

# LCRA Says Drought Means Less Water Flowing Into Lakes

Lakes Buchanan and Travis, the drinking water source for about 1.1 million Central Texans, are noticeably lower this summer because the sources that feed into the lakes have all but dried up.

So far this year, the amount of water flowing into the Highland Lakes is less than 23 percent of average.

"If the current trends continue, then we could set a new record low for how much water flows into the Highland Lakes this year," said Mark Jordan, LCRA manager of River Management.

"This is a major factor in why

lakes Travis and Buchanan are low."

As record high temperatures and dry conditions persist in Central Texas, the Lower Colorado River Authority is encouraging area residents to use water wisely and follow water-use restrictions to prevent or delay more severe measures if the drought persists.

In an average year, about 1.2 million acre-feet of water flows into the Highland Lakes from the Colorado River and streams and tributaries in the region, such as Sandy Creek and the Pedernales,

Llano and San Saba rivers.

So far this year, less than 170,000 acre-feet of water has flowed into the lakes.

The ongoing dry weather pattern has caused most creeks and streams that feed into the Highland Lakes to go dry.

Water experts use the term "inflows" to refer to how much water is flowing into the lakes.

An acre-foot of water is 325,851 gallons or about enough water to cover a football field in one foot of water.

The previous record-lows for inflows were set in 2008 and

2006.

If 2009 proves to be the year a new record low for annual inflows is set, then three of the past four years would become the worst years on record.

Record-high temperatures and the resulting evaporation are also factors.

LCRA's Chief Meteorologist Bob Rose reports that June was the second hottest June on record for Austin.

By July 10, Austin had experienced 23 days of 100-plus-degree temperatures, compared to 11 such days in an average year.

"This year is on track to equal or exceed last year's count of 50 days of 100-plus-degree weather."

These record-high temperatures cause more evaporation from the lakes.

LCRA officials estimate that Lake Travis drops about two-tenths of a foot each week due to evaporation.

Last year, about 220,000 acre-feet of water was lost to evaporation, which is about 30 percent more water than the City of Austin used in 2008 to meet its municipal needs.

Considering that drought conditions have persisted for nearly two years and are categorized as extreme and exceptional throughout much of the lower Colorado River basin, LCRA officials have revised their lake level projections.

Assuming dry conditions continue, current projections show that by Sept. 1, Lake Travis could fall between 630 and 635 feet above mean sea level and Lake Buchanan could fall between 990 and 995 feet msl.

Area residents are concerned about the drought, and some are asking if low lake levels mean that the region is running out of water.

The answer is that lakes Travis and Buchanan were designed and built to be the region's water supply lakes - to store water during rainy times so it would be available during droughts.

"The lakes are serving their purpose."

We expect to see lower lake levels during drought years. Lower lake levels do not mean we are running out of water," Jordan said.

The plan calls for LCRA to take actions when water storage levels are low, including cutting back water for agricultural customers and working with its wholesale customers to implement mandatory water-use restrictions for residential, commercial and industrial customers.

If drought conditions persist, then the need for further actions could be triggered beginning later this summer.

## NEWSBRIEFS

Continued from front page

from 9-10:30 a.m. at the Eagle Lake Jr. High (the one close to the hospital) - new location this year, Garwood School, Sheridan School. Each camper will receive a t-shirt on Thursday morning. The mini-campers are invited to cheer during the Rice Raider Scrimmage on Aug. 20. Cost: \$20 per camper plus \$5 for each sibling ages: 3-6th grade. On Thursday, July 23, the campers will meet at one location for a mini-camp pep rally group and individual pictures will be made by Reflections by Dawn. More information will be given at camp.

### Democrats meeting July 23

The Colorado County Democrats will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 23 at the Nesbitt Memorial Library 529 Washington in Columbus. All County Democrats welcome.

### WOFF Slated for July 25-26

The 30th Annual Wallis Oldtime Fun Festival (WOFF) will be held July 25-26 at the American Legion Hall in Wallis. A free street dance will be held from 8:30 p.m. - 12 a.m. Saturday night. The Blue Note Brothers will provide the musical entertainment. Brandon Mak, 9 yr. old musician will be on hand to perform Saturday, 4-5 p.m. Hamburgers Saturday noon to 10:30 p.m. BBQ dinner Sunday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Arts, crafts, kiddie rides, cake walk and the queen's pageant is back. Culinary cook-off, Saturday. BBQ cook-off and auction at 1 p.m. Sunday. Drawing for prizes, half and half and calf-a-rama after auction. For information call 979-478-6362, 979-257-9765 or 478-2615. Pageant information, 979-885-1689 or 257-7418.

