

Comments Submitted to the Sunset Commission Concerning the LCRA

By Phil Cook

I am Phil Cook, and have lived most of my life in Bastrop County. I have three wells in the west-central part of the county which I use for domestic and agricultural purposes. My wells are in the Simsboro layer of the Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer, which is the same aquifer layer that the LCRA is seeking groundwater permits for 25,000 acre feet/year.

Like hundreds of other well owners in Bastrop and Lee Counties, the water level in my wells will be diminished if the LCRA proceeds as proposed.

What troubles me most is the LCRA's consistent refusal to level with those of us who live in the area that will be affected by their pumping. Although it has had several opportunities to engage the public, it has consistently failed to do so. It acts as if the public has no place and no interests in its plans.

The LCRA refuses to disclose how, and for what purposes the groundwater will be used.

The LCRA refuses to acknowledge the detrimental effects its wells will have on surrounding domestic, agricultural, and municipal wells.

The LCRA falsely claims that its wells in the Simsboro layer will not affect wells in the shallower layers of the Carrizo-Wilcox. This assertion relies on outdated, discredited groundwater models that are no longer in use. More recent, updated models refute this and indicate that the Simsboro layer is directly connected to other aquifer layers.

The LCRA ignores the fact that its pumping, when combined with that of several other water marketers, will have disastrous effects on the Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer and on the many thousands of people in Bastrop and Lee Counties who rely on this aquifer as their sole source of water.

The LCRA flatly refuses to acknowledge that its pumping will not be confined to the property on which it has bought groundwater rights. In fact, it will extend far beyond this property.

Groundwater is vested private property. LCRA's pumping will take groundwater from under hundreds of thousands of acres, far beyond the boundaries to which it has water rights, without the permission of the owners of these properties.

All of this begs an essential question: What is the LCRA doing in the groundwater marketing business? Its mission concerns the Colorado River, power generation and transmission, and the like. It has no need and no place in the groundwater business.