

Cullman County Commission

JAMES D. GRAVES
Chairman

DAN WILLINGHAM
County Attorney



WAYNE WILLINGHAM
Associate Commissioner

DOUG WILLIAMS
Associate Commissioner

October 26, 2009

The Honorable Max A. Townson
City of Cullman
City Hall
204 Second Avenue NE
P.O. Box 278
Cullman, Alabama 35056-0278

Dear Mayor Townson:

Pursuant to your October 8, 2009 letter and Water Purchase Agreement submitted to the Cullman County Commission and after much study, we appreciate this opportunity to formally propose to you a regional water supply and treatment solution for a stronger working relationship with the City in meeting water needs across Cullman County.

Because the County as a whole is at a critical juncture in determining and acting in the most timely and judicious ways to increase both our water supply and water treatment facilities, the time is upon us to take advantage of this opportunity to structure operations for twenty-first century regional cooperation.

As stated in the "Water Supply and Treatment Master Plan", prepared for the City of Cullman Utilities Board, the regional goal is to increase treated water capacity from 24 Million Gallons Daily (MGD) to 33 MGD in a mere two to three years, by 2012. As Commissioners for Cullman County, the largest consumer of treated water purchasing 47 percent of your treated water in the 2008-09 fiscal year, we look forward to discussing with you the merits of the best solutions to meet county-wide water needs.

In reviewing the Utilities Board Plan, for Duck River it outlines:

- purchasing approximately 1,200 acres of land for reservoir construction;
- constructing a dam on Duck River;
- necessitating many years for a reservoir to then fill with water;
- fulfilling mandated testing of one year of the new reservoir's water supply quality before use is allowed; and,
- requiring either a new Water Treatment Plant construction and/or significant upgrades at your Catoma Water Treatment Plant to enable the existing plant to handle treatment of increased water capacity.

Of the 1,200 acres required for the reservoir, the County will not support the taking of private property by condemnation when there are viable options. Also, the Duck River Reservoir and Water Treatment Plan requires from seven (7) years to possibly nine (9)

years before it is able to supply untreated water and requires a greater sum than an initial \$60 million dam/reservoir bond to then treat the new water supply.

As purchasers of water from you, we must be concerned about the cost of water supply and treatment because that directly affects the rates we must charge.

Please find some merits our research has revealed regarding Smith Lake water supply and treatment listed below.

- Accessing water from the already existing, quality water source at Smith Lake is a reliable and expeditious water source that saves years in construction and saves significant costs for all of our constituents who are in dire need of a water supply.
- Utilizing Smith Lake water enables almost immediate work on increasing treatment capacity.
- Also and importantly, to better meet updated Safe Drinking Water Act standards, a Smith Lake treatment plant located where there is the greatest need for increased treated water, in the southern area of the county, decreases the time the water is in the system to better maintain water quality.

We strongly feel it is time to sincerely negotiate development of a new, Regional Water Board and that a regional approach would be to the greater benefit of the City, County, and all purchasers and consumers. We look forward to discussing with you the attached six-point proposal for creation of a Regional Water Board comprised of all wholesale water purchasers who determine to participate.

May we have a follow-up meeting with you on Monday, November 9, at 11:30 AM to discuss this proposal for regional cooperation? We look forward to working with you to meet the November 23, 2009, deadline you set for coming to an Agreement.

Sincerely,



Doug Williams
Commissioner



Wayne Willingham
Commissioner

CC: Hon. Commission Chairman James Graves
Hon. Council President Garlan E. Gudger, Jr.
Hon. President Pro-Tem Jenny Folsom
Hon. Andy Page
Hon. John W. Cook
Hon. Clint Hollingsworth

Attachment: 6 Point Regional Water Board Proposal