

Project Timeline

September 2016: LCRA and partners submit a proposal for federal funding for the Prairie Regulating Reservoir.

December 2016: U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) awards LCRA \$8 million for the project.

September 2017: LCRA and NRCS sign funding agreement.

January 2018: LCRA initiates federal watershed planning and National Environmental Policy Act analysis and permitting process.

Construction will not begin until after additional funding is secured.

April 2021

Prairie Regulating Reservoir Project

The Lower Colorado River Authority has received an \$8 million federal partnership award to help construct a new irrigation regulating reservoir in Colorado County. The proposed reservoir would provide LCRA operational flexibility by helping meet the demands of downstream customers within the Lakeside Irrigation Division. The reservoir would increase water reliability and improve agricultural water use efficiency.

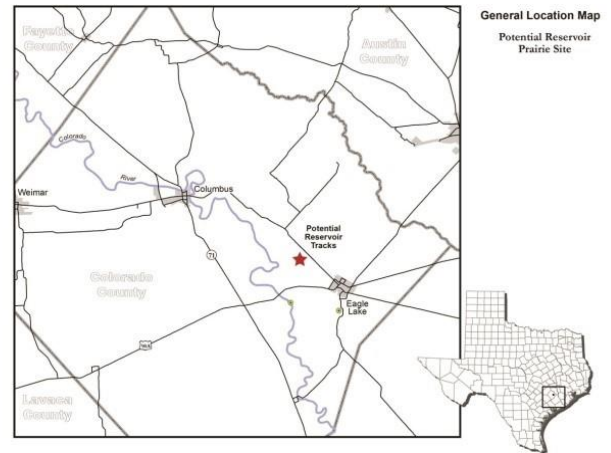
The Prairie Regulating Reservoir project proposes an up to 2,000 acre-foot, off-channel, regulating reservoir and improvements to the existing collection and distribution system.

The project could help LCRA optimize water delivery to meet crop demand and will allow LCRA to minimize operational delays between the time water is ordered and the time water is delivered to farmers. LCRA would fill the regulating reservoir early in the growing season to prepare for irrigation water demand that may occur later in the year. Using stored surface water would reduce irrigators' groundwater pumping during drought and would enhance water conservation.

By constructing a relatively small, local off-channel regulating reservoir that relies on existing or improved infrastructure within Lakeside to deliver water to users, LCRA would make more efficient use of available surface water and improve current operations. Water would be stored on a short-term basis. When demands change rapidly (e.g., due to rain events or high winds), water could then be used a few days later when more typical demands return.

LCRA partners include:

- Ducks Unlimited
- USA Rice Federation
- Texas Rice Producers Legislative Group
- Colorado Water Issues Committee
- Audubon Texas
- National Watershed Coalition
- Bay City Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture
- Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce
- Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
- Colorado County
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Colorado County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) #333
- Wharton County SWCD #342
- Coastal Bend Groundwater Conservation District
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas A&M AgriLife Wintermann Rice Research Station at Eagle Lake



LCRA is hoping to find a site close to canals and LCRA's existing irrigation water re-lift pumping plant near Eagle Lake.