

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Culture, Recreation & Tourism

For Hearing Date: Thursday, March 23, 2023 8:00 AM

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Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

COMMENTS FOR HB 2332 by Orr | et al.

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Steve Nagy

NA

Saint Louis, TX

Please consider keeping the park and lake open in some capacity to the general public, if the development is indeed moving forward.

The city's economy will be drastically affected by the loss of tourism to the area if lake/park access is cut off, to say nothing of the fact that the cemetery on the property will be disturbed/desecrated.

The region needs this public space. Please consider my points and those of the region who are fighting so desperately for this development project to cease or be changed to allow broad public access.

Thank you.

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Dennis Walsh, Former Manager/Park Police Officer @FLSP  
Citizens of Texas  
Fairfield, TX

- As a former manager of Fairfield Lake State Park, I have this gut feeling that the powers that be are working behind the scenes to allow a compromise to preserve part, or even all of FLSP and to allow developers to carry out their plans to develop the remainder of the property. This cannot be allowed to set a precedent, this unique opportunity needs to include ALL OF THE PROPERTY INCLUDED IN THE SALE.
  - I also feel that that the discussions shared in this facebook group Save Fairfield Lake SP are far too important to be restricted to facebook, so, I have outlined a strategic plan on the various issues that need to be investigated on the road to achieving the permanent and secure future of FLSP for the benefit of the people of Texas.
  - The expression "Preaching to the choir" accurately describes this group, so, I would like to invite everyone to expand the awareness to every State and National media outlet, magazines, environmental groups, continue to contact your representatives, EVERYBODY AND ANYONE to raise awareness of the following issues. I fully intend to carry this fight outside of Facebook and encourage everyone to do the same.
  - THINGS TO CHECK OUT
  
  - Water issues
  - Public coverage in the media exposing their water rustling schemes. Why was this information withheld by Todd interests
  
  - Cemetery & Historical issues
  - Historical sites of Hill well, Whisky Still @ Little Brown flat, flowers at pioneer homesteads
  - Lost graveyard in Post Oak area
  - Right of way access to historical graveyards
  
  - Pollution and Contamination issues and associated medical conditions supporting a class action lawsuit
  - trash dump ravine in mine possibly buried to cover contamination
  - Class action suits against the owners due to poisons produced by plant owners that caused cancer in citizens as a result of exposure to toxic substances
  - Take core sample of soil around the fuel storage area that may be contaminated .Soil cores needed for heavy metal contamination
  - Environmental Concerns: bottom sediment core samples, former landfill site residual contamination,, fly ash contamination
  - Research Ariel and Google Earth photos of the plant and mine
  
  - Endangered species and ecological disturbance issues
  
  - Exposure of TU and Todd Interests underhanded strategies
  - Exposure of intern programs propaganda
  
  - An in-depth investigation of TPWD's lack of disclosure of the park sale and suddenness of the park's closure. Did TPWD Commission members have any conflict of interests?
  
  - Media contacts and reference materials
  - Master plan documents from both TU & TPWD  
fwilder@texasmonthly.com.
  - Ballot initiative, look it up
  - contact National Magazines: Outdoor Life, Field & Stream, ect.
  - the Associated Press has already been provided with this information  
signed Dennis J Walsh
-

Martin Iles, Mr.

Self

Sanger, TX

I could think of no greater irony than the loss of public parkland on the Centennial year of the Texas Parks and Wildlife agency. Frankly, there's a lot to be embarrassed about regarding the Fairfield Lake State Park debacle. Incompetence, greed, myopic thinking. One thing is for certain - I have never seen such a broad swath of a bi-partisan outrage as I have seen following this sad spectacle.

As a Texas whose family residency dates back to when the region was still Mexico, there are generations of witnesses to see the highs and lows that have come from this region. Consider this a low moment to make high. Do the right thing and save Fairfield Lake State Park and let this be the first act of many to strengthen our parks system in Texas. To all elected officials consider this a test of your legacy.

“A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit.” — Greek Proverb

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Pam Beene, Mrs

Self and friends in Fairfield

Fairfield, TX

HB 2332 by Orr

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Tim Brooks

Self

Corsicana, TX

Save this treasure!

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Kelli Brooks

Self

Corsicana, TX

Please save this park. It was the number one state park for Texas last year. This park is a national treasure. Please make sure that future generations still have access!!!

