

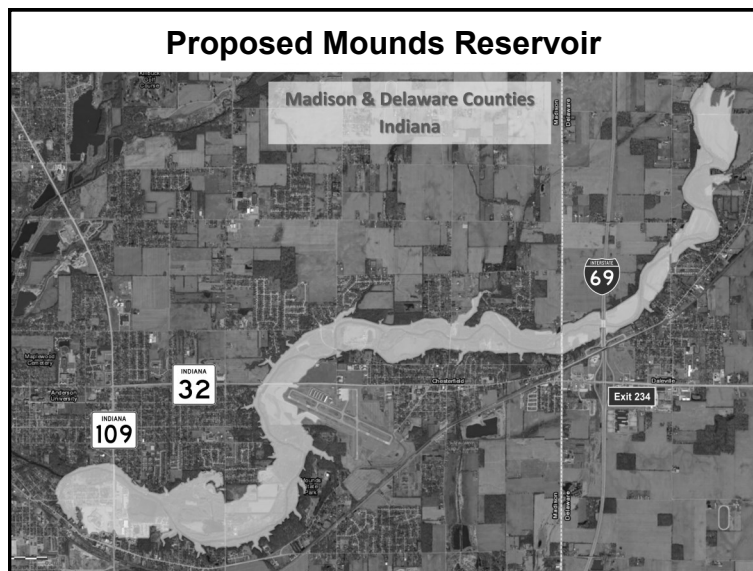
Tell Your Council & Commission Members: Don't Dam It!

The Mounds Reservoir project began as an idea proposed during the 2010 Madison County Leadership Academy. The Anderson/Madison County Corporation for Economic Development (CED) then contracted a Phase I feasibility study conducted by DLZ Engineering of Indianapolis. The concept is to dam the White River to construct a 2,100 acre reservoir from Madison into Delaware County.

This began as an idea centered around economic development (bringing in more tourism dollars from recreational activities), which was stated in the December 8, 2011, Phase I feasibility study conducted by DLZ. Later, the Anderson CED began touting the need for water as a justification for building the reservoir. Let's take a look at the facts:

This is a want, not a need.

We do not need the water, plain and simple. The DLZ feasibility study clearly states the wish to have Indianapolis-based Citizens Water purchase the water from the proposed Mounds Reservoir. However, in their September 2, 2014, presentation to the Indiana General Assembly Interim Study Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Telecommunications, Citizens Water clearly told state legislators that they had more than enough local water resources to develop in order to supply water to their customers for the next 25+ years. Citizens Water also said that these local resources would be far cheaper to their customers than the development of a new reservoir.



Regional "Water Shortages" vs. Regional "Water Capacity Shortages"

Supporters of the proposed Mounds Reservoir argue that the reservoir is needed to respond to a regional "water shortage". However, there is a critical difference between a "water shortage" - a physical lack of fluid water - versus a "water-capacity shortage", i.e., an inadequate number of water production and treatment facilities. The Indiana Chamber of Commerce water study released in August 2014 points to a water-capacity shortage, and a reservoir is not what is needed to solve that problem.

How much would it cost?

The CED has said that the construction of the reservoir will cost \$400 million. However, this is simply the cost to construct the actual reservoir. Here are just a few of the things that are not being included:

- The cost of relocating all the utility infrastructure in the reservoir's footprint, which will undoubtedly be paid for by utility ratepayers.
- The cost of rebuilding existing bridges and/or building new bridges.
- The cost of relocating people and businesses that are in the reservoir's footprint.
- The cost of building new recreational facilities (after destroying the existing ones).
- The cost of environmental cleanup that will have to be done before constructing the reservoir (estimated to be at least \$35 million in the Phase II study conducted by SESCO group).

Who pays?

Not surprisingly, this is not being made clear. The Indiana Finance Authority has granted \$650,000 of our tax dollars to the Anderson CED for the Phase II study, so taxpayers have already paid more than half a million dollars just to study this project. The information available suggests that the CED is hoping to receive grants and loans to pay for the construction, and that the CED hopes that Citizens Water customers will pay those loans off by purchasing the water once the reservoir is constructed. However, Citizens Water has stated no need or desire to purchase this water. There do not seem to be any other potential funders if Citizens Water refuses. The CED has been denied funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. If the reservoir is built and nobody buys the water, there is no doubt that as taxpayers, we will be left holding the bag.

Eminent Domain

If this project comes to fruition, over 400 families (and many businesses and places of worship) will lose their homes to the reservoir. These properties would unequivocally be taken through eminent domain, with no recourse for the affected families, businesses, and communities.

What else will be lost?

If this reservoir is constructed, we will lose 940 acres of an incredibly unique natural environment created by ancient glacial deposits. These fen lands include large portions of Mounds State Park and are home to many rare plant and animal species (including endangered species like the Indiana bat). This would also be the first State Nature Preserve to be destroyed, setting an awful precedent that could lead to a similar fate for other State Nature Preserves. These are public lands - yours and mine - that provide large expanses of forest in one of the most tree-starved areas of Indiana. The environmental loss that would be caused by this project has caused Hoosier Environmental Council, Heart of the River, and the Indiana Forest Alliance to oppose this project.



The construction of the proposed reservoir would also entail the destruction of known archeological sites, as well as the permanent loss of unknown sites. The 2,000 year old Anderson Mounds are listed in the National Register and are of immeasurable importance to recognizing the cultural heritage of central Indiana. Much of the Anderson Mounds would be destroyed by this reservoir, causing the members of the Indiana Archaeology Council to oppose this project.

There is a possibility that the reservoir, if constructed, won't hold water.

Hydrogeologist Tony Fleming, LPG has 25 years of experience in the geology and groundwater of Indiana. He worked at the Indiana Geological Survey and is an acknowledged expert on the geology and hydrogeology of natural areas. Because of the unique geology of the area, Mr. Fleming has expressed concern that there will be water leakage through the sides of the reservoir into sand and gravel. This concern is supported by the experience in the 1870s when there was a canal built along the White River between Daleville and Anderson. The canal was eventually abandoned because it would not hold water.

There is an alternative: the Mounds Greenway.

If this is truly about economic development, there is a cheaper, less damaging alternative. Hoosier Environmental Council, in conjunction with residents of both Anderson and Muncie, developed a plan that will provide even more recreational opportunities to the region at a fraction of the cost, while maintaining the environmental and archeological integrity of Mounds State Park. The Mounds Greenway is estimated to cost \$15 - \$40 million (as opposed to the reservoir's construction cost of \$400 million) and will protect the free-flowing West Fork White River between Anderson and Muncie by establishing a greenway along both shorelines of the river. The Mounds Greenway will maintain existing natural areas and historic sites along the river, and provide recreational opportunities consisting of trails, river access points, picnic areas, and other outdoor amenities. A major feature of the Mounds Greenway will be a hiking/biking trail that runs the entire length of the greenway from Anderson to Muncie.

Take Action Now!

The next step in the proposed Mounds Reservoir project is to form a multi-county commission, whose stated purpose is to make Mounds Reservoir a reality. Stopping the formation of the commission now will stop the project. Contact your County Commissioners, your County Councilors, and your Town Councilors. **Tell them you don't want them to dam the White River, and that you are opposed to the formation of a Mounds Lake Commission!**

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For more information and to find out how to get more involved, check out:

Heart of the River: moundslakereservoir.org

Indiana Forest Alliance: indianaforestalliance.org

(look at the Fall 2014 newsletter: resources>newsletters>past issues>Fall 2014)

Hoosier Environmental Council: www.moundsgreenway.org

Anderson/Madison County Corporation for Economic Development: moundslake.com