

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SJRA Responds to Lawsuit Regarding Hurricane Harvey Flooding**

The board and entire staff of the San Jacinto River Authority are deeply saddened by the losses caused by Hurricane Harvey, and we are equally deeply concerned for our friends and neighbors who have suffered. Our kindest and most sincere thoughts and prayers are with all of them during this extremely difficult time.

We are aware a lawsuit has been filed on behalf of certain individuals who, like so many of us in this area and throughout Southeast Texas experienced flooding. We will review the lawsuit thoroughly and respond accordingly, including maintaining our responsibility to be careful stewards of the public funds entrusted to us to complete our work on behalf of our fellow Texans. At this point, however, the premise of the lawsuit is obviously false.

While we understand the frustration and confusion many people are experiencing as a result of this natural disaster, we also know that allegations in lawsuits are not facts but simply what a lawyer chooses to claim. Despite the misinformation and speculation that has been circulated in the media, in the pending lawsuit, and elsewhere, the actual facts are that the Authority's operation of the Lake Conroe dam was in accordance with both the law and a carefully prepared engineering plan that, among other things actually has the effect of reducing downstream peak flow as water passes through the lake from the San Jacinto River. In fact, these same claims were litigated after the October 1994 storm, a case in which the Authority was successful in having the suit dismissed shortly after it was filed.

The state's water supply reservoirs, like Lake Conroe, are not designed for flood control purposes but most do provide some reduction or buffering of potentially flooding flows as Lake Conroe does and did in this storm. The effects of Hurricane Harvey are appropriately referred to as catastrophic as that is exactly what Hurricane Harvey was; a natural catastrophe. The flooding of which those suing are complaining about, however, was neither caused nor made worse by the SJRA's operation of the Lake Conroe dam.

While, like any good Texan, we accept responsibility and address matters where we may be at fault, we also feel we need to set the record straight when false information is being circulated. Ultimately, we consider it most unfortunate that the public must bear the significant cost of baseless litigation such as the lawsuit recently filed against the Authority.