

October 16, 2006

The Honorable Royce West
Texas State Senator
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711-2068

Dear Senator West:

We are writing on behalf of over 50 communities to seek your support for enhancing the State's ability to help local communities better prepare for floods and prevent future loss of life and property. As you may know, the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition (TCRFC) consists of over 50 communities in the Lower Colorado River basin and surrounding areas who are working together to mitigate the devastating impacts that floods can have on our citizens and our communities by better coordinating and increasing the effectiveness of our local floodplain management and emergency management programs.

The lower Colorado River basin covers a large portion of the state and has a long history of devastating flooding. Due to its steep topography and intense weather patterns, central Texas is very prone to heavy rainfall and flash flooding. The Austin/ San Antonio National Weather Service office issues more flash flood watches and warnings than any other National Weather Service office in the country. In addition, due to its low lying topography, proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and intense weather patterns, the coastal plains are susceptible to large scale, long term flood events.

Although flooding is not new to the basin, there has been a dramatic increase in flood damages in recent years. The last decade was particularly severe with near record and record breaking flood levels for a number of waterways. During this 10 year period, our basin suffered over \$50 million in property and crop damages. And most importantly, these floods also took six lives and injured 172 in our basin.

We and the 54 communities of the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition (TCRFC) want to express our appreciation for your inclusion of Charge #7 in the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee (IGR) Interim Charges recognizing the necessity for further legislative action on floodplain mapping in Texas communities.

Senator West
October 16, 2006
Page 2

Due to the continual need for the state to focus on floodplain issues, we encourage you and the members of the IGR Committee to consider these recommendations as part of the Interim Study:

- 1) Improve governmental effectiveness and efficiency of floodplain and disaster management through coordinated or consolidation of multi-state agency efforts; a “one number to call” approach to better serve communities and help Texas participate with federal programs.
- 2) Identify adequate state funding levels to leverage with local and federal funding programs. Texas’ communities need to accurately identify and map floodplains along rivers based on existing conditions to help reduce future flood damages.
- 3) Develop a State Flood Management Plan that would prioritize regions where Texas needs to improve knowledge and solutions for flood prone regions. Texas is one of the top three flood-prone states in the nation. Statewide flood studies would improve our knowledge of our flooding issues and develop solutions to flood-proof our communities. These studies would also develop a better understanding of our riverine flow regimes including annual probable volumes of flood water for beneficial uses including in-stream flow and fresh water inflow to bays and estuaries.

These recommendations received favorable responses at the February 15, 2005, Senate Natural Resources Committee hearing during the last regular legislative session. We hope they receive just as favorable response this year.

In addition, we would like to volunteer our organization as a resource for you, your staff, the IGR Committee and staff on this Interim Study. Our members have participated and testified in Committee hearings on previous Senate studies on floodplain management and have knowledge of current issues.

We encourage you and the IGR Committee to review the recommendations specifically regarding flood and floodplain management by the Blue Ribbon Committee Study January 2001 Senate Concurrent Resolution 68, and the Senate Interim Committee on Natural Resources August 2002 Interim Report on Natural Disasters to the 78th Legislature. It would be appropriate for the Interim Study to determine what has been accomplished or not accomplished from these previous recommendations.

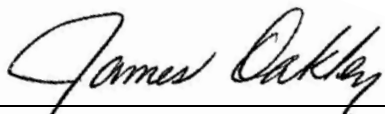
Senator West
October 16, 2006
Page 3

Our members appreciate work of previous Senate Committees and welcome the opportunity to work with the Lt. Governor's Office and the IGR Committee in 2006.

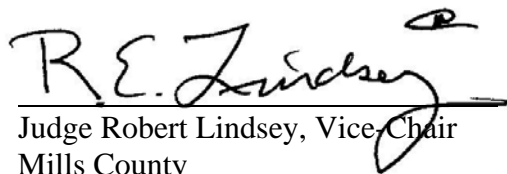
Thank you for your continued good work and efforts on behalf of all Texans.

Sincerely,

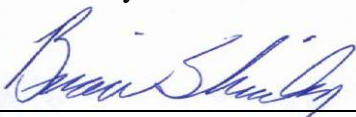
The TCRFC Board of Directors



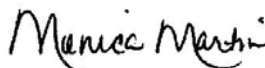
Commissioner James Oakley, Chair
Burnet County



Judge Robert Lindsey, Vice-Chair
Mills County



Council Member Brian Shirley, Treasurer
City of Marble Falls



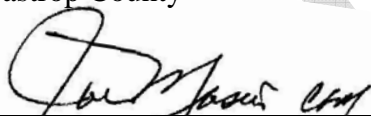
Monica Martin, Region I Representative
Wharton County



Vickie Box, Region II Representative
Bastrop County



Terry Pelton, Region III Representative
City of Marble Falls



Joe Mosier, Region IV Representative
City of Brady

Cc: Senator Jon Lindsay, Vice Chair
Senator Bob Deuell
Senator Mario Gallegos
Senator Jeff Wentworth