LAKE MARBLE FALLS
FALL 2022 DRAWDOWN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **Why has LCRA lowered Lake Marble Falls?**
   LCRA lowered Lake Marble Falls to allow for maintenance work on Starcke Dam. During the time the lake is lowered, lakeside property owners will be able to perform limited maintenance or renovations on their docks, retaining walls or other infrastructure.

2. **When did the lake drawdown begin and when will it end?**
   Lake Marble Falls will be lowered for about 12 weeks in late 2022, from Oct. 1-Dec. 29.

3. **How much was Lake Marble Falls lowered?**
   Lake Marble Falls was lowered from its normal operating range of 736.2 to 737 feet above mean sea level (feet msl) to a range of 729 to 731 feet msl.

   The lake was lowered about 1 foot a day for seven days from Saturday, Oct. 1 to Friday, Oct. 7.

   The lake is scheduled to be refilled beginning Monday, Dec. 26, and will be raised about 2 feet a day for four days, with the lake expected to be back within its normal operating range by Thursday, Dec. 29.

4. **How much did Lake Travis rise because of the water moved downstream to lower Marble Falls?**
   LCRA released water through the hydroelectric generators at Starcke Dam to lower Lake Marble Falls. The water flowed into Lake Travis.

   The water released from Lake Marble Falls totaled about 3,000 acre-feet, which caused Lake Travis to rise by a couple of inches. (One acre-feet equals about 326,000 gallons.)

5. **How will Lake Marble Falls be refilled? How much will Lake Buchanan fall when Lake Marble Falls is refilled?**
   Lake Marble Falls will be refilled with a combination of water released from Lake Buchanan and sent downstream through Inks Lake and Lake LBJ, and water flowing into the Colorado River from tributaries into or upstream of Lake Marble Falls. The refill could cause Lake Buchanan to fall a maximum of a couple of inches.

   The impact to Lake Buchanan could be reduced by rainfall or additional inflows to lakes Buchanan, Inks or LBJ.

6. **What do I need to do to work on my dock, or to dredge or fill during the drawdown?**
   LCRA has secured a lakewide permit from the Army Corps of Engineers allowing property owners to perform maintenance dredging and repair existing retaining walls on Lake Marble Falls from Oct. 1-Dec. 29, 2022. Residents and property owners who want to perform work must register their project with LCRA at lcra.org/lakelowerings. Registration for dock repairs is not required, but all work must comply with the Safety Standards for Residential Docks on the Highland Lakes.

During the drawdown, tools or machinery must not be left in the lakebed overnight. All work must be completed before the lake refill begins on Dec. 26.

Property owners wanting to dredge or repair a retaining wall outside of Oct. 1-Dec. 29 must meet requirements of LCRA's Highland Lakes Dredge and Fill Ordinance.

7. **What activities are not allowed during the drawdown?**
   - Burning in the lakebed, which is prohibited by Section 26.121 of the Texas Water Code.
   - Adding fill material below the 737 feet msl contour of Lake Marble Falls for repair of existing retaining walls or bulkheads.
   - Replacing or building new retaining walls.
   - Shoreline work more than 500 feet or dredging more than 2,000 cubic yards.
   - New construction.
   - Installing new boat ramps/launches.
   - Reclaiming land lost to erosion or flood damage.
   - Disposing of dredged material on sandbars or islands in the lakebed or along the shoreline.

8. **When was the last time Lake Marble Falls was lowered?**
   LCRA last lowered Lake Marble Falls in 2019.

9. **Will any of the Highland Lakes be lowered in 2023?**
   The determination about whether to lower any of the other pass-through lakes in 2023 will be made in late 2022. Lake LBJ and Inks Lake were lowered in 2020, and Lake Austin was last lowered in 2017.

10. **Why is the 2022 drawdown of Lake Marble Falls necessary? Why is it occurring toward the end of the year instead of in January and February, when most drawdowns occur?**
    Lowering Lake Marble Falls in 2022 is necessary to allow work needed to keep the hydroelectric generators at Starcke Dam functioning and available to support the Texas electric grid during periods of highest power demand, the hot summer and cold winter months.

    The Starcke Dam intake project will replace the screens and supporting structure that prevent large objects in the river from entering the hydroelectric generators and damaging the turbines. During the October 2018 floods, debris damaged the center portion of the water intake structure. LCRA performed emergency repairs to allow the hydroelectric generators to continue to safely operate, but during the repairs, engineers determined that the remaining intake screens and structure also needed to be replaced.

    During the project, the intake structure will be refurbished with new screens and structural supports.

11. **What if it floods during a drawdown? What if there is a power emergency that requires LCRA to move water into the lowered lakes through hydroelectric generation?**
    Lake level management, water supply and hydroelectric operations will continue during the drawdown. When water is released from Wirtz Dam, water levels will be higher and fluctuate more at the upper end of Lake Marble Falls than levels measured at Starcke Dam. Unforeseen circumstances, such as floods or power emergencies, could prompt LCRA to change or cancel the scheduled drawdown to pass water through the Highland Lakes. **Equipment and tools should not be left in the lakebed unattended and should be removed from the shoreline when not in use.**

12. **Where can I get more information about performing work in the lakebed during the drawdowns?**
    For more information, submit an inquiry through Contact LCRA or call LCRA Water Quality Protection at 512-578-2324.