

By: Gallego

H.C.R. No. 21

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The Amistad International Reservoir, situated on  
2 the Texas-Mexico border near Del Rio, supplies water to numerous  
3 area communities for municipal, industrial, and agricultural  
4 purposes; yet, with a salt content near the upper limit of the Texas  
5 standard for drinking water, the reservoir may become an unusable  
6 resource for all; and

7           WHEREAS, Two of its main tributaries, the Rio Grande and the  
8 Pecos River, are heavily saturated with salt due to the composition  
9 of the surrounding land, which was once part of a great inland sea;  
10 when dry land emerged, salt from the sea was trapped in the soil and  
11 in underground aquifers; originating in New Mexico, the Pecos  
12 River, in particular, is one of the most saline waterways in North  
13 America and accounts for 30 percent of the salt loading of the  
14 reservoir; and

15           WHEREAS, The upper limit of Texas drinking water standards  
16 for minerals including salt is 1,000 milligrams per liter; when  
17 that limit is exceeded, municipalities that rely on water released  
18 into the Rio Grande from the Amistad Reservoir will face costly  
19 treatment methods to meet state standards; moreover, the elevated  
20 levels of salt may force farmers to discontinue the growth of  
21 certain crops; while fresh water inflow from runoff could help  
22 alleviate the salinity, the potential for such runoff is limited;  
23 and

24           WHEREAS, The Amistad International Reservoir is shared by

1 both the United States and Mexico, in accordance with the terms of a  
2 1944 treaty; for that reason and because the reservoir's holdings  
3 derive from multiple states, it is incumbent on the national  
4 government to take the lead in addressing this urgent problem; and

5       WHEREAS, Congress began that process by enacting Section 729  
6 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986, 33 U.S.C.  
7 Section 2267a (West 2001 & Supp. 2008), and by developing a program  
8 in Section 5056 of the WRDA of 2007, Pub. L. No. 110-114, 121 Stat.  
9 1041, 1213-1214 (2007), that directs the secretary of the army to  
10 rehabilitate and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and to implement  
11 long-term monitoring, data collection and analysis, applied  
12 research, and adaptive management within the Rio Grande Basin; and

13       WHEREAS, Past studies must be evaluated to determine a  
14 strategy for moving forward; in addition, it is imperative that  
15 funding and continuing authority for Section 5056 of the WRDA of  
16 2007, which is set to expire in 2011, be reenacted so that efforts  
17 to solve the salt problem in the reservoir can continue; now,  
18 therefore, be it

19       RESOLVED, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas  
20 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to reauthorize  
21 the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, Section 5056, and to  
22 appropriate sufficient funds to carry out work related to that  
23 legislation; and, be it further

24       RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official  
25 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, the  
26 speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the  
27 senate of the United States Congress, and all the members of the

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1 Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution  
2 be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to  
3 the Congress of the United States of America.