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Efforts to resolve the dispute between The North Texas Municipal Water District (“NTMWD”) and The Heard Natural Science Museum and Wildlife Sanctuary have failed. The dispute arises from NTMWD’s efforts to acquire an easement for a 42” sewer line through the Wildlife Sanctuary. NTMWD filed a lawsuit to take the land for the sewer line by eminent domain.

The Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary, in McKinney Texas, is the result of one woman’s vision for the future and her commitment to the community and North Texas. Miss Bessie Heard devoted most of her lifetime (1886-1988) to the city of McKinney and its people. Her philanthropic endeavors and generosity of spirit left a legacy of accomplishment few people attain. Her greatest contribution to her community and North Texas is the Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary. Miss Heard was 80 years old when she saw the need to preserve a place where future generations could visit to experience nature. The museum opened October 1, 1967 and now serves more than 100,000 visitors annually. The Wildlife Sanctuary occupies 289 acres of land that she once owned.

In an effort to resolve the dispute, Heard’s Board of Directors commissioned a study of the likely effects of the placement of a 42” sewage line through its property. The study was conducted by Mr. Aaron Brewer of W & M Environmental Group, Inc. out of Austin, Texas. The study found that the current plans for the sewage line through the Sanctuary will disrupt a 110 ft. wide, 3500 foot long area of the Museum’s Wildlife Sanctuary, damaging native prairie grassland and wetlands. Based upon that study, the Heard offered an alternative route that would mitigate damage to the prairie grassland and minimize the impact upon the Wildlife Sanctuary. The proposal was rejected by the North Texas Municipal Water District and the lawsuit will be set for trial.