



**CENTRAL TEXAS WATER COALITION COMMENTS FOR
CONSIDERATION AT LCRA'S WATER OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021**

The Central Texas Water Coalition (CTWC) is pleased to note that the LCRA Board has posted an agenda item for the upcoming Water Operations Committee Meeting entitled "2020 Water Management Plan Discussion." As our state thaws out and recovers from the extreme and long-lasting cold weather that we experienced last week, along with the widespread losses of electricity and water supplies, the inclusion of a discussion on the 2020 Water Management Plan is timely and appreciated. We believe the current Water Management Plan (WMP), while an improvement from earlier plans, still includes inherent risks and risk management issues that should be addressed and mitigated.

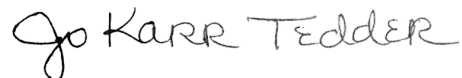
Specifically, the WMP allows significant over-drafting of LCRA's stored water supply via substantial irrigation and environmental releases. In addition, this over-drafting of stored water is not formally included by LCRA in its water availability calculations for Firm Water, and the Firm Yield calculations for Lakes Buchanan and Travis lack sufficient protections for LCRA's Firm Water commitments, since they assume the lakes can be emptied, if needed.

Most importantly, documented, continuing evidence of shocking declines in the inflows that replenish the stored water in the Highland Lakes serves as a warning sign that the risk management aspects of this WMP should be closely examined. Low inflows, combined with the extraordinary population growth in Central Texas and the resulting increases in municipal and industrial water demands, pose a threat that the water supply in the Highland Lakes can be rapidly drawn down. This leaves the region vulnerable to prolonged periods of drought, as well as other challenging conditions.

Better risk management practices and policies are needed to adequately prepare for harsh, long-lasting weather events. The devastatingly cold weather last week showed us that the water supply in Central Texas, which relies upon water stored in the Highland Lakes, is affected by both drought and by extreme cold (with supplies dwindling or disappearing as water pipes broke and water systems ceased to function). We need more protective practices to help us through these trying times -- we cannot just hope for rain without also planning for drought. An extended continuation of the current drought threatens the water supply and the electricity generation system, which requires water for operations. Policies to assure sustainable Firm Water supplies must be incorporated into the upcoming review of electricity management practices.

It is not politics, but rather responsibility and accountability, that will be required to wisely manage critical water and electrical systems. We urge the LCRA Board to be robustly proactive in addressing these issues and in mitigating the risks presented by the current conditions as it conducts its discussions on water management planning and policies.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jo Karr Tedder". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jo Karr Tedder
President, CTWC