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How does 2011 compare?

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<th>TYPE OF WATER USE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Water Use</td>
<td>218,202</td>
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<td>246,601</td>
</tr>
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<td>5,784</td>
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Why does LCRA release water from the Highland Lakes? Releases are made for several reasons:

1. LCRA is legally obligated to pass water through the dams if a downstream senior water right holder is entitled to the water. Downstream senior water rights include those owned by LCRA and by the cities of Austin and Corpus Christi.
2. LCRA releases water to meet needs of customers such as the City of Austin, power plants and farmers. LCRA uses water for environmental flow needs for the river and Matagorda Bay.

* Dedicated environmental releases are the amounts of water released solely for the purpose of satisfying environmental needs. In addition, releases for downstream customers and runoff flowing into the river and bays help satisfy environmental needs.

March 30, 2012

Evaporation - Hot temperatures and windy days can significantly increase evaporation of water. In 2011, an estimated 192,040 acre-feet evaporated from the six Highland Lakes (Buchanan, Inks, LBJ, Marble Falls, Travis, and Austin).

Water stored in the Highland Lakes was vital to meeting the basin’s needs for water in 2011. A very severe drought affected the Colorado River basin throughout the year, and stream flows into the Highland Lakes were the lowest on record. Below the Highland Lakes, flow in the Colorado River dropped to very low levels. Water was drawn from storage in the Highland Lakes to help LCRA and LCRA customers weather the drought, and lakes Buchanan and Travis dropped to their third lowest levels on record. This report includes information on the use of the major water rights in the lower Colorado River basin held by LCRA and LCRA customers.

Water use by source

LCRA uses two basic sources of water to meet customers’ needs: water naturally flowing in the Colorado River, and water stored in the Highland Lakes. Water supplied from the Highland Lakes comes from lakes Buchanan and Travis, the water supply reservoirs in the Highland Lakes chain. In 2011, the Colorado River had very little natural flow. The basin relied heavily on water stored in the Highland Lakes to meet its needs.

Highland Lakes Water Use

LCRA contracts with customers to provide water from storage in the Highland Lakes. Contracts for stored water can be for interruptible water supply or firm supply. LCRA also uses water from the Highland Lakes to help maintain environmental flows and to meet emergency needs for hydroelectric power. In 2011, a total of 714,434 acre-feet of water was supplied from the Highland Lakes.

Interruptible contracts primarily supply agricultural customers. These contracts are subject to cutbacks during drought conditions. Interruptible agricultural customers in the lower basin used the most water of all customers in 2011, a total of 433,251 acre-feet or 61 percent of all water used from the Highland Lakes.

Firm contracts supply cities, businesses and industries that need a reliable long-term water supply. Firm supply is expected to be available through a repeat of the worst drought our region has experienced, the 1947-1957 Drought of Record. In 2011, a total of 247,405 acre-feet of water was supplied from the Highland Lakes to firm customers.

Environmental and emergency hydroelectric releases — LCRA releases water from the Highland Lakes to meet minimum flow requirements for the Colorado River downstream of Austin and for Matagorda Bay. In 2011, 33,433 acre-feet was released to meet environmental targets and 345 acre-feet was released from the Highland Lakes to meet emergency needs for electricity.

Colorado River Water Use

In addition to the water supply available from the Highland Lakes, LCRA owns other water rights on the Colorado River. In 2011, a total of 101,125 acre-feet of water was supplied from the Colorado River for agricultural and industrial uses under these water rights.

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Customer Water Use in 2011

Emergency releases – On occasion, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas requests LCRA to release water through its hydroelectric generators to meet short-term, urgent power needs in the state. In 2011, LCRA released 345 acre-feet from the Highland Lakes system for emergency electrical power needs.

City of Austin owns a water right that allows it to pump water from the Colorado River. The City also relies on water from the Highland Lakes under a contract with LCRA. In 2011, the City’s municipal use was 168,334 acre-feet, including 61,712 acre-feet diverted under Austin’s water right from the Colorado River at Lake Austin and 106,622 acre-feet obtained from the Highland Lakes under a contract with LCRA.

Interruptible water released but not used – LCRA estimates that 65,266 acre-feet was released from the Highland Lakes and not used by irrigation operations because the water was lost to evaporation, seeped into the river banks or conditions changed that eliminated the need for the water. When this amount is added to the water pumped, the total water use from the Highland Lakes for agricultural irrigation was 433,251 acre-feet for 2011.

Flow to bay – A total of 222,196 acre-feet of freshwater flowed in the Colorado River past Bay City toward Matagorda Bay.

South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Company (STPNOC) is a nuclear power plant located in Matagorda County. STPNOC and LCRA jointly own a water right to take water from the Colorado River for the plant. STPNOC also has a contract with LCRA to back-up this water right. In 2011, STPNOC pumped 2,267 acre-feet from the river and did not require stored water from the Highland Lakes.

Legend
- Colorado River
- Firm Water Use:
  - Water from Highland Lakes (AF)
  - Water from Run of River (AF)
- Agricultural Irrigation:
  - Water pumped from releases made under the LCRA’s Highland Lakes diversion (AF)
  - Water pumped under the LCRA’s Highland Lakes water rights (AF)

Interruptible Water Customers (Agriculture)

City of Austin

Water Supplied from the Highland Lakes
Volume (acre-feet)
City of Austin 106,622
LCRA Ferguson Power Plant 17,903
City of Cedar Park 15,786
Austin Energy Power Plant Project 8,443
Austin Energy Power Plant Project 8,291
Travis County MUD No. 17 8,090
City of Pflugerville 7,275
LCRA Water and Wastewater Utilities 6,517
LCRA San Gideon Power Plant 5,505
City of Leander 4,881
Oxea Corporation 3,819
Travis County MUD No. 4 3,467
Lakeway MUD No. 1 2,960

Subtotal from Highland Lakes 238,939

Water Supplied from Other Water Rights
Volume (acre-feet)
City of Austin 63,772
South Texas Nuclear Project 2,267
Oxea Corporation 1,720
Underground Services Markham 808
Subtotal from Other Water Rights 68,567

Total from Both Sources (acre-feet) 307,506