



Proposed reservoir would displace Washington Parish history, homes

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Mike Ross / Northshore Bureau Chief

BOGALUSA -- Seventy-four-year-old Pete Pittman took a look at a log cabin built by his grandfather in 1886 and wondered what would become of it if a proposed reservoir in Washington Parish is built on the land where the cabin, along with his family home, resides.



WWL-TV

Pete Pittman stands in front of his family' log cabin, built in 1886.

A Washington Parish commission voted unanimously to approve the reservoir, which they said would displace 19 families, including the Pittmans.

“I’d say about half of my mother’s brothers and sisters were born here,” said Pittman. “Whenever the reservoir comes, a lot of our history is gonna be gone.”

The plan calls for a 4,600-acre reservoir between Franklinton and Bogalusa, which will provide a new source of drinking water for the area.

It still needs an okay from the Army Corps of Engineers, which said it would hold public hearings on the matter.

“We’re looking into the future,” said Bill Jenkins, a member of the reservoir commission. “Washington Parish needs something to kind of spur its economy along a little bit. We believe the benefits of a reservoir will help the area grow.”

Pittman says his family is very distressed that their meeting place would end up under water.

He and other Washington parish residents said they are also concerned about a couple of nearby graveyards, some of which date back to the 1800s.

“We’re real sensitive to that,” said Jenkins. “We gotta make sure we do the right thing, cause it’s very important.”

Pittman and his friends and relatives said they intend to continue to fight the project.

Online at: <http://www.wwltv.com/local/stories/WWL010605reservoir.835f51c2.html>