### Little Raider football camp July 27-29

Little Raider youth football camp will be held July 27-29 from 9-11 a.m. at the Eagle Lake Elementary School. Grades 1st-6th are asked to attend. For registration information and cost, call Coach Brad Dumont at 361-772-6995 or Nick Shorter at 713-363-4198.

### Colorado County Fair broiler pickup

Colorado County Fair Exhibitors who ordered broiler chicks for the 2009 fair must pick them up at M-G, Inc. in Weimar on Thursday, July 30. The rules and regulations, record books and entry forms will be available to be picked up at the same time. Contact Chairman Lee Hasse at 979-263-4254 for more information. Broiler chicks must have been ordered and paid for at the Colorado County Extension office prior to getting the chicks.

### Sts. Peter and Paul festival Aug. 2

Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church of Frelsburg will hold its annual festival Sunday, August 2. The church is located 10 miles north of Columbus off FM 109, at 1031 Church Lane. A meal of fried fish, buttered potatoes, hush puppies, coleslaw, pinto beans, bread, pickles and tea will be served at 11 a.m. Meal tickets will be \$8 for a large plate and \$5 for a small plate. Throughout the day, listen to great music provided by Douglas Polasek. Hamburgers, nachos and snacks will be available at 3 p.m. The day will conclude with a free dance with music by the Red Ravens from 4-8 p.m. Come one, come all, to Frelsburg for a fun time!

### CCA Banquet is Aug. 6

The CCA banquet will be held Aug. 6 at the Columbus KC Hall. The meal will consist of boiled shrimp, sausage, corn, potatoes and salad. Grilled chicken breast with sides will also be available. Tickets

are \$30 pre-sale, \$35 at the door, youth 12 and under, \$10. Corporate tables available: \$600, Gold; \$400, Silver; Bronze tables, \$300 (reserved only). Tickets may be purchased from board members or at Johnny's Sport Shop, Drymalla Construction, Heffley's Mill, Columbus State Bank, Columbus Butane, Weimar Manufacturing and Main Package Store. For more information call Trey Barfield, 979-732-2074, DeWayne Kotrla, 732-3615 or Ellen Labay, 979-733-6045.

### FPC to celebrate 100th birthday

The First Presbyterian Church (FPC) in Eagle Lake invites everyone to come and celebrate the 100th birthday celebration. The program starts at 10:30, Aug. 9. Rev. John Howard Reed, former member and Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in Houston will be guest speaker. A program will follow with a BBQ lunch and signing of Sidney Struss's 4th historical book publication, The First Presbyterian Church of Eagle Lake - 100 Years. Only those books bought at the church will have a discounted pre-release price. Spread the word and make this a grand homecoming for the church! If you have any questions, please contact Mike Cooper at 979-234-2937.

### Free youth camp at WCBC

Free Youth summer camp hosted by SOAH ministries. Join us at White Cloud Baptist Church (WCBC) in Eagle Lake thru August 21, Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Ages up to 18 years old. Meals will be served. Program activities include youth forums, life skills, arts and crafts, reading and math enrichment, dance/music, table games, and physical fitness. For more information call 832-677-6320 or 832-483-2521.

### EAGLE LAKE WEATHER REPORT

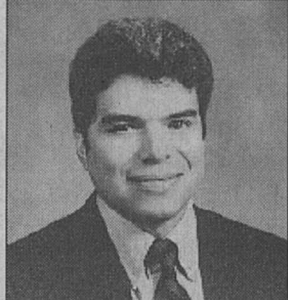
Information Courtesy of Texas A&M University System  
Agricultural Research and Experiment Station, Eagle Lake

Date	Temp (H/L)	Rainfall(in.)
Mon. 07-06-09	97/74	0.39
Tue. 07-07-09	92/74	0.04
Wed. 07-08-09	n/o	0.00
Thu. 07-09-09	101/76	0.00
Fri. 07-10-09	101/74	0.00
Sat. 07-11-09	99/75	0.00
Sun. 07-12-09	99/75	0.00

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