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Debbie Hail

Self

McKinney, TX

I am in favor of acquiring Fairfield Lake State Park by virtue of eminent domain. We must preserve this park for generations to come and for the wildlife that call it home, especially our National bird, the bald Eagle. We cannot allow the destruction of wild life and public lands that have been used for years by the citizens of Texas and others who have visited the park. It is a heritage that cannot be replaced.

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GayLynn Johnson

NA

Ponder, TX

Please save this State Park

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Gwenn Beaver  
Self - Paralegal  
Tomball, TX

Please preserve this state park. Texas doesn't need more mega mansions built on land which has been preserved, developed and cared for by state funds. We need to protect what makes Texas great - open spaces that provide wildlife habitats and allow families to experience the great outdoors affordably. I love camping at state parks and I hate to think of all the animals who will die if this park is developed as housing. Please save this park!

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Nancy Smith  
Self  
North Richland Hills, TX

Please do anything and everything to save this beautiful park!

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Ginny Brown  
Self  
Hillsboro, TX

I am supporting this bill for the preservation of Fairfield State Park. We need to preserve our State parks for present and future generations.

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Mary Ramsey  
Self  
Rusk, TX

Please consider the preservation of Fairfield Lake State Park. It is such a beautiful treasure for the area. It generates revenue for the area. I enjoy camping there and was very disappointed to here the State had lost the lease. This should have never been allowed to happen.

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Charles Hayes  
Self  
Midlothian, TX

This park is very valuable to many of us in north texas

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Lisa Beaty  
Self  
Forney, TX

PLEASE PLEASE save this park! It is one of the most beautiful Texas State Parks. There are so many people who want to enjoy the outdoors and there are not enough parks like this. It's so remote which is one of the draws to people like us.

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Sandra Kubica

Myself and my family as well as others who want to save Fairfield Lake State Park  
Lubbock, TX

I would like to ask for your support for HB2332. Fairfield Lake State Park is a treasure we cannot lose. People and wildlife alike NEED this historic park.

Thank you,  
Sandra Kubica

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Sandra Sledge

Self Licensed Veterinary Technician  
GARLAND, TX

Fairfield State Park is a wholesome native natural place for all of our citizens of Texas to appreciate outdoor healthy activities. Have you seen the photos of good family fun?

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Blaire Gage

Self  
Buffalo, TX

Fairfield Lake State Park is a treasured place that many families build bonds and share memories that are passed down from generation to generation. Having the place to share the experiences I had as a kid with my kids is irreplaceable. Kids need nature to explore, a place to learn, and discover. Clearing out bushes and forcing animals out of their habitats to build homes not only takes away from those animals but our future, our next generation. The world depends on what we do today to preserve a better future for those to come.

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Dianna Sutton

Private citizen  
Streetman, TX

Please save Fairfield Lake State Park ?? Would be a shame to lose this gem! I love hiking the trails there ! Closest State Park to my home. Also save the water from the Lake! Todd interests or anyone else, selling the water, will disrupt the Lake as we know it now.

Thank you in advance.  
Dianna Sutton

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Shane Fore  
Fairfield Lake State Park  
Oakwood, TX

As a resident of Freestone county for the last 11 years, (transplant from Dallas) and a proud Texan I can say that Fairfield Lake State Park needs to be kept in its form as public land that Texas doesn't have much of. Working at a Childrens Home in Freestone County I can say that as a houseparent to up to 12 boys we go to our local State Park on a regular basis to enjoy its various activities and natural wonders such as Bald Eagles, River Otters, and Fishing. The Boys who live with me come from backgrounds that didn't promote outdoor recreation and lack those outdoor experiences that many others get to enjoy.

If I had to travel to another local State Park my current drive of 25 minutes would turn into over an hour. We celebrate birthday party's at FLSP and it would be a shame to lose that venue as a place to celebrate life. It's a shame already that money and greed have played a factor in losing this wonderful Park that supports our local community with visitors and community based events hosted by the park like Christmas in the park that has grown considerably over the years from when they first started doing it.

I would also say that if we live under the idea that God Blessed Texas wouldn't it be prudent to continue to honor that idea by maintaining good stewardship to the land we are Blessed with? Wouldn't it be a legacy to our children's, children to provide those areas of natural beauty for those generations to come? Why plow under and build a golf course that is in and of itself a drain on the natural resources? Why build mansions on the graves of our ancestors? Why sale the water that would ultimately harm the natural process of a healthy lake? Your Boy TBoone Pickens is already draining our Oglala aquifer cause oil wasn't enough. I can't help but wonder how you can ask God to continue to bless us and our land when we make a mockery of it in the name of progress.

