



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2014**

## **Chairmen Guillen, King Host Hearing on Falcon Lake Bass Population**

**AUSTIN** – On May 16th, State Representative Ryan Guillen (D- District 31) and State Representative Tracy King (D- District 80) will be jointly hosting a field hearing in Zapata to discuss issues related to the declining bass population in Falcon Lake.

Falcon Lake Reservoir, located in Starr and Zapata counties, has had a historically strong largemouth bass population and has received global recognition as a prime fishing location for the species. However, in recent years the bass population in Falcon Lake has declined. The issue was first brought to light by local fishermen, who have attributed blame to the overpopulation of alligator gar in the lake. Since then, legislators have been working with the Falcon Lake community and the Parks and Wildlife Commission to identify solutions to the issue. The purpose of the field hearing is to provide a forum for expert and public input in an effort to examine what the state can do to replenish the bass population.

The hearing will feature invited testimony from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Inland Fisheries Division, including Director Dr. Gary Saul, Chief of Management and Research Dave Terre, and Chief of Information and Regulations Ken Kurzawski. The hearing is also open to the public for oral and written testimony. Members of the committee and guests will meet for the hearing at the Zapata Technical and Advanced Education Center, room 128, 605 North U.S. Highway 83 at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, May 16th.

"Helping restore the bass population to Falcon Lake is a top priority," commented Guillen, Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Recreation & Tourism. "By opening a working dialogue between the fishermen, local authorities, and the TPWD Inland Fisheries Division, we hope to make further progress toward a coordinated response to this crisis."

"The bass depletion in Falcon Lake is a serious concern," said Representative Tracy O. King, Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture & Livestock. "I want to thank the committee for taking the time to visit the area and gain a better understanding for the importance of finding solutions to improve the bass population at the lake."

This event will be the Committee on Culture, Recreation, and Tourism's second field hearing this year. Chairman Guillen has planned a series of field hearings in an effort to address pressing issues in Texas that fall under the committee's charge.

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