



LAKE BLALOCK FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Watershed maintenance and lake levels

1. What is a “drawdown?”

Our watershed management strategy includes a wide variety of routine maintenance and monitoring activities to not only protect the health of the lake, but also to provide adjacent property owners the opportunity to conduct maintenance activities that support water quality goals and safe recreational access. As part of this ongoing maintenance, Spartanburg Water has planned to initiate a lake level “drawdown” that will slowly lower Lake Blalock’s water level approximately 2 ½-3 feet.

2. Why do you need to reduce the levels of Lake Blalock?

Spartanburg Water staff has received requests from several adjacent property owners wishing to perform maintenance on their docks or stabilize certain areas of the shoreline that may be experiencing erosion. Our watershed team will work with adjacent property owners that may have questions or want to perform maintenance during the projected drawdown period. Spartanburg Water also plans to take advantage of the lower levels to survey the lakeshore and exercise the valves and gates used to control and maintain “full pool” status.

3. When is the last time that Spartanburg Water lowered Lake Blalock?

While a drawdown of the lake is not an annual process, our watershed management team does lower the levels when necessary in our reservoirs. We last organized a “maintenance” drawdown between December 2014 and February 2015. We also recently dropped the water level approximately three feet for a short time this fall in anticipation of rainfall projected from Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Michael. In both of these instances, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Dam Safety Program officials requested that dam owners in South Carolina start lowering reservoir levels several days ahead of the storm(s). This was further supported by the governor’s office in preparation for significant rainfall within the state during this time.

4. How long will Lake Blalock’s levels be lower than normal?

We will begin this project in early December. The drawdown will continue until the end of February, providing our watershed management staff and you, as adjacent property owners, an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance. The reservoir water level may fluctuate during the drawdown period, especially in the event of heavy rainfall. This may result in a longer time to reach our target drawdown level and, if wet weather patterns persist, may actually prevent us from reaching or sustaining these lower levels in Lake Blalock.



5. I like to fish and enjoy the lake in the wintertime. Will the lowered levels interfere with my recreation plans?

While we do not expect this drawdown to have any drastic impact on normal recreation activities, like fishing, there may be areas of the lake that may be harder to navigate during the drawdown. Our staff will be posting signs to alert boaters of the potential hazards of using their watercraft while the reservoir is at a lower level. As always, we encourage safety. Please speak with a Lake Warden to ensure that your plans do not involve taking your boat into a portion of the reservoir that may be difficult to navigate in the months of December, January and February.

6. What kind of maintenance can I do on my property?

Adjacent property owners may benefit from the lower levels, which provide perfect conditions to survey erosion and perform miscellaneous maintenance projects, including the construction or repair of docks and walkways. Spartanburg Water is providing advance notice of the drawdown to allow you the time needed to consider and schedule any maintenance or upgrades to the shoreline or permitted structures, including those that require obtaining certain permits. Adjacent property owners are reminded that maintenance activities do **not** include pushing yard debris or any other material into the lake. In addition, no fires are allowed on property that Spartanburg Water owns (i.e., below the 720' MSL contour line).

7. How do I get a permit?

Other than minor maintenance activities as defined by Spartanburg Water, permits are required for any work that falls below the 720' contour, and we encourage you to make permit applications to ensure adequate time for them to be processed and issued by our watershed management team and lake staff. Assess your needs and start planning now - do not delay in seeking a permit if you plan to perform work during the drawdown period. Contact the Lake Blalock Wardens' office immediately if you are planning on maintenance/shoreline stabilization activities.

Applications are available at the Lake Blalock Wardens Office, located at 1925 Sandy Ford Road, Chesnee. Sign up for our Lake Alerts for drawdown information at <https://www.spartanburgwater.org/lakealerts>.

For information about when permits are needed, visit <https://www.spartanburgwater.org/blalockpermits> or call our Lake Blalock Wardens Office at (864) 578-5442.

8. Do I need to move my boat?

Although not required, we recommend that any boats be moved from the water during the drawdown. Please call our office at (864) 578-5442 if there are specific questions regarding boats on the lake.



9. How consistent will you be able to hold the level of Lake Blalock in order for adjacent property owners to perform maintenance?

While Spartanburg Water will be working towards lowering Lake Blalock by 2 ½-3 feet, keeping it lowered may be challenging during rainfall events or wet weather patterns.

It is expected that the water level will fluctuate during the drawdown period due to projected weather patterns for December 2018 through February 2019. As adjacent property owners consider and begin to implement permitted projects, it is recommended that weather forecasts be monitored on a regular basis, especially when planning key shoreline work.