



**US Army Corps
of Engineers
Fort Worth District**

News Release

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Low water level facility closures and cautions

FORT WORTH, TX – In 1972 the Whitney Lake conservation pool elevation was raised to 533 feet. Since that time the pool has fallen below elevation 521 feet on three occasions: August 1978 the elevation fell to 520.25 feet, in October 1984 the elevation went down to 520.99 feet and in December 1988 the elevation dropped to 520.46 feet. In the absence of significant rainfall pool levels are again expected to drop below 521 feet.

Releases for water supply and hydropower generation will continue until the storage dedicated to those purposes is depleted at the elevation of 520 feet. If the pool reaches an elevation of 520 feet the rate of decline thereafter may be expected to decrease as loss of water from the lake is reduced to evaporation and a minimal amount of discharge through the dam to maintain oxygen and flow in the Brazos River.

Whitney Lake is currently at an elevation of 521 feet or 12 feet below the conservation pool, making some U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operated facilities difficult or impossible to use. Although all campsites, picnic sites, playgrounds, and group facilities are open without restrictions, swim beaches and boat ramps are being negatively impacted. Currently, Lofers Bend Day Use and McCown Valley Day Use are swim areas closed. These areas are designed so that beach conditions meet basic safety guidelines for depth, bottom contour and hazards. Those areas are well above the waterline; the current water levels have created a new waterline below the designated swim area and may not meet safety guidelines.

Additionally, many boat ramps are currently unusable and have been closed. These include West Lofers Bend, East Lofers Bend ramp #2, Kimball Bend, Ham Creek, Steele Creek Ramp #2, as well as Walling Bend and Lakeside Village ramps under lease to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Remaining ramps are very marginal and are best suited for smaller boats, extreme caution should be used when using ramps at Lofers Bend Day Use, Cedron Creek, McCown Valley, and Walling Bend Cliffs.

CLOSURES

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Although some ramps will be excavated next week, many are so far from deep water, they will be impossible to improve at this lake level.

The most functional ramps are Lofers Bend East, Plowman Creek, Cedar Creek, and Steele Creek ramp #1 Red Bluff side. Caution should be maintained with these ramps as well due to rocks and gravel bars are usually present at all ramps.

All boaters, regardless of familiarity with the lake, are urged to exercise caution. Last week a large pleasure boat ran aground illustrating how dramatically the lake can change at lower levels. Boaters should be on the look out for obstacles, check areas they will use well before skiing or tubing, and be alert for congestion as boat traffic is crowded into smaller areas than normal.

Without sustained rainfall over a large area, the potential length or severity of the low water level is difficult to predict. Please enjoy Whitney Lake safely and responsibly. For more information call the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer office at (254) 622-3332.

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