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Friends of Reservoirs Grant Committee

Dear Grant Committee Members,

I am writing to express my full support for the "Friends of Lake Columbia habitat project led by Darrel Adams of the RDA and myself. As a fisheries biologist with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, I have worked closely with Darrel on several fish habitat improvement projects over the years, and I am confident in our ability to partner on improving the fish habitat in Lake Columbia. Last year we successfully deployed 22 Mossback structures, creating three new habitat sites, with the assistance of approximately 16 volunteers from the public and local university.

Lake Columbia serves as a water supply reservoir for the surrounding communities and also supports a popular sportfish fishery for Largemouth Bass, Black Crappie, and Redear Sunfish. However, due to its designation as a water supply reservoir, the Arkansas Department of Health prohibits the use of organic materials for habitat enhancement, which has limited our ability to use traditional methods such as hinge cuts and brush piles.

I will personally be involved in the planning, site selection, and installation of these structures, ensuring that the project aligns with the management objectives for Lake Columbia. This project is also consistent with our lake management plan, which identifies the need to improve sportfish habitat to support and enhance angler opportunities.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that the "Friends of Lake Columbia" project will be a success. I wholeheartedly support this grant application and look forward to collaborating on its successful implementation.

Sincerely,
Jacob Martin
South Central Fisheries Management Biologist
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

