



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
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GBRA to Inflate Salt Water Barrier; Issue Boating Caution

For More Information

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SEGUIN- Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) officials are taking steps to protect local water supplies from salt water intrusion as drought conditions trigger declining river flows and water levels.

"The Guadalupe River Basin and south central Texas is experiencing severe drought," said Herb Wittliff, manager for GBRA's Calhoun County Operations. Today's Canyon Reservoir elevation is 906.49 feet mean sea level (msl), almost three feet below its conservation pool level of 909 feet msl, the reservoir inflow is 32 cubic feet per second (cfs) and the outflow is 246 cfs.

"Because the river stage at the GBRA Lower Guadalupe Diversion Dam and Salt Water Barrier near Tivoli is only 2.15 above mean sea level, GBRA will activate the barrier by inflating both the inboard and outboard fabric dam bags at the structure late tomorrow evening (Friday, June 20)," said Wittliff. "This will prevent salt water from migrating upstream of the barrier as flows continue to decline, and entering the GBRA freshwater diversion system that delivers raw water from the Guadalupe River to municipal, industrial and agricultural users in Calhoun County."

Because a 2- to 4-foot drop in water level is possible from the upstream to the downstream side of the Salt Water Barrier when activated, GBRA has issued a boating caution for anyone who uses the lower Guadalupe River near Tivoli for water recreation or commercial fishing. Warning signs will be posted and lights will provide illumination for night-time conditions. Attempting to pass through the structure in a boat while the barrier is in operation could result in serious injury, or possible loss of life. Boaters on the upstream side must stay a safe distance away from the structure to avoid being carried downstream by a strong current.

The Lower Guadalupe Diversion Dam and Salt Water Barrier was built in 1965 by GBRA and is located near Tivoli, about 10 miles upstream of the mouth of the Guadalupe River. The barrier is designed to allow river flows to pass through at all times. When the barrier is activated, water will pool for a short distance upstream of the bags until it reaches an elevation of about 4 feet, at which point it spills over the bags and continues its normal course downstream to the bay. This upstream level also maintains a more efficient gravity flow in GBRA's freshwater diversion system. When not in operation, the fabric dam bags are deflated and lie flat on the river bottom.

The barrier will remain in operation until river conditions improve. While GBRA is aware of the inconvenience to the boating public, operation of this structure is essential to safeguard water supplies for agricultural, industrial and municipal drinking water use. For more information, contact the GBRA Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant at (361) 552-9751.

The GBRA was established by the Texas Legislature in 1933 as a water conservation and reclamation district. GBRA provides stewardship for the water resources in its 10-county statutory district, which begins near the headwaters of the Guadalupe and Blanco rivers, ends at San Antonio Bay, and includes Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun, and Refugio counties.