
LAKE TEXOMA MESSENGER

Volume 1, Issue 1

www.FriendsofLakeTexomaStatePark.org – Kingston, Oklahoma

January, 2009

Lake Texoma State Park - Privatization Appears Unlawful

Records Show Land Deal & Park Conversion are Premature

(Kingston, OK) – In December, the Friends of Lake Texoma State Park located documents at the Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department (OTRD) in Oklahoma City which appear to show that the Park is being unlawfully converted to private use.

Thanks to the Oklahoma Open Records Act, the Friends were able to obtain proof of at least seven different park improvement projects which were paid for by federal grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The National Park Service (NPS) administers LWCF funds which come with a strict stipulation that public parklands funded in this way not be converted to other uses unless replacement recreational lands are provided.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1964 assists in preserving, developing and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources for all citizens of present and future generations.

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(And why you might want to know....)

Kingston Town Meeting: 1/31

Let's Take Back The Park!

Do you remember when everyone was saying "It's a Done Deal?"

Well it isn't, and it never was!! Hello again everyone,

When we began writing letters to the local papers last summer, raising questions about the ongoing sale of the park, it seemed like every one around was saying, "It's a done deal – there is nothing we can do." We have never seen so many sad faces.

When we hosted our first public Town Meeting in mid-September, we had a good turnout and a heated debate. We learned that almost no one in Kingston is for this project except people who are already working for Pointe Vista Development, or who are hoping to cash in on the deal some day.

Since that time more and more information has come out showing that there is so much wrong with this land grab and so many laws being ignored by the state officials who have promoted it. We can end this rip off and send the developers back to Oklahoma City if enough of the folks here in Kingston are willing to stand up against it. Together let's tell these people that we've had enough of their lies and phony promises – we want our parkland back!

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With each project agreement, the Tourism Department made a binding commitment to protect and preserve Lake Texoma State Park for public recreational use, now and forever. It only takes one LWCF grant to protect a state or national park, but OTRD received grants for at least seven, and perhaps more.

With each grant application, OTRD submitted a special map with a boundary showing the locations of the park improvements, and the part of the park which they agreed to protect forever.

By June, 1997, the state had received so many of these grants that the entire park fell within what is called the "6(f)(3) boundary map," referring to the compliance section of the Land and Water Conservation Act which essentially protects areas from conversion without replacement.

If a state seeks to convert a LWCF funded park it must first submit a formal request to the NPS.

No such request was ever submitted to the NPS prior to the sale of Lake Texoma State Park lands to Pointe Vista Development, L.L.C. of Oklahoma City. Responsibility for compliance and enforcement of these project agreements rests with the Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson.

Prior to sale or conversion, the LWCF also requires that the Tourism & Recreation Department (OTRD) to identify replacement park lands and do an inventory of their qualities. These qualities need to be compared item by item to determine the suitability of the replacement park land.

The NPS may not approve the park conversion without this information. Parklands need to serve the same community and have similar ease of public access, and equal value. They cannot be taken from an already existing public recreational area, like Johnson Creek in Bryan County. It must be newly created.

That is prohibited by LWCF because it would result in a net loss of public recreational facilities.

1967: \$40,000. public group camp & campground built to be replaced in 1997 by the Chickasaw Pointe Golf Course which then came under the protection of the Land and Water Conservation Act. **It was sold last year to Pointe Vista!**

1963 - \$53,000: Campgrounds and electrical system work at Catfish Bay Lagoon System next to the airstrip.

1968 & 1969: Texoma State Park Road LWCF improvements - cost **\$4,406.40**, and **\$3,213.00**.

1969: \$81,600 - ten sleeping cabins, community bldg

1970: \$6,426 – access roads, parking for new boathouse.

1977: \$572,600 - campground at Chickasaw Pointe, lodge tennis court lighting , lodge golf course irrigation.

1983 – 88: \$35,000 – campgrounds, roads, utilities.

Hey, Corps of Engineers: How about a Real EIS?

On August 10, 2004, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sent a request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other agencies and interested parties, requesting comments on their proposed land transfer at Lake Texoma State Park.

Their proposed action would transfer 564 acres, the Park, to the Oklahoma Commissioners of the Land with the land to be sold at "fair market price." In a letter dated October 6, 2004, Jerry Brabander, the Field Supervisor for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Tulsa, wrote, "Lacking precise information on the location of these lands, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cannot provide you a site specific species list" as required by the Endangered Species Act.

Brabander said, "**The federally-listed species likely to occur near Lake Texoma would include the bald eagle,** interior least tern, piping plover, whooping crane, and American burying beetle. ...The direct and indirect effects on these federally-listed species must be addressed before proceeding with your proposed action." **(And they were not!)**

In regards to the land sale, Brabander commented that the Corps "frequently permits actions...that cumulatively impact wildlife habitat at Corps projects. Lands previously available for public uses such as camping, hiking, hunting and fishing, frequently then become unavailable to the general public." Exactly what is going on at Lake Texoma!

"This proposed action is another example of project lands and wildlife habitat being affected without any assessment of cumulative effects."

