



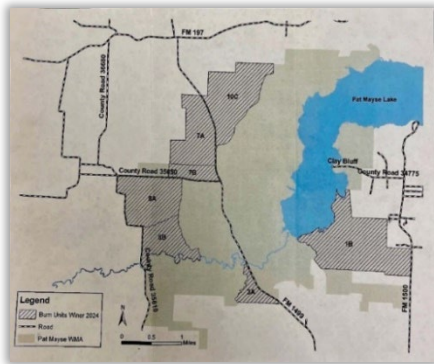
State Representative  
**Gary VanDeaver**  
 January 2024 E-Newsletter



**88th Legislature Report - House District 1**  
**Bowie | Cass | Lamar | Red River | Morris**

**Local & Legislative Updates**

**TexAmericas awarded \$1.5 million grant.** In January, the governor's office announced that TexAmericas Center will receive \$1.5 million for the Red River Army Depot – Enhanced Logistics Capabilities. These funds are just a part of the state's program to provide grants for infrastructure in military communities that may be impacted by any future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. Five other cities and counties also received part of the overall \$15.4 million in grant funding to military communities. According to Mr. Scott Norton, CEO of TexAmericas, the funding will be used to enhance the rail capabilities on their campuses.  
**Congratulations!**



**REMINDER: TPWD and prescribed burns.** The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) has scheduled a prescribed burn for the Pat Mayse Wildlife Management Area (WMA) between January and March 2024. The area on this map with the horizontal markings is the area of the prescribed burns. Landowners adjacent to these areas have been notified that burns are scheduled from January to March 2024. Prior to any fires actually taking place, the TPWD will notify city and county emergency services, local area fire departments and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). For more information see: [http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/wildland\\_fire\\_management/](http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/wildland_fire_management/).

**Marvin Nichols Reservoir (MNR) feasibility study.** The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) accepted comments about the impact of the proposed MNR until December 1, 2023, and it is required to submit its findings to the state leadership and legislature no later than January 5, 2025. The TWDB recently informed my office that its staff is now reviewing the submitted material and will post a draft report on their website as a part of the public comment phase of the study. I appreciate everyone who took the time to submit their comments and concerns about MNR to the TWDB, but now is not the time to take your "foot off the accelerator." As soon as the draft report is posted, I encourage everyone to carefully review it to submit additional comments about the report. As more details become available from the TWDB, my office will make sure to keep you informed.

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***Increases in homeowner's insurance rates.*** Recently, HD 1 constituents have talked to me and called my offices with concerns over increased rates for their homeowner's insurance policies. People are upset and concerned over the rate increase notices they are receiving from their insurance providers. I asked my staff to contact the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) for an explanation about these increases. The TDI said that the property and casualty insurers it regulates are required to file their rates for review. Like many other states, Texas is a "file-and-use state," which means that once an insurer files its rates, it can use them on their effective date. State law requires that rates:

- Be adequate.
- Not be excessive resulting in unreasonably high long-term profits compared to the coverage provided.
- Be based on sound actuarial principles.
- Be reasonably related to all costs (expected losses and expenses).
- Not be based on the insured's race, creed, color, ethnicity or national origin.

If the filed rates do not meet these standards, TDI notifies the insurer. If the insurer does not change, withdraw or provide better supporting information for the filing, TDI will take action to disapprove it. More information on the review process and tips to help you save on your insurance rates can be found on TDI's website:

<https://www.tdi.texas.gov/>.

***TWDB & the new Texas Water Fund.*** Last year, the legislature and voters approved the creation of the new Texas Water Fund (TWF) that will help our growing state ensure that all Texans have the water they need. With voter approval in November 2023 and funding provided by the legislature last year, the TWF is charged with:

- Water infrastructure projects, prioritized by risk or need, for rural political subdivisions and municipalities with a population of less than 150,000;
- Projects for which all required state or federal permitting has been substantially completed;
- Statewide water public awareness program;
- Water conservation strategies; and
- Water loss mitigation projects.

The TWDB is seeking stakeholder input via three surveys:

- [Texas Water Fund Survey 1: Financial Assistance for Water Infrastructure Projects](#)
- [Texas Water Fund Survey 2: New Water Supply Fund for Texas](#)
- [Texas Water Fund Survey 3: Statewide Water Public Awareness Program](#)

Written feedback may also be submitted to [TexasWaterFund@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:TexasWaterFund@twdb.texas.gov). Information provided in the surveys or submitted via email is requested by **April 30**. The TWDB will also provide information at upcoming [financial assistance workshops](#) around the state, as well as host a stakeholder meeting in Austin in March and a Board meeting in Lubbock in April. See the [Proposition 6 and Texas Water Fund Frequently Asked Questions and Implementation Timeline](#) for details as they become available.

**Secretary of State Nelson tours the state.** The Honorable Jane Nelson, Secretary of State, has been touring the state to remind Texans of key information relating to registering and voting in upcoming elections this year. Not only is 2024 a presidential election year, but there will also be elections for the state legislature, mayors, city councils, school boards and other local governmental bodies. Secretary Nelson noted that Texas requires a photo ID before a person can register to vote. There are seven approved forms of photo ID Texans can use to vote in person:

- Texas Driver License;
- Texas Personal Identification Card;
- Passport;
- Texas Handgun License;
- Military Identification Card;
- Citizenship Certificate; or
- Texas Election Identification Certificate.

Secretary Nelson has also touted her office's website of [VoteTexas.gov](https://VoteTexas.gov), which is the state's official website from with all the voting information a person needs. She reminded Texans of these important dates:

- February 5 is the last day to register in time for the primary election, which is March 5;
- February 23 is the last day to apply for a ballot by mail; and
- Early voting runs from February 20 through March 1.

For more information on ID requirements and voting deadlines, please either visit [VoteTexas.gov](https://VoteTexas.gov) for official information or call 1-800-252-VOTE.

### Contact Information

**My office is here to help.** I thank each of you for letting me serve you as your state representative. Please contact either the District or the Capitol office if there is anything you think we can do to help you. Follow me on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more updates!

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