It has been said by greater men so I will leave you with the words of one of our Greatest Presidents Theodor Roosevelt.

"We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils have still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields and obstructing navigation."

"I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us."

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Cassandra Sandman  
Self  
Temple, TX

Please consider preserving this beautiful state park or at least portion of the property.

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Michelle Villafranca  
Self  
Alvord, TX

Please do all you can to save this state park from becoming a private holding. Texas has so little public land & is rapidly losing private land to development, sprawl, solar farms. Texas needs to value preservation & conservation before there is nothing left.

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Tracy Sue Price  
Self  
Waxahachie, TX

Please save this wonderful state park! Our state needs to whatever it takes to preserve this state park for everyone today and all future generations to come. Our state needs more places like this and not another gated community with overpriced houses.

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Colette Wong  
None  
DeSoto, TX

In the past, eminent domain had been used frequently for commercial enterprises like AT&T Stadium in DFW.

The statute was changed to better serve Texas residents.

Now is the time to make good on the promise made to the people of Texas.

Use eminent domain as the tool to "Save Fairfield State Park" for the enjoyment of the everyday Texan.

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Richard Taylor  
Self/retired  
Fort Worth, TX

Please protect and save Fairfield Lake State Park. The value of the wildlife alone is worth saving this park. The use of the park for fishing, birding, hiking, camping is priceless for us and for generations to come. Gated communities for the affluent are plentiful, but gorgeous state parks available to ALL Texans are not! We appreciate your consideration of using the power of eminent domain to keep Fairfield Lake State Park alive and well!

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Janet Adamo  
Self Retired teacher  
Centerville, TX

The preservation of Fairfield Lake State Park for the enjoyment of the citizens of Texas is paramount to a developer who wants to line his pockets building multimillion dollar estates and destroying a delicate, environmental habitat is unthinkable. Eminent Domain has been used in the past to secure public lands. If Texas cannot find the funds to purchase the land and lake, then please use the power of Eminent Doman to preserve this beautiful, serene place for the benefit of the people of Texas and to preserve the wildlife that we are losing, especially the bald eagles nesting there. There are also historical cemeteries located there that this developer had no regard for.

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Ria Ferich  
self  
Austin, TX

I went to this park for the first time over Spring Break and was blown away by the diversity of birds and other wildlife. It is a true treasure and would be a devastating loss to future park goers if this land was to be sold.

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Dennis Walsh  
Self Retired State Park Manager FLSP  
Fairfield, TX

I KNOW A PLACE.....

Where \$72 million of taxpayers blood, sweat & tears is being stolen from our children's future! Fairfield Lake State Park! Someone needs to go to jail.

I challenge all y'all to share this far and wide to let our elected & appointed officials be aware that this is happening on their watch and we don't want it. Is this what they want to be remembered for?

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Jodie Rexroat  
self  
Maypearl, TX

I am opposed to the sale and redevelopment of Fairfield Lake State Park.

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Michael Smith, Mr  
None  
Arlington, TX

We need parks such as Fairfield. Lots of people are spending time in state and local parks, and science is documenting numerous health benefits of time spent in nature. This surely justifies the state's taking that land for the continued public good that this park provides.

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Jason Bryant  
self  
Burleson, TX

"I am opposed to the sale and redevelopment of FLSP"

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Denetta Thomas  
Sell  
Gilmer, TX

Please allow Fairfield State Park to stay opened to the public. Some Texans only visit State Parks for vacation. They are a wonderful resource for families. They offer a reasonably priced vacation or getaway.  
Thank you,  
Denetta Thomas

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Seth Gulski  
Self  
La Porte, TX

I'm opposed to the sale/development of Fairfield Lake State Park. Please keep this park open and keep Texas beautiful.

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Kyle Gleghorn  
Self  
Oakwood, TX

As a resident of freestone county i feel the loss of access to public use of Fairfield lake and the state park would be detrimental to the local area. To many of our beautiful Texas lakes have been privatized with very limited access. The facilities at the state park are already available and should be presented for public use.

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Misti Little  
self  
Stagecoach, TX

I support the bill proposed by Representative Orr for the use of eminent domain in the preservation of Fairfield Lake State Park. I am opposed to the sale or redevelopment of this beloved state park and the loss of any public land from Texans is a detriment to the ethos of the state.