WE WANT A REAL EIS!!

(ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY)
OF AUBREY MCCLENDON'S POINTE
VISTA DESIGN PLAN!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIENDS OF LAKE TEXOMA STATE PARK MEETINGS:

PLACE: BOYD STEELE'S HOME,
1398 TEXOMA PARKWAY ROAD

TIME: 3 PM, THURSDAY, JAN 15TH
Event and Media Planning for FLTSP Volunteers .

PLACE: BOYD STEELE'S HOME
1398 TEXOMA PARKWAY ROAD

TIME: 1 PM, SATURDAY, JAN 24TH
FLTSP VOLUNTEERS MTG FOR 1/31 TOWN MEETING. ALSO,
PREPARE FOR 2/10 KINGSTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING.

FLTSP / KINGSTON TOWN MEETING AT BG'S

PLACE: BG'S CATCH, HWY70, KINGSTON, OK
TIME: 2:00 – 3:30PM, SATURDAY, JAN 31ST
This will be our first Town Meeting of the New Year
for Kingston area businesses and residents.

For More Information please contact:

Stephen Willis - 405-217-4152

Boyd Steele – 580-564-0836

E-mail: defendlaketexoma@gmail.com

www.FriendsofLakeTexomaStatePark.org

www.defenseofplace.org

Please patronize the following area businesses:

DURANT COPY CENTER – (580) 920-2679

1205 N Washington Ave, Durant, OK

BG's CATCH – (580) 564 4320

605 ½ E. Hwy 70, Kingston, OK 73439

Let's Take Back Lake Texoma State Park!

Nothing could be more empowering for a small community like Kingston than coming together to save a resource like Lake Texoma State Park. Not just for future generations of Marshall County citizens, but for our selves and our families and all of our friends.

This is not wishful thinking. It is entirely possible to stop this land grab, but only if the folks who are most impacted by the loss of the park are willing to stand up and say, **“We’ve had enough of the lies and the BS!”**

Our next meeting will be held Saturday, January 31, from 2-3:30 PM at BG's Catch on US Highway 70 in Kingston.

Bruce Greene has generously offered to open early so we can host this public meeting. We will share with you what you can do to help Take Back Lake Texoma State Park. Please don't miss this chance to connect.

Mark January 31st on your calendar and bring your neighbors with you to BG's. This is an opportunity unlike any you have ever had before. How often do you get to take on the powerful corporations that seem to run the world? Working together, we'll send them packing!

We need everyone in Kingston to get involved. Lake Texoma State Park and its lodge, campgrounds, marina and golf courses made up the economic engine that served Kingston for almost five decades. Most towns would give anything to have successful, sustainable economy, and they would fight dearly to protect it.

Remember this: Thanks to the Kingston residents who are already standing up and saying “NO!”... **This land grab is no longer a Done Deal.** Pointe Vista officials have already admitted as much when they said they don't need Area C to go forward. But they do need to pay for a \$2 million Environmental Study which could take up to two years to complete!

Ask yourselves this: Who can best afford to lose this battle, Pointe Vista Development, or the small businesses and residents of Kingston? Senator Gumm and other public officials have been invited to speak.

Aubrey McClendon and Mark Fischer are multi-millionaires. They can afford to let go of our park. We are not alone in this fight; our parks are under attack throughout the nation and we need to draw a line here.

Join with us. Together we can save the Park!!

FRIENDS 2009 GOALS:

- * FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY- PVD
- * CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
- * AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY
- * STOP CORPS FEDERAL LAND SALES
- * STOP OKLAHOMA DEMONSTRATION LAKES PROJECT

RED STATE REBELS ARE STANDING UP IN SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS ALL OVER AMERICA. WE ARE TAKING A STAND FOR PLACES THAT MATTER- STATE AND NATIONAL PARKS THAT HAVE BEEN OPENED TO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS IN VIOLATION OF OUR COMMON WEALTH. NOW IS THE TIME FOR YOU TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

Who are Jeff McMahon and Clifton Scott?

On October 26, 2008, Tony Thornton of the Oklahoman Reported: "Corrupt businessman Steve Phipps, the linchpin of a three-year FBI investigation, told a federal grand jury he could implicate more than 30 people – in criminal activities and/or political corruption."

Among those Phipps has already testified against are former state auditor, Clifton Scott, who is current Secretary of the State Land Office.

Governor Brad Henry also received illegal contributions from former State Senator Gene Stipe and Steve Phipps.

The Commissioners of the Land Office includes members who are implicated in these illegal contributions and who were instrumental in approving the sale of Lake Texoma State Park. Jeff McMahon was reported to have traveled to Lake Texoma on a fishing trip with Phipps in 2002, prior to his appointment to the Land Office by Governor Henry.

Google search: "Anatomy of a Scandal by Gary Jones" and "FBI probes Hugo Lake Land Deal," by Tony Thornton, and you'll see why the land deals at Lake Texoma should be investigated and very possibly overturned. – Vicki Gaylor and Stephen Willis

Friends of Lake Texoma State Park
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