approval.

PASSED AND APPROVED, this the 17<sup>th</sup> day of August,  
2016.

  
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SEAN ROMMEL, PRESIDENT

ATTEST:

  
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FRED MILTON, SECRETARY