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Julie Whitmire  
Self  
Dallas, TX

Please- we need more state parks, for all the people not just the wealthy. This is a state treasure! Eminent domain sounds like a good solution- can you make it happen?

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DustinWayne Carpenter, Mr  
Fairfield State Park self  
Teague, TX

Keeping our future goals with our children in mind. DustinWayne 23'

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Teresa Pratt-Yates  
self  
Canton, TX

Fairfield Lake State Park is a beautiful example of Texas, out-of-doors. We have so few out-of-door family-friendly opportunities to present to our children and future generations, and Fairfield Lake State Park offers all of us education, peace, beauty and the opportunity to relax in the great Texas out-of-doors! Please consider what has to be done to preserve this great State Park and consider the consequences of it's loss carefully before making any decisions. I am requesting that we all join forces to do what is necessary to preserve Fairfield Lake State Park .

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Rebecca Wilson  
self, retired teacher  
Flower Mound, TX

If Fairfield Lake State Park is permanently closed, the loss of this treasured resource is what will be remembered in this centennial year that was meant to be a celebration of our Texas state parks. This loss would set a dangerous precedent, since Fairfield is not the only park on leased property. During these troubled times, our parks, trails, and lakes are more important than ever, as more people are biking, hiking, kayaking, and fishing; my husband and I have hiked almost every day for the past 3 years. The disruption of a habitat for the great variety of birds (including a bald eagle) and other animals that we saw on a recent visit to the park would be a tremendous loss. We need more state parks and public lands in Texas; we cannot afford to lose access to this beautiful park. Please save Fairfield State Park.

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Kati Bradford  
Someone who wants to stay a Texan!!!  
Texas city, TX

Please save Fairfield Lake State park!! I grew up in Fairfield my whole life and now live in Galveston county. This park is so important to not only the residents that live there but to every current and future Texan. I am so saddened by the constant construction and infrastructure destroying our beautiful land!! We can never get that back. I use to be so proud to be a Texan, I grew up in the country with wildflowers and bluebonnets. How will there be any thing left if we just build on top of it!! Please the state of Texas could take a stand and take pride in our land again!! Keep Texas beautiful and don't mess with us!!

---

Kathy Ware  
Self  
Kerens, TX

Preservation of this park is extremely important to my family. As a family, we have spent many holidays, weekends and summer vacation days at Fairfield. This park is immensely family oriented and friendly. As Texans we are losing more and more public land every year. This park needs to be saved for ALL people of Texas may enjoy its bounty.

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Michelle Harvey  
self, homemaker  
College Station, TX

Please pass this bill to save Fairfield State Park. It is a value to the state as a park and should continue to be such.

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Angela Nelson  
Self  
Coolidge, TX

The residents and visitors of Texas would be losing a beautiful state park if this sale is to go through! I used to spend every summer going out there to swim with all my friends. Seeing the deer and enjoying the quiet out away from the big city, away from lights and noise, just able to completely enjoy the nature Texas has to offer. Please, for every other Texan who is proud our our state and for all visitors who need to enjoy what we have here, I bet that House Bill 2332 passes and Fairfield Lake State Park can stay just that, a state park open for all to enjoy!! The park is home to so much wildlife...deer, snakes, rabbits, even bald eagles nest there! It deserves so much more than to be sold off and turned into just another lake subdivision for people who can't truly appreciate it. Thank you for your consideration!

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Hughes Andry  
American Sportfishing Association  
Katy, TX

Dear Chair Ashby, Vice Chair Martinez and Members of the House Committee on Culture, Recreation and Tourism, On behalf of the American Sportfishing Association, I write in favor of House Bill 2332, which would allow the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to acquire Fairfield State Park and maintain public access. As anglers, boaters and the public have enjoyed Fairfield Lake and the surrounding state park for nearly 50 years, the plans to convert the area into a private development would deprive the area of one of Texas' best bass fisheries.

By way of background, the American Sportfishing Association (ASA) is the nation's recreational fishing trade association, providing a united voice for the recreational fishing industry when emerging laws and policies pose significant impacts on sportfishing businesses or sportfishing itself. Between manufacturing, retail businesses and guide and charter services, the recreational fishing industry makes a profound economic impact in Texas. In Texas alone, over 4 million anglers contribute to a \$7.7 billion economic impact, supporting 51,000 jobs across the state.

As a Texan an ASA Government Affairs Committee Member and a member of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Coastal Resources Advisory Committee, I can attest to the impact made by recreational fishing in local economies. As Texans from across the state have visited Fairfield Lake for decades, this development will impact the businesses, restaurants and tackle shops that have long benefitted from visits and trips to the lake.

