

By: Nevárez

H.C.R. No. 145

HOUSE 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 almost 30 percent of the salt loading of
14 the 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 the

1 United States and Mexico, in accordance with the terms of a 1944
2 treaty; for that reason and because the reservoir's holdings derive
3 from multiple states, it is incumbent on the national government to
4 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 and by
7 developing a program under Section 5056 of WRDA of 2007,
8 Pub. L. No. 110-114, that directs the secretary of the army to
9 rehabilitate and enhance fish and wildlife habitats and to
10 implement long-term monitoring, data collection and analysis,
11 applied research, and adaptive management within the Rio Grande
12 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 WRDA of 2007,
16 which was extended until 2019 in Section 4006 of the Water Resources
17 Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014, be fully funded so that
18 efforts to solve the salt problem in the reservoir can continue;
19 now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, That the 84th Legislature of the State of Texas
21 hereby recognize the secretary of the army for the work on the
22 Amistad International Reservoir and for the effort to continue to
23 find funds to carry out work related to Section 4006 of the Water
24 Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014.