LCRA Water Use Summary 2024

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Drought conditions continued across the lower Colorado River basin for most of 2024, the hottest year on record for Texas. Rainfall was 6.5 to 7 inches below normal across the Hill Country and Central Texas, and slightly above normal across the coastal plains.

Inflows into lakes Buchanan and Travis were the highest since 2019, but still only half of the historical average. The basin saw two significant periods of rain in 2024. In May, storms in the upper basin caused inflows to be above the monthly average, and the combined storage of lakes Buchanan and Travis increased by about 275,000 acre-feet, or 14%. Inflows were also slightly higher than average in July. Inflows for all other months were well below average.

Total water use from the Highland Lakes and Colorado River decreased by 4% from 2023 to 2024. Overall water use from the Highland Lakes decreased by 25%, largely because more run-of-river water was available to meet demands downstream of Lake Travis. Diversions of streamflow from the Colorado River increased by 19% from 2023 to 2024. Because of the drought, no water from the Highland Lakes was available to most interruptible agricultural customers in Colorado, Matagorda and Wharton counties in 2024.

LCRA
ENERGY • WATER • COMMUNITY SERVICES

April 2025

WATER USE BY SOURCE – LCRA uses two basic sources of water to meet customer and environmental needs: water stored in lakes Buchanan and Travis and water naturally flowing in the Colorado River. When the natural flow into the Highland Lakes is greater than customer needs and environmental obligations, LCRA stores the excess in lakes Buchanan and Travis for later use.

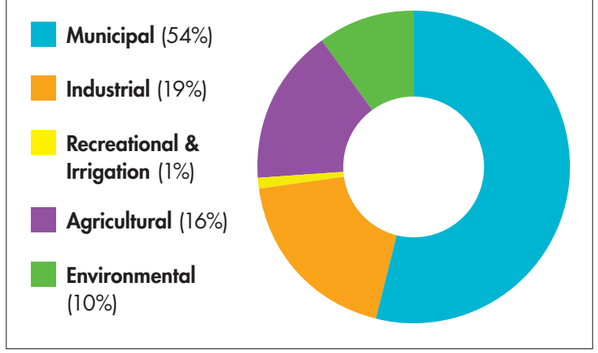
1. **Highland Lakes water use** – Contracts for water stored in lakes Buchanan and Travis can be for firm or interruptible supply. LCRA also supplies water from the Highland Lakes to help maintain environmental flows, as required by the state-approved Water Management Plan. In 2024, the Highland Lakes supplied 191,063 acre-feet of water for all uses.
   - **Firm water contracts** – These contracts supply cities, businesses and industries that need a reliable long-term water supply. Firm supply is available through a repeat of the driest conditions the region has experienced. Firm customers used 144,238 acre-feet, or about 76% of all water used from the Highland Lakes, in 2024. This includes 7 acre-feet used in hydroelectric generation to meet emergency needs for electricity.
   - **Interruptible water contracts** – These contracts supply agricultural customers. Interruptible water is subject to cutbacks during drought conditions, and its availability was curtailed in 2024 because of the drought. Interruptible customers used 529 acre-feet, less than 1% of all water used from the Highland Lakes, in 2024.
   - **Environmental** – From time to time, LCRA releases water from the Highland Lakes to meet environmental flow requirements for the Colorado River downstream of Austin and for Matagorda Bay. In 2024, LCRA released 46,296 acre-feet, or about 24% of all water used from the Highland Lakes, for environmental flows.

2. **Colorado River water use** – In addition to the rights to water from the Highland Lakes, LCRA owns and manages other rights to the natural flow of the Colorado River. In 2024, a total of 160,350 acre-feet of water was supplied from the Colorado River for agricultural, municipal, industrial, recreation and firm irrigation uses under these water rights.