The State of Texas and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) have operated the Fairfield Lake State Park for decades, investing over \$70 million in the maintenance of the park and lake. A sizeable share of that funding comes from anglers themselves, who purchase licenses and pay excise taxes on fishing equipment into the Sportfish Restoration Fund. Visited by over 80,000 anglers, hunters, boaters and outdoor recreationists last year alone, Fairfield State Park's public-funded access points, roads and facilities have been maintained by the public to serve Texans from across the state.

Per the TPWD, last year, Fairfield Lake produced 38 ShareLunkers - largemouth bass weighing over 8 pounds or measuring over 24 inches in 2022 – the most of any Texas state park lake, and third among all Texas lakes. Fairfield Lake has been a top destination for anglers across the state for decades. While I understand that Fairfield State Park is recognized as private property, and I respect a landowner's rights, the Park has been open to the public for fishing, hunting and outdoor recreation for nearly 50 years.

HB 2332 would allow the TPWD to buy the property from its current owner, Vistra Corp, and maintain the State Park as it has since 1976. I encourage the Committee to pass this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Hughes Andry

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lana Ponce  
Fairfield Lake State Park  
Fairfield, TX

Me and my husband have been Park Host inside the Texas State Parks for over 16 yrs now.. Fairfield Lake State Park got 5 yrs of our time, sweat and tears. We have seen Timber Rattlesnakes which is a Protected Species in Texas, and we had Box Turtles as well out there.. There is a wide array of species and animals to Fish out there and now a Developer has come in and has bought our beloved park, in which he has sold the water rights to.. PLEASE help us save our park... The Animals, fish and ECO system need you on this matter... Please help protect our Bald Eagle and their families. Please don't let this park die, don't let the Wildlife die, let them know they have a home and they WILL not be pushed out of it as well as thousands of other places.... Please don't let this happen! Lana Ponce

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Sarah Jay  
Self - Junior Editor/Staff Writer Epic Gardening Blog  
Denton, TX

To the Texas House Representatives,

Please do the right thing and save Fairfield State Park. Not only has this park been a haven for wildlife and native Texas flora for some time, it has been paid for by local citizens. By allowing the sale of this property to go through, you would set a terrible precedent that puts all our state parks at risk.

Please consider this and the numerous other pleas you are definitely going to receive.

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Dennis Walsh  
The people of Texas  
Fairfield, TX

As I lifelong naturalist with over 26 year's experience with TPWD as a park manager, police officer and resource interpreter, my most important take away message is "As the QUANTITY of human development of our planet increases, the QUALITY of our environment decreases".

On the Eagle Tours at the lake I would relay the story of the canary in the coal mine where the coal miners would use a caged canary as an environmental indicator of air quality. If the canary showed any signs of distress, the knew that the air might have been toxic and it was time to get out! Up here on the surface, indicator species such as the bald eagles tell us that we are polluting our environment with DDT, lead, mercury and dioxin, but we can't escape the planet so we are forced to take corrective action.

This message applies with even greater urgency to the closure of our park. We need to make this effort a landmark case and draw the line in favor of the environment for our children and their children. Use Eminent Domain to keep Fairfield Lake State Park a natural treasure for the future!.

Environmental, Cultural, and Economic Impact assessment investigations need to be conducted with the latest technology by impartial disinterested entities ( not Todd Interests, TU, Vistra or even TPWD )in order to assess the property and determine the scientific and safety of the site for the people of Texas.

Thank You for your time.

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Michael Boyd  
Self  
Conroe, TX

I'm in favor of HB2332 for the state of Texas to become the owner of Fairfield State Park. As it's rightful for the state to have had an option in purchasing the property for which it has operated and invested millions of taxpayers dollars.

Fairfield state park is a perfect meeting location for weekend camping trips between families scattered from Houston to DFW. I hope there's more chances in the future to camp and fish with my family in this park.

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Ashlyn Cox  
Self - Receptionist  
Josephine, TX

Texas Parks & Wildlife, and the state parks themselves, is around to protect species and natural spaces. The sale of Fairfield Lake State Park completely annihilates that.

There are so many protected species that selling of the land, the park, and the water would negatively impact, including the bald eagles, timber rattlesnakes, box turtles, and others.

