

The reservoir has destroyed 10,000 acres of prime wildlife habitat, in fact, some of the finest in the Red River Valley.

White tail deer, squirrel, quail, raccoon, fox, and other excellent game animals and birds are being forced from one of the last remaining large areas of natural habitat in this area of the Red River Valley.

While I realize that this is not an unusual occurrence as America grows and develops, H.R. 7699 offers what I believe to be a reasonable and inexpensive solution to this particular problem.

H.R. 7699, which I am asking that you give favorable consideration, would modify the Pat Mayse Dam and Reservoir project to provide for the acquisition of approximately 750 acres of privately owned lands to facilitate the establishment of a near-10,000-acre wildlife refuge and game management area adjacent to the Mayse Reservoir.

This situation is unique, as was the land acquisition for the Mayse Reservoir—in which more than two-thirds of the land needed for its construction was already owned by the Government and was surplus as a result of the closing of Camp Maxey after World War II. The major portion of the land needed for this wildlife refuge is Government owned, is not being utilized and is, in fact, of an excess nature.

Only 750 acres of privately owned land is needed to block out an excellent wildlife refuge and game management area. This is in four small blocks inside the perimeter of the Government-owned land. Obviously, having privately owned land inside the refuge area would be conducive to effective game management practice and safety.

If this 750 acres should not be acquired now, and the wildlife refuge not be designated, the result will almost surely be the turning of this entire area over to private development. Priceless wildlife habitat then would be lost forever to Red River Valley.

The 750 acres requested in H.R. 7699 is largely pasture and timbered land. There are no homes or other major improvements located on this land, and no great inconvenience would be imposed upon its owners.

Both the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Departments have determined the need for acquisition of a wildlife management and public hunting area located adjacent to the reservoir site.

The resultant wildlife management area would compensate for wildlife losses resulting from the Mayse Reservoir project and, in addition, would provide an enhancement of about 1,800 man-days of big game hunting, 5,400 man-days of upland game hunting, and 1,600 man-days of waterfowl hunting.

The Red River Valley, like many other rural areas of our Nation, is turning to industry. The city of Paris, which is only 12 miles from the Mayse Reservoir, has in recent years added such major industries as Campbell Soup Co., Westinghouse, and Babcock & Wilcox.

Ironically, as population expands, areas of recreation for the people diminish. Such is the case in northeast Texas—and your favorable consideration of H.R. 7699 would remedy this disturbing trend with the creation of a near 10,000-acre wildlife refuge and game management area in northeast Texas.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the members of this fine committee for considering my bill so promptly after receiving the comments of the Department of the Army.

Thank you.