Water Wise Irrigation Professional Seminar

Water Supply Outlook

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Drought Page

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Texas Drought

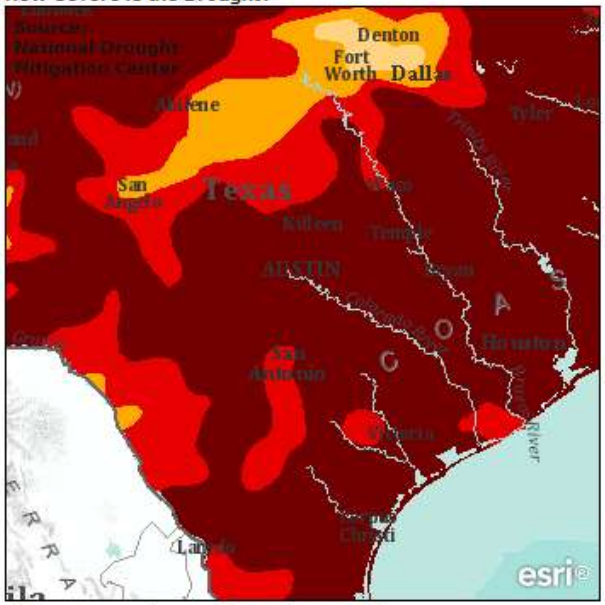
Texas drought could become worst on record

Fall may be bringing some relief from summer's severe heat, but the extreme drought gripping the lower Colorado River basin shows no sign of relenting and could become the worst on record by early spring.

Given this forecast, LCRA's Board of Director decided Sept. 21 to ask the state for permission to significantly curtail or cut off water for downstream agricultural use next year if the levels of lakes Buchanan and Travis remain low. You can read more about that decision here.

The 12 months from October 2010 through September 2011 have been the driest for that 12-month period in Texas since 1895, when the state began keeping rainfall records, This summer in Texas was the hottest in the country's history, according to the National Weather Service. As of Sept. 30, Austin has recorded 90 days of 100-degree temperatures this year, obliterating the old record of 69 days set in 1925. The combination of record low rainfall and unprecedented heat has caused some of the most severe drought conditions ever observed.

How Severe is the Drought?



Use your mouse to zoom in or out or move the map.

Intensity:

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

The U.S Drought Monitor each week classifies the intensity of dry conditions throughout the United States.

HOW FULL ARE THE LAKES?

38%

Lakes Travis and Buchanan are our region's water supply reservoirs and currently hold about 763,305 acre-feet of water.