Aside from the protected species, the point of the parks is to have natural areas protected for the people of Texas. The info that this park was closing was only offered up to the public a couple weeks prior to the closure. Allowing this sale could open the door for other parks to also get shut down, as I believe there are a few others not owned by the state. If a park can be sold out from under TP&W at any time, with very little notice to the public, is anything even truly being protected?

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Rhonda james  
Self  
Fairfield, TX

Hello,

My name is Rhonda James, I am the leader of Boy Scout Pack 668. Thank you so much for doing your part to save Fairfield Lake State Park. Our pack has held our camping trips here for years. We have enjoyed the beautiful trails, canoeing, fishing, swimming, camping and just being with nature. Many people complain that today's youth are a "digital" generation, but many of these people are the same ones responsible for taking nature away from them. The annual Kid Fish tournament event is a perfect example of bringing children into nature, that would normally not have the opportunity. It is a time to allow kids to lay down a phone, tablet, and gaming device and pick up a fishing pole, explore nature's trails and experience the majesty of a Bald Eagle in flight. There are so many species that inhabit the park and destroying this park, would destroy so many natural habitats and possibly put many species in jeopardy of endangerment or possible extinction. Furthermore, events such as Christmas In The Park give families a quality chance to return to simplicity and peace, and to experience the holidays together as it should be without the pressure of commercialism. The park and officials also provide events such as night hikes that allow all involved to experience the magic and complexity of our natural world. This teaches that this world can offer and contains so many mysteries that no one can imagine. In conclusion, please know that saving this park is essentially saving a generation, preserving the memories a past generation, and fueling the interests, education and potential memories of a future generation. I hope this park continues to be a source of togetherness for families, nature education for the children and adults alike. There is nothing like stepping out of a tent with a fresh cup of coffee while watching the morning sun glisten on the water, listening to the native wildlife rustle in the leaves and watching your child, grandchild or even an adult catch their first fish. The joy on their face and the sparkle in their eyes should be worth all the money in the world to save Fairfield Lake State Park!!!

Respectfully,

Rhonda James

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Amber Allee  
Self  
mexia, TX

Fairfield Lake State Park is a natural treasure and a cherished recreational area for the local community and visitors alike. It provides opportunities for camping, hiking, fishing, boating, and wildlife observation, among other outdoor activities. If a developer were to turn it into a subdivision, this beautiful park would be lost forever, and the natural habitats and ecosystems that sustain a diverse range of plant and animal species would be destroyed. We must work to save Fairfield Lake State Park from such development to ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy the beauty and benefits of this precious natural resource.

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Sandy Emmons

self / former Curator for Freestone County Historical Museum in Fairfield, Tx & current retail family business owner Downtown Fairfield , Tx

Waxahachie, TX

And Bill H.B. 4757 This committee needs to preserve Fairfield Lake State Park in its entirety and do the maximum effort to keep it open as an overnight park as it has been for over 50 years. This park is essential to so many programs that will affect all State Park lakes in Texas, not just Fairfield. So many resources have been invested in this park and its lake. How tragic and embarrassing if TPWD were to lose this park to private developers. The public will lose further trust in the Texas government if this park is taken from the state. This could be a landmark case, and your committee can help TPWD and the State of Texas with further negotiations and acquisitions setting an example for generations to come. Why back off from eminent domain when this is a textbook case for it? The loss of this park will have a dire effect on Fairfield businesses that rely on park traffic. This is the biggest tourism draw in Freestone County. You must also preserve the history and archeological significance of the area, full of plantation life in Texas, slave, freed slave, paleo, woodland, and Native American sites. The biggest history of bootlegging in Texas is located there too. This is a PR nightmare for TPWD and the State. Put it on a ballot to the people of Texas and I'm sure eminent domain would be approved in this case.

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Gary Wiggins

Self, Library Director

Teague, TX

Please support this bill and do whatever it takes to save this State Park. I support eminent domain in this case because the property has been enjoyed by the public for many years, and hasn't yet been developed for private use. Thanks!

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Donette Bonner

SAVE FAIRFIELD STATE PARK AND LAKE

Fairfield, TX

To whom it may concern, I have lived in Freestone county, most affectionately known as FREECO, since 1980, married into my husband's family which is a pioneer family that has been in Freestone county since the mid 1800's. We love our county and what she has to offer. The park is something that is such an additional gem to our county and for the whole state to benefit from. I am begging you to please SAVE OUR RESOURCES!!!! The powers that be want to continue to chip away at our countryside all so they can line their pockets. They can care less that there are people that live here and have roots here. Families that care about Heritage. And so many others that desire that same kind of life and our State Park is a little piece of that solitude. So I ask you to PLEASE PLEASE don't allow selfish greed to destroy what God has Blessed this state with and that good stewards have cared for in order for the good people of the Great State of Texas to continue to enjoy for generations to come. Thank you.

