Updated Flood Hazard Information for Areas Between Buchanan Dam and Inks Dam

Buchanan Dam

- In Burnet and Llano counties
- Completed in 1938
- 145.5 feet high
- About 2 miles long
- Primary purpose: water supply and hydroelectric power
- 37 floodgates in three sections: seven-gate, 14-gate and 16-gate
- Discharge capacity: 348,000 cubic feet per second

Inks Lake

- 777 acres
- Historic high: 902.8 feet above mean sea level on July 25, 1938
- Primary purpose: hydroelectric operations
- Target operating range: 886.9-887.7 feet msl
- 4.2 miles long
- 3,000 feet at widest point

Flood releases from Buchanan Dam's 14-gate and 16-gate sections in June 2016.

People who own property between Buchanan Dam and Inks Dam now have access to flood hazard information that was developed using the latest digital terrain data and flood modeling methods. The updated information will move some areas between Buchanan Dam and Inks Lake into the floodplain for the first time and other areas out of it. The information also identifies a floodway along Inks Lake for the first time.

The updated information comes from a floodplain study LCRA commissioned, with approvals from Burnet and Llano counties, that tracked where water released from Buchanan Dam travels during floods. The model results were confirmed by observations during floods in 2016 and 2018.

LCRA submitted the updated flood hazard information to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for approval in the form of a Letter of Map Revision. Upon final approval, FEMA will use the new information to update its Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Communities use these maps to determine flood insurance needs and regulate development in flood hazard areas.

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The study updates flood hazard information in two areas:

- The north side of Inks Lake in Burnet County, where water flows from the 14-gate and 16-gate sections and spillway of Buchanan Dam to Inks Lake. The old information was not based on detailed analysis and showed only approximate boundaries of the flood hazard areas. The new information better identifies where water will flow and for the first time identifies how high the water will rise during 50-, 100- and 500-year floods in these areas.

- Along the length of Inks Lake in Burnet and Llano counties, from Buchanan Dam to Inks Dam. The new study identifies a floodway in this area for the first time. A floodway is the central portion of the 100-year floodplain, where flows are stronger and faster. The floodway should be kept free of new obstructions to allow a 100-year flood to pass. Local floodplain administrators use the floodway designation to regulate development of property and limit future increases in floodplain levels.

Next steps

After Burnet and Llano counties have notified affected property owners via certified letters in September 2020, FEMA will publish notices in local newspapers. Property owners and the public will have 90 days to appeal the technical basis of the updated flood risk maps. The revised maps will become effective 30 days after the appeal period ends and all technical appeals are resolved.

For more information and to view maps of the updated flood risk areas, visit www.lcra.org/floodhazardupdate.

For more information about the effect of floodplain map updates on individual properties, contact Llano County Permitting at floodadmin@co.llano.tx.us or 325-247-2039, or Burnet County Development Services at inspect@burnetcountytexas.org or 512-715-5260.

For copies of technical information for the Letter of Map Revision, contact LCRA at Buchanan-Inks-LOMR@lcra.org.

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