BOB ROSE'S WEATHER BLOG

RIVERS AND LAKES

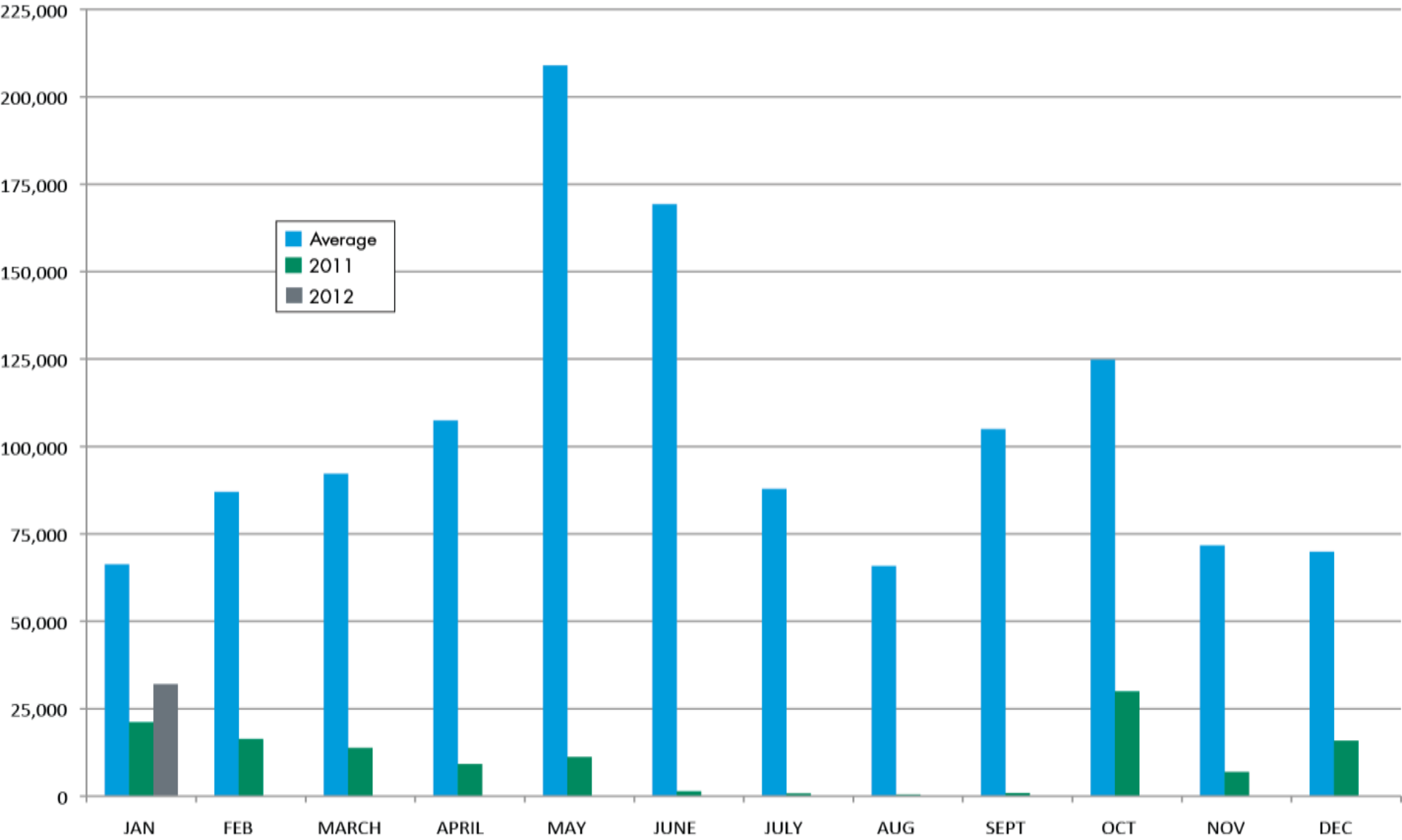
LAKE	LEVEL	MO. AVG
Buchanan	989.43	1011.35
Inks	887.34	887.50
LBJ	824.86	824.03
Marble Falls	736.24	736.06
Travis	627.76	666.20
Austin	491.90	492.18

Daily River Report | Hydromet Data

USEFUL LINKS

- Water Use Restrictions
- Frequently Asked Questions about drought
- Public Boat Ramp

Water flowing into the Highland Lakes



*Inflows: the estimated amount of water flowing into the Highland Lakes from rivers and streams. Data for 2011and 2012 are preliminary and subject to change.

January totals (in acre-feet)

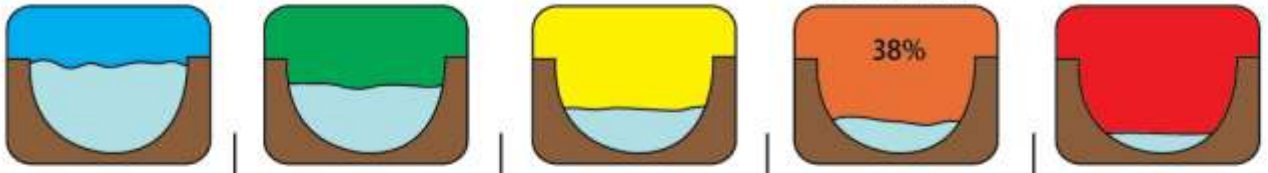
Average:	66,262
2011:	21,158
2012:	32,022