Donette Bonner

Fairfield, Stewards Mill/Bonnerville, Texas

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George Gretser

Self

DALLAS, TX

For years and generations, Fairfield state park has been an Environmental gem for individuals and families to enjoy. This is exactly the kind of natural resource at the State of Texas should be preserving for future Generations While protecting the wildlife habitats if it's inhabitants. Commercialization and development contributes nothing except to make a select few rich while building houses most of us could never afford. Texas has a budget surplus, we should use it to preserve Fairfield Lake State Park. There is a grass movement that is paying attention to what is happening and who is voting. Be on the right side of this and preserve this Texas treasure. Thank you

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Laura Moore  
Save Fairfield State Park  
Fairfield, TX

Fairfield State Park provides enrichment for our children as well as outdoor education and wildlife. The fishing is excellent! People come from all over to go to our beautiful State Park. Please vote against shutting it down!

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Sandra Sledge  
Self Licensed Veterinary Technician  
Garland, TX

I urge the citizens of our great state to take action keeping the natural Fairfield Lake State Park And the surrounding acres by granting the power of eminent domain providing a native natural haven for everyone's friends and family to enjoy our State Park's outdoor physically and mentally healthy activities. This park has been important to our citizens for 50+ years and the future of Fairfield Lake State Park is wanted dearly by many to be shared by all of us.

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Rebecca Wilson  
self, retired teacher  
Flower Mound, TX

Those who love Texas state parks, as my husband and I do, know that each park is unique and special. There will never be another Fairfield Lake State Park. This beautiful park has so much to offer: hiking, kayaking, fishing, birdwatching, nature studies, and camping. During today's stressful times, an increasing number of people look to nature for relaxation and peaceful solitude. Access to state parks and nature trails is a vital component for maintaining the mental and emotional health of so many Texas citizens. This park is a haven for wildlife, and, during a recent half-day visit, my husband and I saw a beaver, a bald eagle, cormorants, and 23 other types of birds. The loss of Fairfield Lake SP would cast a shadow over this year which, ironically, was meant to be a time of centennial celebrations of the creation of Texas state parks. We need more, not fewer, state parks in Texas. Please do not allow this dangerous precedent of a state park closure, as the future of other state parks on leased land could then be in jeopardy. Save Fairfield Lake State Park, and let the citizens of Texas know that the nature/human connection will be valued, respected, and protected for our benefit and for the enjoyment of future generations.

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Jeannie Keeney  
Self  
Fairfield, TX

As a Freestone County Citizens, I am very concerned about our State Park closing. There are very few things in our County for families to enjoy together, and taking the park away will surely create more hardship. Selling the water from the lake should be forbidden. Please keep working hard to save our park, preserve our wildlife and their natural habitats, and preserve the cemeteries that are on that location.

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Gloria D Hobdy  
Individual  
Streetman, TX

This lake area should be preserved for the eagles and other wildlife the use the area for their homes. This natural preserve has been educational, fun and a space used and enjoyed by many. We need and love our lake and the economic impact it brings to our town.

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Muhammad Arshad  
Self business owner  
Saginaw, TX

I am opposed to the sale and redevelopment of FLSP

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Kimberly White  
Self  
Fairfield, TX

Please consider supporting the bill to save Fairfield Lake State Park. Not only is the lake a wonderful place for families it's also financial support for many of the small businesses within Fairfield and it's also the home to many animals (including the Bald Eagle) and plants that either are or have been on the endangered list. Todd Industries will take away their habitat in the name of entertainment for a select few. Instead of destroying the habitat for these protected animals we need to protect it and them. We need to protect these plants. Once they are gone we can't get them back. We need to protect the town of Fairfield - as we were already issued a big blow by the plant being shut down - but now to have the lake taken as well would be awful. Families deserve a nice peaceful place to go on vacations or just for the day - a nice hamburger/hotdog cookout with family and friends. There is way more that can be said about Fairfield Lake State Park - more than could ever be fit into 3000 characters. This isn't just a lake, it's friends...it's family...it's home. Please don't let that be turned into a golf course (which Fairfield already has at the country club). Please protect nature and small towns people. Please protect the animals - is it even American or Texan to not protect the Bald Eagle? Please do what is right and support this bill - our towns future and the lives of so many depend on it.

