

A controversial proposal to build a water pipeline from Lake Monroe to Indianapolis is no more.

The man behind the pipeline plan, Aquavisions' **Beurt SerVaas**, said he was dropping it after Gov. Mitch Daniels called the idea a "nonstarter" in The Herald-Times last week.

"I don't think the city (Indianapolis) can build the pipeline without the governor approving it," **SerVaas** said by phone Wednesday afternoon.

"I think he's 100 percent on Bloomington's side."

SerVaas proposed that the 60-mile pipeline be a private not-for-profit project between the state of Indiana, Aquavisions and Indianapolis Waterworks.

SerVaas and the waterworks department got the go-ahead in May to proceed with a feasibility and financial review of tapping up to 90 million gallons a day from Lake Monroe via a pipeline.

The news concerned Bloomington officials and residents unsure of the effects a pipeline would have on the city's drinking supply. As proposed, the pipeline could have drained more than six times the city's average daily use of 14 million gallons.

Other concerns ranged from flood control to recreational opportunities from boating to bird watching at Lake Monroe.

In an interview with the H-T last week, Gov. Daniels said tapping Lake Monroe via a pipeline to Indianapolis sounded "backwards."

With the governor skeptical of the plan, **SerVaas** said it won't happen at all.

"I say hail to Bloomington, the governor helped you a lot; you should be very happy for him and vote for him in the next election," he said.

SerVaas, a former member of the Indianapolis-Marion County city-county council, initiated the plan to address drought protection.

He said it cost him several million dollars to do so during the past two and half years. He wanted the pipeline to be his legacy.

SerVaas said he won't bring forward another idea for drought protection.

"It's not my problem, is it? I did my job," he said.

Even without the pipeline, local officials will continue to look at water capacity and other issues raised by **SerVaas'** plan.

Bloomington Mayor Mark Kruzan has said the city needs to plan for future water needs. He's asked consultants to revamp a 2003 long-range water plan and to include the possible effects of taking up to 90 million gallons of water a day from the lake.

And a 14-member task force he called for last week to study the lake and its uses will still go forward.

Kruzan expressed gratitude that the governor's stance against the pipeline project led to its demise.

"We very much appreciate the governor keeping our head above water," he told The Herald-Times.

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Sarah Morin; 331-4363 | smorin@heraldt.com, 'Plug pulled on lake plan - Beurt SerVaas drops plan after governor calls idea 'nonstarter'', *Herald-Times* (online), 27 Jul 2006 <<https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.monroe.lib.in.us/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/1444EF2CF4F4EE38>>

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