



**\*\*Media Alert\*\***

**Declaration of Drought Warning – Fact Sheet**

Charlottesville, VA—October 6, 2017

As a follow-up to the Press Release “RWSA Declares Drought Warning” issued on October 5, 2017, RWSA is publishing the following Fact Sheet to provide additional information to the public.

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Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority  
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# **Fact Sheet: RWSA Drought Warning Declaration**

October 6, 2017

## **1. Why did RWSA declare a Drought Watch and a Drought Warning?**

Since August 3, 2017, water storage at South Fork Rivanna Reservoir (SFRR) has declined from 100% to 42% of capacity. This was a decrease from about 880 million gallons to 370 million gallons, an average decrease of about 8.5 million gallons per day (mgd).

## **2. What is the difference between Drought Watch and Drought Warning?**

Drought Watch is a request to the public to voluntarily reduce water usage. A Drought Warning includes mandatory restrictions on certain types of water usage.

## **3. Why was there a quick change from Drought Watch to Drought Warning?**

Between September 25 and October 2, 2017, water storage at SFRR has declined from 59% to 45% of capacity, an average decrease of about 15.5 mgd, indicating the loss of water storage may be accelerating as the drought conditions persist. The drought stage was upgraded to a Drought Warning by RWSA on October 5, 2017 due to this rapid loss of water storage at the SFRR.

## **4. The New Ragged Mountain Dam was built in 2014 for this community. Why do we need water restrictions with the additional water storage in the expanded Ragged Mountain Reservoir?**

The SFRR is the sole source of supply to the South Rivanna Water Treatment Plan (SRWTP). The volume of water in Ragged Mountain Reservoir (1.2 billion gallons) is not available to be treated at the SRWTP. Water must be produced at both treatment plants to serve the entirety of the urban area of Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Crozet and Scottsville have separate water treatment systems that are not included in the urban area.

## **5. What is RWSA doing to resolve the water supply concern at South Fork Rivanna Reservoir?**

Operational measures have been implemented to minimize water usage from the SFRR and maximize water usage from the Ragged Mountain Reservoir. In addition, we have requested a permit variance from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to reduce the instream release requirements at the SFRR from 9 MGD to 1.3 MGD during this drought period. DEQ has indicated we must impose mandatory water conservation measures for our request to be considered.

## **6. What if it rains this weekend?**

We will continue to evaluate precipitation, daily reservoir levels, and streamflow releases. Drought recovery may take several months, depending on the amount of rain we receive and the severity of the dry conditions in the watershed.

## **7. How can you help?**

You can help by being mindful of your water use, and following the City and the County's mandatory water restrictions.

### **Contacts or Questions:**

- For questions regarding reservoir levels:  
**Andrea Terry, RWSA Water Resources Manager (434-977-2970, ext 197).**
- For questions regarding specific water restrictions, please contact your retail water provider (the entity that bills you for water).  
**City of Charlottesville Public Utilities Department 434-970-3800.**  
**Albemarle County Service Authority 434-977-4511**

Additional information is also available on the websites of:

RWSA - [www.rivanna.org](http://www.rivanna.org)

ACSA - [www.serviceauthority.org](http://www.serviceauthority.org)

City of Charlottesville - [www.charlottesville.org](http://www.charlottesville.org)