

**RECEIVED**

**Date: August 25, 2025**

**AUG 27 2025**

**To:**

**PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION**

**Kentucky Public Service Commission**

**211 Sower Boulevard**

**P.O. Box 615**

**Frankfort, KY 40602-0615**

**RE: Case No. 2025-00259 – Investigation into the Potential Expansion or Replacement of the Bullock Pen Water District Water Treatment Plant**

**Dear Commissioners,**

**My name is Michelle Ballard, and my husband, Thomas, and I are homeowners on Bullock Pen Lake. We chose to make our home here because of the lake — for the view that centers our daily life, the peace it brings, and the opportunity to live close to nature.**

**When we moved here in 2020, one of the first things we did was refinish our dock — not just as a home project, but as an investment in the life we imagined here: morning coffee on the water, paddling our kayaks through quiet coves, and watching the sun set from our own shoreline. As a photographer, the lake has become my canvas. I've captured herons in flight, beavers at work, and the subtle seasonal changes reflected in its waters. This isn't just where we live — it's our sanctuary, and we're not alone in feeling that way.**

**That is why I am deeply concerned about the Bullock Pen Water District's proposed water treatment plant expansion or replacement, particularly if it involves substantial drawdowns of the lake. If there is a better, more economical way to meet water supply needs — such as maintaining existing purchasing agreements or upgrading current systems without overburdening the lake — those options should be fully explored before moving forward.**

**Impacts on Homeowners and the Community**

- **Property Values and Stability:** Many lakefront and nearby homeowners have invested significant savings here, with the expectation of stable water levels and year-round access. Prolonged low levels will diminish property appeal, reduce tax base, and potentially cause financial hardship for families counting on home equity.

- **Loss of Dock Access and Use:** Even moderate drawdowns could render docks unusable for weeks or months, cutting off boating, kayaking, and swimming. For many of us, those activities are central to why we chose to live here.
- **Erosion of Quality of Life:** The ability to step onto our docks, enjoy the view, and access the water sustains mental well-being and community spirit. These are values that cannot be easily measured but are deeply felt.

#### **Recreational and Cultural Impact**

- **Fishing and Seasonal Drawdowns:** Lowering the lake during peak fishing season would disrupt spawning areas and reduce fish populations, harming both casual anglers and organized events.
- **Community Connection:** The lake hosts informal gatherings, seasonal celebrations, and shared experiences that strengthen our sense of belonging. Water level instability threatens these traditions.

#### **Environmental and Wildlife Concerns**

- **Shoreline and Habitat Loss:** Lower levels expose critical nesting and feeding areas used by blue and green herons, beavers, amphibians, and other wildlife I've spent years photographing.
- **Aquatic Ecosystem Health:** Drawdowns risk degrading water quality, increasing sedimentation, and creating conditions for harmful algal blooms, threatening the very water supply this project is meant to secure.

#### **The Path Forward**

**I am not opposed to responsible infrastructure improvements. But any solution must be:**

- 1. Transparent —** fully disclosing costs, alternatives, and environmental impacts.
- 2. Economically Sound —** pursuing the most cost-effective methods before burdening ratepayers.
- 3. Environmentally Responsible —** safeguarding Bullock Pen Lake for future generations.
- 4. Equitable to All Stakeholders —** ensuring that homeowners are afforded the same protections and remedies as public access facilities.

**If a contract or project agreement is executed, I respectfully request that the PSC require a binding clause protecting the usability of private docks. Should water levels, as a direct result of this project, render existing docks inadequate for reasonable use, the party responsible should be contractually obligated to extend, modify, or otherwise restore access at no cost to the homeowner.**

**The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife has already required Bullock Pen Water District to spend approximately \$50,000 extending the public boat ramp to maintain access. Homeowners should receive equivalent consideration — as the loss of dock access would immediately reduce property value, diminish quality of life, and, in many cases, threaten primary investments in our homes.**

**There are alternatives worth examining — including continuing to buy treated water, upgrading existing facilities, or developing less impactful withdrawal schedules — that could meet supply needs without jeopardizing the lake's health or shifting the costs of mitigation unfairly onto homeowners.**

**Request:**

**I respectfully urge the PSC to:**

- **Require a comprehensive environmental and hydrologic impact study before any approvals.**
- **Mandate evaluation of less costly, less damaging alternatives.**
- **Establish binding protections for minimum lake levels, seasonal drawdown limits, and homeowner dock usability.**

**Our home, our dock, and our lake are not just amenities — they are the heart of our lives and our community. Please ensure that your decision reflects not only data, but the lived reality of those who stand to be most affected.**

**Thank you for your time, your service, and your careful consideration.**

**Sincerely,**

**Thomas & Michelle Ballard**

Handwritten signatures of Thomas Ballard and Michelle Ballard in black ink.

**923 Catlett Dr., Crittenden, KY 41030**

