



BRIAN BIRDWELL



JIM KEFFER

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LOCAL LEGISLATORS GATHER TCEQ AND HOOD, PALO PINTO COUNTIES FOR WATER MEETING

AUSTIN—State Senator Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) and State Representative Jim Keffer (R-Eastland) convened a meeting Friday to discuss the Brazos River Authority's (BRA) System Operation Permit request for 420,000 additional acre-feet of firm-yield water. Three senior officials from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) were present at the meeting, as well as local elected officials and staff from the City of Granbury, Hood County and Palo Pinto County.

The BRA recently submitted to the TCEQ a Water Management Plan for the usage of their potential new water rights, and by June, the TCEQ will announce the date(s) of a public comment period on the subject. Prior to that time, however, Sen. Birdwell and Rep. Keffer felt it was imperative that they create an opportunity for Hood and Palo Pinto County leaders to discuss the public safety, economic and quality-of-life impacts that could be felt in their respective communities should the TCEQ approve the BRA request. The entire administrative process is expected to take at least one more year to complete.

"As two of the three reservoirs owned and operated by the BRA, Possum Kingdom Lake and Lake Granbury will certainly be impacted by any decision made by the TCEQ on this permit," said Rep. Keffer. "In the coming months, we will continue our efforts to ensure that the affected communities—local governments, community groups, and individual citizens—have every possible opportunity to participate at every step of the process."

"Texas is in the middle of an incredible drought, and the demand for water is only growing," said Sen. Birdwell. "The citizens I serve in Hood County and Senate District 22 are facing the harsh realities of this dichotomy, and I felt it was absolutely necessary for the TCEQ to hear directly from them. My staff and I have been tracking this issue rigorously and in great detail, and we will continue to do so until this process is complete."

Senator Birdwell and Representative Keffer have encouraged all concerned persons to request their placement on an "interested parties" list by referencing Water Use Permit No. 5851 in a letter addressed to:

**Office of the Chief Clerk - MC 105
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, TX 78711-3087**

For more information about the ongoing TCEQ permitting process and the status of Water Use Permit No. 5851, please visit: http://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/water_rights/pending.html. For details about the BRA System Operation Permit and to review their Water Management Plan, please visit: <http://www.brazos.org/SysOps.asp>.

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Senator Brian Birdwell serves Hood County as part of Senate District 22, while Representative Jim Keffer serves both Hood and Palo Pinto Counties as part of House District 60.