Water Supply Status

February 1, 2012

Lakes Travis and Buchanan Current Storage : 760,000 acre-feet (AF)

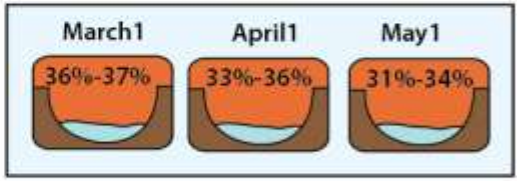
We Are Here



	Good	Fair	Cautious	Severe	Emergency
Water Supply	2 - 1.7 MAF (> 85%)	<1.7 - 1.4 MAF (85% - 70%)	< 1.4 MAF - 900,000 AF (70% - 45%)	< 900,000 - 600,000 AF (45% - 30%)	< 600,000 AF (< 30%) (Drought worse than Drought of Record)
Impacts	None	Begin environmental reductions**	• Request voluntary firm demand reductions. • Reduce agricultural supply**	• Increase reductions for agriculture* • Increase voluntary reduction for firm demand • Increase reductions for environmental**	• Agricultural supply cutoff • Firm pro-rata curtailment
Actions		January 1, 2011, reduced supply for environmental flows when storage was 1.55 MAF	May 2, 2011, requested voluntary firm demand reductions, when storage was less than 1.4 MAF	• August 23, 2011, requested firm water customers implement mandatory water use restrictions. • Dec. 7, 2011, TCEQ approved LCRA's request for temporary emergency changes to the Water Management Plan. • Jan. 1, 2012 further reduced supply for environmental flows when storage was 0.74 MAF.	
Forecast				Combined storage on March 1, 2012, could be as low as 730,000 to 740, 000 AF, triggering reduction or cutoff of supply for agriculture	
Notes				Agricultural reduction or cutoff likely in 2012	

