

## MEMORANDUM FOR CESWF-OD

SUBJECT: Master Plan Supplement, Ray Roberts Lake Master Plan, Design Memorandum No. 8, January 1983

## 1. References:

a. Chapter 3, ER 1130-2-550, 15 November 1996, Recreation Operations and Maintenance Policies.

b. Chapter 3, EP 1130-2-550, 15 November 1996, Recreation Operations and Maintenance Guidance and Procedures.

c. CESWF Appointment Memo #97-08, 29 April 1997, Appointment of Authorized Representative.

2. In accordance with references above, with your approval, this Master Plan Supplement will be incorporated into the Ray Roberts Lake Master Plan.

3. **Background:** During the past two years, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), to whom Culp Branch Park is licensed for fish and wildlife management purposes, approached the Corps regarding the land classification and long term future management of Culp Branch Park. Per the enclosed copies of letters exchanged between TPWD and the Corps, TPWD expressed an interest in changing the land classification of Culp Branch Park to better reflect their long-term interest in managing the property as a native prairie site that also provides public hunting and other low-intensity recreation opportunities. TPWD has been particularly concerned that the rapid pace of residential and commercial developments around Ray Roberts Lake would eventually result in pressure for high intensity recreation development in Culp Branch Park. Such development would result in the loss of a rare and ecologically valuable native prairie site. Approximately 201 acres of the 430-acre Culp Branch Park were acquired as separable recreation lands. The cost of acquisition was shared with the project sponsors, the cities of Dallas and Denton. The area is not leased to the cities.

4. **Proposed Action:** The proposed action is to change the land classification of the 430-acre Culp Branch Park from the current classification of Recreation-Low Use to a Multiple Resource Management, Recreation - Low Intensity and Wildlife Management classification. The basic land allocation of Culp Branch Park is Recreation and will not be changed by this supplement. The supplement will also change the conceptual design drawing of Culp Branch Park currently listed as Sequence VIII-2 in the Ray

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Roberts Lake Master Plan. In making this change, Culp Branch Park will remain allocated to recreation purposes, but only for low intensity recreation uses as defined in paragraph 7-02(c) on page VII-1 of the Master Plan.

5. **Purpose:** The purpose of these changes is to clearly establish that Culp Branch Park, in keeping with TPWD's past, present, and future management goals, is to be managed as a native prairie preserve which is available for low-intensity recreation activities such as hiking, fishing, hunting, and nature study.

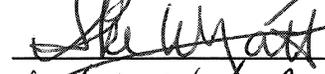
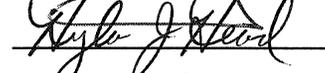
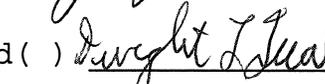
6. **Coordination:** As cost sharing partners in the Ray Roberts Lake Project, the attached letters were sent to the cities of Dallas and Denton requesting their comment on the proposed action. No response was received from Denton, but a positive response was received from the city of Dallas per the attached letter dated April 11, 2001.

7. **NEPA Compliance:** The scope of this supplement does not warrant preparation of an Environmental Assessment because it simply supports the manner in which Culp Branch Park has been managed by TPWD since the land was acquired in the mid-1980's. The proposed change in land use classification is compatible with the basic recreation allocation of Culp Branch Park.

8. **Staffing:** Recommend technical review and concurrence by the following staff elements and approval by Chief, Operations Division.

Encl

  
WILLIAM H. COLLINS  
Chief, Natural Resources  
and Recreation Branch

CESWF-OD-EF	concur (✓) nonconcur ( )		Date <u>23 Jan. 02</u>
CESWF-RE-M	concur (✓) nonconcur ( )		Date <u>23 JAN 02</u>
CESWF-RE	concur (✓) nonconcur ( )		Date <u>1/25/02</u>
CESWF-OD	approved (✓) disapproved ( )		Date <u>1/25/02</u>

Encl

DWIGHT L. QUARLES  
Chief, Operations Division

CF(w/encl) :  
CESWF-RE-M(w/o encl)  
CESWD-CMO-R  
CECW-ON  
CESWF-OD-EF



CITY OF DALLAS

April 11, 2001

Mr. Dwight L. Quarles  
Chief, Operations Division  
Department of the Army  
Forth Worth District Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 17300  
Fort Worth, TX 76102

Dear Mr. Quarles:

Dallas Water Utilities has reviewed your letter of February 26, 2001 regarding the Ray Roberts Lake Master Plan and concurs with the change in land classification from Recreation – Low Use to Multiple Resource Management, Recreation – Low Intensity and Wildlife Management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the change in classification. Please contact Bobby Praytor at 214.670.5209 if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Terrace W. Stewart, P.E.  
Director

**Water Utilities Department**

City Hall • 1500 Marilla, 4AN • Dallas, TX 75201 • 214.670.3146

A city utility providing regional water and wastewater services vital to public health and safety.