Water Rights	2024 Use (in acre-feet)
LCRA Garwood*	92,392
LCRA and South Texas Project*	59,910
LCRA Lakeside*	0
LCRA Gulf Coast*	8,048
LCRA Pierce Ranch*	0
LCRA Lakes Buchanan and Travis	191,063
SUBTOTAL — LCRA	**351,413**
City of Austin Water Rights*	111,911
Bastrop Energy Partners, LP*	180
SUBTOTAL — Other	**112,091**
TOTAL	**463,504**

**Water use from the Colorado River was 272,441 acre-feet.*

2024 Water Use From Highland Lakes and Lower Colorado River
(LCRA and Other Water Rights)



HOW DOES 2024 COMPARE?

TYPE OF WATER USE*	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Municipal (firm customers)	**251,970**	**249,011**	**266,848**	**274,946**	**250,238**
Water from the Highland Lakes	144,531	118,821	198,971	187,868	130,092
Water from the Colorado River†	107,439	130,190	67,877	87,078	120,146
Industrial (firm customers)	**50,343**	**113,594**	**51,790**	**77,141**	**87,705**
Water from the Highland Lakes	18,593	12,390	22,722	15,974	10,231
Water from the Colorado River†	31,750	101,204	29,068	61,167	77,474
Recreational & Irrigation (firm customers)	**7,568**	**4,204**	**6,898**	**7,041**	**5,990**
Water from the Highland Lakes	7,413	4,204	6,898	7,041	3,915
Water from the Colorado River	155	0	0	0	2,075
Agricultural (interruptible customers)	**247,573**	**171,900**	**258,704**	**88,891**	**73,275**
Water from the Highland Lakes	84,472	45,109	160,213	9,079	529
Water from the Colorado River	163,101	126,791	98,491	79,812	72,746
Environmental‡ *(from the Highland Lakes)*	**115,586**	**31,317**	**40,510**	**35,287**	**46,296**
TOTAL WATER USE	**673,040**	**570,026**	**624,750**	**483,306**	**463,504**

* *Water use is in acre-feet.*

† *Reported use includes water available under water rights held by the City of Austin and Bastrop Energy Partners, LP, and held jointly by South Texas Project and LCRA.*