Last Three Months

Outlook***



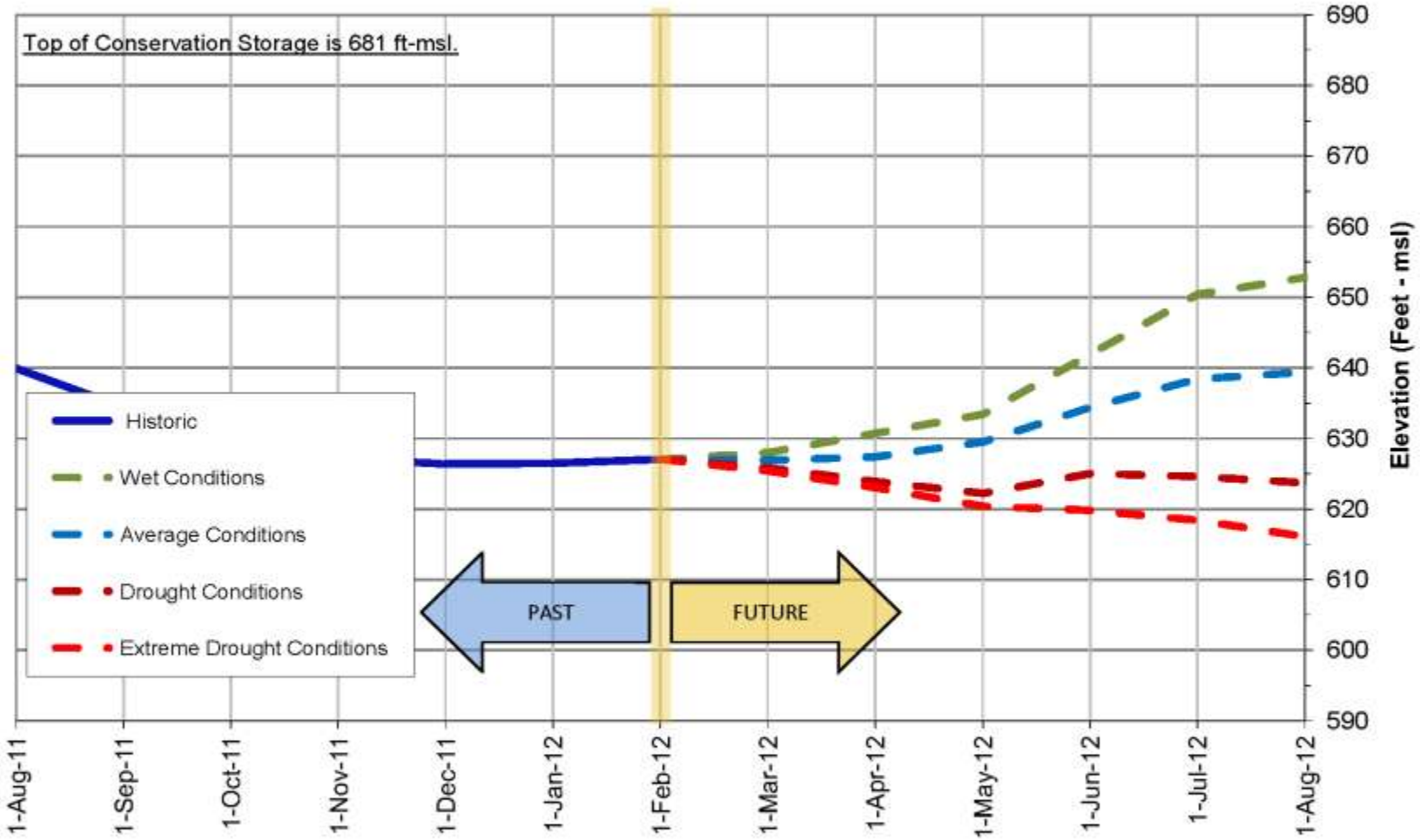
1 Year Ago

* Based on March 1 storage in lakes
** Based on Jan.1 storage in lakes
*** Based on forecasted continuation of very dry conditions and very low inflows to the Highland Lakes.

Note: One acre-foot (AF) equals 325, 851 gallons.