November 3, 2000

Mr. Dwight L. Quarles  
Chief, Operations Division  
Department of the Army  
Fort Worth District, Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 17300  
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300

Dear Mr. Quarles:

This letter is to request that the following changes be made to the license agreement between Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) for the Culp Branch Park unit of the Lake Ray Roberts Public Hunting Area:

1. Currently, the Culp Branch unit is authorized to be used by TPWD as an active fish and wildlife management area under section 17 b. of the current license agreement. This license agreement addresses the entire 40,609.74 acres of Public Hunting Area around Lake Ray Roberts, for a term of 5 years. TPWD would like to extend the license on the 430-acre Culp Branch unit from 5 to 25 years. However, we would like to keep the license term on the remaining 40,179.74 acres authorized as Public Hunting Lands at 5 years. I understand that this will require the development of a separate license for the Culp Branch unit, and TPWD is prepared to sign such license.
2. Use the most current land use classification standards to prepare a master plan supplement that would change the current classification of Culp Branch from "Recreation - Low Use" to "Multiple Resource Management - (Recreation - Low Density and Wildlife Management General)."

It is the intent of TPWD to manage Culp Branch as a Native Prairie site that also provides hunting and outdoor recreational opportunities. I understand that the above changes will provide the greatest amount of assurances available, for the conservation of this site. I appreciate the cooperation and attention given to this issue by the COE. If I can be of assistance in executing these changes, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Roy Welch  
Wildlife Division Region II Director

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September 25, 2000

Operations Division

Mr. Roy Welch  
Wildlife Division Region II Director  
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department  
1601 E. Crest  
Waco, Texas 76705

Dear Mr. Welch:

This is in response to your letter dated November 8, 1999, requesting that the Ray Roberts Lake Master Plan be supplemented to change the land use classification of Culp Branch Park from the current classification of "Recreation - Low Use" to a "Wildlife Management" classification. Your intent in making this request is to have a land use classification that better reflects Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's (Department) long-term management goals for Culp Branch Park.

In researching your request, we found that approximately 201 acres of the 430-acre Culp Branch Park were acquired as separable recreation lands. In other words, these acres were needed only for recreational purposes and, conversely, were not needed for flood control or water conservation purposes. As such, these 201 acres must remain allocated for recreation purposes. The remaining 229 acres were acquired primarily for the purposes of flood control and water conservation, and secondarily for recreation. Although we cannot change the basic recreation allocation of Culp Branch Park, I will attempt to set forth the things we could do to facilitate your management goals for the area.

After all project lands were acquired and final contracts signed with the project sponsors (cities of Dallas and Denton) for recreation development at Ray Roberts Lake, Culp Branch Park was classified in the Ray Roberts Lake Master Plan, Design Memorandum No. 8, January 1983, as a Recreation - Low Use Area. Please note that land classification is defined in our regulations as a further refinement of land allocation. The

master plan defines Recreation - Low Use areas as lands acquired for both project operational needs and multiple low-density recreation activities. The master plan specifically states, "Activities which will be suited to this land classification are: primitive camping, nature study, horseback riding, and hiking. These lands may also provide suitable habitat for the propagation and preservation of native species of wildlife." Possibly as an oversight, or for other unknown reasons, the concept drawings of Culp Branch Park (Plate VIII-2 in the Master Plan) are somewhat contradictory to the Recreation - Low Use classification. The drawing depicts fairly intense developments including 60 picnic sites, a group shelter, a playground, and paved roads and parking lots. Certainly, this level of development goes beyond the definition of Recreation - Low Use. However, the drawings must be considered conceptual, and the drawing itself includes a statement that the design intent for Culp Branch Park is that of a minor day-use facility.

Considering the clear intent of the Recreation - Low Use definition which applies to Culp Branch Park, any future attempt to use the area for intensive recreation, such as an amphitheater, golf course, campground or picnic/day use area would require a master plan supplement and an Environmental Assessment. With the Department's long track record of managing Culp Branch Park for the protection of native prairie habitat, we believe that such a change to the Master Plan would have little public or agency support.

