

# Marvin Nichols Q&A

**Why are IP employees opposed to Marvin Nichols as a water supply strategy contained in the Texas water plan?** Texas Parks and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the Texas Forest Service reports show the loss of agricultural land from both actual reservoir construction and required habitat mitigation would be, at a minimum 225,000 acres and could actually be as high as 986,000 acres, depending on the mitigation management option. Permanent removal of this vast amount of forestland would prove detrimental to the forest and paper products industry and severely hamstringing the northeast Texas economy. It would also deprive private land ownership of this large land mass.

**Do you agree with Commentary included in the “Economic, Fiscal, and Developmental Impacts of the Proposed Marvin Nichols Reservoir Project” which asserts that the Texas Forest Service report is flawed and paper and forestry jobs would not be lost by the Marvin Nichols reservoir.** No. Their reports disregard potential impacts related to: Mitigation & Forest and Paper Product Industry Jobs. In fact, the Texas Forest Service commentary states, “Even if the reservoir offers other economic benefits, it does not mean that the job and earnings lost in the forest sector can be ignored. Different jobs require different skills. Transition between jobs takes time and effort. Not everyone can make such a transition successfully. Also, earnings from a logger or a mill operator are substantially higher than that of a reservoir construction worker.” In addition, the jobs we are trying to protect are real jobs, which are held by real people living in our community. The projections made by the economic report make assumptions regarding hypothetical new jobs heavily relying on temporary construction workers, many of which would likely come from outside the Northeast Texas area. Clearly this issue does nothing more than serve Dallas’ urban agenda while refusing to hear the real economic impacts to rural North East Texans.

**Isn’t the Marvin Nichols reservoir, as part of the water strategy contained in the Texas water plan, the only viable option to the residents of Dallas/Ft. Worth area to obtain water?** No. There are many viable options including conservation. Use of existing reservoirs including Lake Texoma & Toledo Bend could be tapped for substantial water supply and lake levels at Wright Patman could be raised to help Dallas residents provide for future water needs. Certainly water needs throughout the state of Texas are indeed significant and must be addressed. However, the potential negative economic and environmental impacts associated with the proposed Marvin Nichols Reservoir are too great to warrant further study.

**What is mitigation?** A requirement to set aside additional lands due to the loss of habitat under the Clean Water Act. This land would set aside and permanently taken out of production.

**If the mitigation is only 1.54 to 1 then why remain opposed to Marvin Nichols reservoir?** The history of mitigation requirements for Texas reservoirs shows a clear trend of increasing strict enforcement of the mitigation requirements. In fact, review of mitigation guidelines and previous governmental reports allude to mitigation much greater than 1.45 to 1. That mitigation ratio (1.54 to 1) was the requirement for a lake impounded in West Texas which had little if any priority bottomland hardwoods. There were only 6,000 acres of priority bottomland hardwood acreage in nearby Cooper Reservoir yet it required 35,000 acres in mitigation, a ratio of almost 6 to 1. And, even if it were 1.54 to 1, that would be over 100,000 acres of land required for mitigation in addition to the approximately 70,000 acres taken for the lake, totaling a loss of 170,000 acres of land from production and private land ownership.

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**Aren't there ample forestlands throughout Northeast Texas and Southwest Arkansas to satisfy the manufacturing sectors?** While there are various forestlands in our region, the reservoir site consists of mostly bottomland hardwood and upland hardwood forests. Federal and state laws and regulations dictate that lost habitats have to be compensated with lands of similar types. As proponents of sustainable forestry, we remain opposed to taking more than 250,000 acres of forestland permanently out of production.

**Why specifically is International Paper concerned by a reservoir that won't be built until 20 years from now?** We remain a strong proponent of Sustainable Forestry. This proposal would remove a significant amount of renewable resources. While we can't predict the future, we know International Paper and the Texarkana Mill's success is guided by the economy, market conditions, being better than our competition and controlling costs. The potential loss of wood fiber could cripple ours and other forest industries ability to remain competitive.

**What can we do to eliminate Marvin Nichols as part of the water supply strategy contained in the Texas water plan?** Increasing public awareness is an important first step to eliminate the Marvin Nichols proposal. In addition, acting on that information is crucial. Continue to write, call or fax the Governor, Lt. Governor and House and Senate members of the Natural Resources Committees. Additionally, prepare letters to the editor and forward to Amanda for sending to papers across the state.

**According to many proponents of the reservoir any lost jobs that result from the reservoir could be replaced with reservoir building/construction jobs. Won't that offset your dire predictions?** No. Even if the reservoir offers other economic benefits, it does not mean that the job and earnings lost in the forest sector can be ignored. Different jobs require different skills. Transition between jobs takes time and effort. Not everyone can make such a transition successfully. Also, earnings from a logger or a mill operator are substantially higher than that of a temporary reservoir construction worker. The men and women employed by the forest and paper products industry have a significant economic impact in northeast Texas and are making every effort to remain competitive and make decisions (like opposing Marvin Nichols Reservoir) that are in the best interest of the paper and forestry products industry, area paper mills, the overall paper and forest products industry workforce and the community. Also, many of these jobs would require temporary construction workers with previous experience, which would likely mean a majority of these workers would come from outside the Northeast Texas area and leave when the construction work is completed. The jobs, which would be lost, are real and permanent jobs held by real people in our community who work, live and pay taxes in our community. This issue does nothing more than serve Dallas' urban agenda while refusing to hear the real economic impacts to rural North East Texans.

**Wouldn't Marvin Nichols reservoir be good for tourism?** While there are some possible tourism benefits related to the proposed reservoir the potential economic negative impact to other industries in Northeast Texas is so great that Marvin Nichols should no longer be considered an option.