Lake Travis Level Forecast

WITH EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF IN 2012



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1/30/2012
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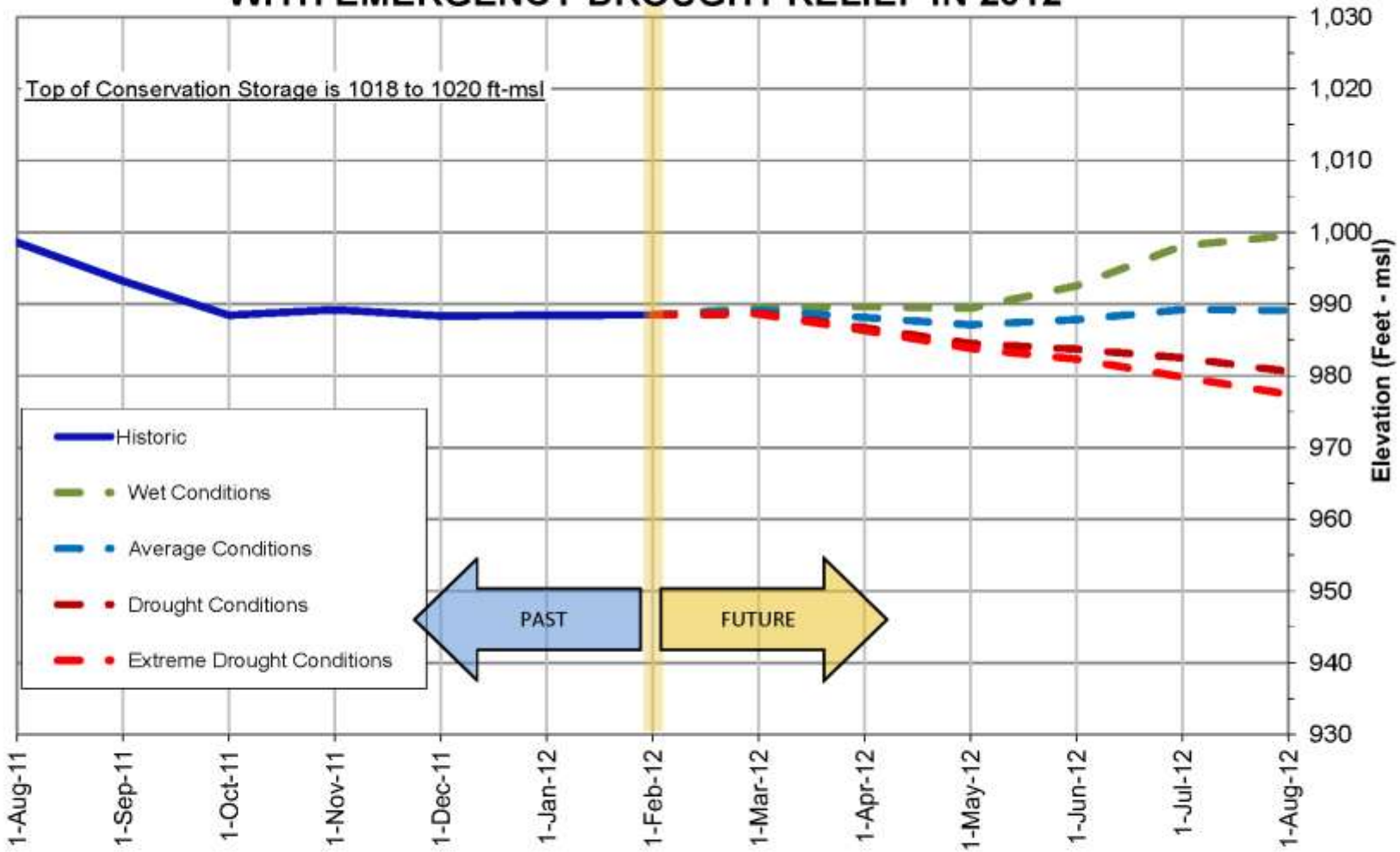
REA

Lake Buchanan Level Forecast
WITH EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF IN 2012



