
Appendix E

LCRA Board Policy 501

(Water Resources)

LCRA BOARD POLICY
501 - WATER RESOURCES
December 15, 2010

501.10 PURPOSE

This policy establishes principles and guidelines for implementing LCRA's responsibilities regarding water supply management, planning and development, water conservation, environmental flows, water quality protection, water contracts and rates, and the lowering of LCRA operated lakes.

501.20 WATER SUPPLY MANAGEMENT, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LCRA will take initiative in appropriate management, planning, programs, and projects to control, store, preserve, use, develop, conserve and manage the water supplies under its jurisdiction. To guide this effort, LCRA will adhere to the following general principles:

1. As a regional supplier, LCRA will, where practically feasible, cooperate with regional efforts, including regional water planning efforts, to benefit the Colorado River basin.
2. LCRA will optimize its water supply by managing the water stored in the lakes Buchanan and Travis with a basin-wide perspective of ensuring firm water supplies are available during an extended drought while continuing to make interruptible supplies available whenever possible. LCRA will achieve this objective, in part, through the development and implementation of its state-approved Water Management Plan.
3. LCRA will address unidentified future water supply needs and uncertainties through use of a reserve or some other mechanism to trigger acquisition of additional supplies.
4. While maximizing the potential supplies available from its Colorado River rights in a cost-effective manner, LCRA may consider development of new, cost-effective supplies to serve its customers.
5. LCRA will monitor developments in state water law and water rights permitting and, where necessary, take action to ensure that the legal rights and obligations LCRA has to manage the state's water resources are not significantly and adversely affected by such activities.
6. LCRA will stay fully apprised of developments regarding the legal framework under which groundwater is regulated and evaluate LCRA's role and the potential impacts to LCRA. Through ongoing assessments of groundwater supplies, LCRA will encourage and research conjunctive management and use of ground and surface water supplies.

LCRA may plan, develop, and manage conjunctive use projects where economically feasible, with the added goal of protecting and preserving the groundwater resources of the state.

7. LCRA will explore opportunities to improve the reliability of water supply for agricultural needs through diverse, cost-effective strategies that increase available supply in the lower basin while minimizing the impact on firm water customers.
8. A preference for a basin-wide approach to benefit both upstream and downstream interests will be given when pursuing water supply strategies.
9. LCRA will oppose any interbasin transfer of surface water outside the Colorado River basin unless and except to the extent the transfer is consistent with LCRA's enabling legislation or other state law. Beyond existing commitments, LCRA will not plan for sales outside the basin unless and except to the extent it has secured water supplies to meet current and future in-basin demands.

501.30 WATER CONSERVATION

LCRA will meet or exceed state water conservation requirements and provide leadership in promoting the conservation of water. LCRA's commitment to conserving water will be achieved by implementing a variety of programs designed to encourage the conservation of water, including:

- Rigorous conservation requirements in rules and contracts
- Technical assistance and training
- Public education
- Incentives to customers
- Raw water rates or surcharges that encourage conservation
- Joint programs with customers and other stakeholders to encourage local initiative
- Programs to encourage the beneficial reuse and recycling of water

501.40 ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS

LCRA is committed to maintaining, and where reasonably possible, improving fish, wildlife, and recreation resources in the river and bay system. LCRA should continue to be a leader in developing high quality science on environmental flows for the benefit of the lower Colorado River basin and comply with all state and federal requirements in the most efficient way possible. LCRA will provide water to help meet environmental flow needs in a manner that does not diminish or hamper its ability to meet current and future water demands of other beneficial users in the basin.

501.50 WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

LCRA will provide leadership in protecting water quality and, where reasonably possible, improving the quality of the surface and groundwater within the lower Colorado River watershed. LCRA will

seek to protect against degradation of water quality and will support recreation, aquatic life, and water supply uses of the waters under its jurisdiction. LCRA will implement this goal through monitoring, assessment, advocacy, contracting, regulatory oversight, and reliance on the best available science, technology and innovation. LCRA will cooperate with other concerned public and private entities to help address issues of concern related to water quality within the lower Colorado River watershed, including groundwater. LCRA will implement high water quality protections for its own projects and facilities that manage stormwater runoff to the maximum extent practicable and, at a minimum, maintain and implement state and federal water quality standards.

501.60 WATER CONTRACTS AND RATES

501.601 Water Contracts

LCRA will develop reasonable rules for the consideration, issuance, and administration of raw water contracts. Such rules should address requirements for water conservation, drought contingency, interbasin transfers, water quality impacts, and other requirements necessary for the fair and appropriate administration of water contracts. The rules should be updated from time to time to reflect changes to Board policy, applicable law, or other business needs. Any such rules adopted by the Board are incorporated into this Policy by reference as if set forth fully in this Policy. LCRA staff shall develop standard form raw water contracts consistent with Board policies and rules.

501.602 Water Rates

LCRA's rates will be just and reasonable, not unduly discriminatory, and set to fully recover LCRA's costs to control, store, preserve, conserve, use, plan, develop, manage, distribute and sell the water supplies under its jurisdiction, consistent with state law. The rates will allow LCRA to be self-supporting in providing these services and provide for a stable and predictable flow of revenue.

501.603 Board Consideration and Public Input

Implementation of new rates will be carried out within a time frame that attempts to minimize adverse impacts upon the customers of LCRA. All contract rules and rates will be presented to the LCRA Board of Directors for approval, and the public, including all water customers, will be afforded an opportunity to comment on such actions prior to the Board's consideration for approval.

501.70 LOWERING LCRA-OPERATED LAKES

The General Manager may authorize the lowering of Inks Lake, Lake LBJ, Lake Marble Falls, and Lake Austin only if such lowerings will not interfere with LCRA's essential operations, adversely impact aquatic habitat, or result in any unrecovered losses related to water supply and are otherwise consistent with LCRA's water rights and existing contracts and leases. Further, such lowerings shall not result in any unrecovered losses related to hydrogeneration revenues for any lowering of Lake Austin or any lowering of Inks Lake, Lake LBJ, or Lake Marble Falls that occurs with a frequency of more than once every four years.

501.80 AUTHORITY

Texas Water Code, Chapters 11 and 12; Texas Special District Local Laws Code §§ 8503.001, 8503.004, 8503.011, 8503.012, 8503.013, 8503.028, 8503.029, and 8503.030.

EFFECTIVE: December 15, 2010.