Cedar Creek (1209G) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Cedar Creek (1209G) in the summer of 2010 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Cedar Creek is an unclassified perennial water body that is approximately 23 miles in length. The creek is located in Robertson and Brazos counties. It was identified in the 2012 Texas Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies due to elevated bacteria levels. It was initially listed in 2002.

The RUAA identified that the presumed use of primary contact recreation (PCR) for Cedar Creek should be revised to secondary contact recreation 1 (SCR 1). SCR applies to water bodies where water recreation can occur, but the nature of the recreation does not involve a significant risk of ingestion. SCR 1 applies to intermittent and perennial freshwaters where site-specific information demonstrates that primary contact recreation has little to no likelihood of occurring due to physical characteristics of the water body such as shallow depths or lack of pools.

During the field surveys, field staff observed a few people fishing. Six interviews were conducted with landowners who had property along or near the creek. One interviewee stated that their grandchildren like to swim and play along the banks. Fishing was reported as a personal and a witnessed use. During the field surveys, an additional landowner informed field staff that they had never seen any recreation on the creek and that it was too muddy. Cedar Creek had an average thalweg of 0.60 meters (23.62 in). One site had an impoundment and pools deeper than 1 meter. The thalweg depth was calculated with data from supplemental site visits. The average stream flow was 1.4 cubic feet per second. The Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI) indicated normal conditions during both field surveys. Public access to Cedar Creek was described as moderate with the stream flowing predominately through private property. There are no public parks on the water body and most road crossings were fenced off on upstream and downstream access points. Fences, log jams, and steep slopes were all documented as instream impediments.

Limited access and instream impediments decrease the likelihood of PCR use, supporting reclassification to SCR1. In accordance with §307.4 (j)(3)(C) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ recommends a reclassification from PCR to SCR1 with the corresponding geometric mean of 630 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for all of Cedar Creek, from the confluence with the Navasota River in Brazos County to the confluence with Moores Branch and Rocky Branch in Robertson County. This reclassification is appropriate due to "physical conditions related to the natural features of the water body" in accordance with reasons specified in 40 CFR §131.10(g)(5).

Prior to changing the currently assigned recreational use of Cedar Creek in the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ would provide additional public notice and opportunity for public comment. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency would review this proposed change under the provisions of the federal Clean Water Act.