

The Central Texas Water Coalition is a 501(c)4 non-profit organization advocating for water policies that will preserve the Highland Lakes as irreplaceable natural resources supplying water for more than one million Central Texans and providing an important economic engine for the tourism industry and the State of Texas.

Coalition partners include more than 3000 Texas residents, businesses, local government representatives, property owner associations, environmental interests and concerned citizens. All are united by their commitment to protect our future through responsible water management and conservation policies.

HISTORY OF CTWC

In May of 2010, the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) appointed the Water Management Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee, which consisted of 16 individuals representing diverse interests: Rice Farmers, Environmentalists, Firm Customers and the Lakes.

Individuals representing the Highland Lakes formed CTWC in 2011 to provide a unified voice for Central Texas. Friends of CTWC, a 501(c)3 tax-deductible non-profit organization was formed in 2012, and a new statewide committee - Water Equality for Texans - was formed in 2014.

GOALS OF CTWC

The CTWC groups' continue to represent lake interests by educating the public on the need for responsible water management, encouraging conservation and urging citizen involvement to help protect the lakes and our future.

WHAT WE'RE WORKING FOR:

With significant growth in the state's population occurring and expected to continue, unreliable rainfall for water supplies could pose a real threat to the state's drinking water, public health and safety and the economy.

Annual economic losses from not meeting water supply needs could be devastating.

We can't control the rainfall, so we must plan for the future and ensure responsible and forward-thinking management of the resources we have during floods, drought, or our new normal.

SINCE 2000, AT LEAST SOME PART OF THE STATE WAS IN DROUGHT CONDITIONS 93 PERCENT OF THE TIME.

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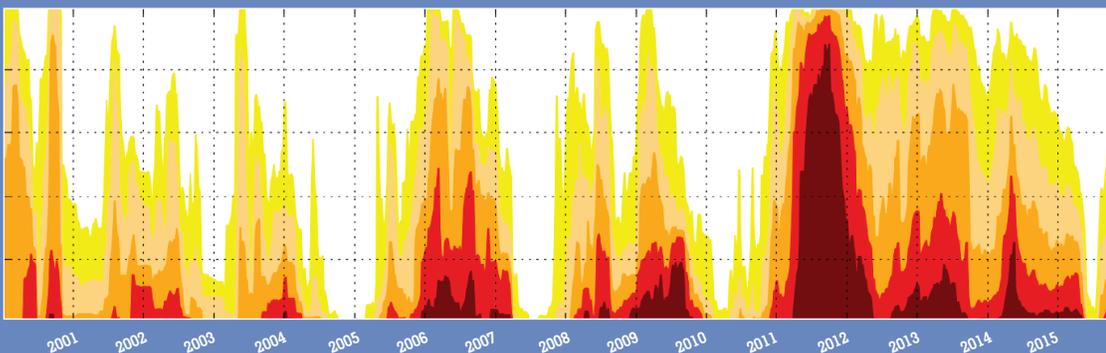
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- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)

ENSURE ADEQUATE DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES FOR THE FUTURE

A dependable supply of safe drinking water is essential to public health, the state's economy and quality of life. With depleted water sources, an expanding population, and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns, it is critical that greater emphasis be placed on protecting the state's drinking water supply. In order to ensure adequate water supplies for the future, water management entities must thoroughly consider the full future impact of their decisions at different degrees of water availability including times of extraordinary drought, less severe drought and normal conditions.

Recommendation: *Ensure that regulatory entities make water management decisions that are more protective of drinking water supplies using current sound science to ensure adequate supplies are available for our growing population, even through extended drought.*

CONSIDER ECONOMIC IMPACT

Currently, the Texas Water Code does not include consideration of the personal, local and statewide economic impacts of water management decisions made by state regulators. In addition to the impact on a region's drinking water, such decisions can have a negative effect on tax revenues, economic viability, business and industry, and job growth.

Recommendation: *Clarify state law to require economic impact as a factor that must be given due consideration in making water management decisions.*

INCREASE WATER CONSERVATION

Fostering water conservation and efficiency must be a central part of the state's water management strategy for the future. These efforts should include but not be limited to reducing water losses in water distribution systems, encouraging agricultural users to transition to the best available technology for water and irrigation systems, and increasing public education on the value of water conservation. It should also include preserving the watersheds that feed our lakes and aquifers by recognizing and protecting them through land use policies and infrastructure planning. Conservation, and policies supporting it, should drive all decisions regarding water use, from personal use to business use to decisions about the types of crops we grow.

Recommendation: *Support conservation rules and policies, and prioritize projects that will have the greatest impact on protecting water resources and reducing water consumption.*

CREATE TRANSPARENCY IN WATER PLANNING

Texas' State Water Plan is developed by 16 regional water planning groups from across the state that functions independently. To many observers, the groups lack transparency. Issues complicating public access and participation are common. Additionally, public notices of critical meetings by river authorities often provide little time or information for citizen understanding and input.

Recommendation: *Require greater transparency, public access and input to river authorities and regional water planning groups.*

USE UPDATED SCIENTIFIC DATA

Hydrological data provides the foundation for predictive water modeling that guides water management decisions. With much of the state experiencing an increasingly drier climate and a corresponding decline in lake inflows, historical hydrology data can no longer be relied upon to provide accurate projections of future inflows. Updated studies should be conducted to guarantee water management decisions used to ensure our state's future water supplies are based on current inflow modeling.

Recommendation: *Support the use of updated hydrological data in water management decision-making. Staff resources appropriately to provide real-time hydrological data.*

ESTABLISH EQUITABLE WATER RATES TO ENHANCE WATER CONSERVATION BY ALL

Water pricing is an important factor in managing water demand and should support the state's growing emphasis on conservation. While many municipal and industrial users face higher rates that encourage reduced use, other pricing practices provide little incentive for conservation.

Recommendation: *Require fair and equitable pricing of water for all customers to encourage conservation. Create a viable avenue for customers to appeal water rates they believe to be unjust and discriminatory.*

For more information on the Central Texas Water Coalition or to support its efforts by contributing go to: www.CentralTexasWaterCoalition.org

To make a tax deductible donation, go to www.friendsoftwc.org

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