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Barton and Onion creeks in trouble

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Drought status set to critical

Updated: Friday, 17 Jul 2009, 5:40 PM CDT
Published : Friday, 17 Jul 2009, 12:59 PM CDT

- [Natalie Stoll](#)

AUSTIN (KXAN) - Barton Creek and Onion Creek replenish the [Edwards Aquifer](#) . However, both have been mostly dry for over a year.

Barton Creek near Highway 290 and Trautwein Road is dirt. Rope swings hang feet above the creek floor.

"Now that it's dried up, there's no fish," said Tyler Higgins, who lives near Barton Creek. "When it does fill up, you can swim in it. But, it's not the same. When it gets wet, it gets turned into mud because everything's so dry."

The [Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District](#) said this drought is rivaling that of the 1950s. Critical drought status has been in place since December as Barton Springs flow remains under 20 cubic feet per second. Critical drought status means there is a 30 percent reduction in pumping. Outdoor watering is prohibited.

"If you know what your monthly water use is, it shouldn't be more than 2,000-3,000 gallons per person per month," said John Dupnik, an Environmental Permit Specialist with the BSEACD.

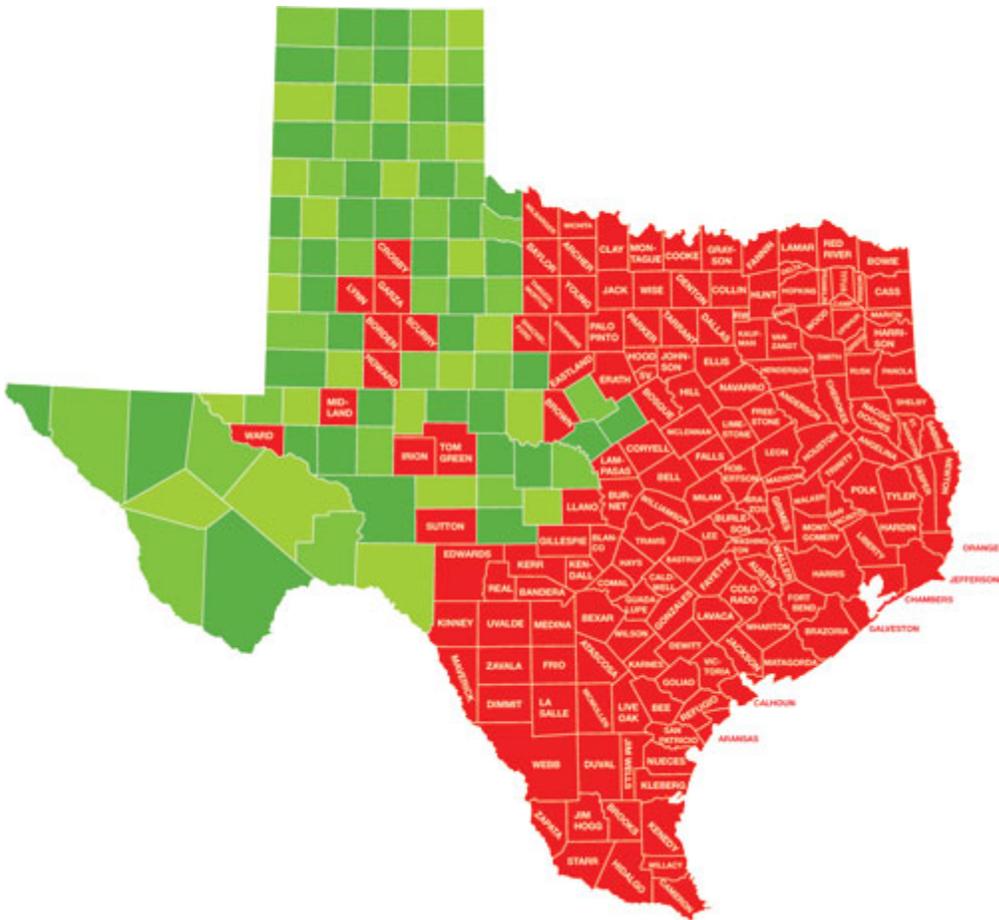
Over the past 10 days, [Barton Springs](#) flow is averaging 17.4 cubic feet for second. On Friday, the flow measured 15 cubic feet per second. BSEACD is proposing two additional drought stages:

1. Exceptional drought stage would minimize all water usage
2. Emergency Response drought stage would stop all non-essential water use.

The proposed stages could be ready for use by the end of the summer.

Some conservation techniques include avoid using automatic irrigation systems and hose end sprinklers, do not wash your car, avoid refilling pools and cut off any non-essential water use.

Below is a map of the Texas counties which are currently in drought:



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