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Pam Beene  
Self and Friends  
Fairfield, TX

State parks are for our children and our future. Please. Save Fairfield State Park and our beautiful natural wildlife habitat.

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Corinne Wilder, VP, Global Ops  
Self  
Austin, TX

While there are a vast multitude of reasons - environmental, political, financial and personal - that we are here today, the simple truth is that Governor Abbott has made a public statement - and I quote - “ Yes, we want Texas to grow. Yes, we want Texas to prosper. But we can do that while at the very same time conserving the beautiful parks that we have and adding to them to make Texas even more appealing to future generations.”

Now is the time for him, and this committee, to stand behind his very clear statement to protect and conserve our natural resources. We’re Texans. We should be proud of our commitments & values - but we currently do NOT have reason to. We’re the largest state in the contiguous United States, and we rank 35th in protected lands. We should be embarrassed of this number. YOU should be embarrassed by this number. This year marks the 100th anniversary of our state parks system, and to allow a park which has 80,000 visitors per year to close and be destroyed for ONE single entity’s personal profit is unacceptable and would mark a terrible tragedy for our states’ history. And go COMPLETELY against Gov Abbott’s clear mandate and wish to protect our lands.

Personally, I grew up in Fairfield Lake State Park - literally. My father, Dennis Walsh, was Superintendent for 15 years, and in doing so has shaped my career and passion for sustainability and land conservation. This beautiful gem of a park lies right on the border between prairie land and piney woods, and is host to hundreds of species of unique plants and animals. I don’t want to see my childhood home destroyed to build multimillion dollar homes and a golf course.

Economically, we also must absolutely recognize that \$72M of Texas Taxpayers money has gone into the park I’ve the last 50 years of existence. I have an MBA. I’m in charge of operations for a \$100M+ global company - I understand the projections that Todd Interests intends to file against this bill, and how they plan to financially fight and pressure our government for their own personal interests. But I challenge you: Please don’t allow a PRIVATE entity to hold this government hostage to doing the right thing for the future of our state.

I challenge this legislation to accept and promote Angela Orr’s bill to save Fairfield Lake State Park. My home for the first 15 formative years of my life.

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Charnelle Robison, Mother Grandmother Citizen of Freestone County .Citizen of Heaven  
Save Fairfield State Park  
Teague, TX

Keep The State Park Open and Protected the Children and Families The Animals Who call it home .Those who have family Buried There.God gave us this Earth The Water ways the streams and wildlife to Griw together we are to protect and cherish each other

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Kristine Lenamond  
Self, Buffalo High School Science Teacher  
Groesbeck, TX

Not often is it necessary to heed to eminent domain, but now is one of those times in the case of Fairfield State Park. The park has been enjoyed by the public for many decades and is testimony to the hard work that the state of Texas has already put into preserving the environmental site of the park. There is no reason it should be turned into another multimillion dollar housing development when we have a crisis housing lower to middle classes already local to the area around which the development is planned. It would only serve to marginalize a growing community of poor and under serviced populations in Texas, and eliminate an important protected or supposedly protected natural resource from the community.

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Jennifer Ayala  
Self, Secretary  
Corsicana, TX

I support the preservation of Fairfield Lake State Park and am opposed to any development or draining of the lake, which is what Todd Interests is planning. This lake and park has been public access to the local community for 50 years and is the natural habitat of multiple federally protected species, including the bald eagle. For years, families have come to enjoy/love the park and share that with their future generations. This is a rare place and would absolutely be a detriment to lose, especially in a state with so few parks and such a large population. Texas needs more state parks and protected areas, not less. Especially in fair weather when campers are out, sites/parks fill up. Keeping Fairfield open would give camping access to more citizens (100 extra sites) and the money goes back to the state. This also directly affects the livelihood of local small business owners that may not make it without the park visitor sales. Please consider our future generations that also deserve to experience this place. Don't let Todd Interests take this treasure from Texas citizens and turn it into a housing development and pump half the lake to DFW. That's in no way in the public's best interest.

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Devin Jackson  
Self  
Palestine, TX

I am OPPOSED to development on the site of Fairfield State Park! The loss of our closest state park, RV camping in a nature filled environment and the loss of income to Fairfield, Texas would not only be a loss of a beautiful natural environment in Texas, but a tremendous loss of income to a small town. Multiple businesses will be negatively effected permanently. We need this state park to remain Pure Texas!

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