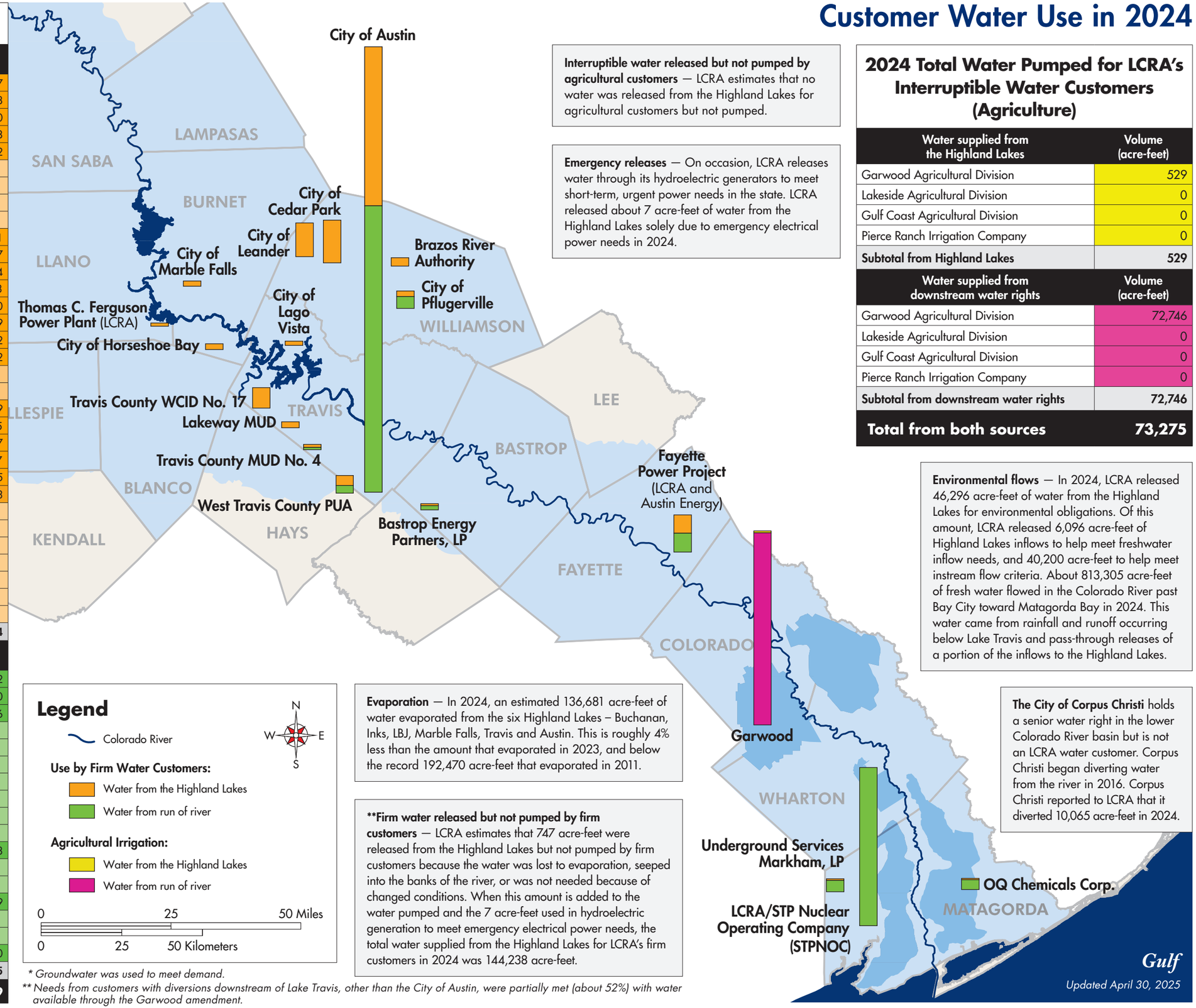
‡ *Environmental releases are made to meet environmental requirements set out in the LCRA Water Management Plan. Releases for downstream customers and runoff flowing into the river and bay also help satisfy environmental needs.*

Learn more about the lower Colorado River at www.lcra.org.

Customer Water Use in 2024

2024 Total Water Pumped by LCRA's Firm Water Customers

Water supplied from the Highland Lakes	Volume (acre-feet)
City of Austin, municipal and parks	60,207
City of Cedar Park	16,168
City of Leander	12,780
Travis County WCID No.17	7,748
LCRA power plants	6,412
• Fayette Power Project (LCRA Share)	5,188
• Sim Gideon Power Plant*	0
• Lost Pines 1 Power Project*	0
• Thomas C. Ferguson Power Plant	1,224
West Travis County Public Utility Agency**	3,771
Domestic water users on the Highland Lakes	3,737
Brazos River Authority	3,174
Lakeway MUD	2,258
City of Horseshoe Bay	2,190
City of Pflugerville**	2,099
City of Marble Falls	1,992
Austin Energy (AE) Power Plants	1,732
• Fayette Power Project (AE share)	1,732
• Decker Power Plant	0
City of Lago Vista	1,599
Travis County MUD No. 4**	1,125
Bastrop Energy Partners, LP**	757
Underground Services Markham, LP	327
OQ Chemicals Corp.	155
Other Firm Customers	15,253
• Diverted from Lake Buchanan	378
• Diverted from Inks Lake	690
• Diverted from Lake LBJ	3,170
• Diverted from Lake Marble Falls	0
• Diverted from Lake Travis	6,118
• Diverted from Lake Austin**	4,308
• Diverted from downstream of Lake Austin**	589
Subtotal from Highland Lakes**	**143,484**
Water supplied from other water rights	**Volume (acre-feet)**
City of Austin, municipal and parks	108,492
LCRA/STP Nuclear Operating Company	59,910
LCRA use – Garwood amendment	19,646
• City of Pflugerville	4,503
• Fayette Power Project (LCRA share)	3,734
• West Travis County Public Utility Agency	2,927
• Bastrop Energy Center	1,416
• Travis County MUD No. 4	873
• LCRA other municipal use	3,351
• LCRA other industrial, firm irrigation and recreation	2,842
LCRA Gulf Coast municipal and industrial use	8,048
• Underground Services Markham, LP	4,312
• OQ Chemicals Corp.	3,736
Austin Energy (AE) power plants	3,419
• Fayette Power Project (AE share)	3,419
• Decker Power Plant	0
Bastrop Energy Partners, LP	180
Subtotal from other water rights	**199,695**
Total from both sources	**343,179**



