The Proposed Lake Ringgold
Frequently Asked Questions

The City of Wichita Falls is proposing to build a 16,000-acre reservoir called Lake Ringgold that would cost $331 million and cause major harm to exceptional wildlife habitat. It would force forty families to sell all or part of their ranches, taking a total of 41,000 acres out of production.

Why isn’t Lake Ringgold needed?

Wichita Falls has done an outstanding job of meeting its water needs, both for today and in the future. The City’s current annual water supply is sufficient to more than meet its needs over the next fifty years. Everyone remembers how close the city came to running out of water in 2011. The city acted effectively to remedy the problem, adding to their water supply by purifying and recycling the City’s wastewater.

How much water does Wichita Falls need - and how much does it have?

The State Water Plan projects that Wichita Falls and its customer cities will need less than 30,000 acre-feet of water per year in 2070, including what it supplies to surrounding cities.

Wichita Falls’ current annual water supply from Lakes Arrowhead and Kickapoo, plus the reuse/recycling project the city has recently finalized, is more than 45,000 acre-feet per year - an excess of over 50%.

If unexpected additional demands for water ever were to occur, there are lower-cost ways to develop water than building a new lake. Example: The City still has water rights in Lake Kemp that could be redeveloped.

Who would pay for Lake Ringgold?

Lake Ringgold’s $331 million price tag would be borne by the residents of Wichita Falls and area communities who buy water from Wichita Falls - either through bonds or by an increase in water rates.
Where would Lake Ringgold be built?

The lake would be built in rural Clay County 30 miles east of Wichita Falls on the Little Wichita River.

What harm would there be in building Lake Ringgold?

Building Lake Ringgold would cause irreparable harm to the natural landscape of neighboring Clay County and negatively impact the local economy.

Environment. Lake Ringgold would permanently inundate wooded river and creek bottoms and rare native tallgrass prairie vital for quail, ducks, deer, songbirds, and other wildlife. The amount of water lost to evaporation from the surface of the lake would be significant, reducing flows to the Red River and Lake Texoma downstream.

Economy. Clay County would incur increased costs for road maintenance, law enforcement, and other services while at the same time experiencing a decrease in taxes as land for the lake is taken out of production and off the tax rolls.

People. Property owners would have no choice whether to sell their ranchland, land that has provides their livelihoods and has in some cases been in the family for generations. If they refused to sell at the price offered to them, their land would be condemned under eminent domain.

Would building Lake Ringgold help the local economy?

Raising water rates or taxes to pay for Lake Ringgold would mean that local residents would have to forego purchasing whatever they would have used the money for, to buy a reservoir they don’t need. While having an adequate water supply is of course necessary for economic development, the burden of building excess water supply might actually discourage companies from coming to the region by placing an unnecessary debt load on their employees.

For more information, contact

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