

Current LWV-Texas Position on Water

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D. WATER - 1971, 1974, 1978

The League of Women Voters of Texas supports long-range state water planning that:

- takes into consideration its social, economic, environmental, and land use implications
- provides for development of adequate water supplies by ecologically and financially sound means
- emphasizes conservation and reuse of water
- is based on increased research concerning wise and efficient use of the state's land and water resources
- affords protection for the land and for fragile ecosystems

The League of Women Voters of Texas supports measures for the protection, conservation, and development of the groundwater resources of the state as an integral part of the comprehensive state water plan, and groundwater management that would achieve the following objectives:

- maintain groundwater quality by preventing harmful contamination of aquifers
- assure the long-term productivity of the state's groundwater resources and availability of groundwater supplies
- minimize adverse effects of groundwater withdrawals, including land subsidence and reduction of spring flows

Water resources planning should also include:

- detailed information concerning:
 - the hydraulic characteristics and recharge of the state's aquifers
 - quantities, locations, and trends of groundwater withdrawals
 - measures that could conserve and extend existing supplies
 - current and projected costs of ground water and alternative surface water supplies
 - potential conjunctive use of ground water and surface water
- management options developed specifically for each area of the state where ground water is a significant resource
- full public consideration of groundwater management options
- recommendations of measures to be taken by the state, by political subdivisions of the state, and by the private sector to assure wise management of the state's groundwater resources
- coordination of state plans for groundwater management with relevant policies and programs of the federal government and of other states.

Adequate funds should be appropriated for planning and for management of the state's groundwater resources.

Explanation: Water

In the 1950s and 1960s, LWVUS positions were reached on water conservation and development and on abatement of water pollution. These positions, as well as national and state positions in other natural resource areas -- especially land use -- are relevant to action on Texas water issues.

A study of state water planning was adopted by the 1970 Convention. Impetus for the study was the 1968 Texas Water Plan, and the 1969 election in which a \$3.5 billion bond program to begin implementation of the plan was narrowly defeated. The plan proposed importation of out-of-state water to West and South

Texas via two large canal systems. The League consensus disagreed with that aspect of the plan, stating that additional water supplies should be developed in an ecologically sound manner from within the state, and that more efficient use should be made of existing water supplies.

The League took another look at the Texas Water Plan in 1974, following publication of a Corps of Engineers analysis of a proposal for importation of water from the Mississippi River. This consensus reaffirmed our 1971 positions.

The 1977 Convention deleted the position statement that additional water supplies should come from within the state. Delegates continued to oppose massive water transfer projects but felt that opposition should be based on other League positions. The 1977 Convention also adopted a study of groundwater management and protection, and consensus was reached in November, 1978.