Nonetheless, we support your effort to further strengthen the intent of your management goals for Culp Branch Park and would like to recommend the following as a means of doing that:

- a. Change the current wildlife management license, which has only a 5-year term, to a license or lease with a 25-year term. This change could be implemented to include the entire Ray Roberts Public Hunting Area or a separate license/lease agreement could be executed which addresses only Culp Branch Park. We believe the longer term would make a statement that the Department has a long-term interest in the property.

*DNW*  
RR-TPWD Wildlife  
License File

b. Using the most current land use classification standards published in Corps Regulation ER 1130-2-550, the Corps should prepare a master plan supplement, complete with text descriptions and digital aerial maps, which changes the current Recreation - Low Use classification of Culp Branch Park to a Multiple Resource Management classification. The Multiple Resource Management classification would then be further classified to show that the area is to be managed for Recreation - Low Density and Wildlife Management General. We believe that such a classification would be compatible with the basic recreation allocation, but still provide a clear statement about how the area is to be managed. I am enclosing a copy of a portion of our regulation, ER 1130-2-550, which gives full descriptions/definitions of these allocation and classification terms.

We believe the above actions could be accomplished without preparing an Environmental Assessment since the area is already licensed to the Department and the classification change is little more than a change of nomenclature. Of course, we would coordinate the change with Dallas and Denton since they helped purchase the area. If you agree with these recommendations, please indicate so in writing. The process of making these changes could take 90-120 days. Please direct any questions to Mr. Don Wiese, 817-978-2707, [donald.n.wiese@swf.usace.army.mil](mailto:donald.n.wiese@swf.usace.army.mil).

Sincerely,

*RA*  
COLLINS CESWF-OD-R

FICKEL CESWF-EV *mt*

*RA*  
HEAD CESWF-RE

Dwight L. Quarles  
Chief, Operations Division

*RA*  
BARRETT CESWF-OD

QUARLES CESWF-OD

*29/29/06*

Enclosure

Copy Furnished (wo/encl) :

CESWF-OD-LE



January 28, 2000

Douglas Cox  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
1801 N. Mill Street  
Lewisville, TX 75057

RE: Culp Branch Unit

Dear Mr. Cox:

In reviewing the attached letter from Roy Welch of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Wildlife Division, I support their interest in re-designating the Culp Branch Unit at Ray Roberts Lake to a Wildlife Management Area.

As a representative of the State Parks Division, I see greater benefits in the proposed re-designation of the Culp Branch Unit, especially as the Ray Roberts area continues to grow and develop. Based on existing facilities and outdoor experiences made available through the parks we currently operate and maintain on Ray Roberts Lake, the visiting public is afforded great recreational opportunities.

Again, I support the request of Mr. Welch.

Should you have further questions, feel free to contact me at the Regional Office in Waco, Texas at 254-867-7959.

Sincerely,

Randy Bell  
Region 3 State Parks Director

Attachment

Cc: Roy Welch – TPWD  
Kevin Mote - TPWD  
Russell Fishbeck - TPWD

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November 8, 1999

Douglas Cox  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
1801 N. Mill Street  
Lewisville, Texas 75057

Dear Mr. Cox:

I would like to request that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) change the designation of the Culp Branch Unit, in the Lake Ray Roberts Master Plan (Design Memorandum No. 8, Master Plan for Ray Roberts Lake, 1983), from its current status as a "Recreation (Low Use Area)" to "Wildlife Management" area. Culp Branch is an important remnant of native tallgrass prairie due to its size, location, and diversity of native flora. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is willing to dedicate resources necessary for the long term conservation and improvement of the area as a native prairie site. However, recent attempts by local entities to develop Culp Branch into a golf course, religious amphitheater, etc. creates a somewhat uncertain future for this tract of land. In order for TPWD to commit the needed resources to Culp Branch, we believe additional measures are needed to insure its future. I believe that the requested designation change will help both TPWD and the COE to conserve a portion of a rapidly diminishing natural resource. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact myself @ (254) 867-7970 or Kevin Mote @ (940) 637-2763. I look forward to hearing from you concerning the progress toward this goal.

Sincerely,

Roy Welch  
Region II Director  
1601 E. Crest  
Waco, Texas 76705

kdm

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