Interruptible water released but not pumped by agricultural customers — LCRA estimates that no water was released from the Highland Lakes for agricultural customers but not pumped.

Emergency releases — On occasion, LCRA releases water through its hydroelectric generators to meet short-term, urgent power needs in the state. LCRA released about 7 acre-feet of water from the Highland Lakes solely due to emergency electrical power needs in 2024.

2024 Total Water Pumped for LCRA's Interruptible Water Customers (Agriculture)

Water supplied from the Highland Lakes	Volume (acre-feet)
Garwood Agricultural Division	529
Lakeside Agricultural Division	0
Gulf Coast Agricultural Division	0
Pierce Ranch Irrigation Company	0
Subtotal from Highland Lakes	**529**
Water supplied from downstream water rights	**Volume (acre-feet)**
Garwood Agricultural Division	72,746
Lakeside Agricultural Division	0
Gulf Coast Agricultural Division	0
Pierce Ranch Irrigation Company	0
Subtotal from downstream water rights	**72,746**
Total from both sources	**73,275**

Environmental flows — In 2024, LCRA released 46,296 acre-feet of water from the Highland Lakes for environmental obligations. Of this amount, LCRA released 6,096 acre-feet of Highland Lakes inflows to help meet freshwater inflow needs, and 40,200 acre-feet to help meet instream flow criteria. About 813,305 acre-feet of fresh water flowed in the Colorado River past Bay City toward Matagorda Bay in 2024. This water came from rainfall and runoff occurring below Lake Travis and pass-through releases of a portion of the inflows to the Highland Lakes.

The City of Corpus Christi holds a senior water right in the lower Colorado River basin but is not an LCRA water customer. Corpus Christi began diverting water from the river in 2016. Corpus Christi reported to LCRA that it diverted 10,065 acre-feet in 2024.

Legend

- Colorado River

Use by Firm Water Customers:
- Water from the Highland Lakes
- Water from run of river

Agricultural Irrigation:
- Water from the Highland Lakes
- Water from run of river

N, W, E, S

0 25 50 Miles

0 25 50 Kilometers

Evaporation — In 2024, an estimated 136,681 acre-feet of water evaporated from the six Highland Lakes – Buchanan, Inks, LBJ, Marble Falls, Travis and Austin. This is roughly 4% less than the amount that evaporated in 2023, and below the record 192,470 acre-feet that evaporated in 2011.

****Firm water released but not pumped by firm customers** — LCRA estimates that 747 acre-feet were released from the Highland Lakes but not pumped by firm customers because the water was lost to evaporation, seeped into the banks of the river, or was not needed because of changed conditions. When this amount is added to the water pumped and the 7 acre-feet used in hydroelectric generation to meet emergency electrical power needs, the total water supplied from the Highland Lakes for LCRA's firm customers in 2024 was 144,238 acre-feet.

** Groundwater was used to meet demand.*

*** Needs from customers with diversions downstream of Lake Travis, other than the City of Austin, were partially met (about 52%) with water available through the Garwood amendment.*

Updated April 30, 2025