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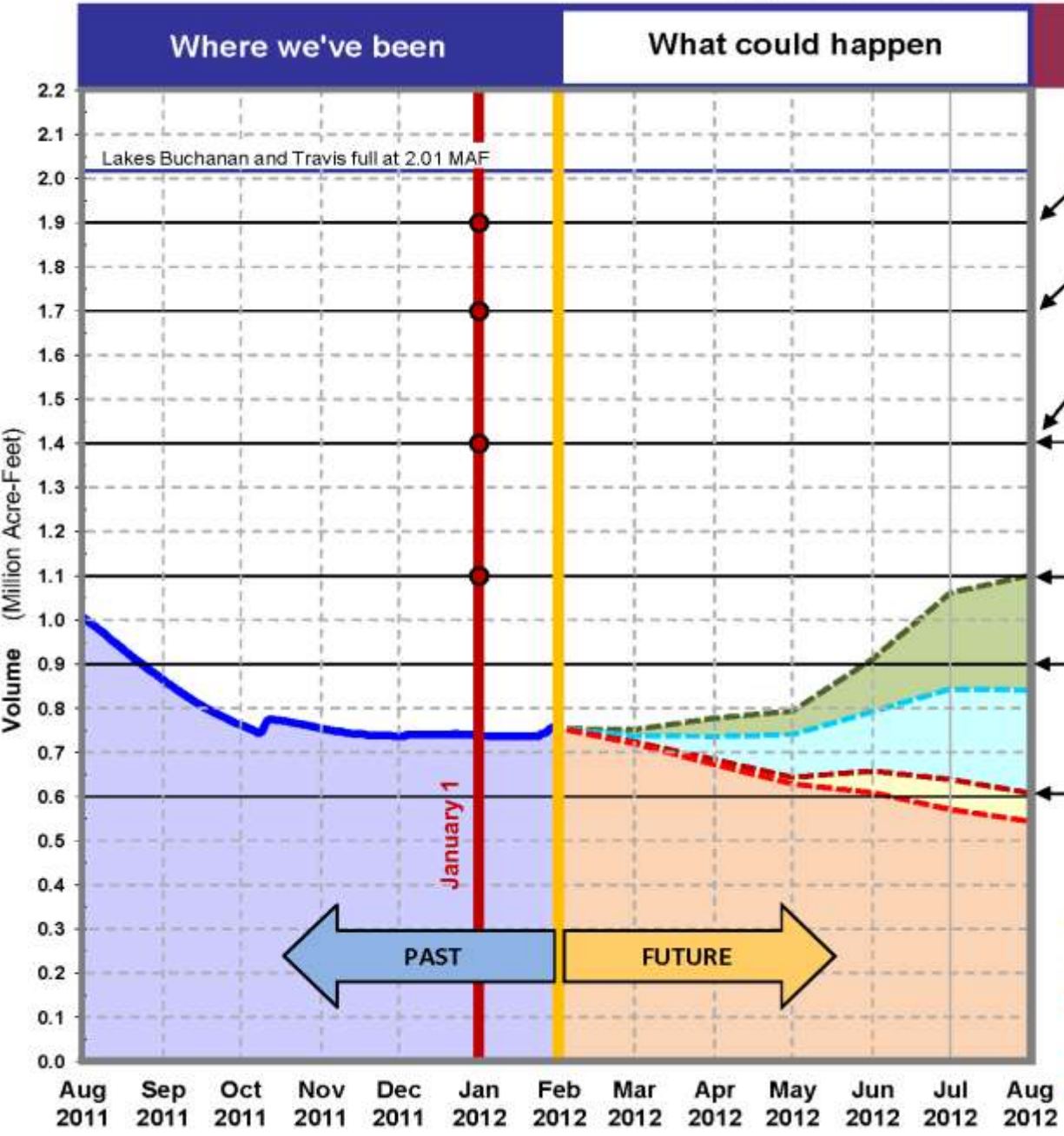
Highland Lakes Storage



2010 Water Management Plan Trigger Points

1.9 MAF - 94% Total Combined Capacity
On Jan. 1 or July 1 - Interruptible supplies are ceased for all customers except four major irrigation operations.

1.7 MAF - On Jan. 1 - Bay and Estuary
Reduce bay and estuary releases to meet 150 percent of critical needs (limited by Storable Inflows).

1.4 MAF - Any time - Firm Demands
Request firm customers to implement voluntary water use reduction measures to achieve a 5 percent reduction in use.

1.4 MAF - On Jan. 1 - Interruptible Supply
Begin gradual curtailment of interruptible supply to four major irrigation operations. Curtailment increases with lower storage levels. Environmental releases for instream flows are reduced to meet critical needs.

1.1 MAF - On Jan. 1 - Bay and Estuary
Environmental releases for bay and estuaries are reduced to meet critical needs.

900,000 AF - Any time - Firm Demands
Request firm customers to implement mandatory water use restrictions to achieve a 10-20 percent reduction in use. Meet with customers to develop a curtailment plan should drought worsen.

600,000 AF - Drought Worse Than Drought of Record - Cease Interruptible and Curtail Firm
If criteria indicate drought worse than record, begin curtailment of firm supply after ceasing interruptible supply (timing based on duration of drought).

- Historic Lake Capacity
- Forecast - Wet Conditions
- Forecast - Average Conditions
- Forecast - Drought Conditions
- Forecast - Extreme Drought Conditions

Note: MAF equals One Million Acre-Feet
One Acre-Foot (AF) equals 325,851 gallons.

Date: February 1, 2012

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