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**LCRA RECEIVES PEACEMAKER AWARD
FOR HIGHLAND LAKES PLAN PROCESS**

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AUSTIN – The Dispute Resolution Center of Travis County has presented its Peacemaker award to the LCRA for spearheading a collaborative process in which competing users of Lake Travis agreed to a plan to make the popular lake safer and more enjoyable.

The LCRA received the award at the Center’s recent 8th Annual Peacemaker Award Ceremony in Austin. The Center, which works to promote peaceful resolutions to issues that might otherwise end up in court or result in violence, honored the LCRA for its nearly yearlong process in which 22 stakeholders formed a consensus on a recreational management plan for Lake Travis.

“When we started this process, a lot of people were skeptical that we could come up with a consensus among the nearly two dozens groups involved,” said Donna Brasher, executive manager of LCRA's Community Services department. "While this award went to the LCRA, all the groups participating deserve credit in solving issues so we can all continue to enjoy the lake while also improving safety.”

Kris Donley, executive director of the Dispute Resolution Center, said the LCRA was recognized for bringing together competing groups and helping come up with a plan to resolve potentially controversial issues of placing restrictions on lake use.

“It just shows the overall support of the endeavor was due to the collaborative problem-solving process that was adopted,” she said.

The process started in the summer of 1999 when the LCRA surveyed more than 700 lake users and residents to identify problems at the lake, including safety, noise and congestion. After some lake users threatened lawsuits in response to an initial proposal to place limits on personal watercraft and high-performance boats, the LCRA hired neutral facilitators and created the broad-based committee. Committee members included

organized groups of property owners, boaters, boat and marina businesses, recreational users and those concerned with the environment and the protection of Lake Travis.

The committee met for three hours each week for 11 weeks, and agreed unanimously to 33 recommendations. The recommendations included: establishing watercraft noise guidelines; implementing a “no wake zone” within 50 feet of the shoreline, structures and swimmers; requiring private dock owners to comply with dock safety standards; and increasing law enforcement.

The LCRA hired independent mediators to manage the process, recognizing that the LCRA, in its role of managing the use of Lake Travis, could not serve as a neutral facilitator, said Suzanne Zarling, manager of Water Resource Protection for the LCRA.

“The actions approved by the stakeholders were much better than what we originally proposed,” said Zarling, who organized the committee.

The LCRA’s Board of Directors adopted the plan in January 2000. The Board later adopted virtually the same recommendations at the other Highland Lakes under its jurisdiction: Buchanan, Inks, LBJ and Marble Falls.

The Dispute Resolution Center is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides and promotes accessible, high-quality dispute resolution services for all people in the Travis County area. The LCRA, a conservation and reclamation district operating with no taxing authority, manages the Highland Lakes and the Colorado River system.