



Improving Water Quality in the Lower Leon Creek Assessing the Contact Recreation Use

In 2006, TCEQ assessment indicated that in Lower Leon Creek, concentrations of bacteria were regularly at levels that might pose a health risk for swimmers. High concentrations of bacteria, which are commonly found in the intestines of warm-blooded animals, may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms. This can pose an increased health risk to people who swim or wade in the creek—activities called “contact recreation” in the state’s standards for water quality.

In 2008, the TMDL Program initiated an assessment project to determine the extent and severity of water quality impairment in Lower Leon Creek.

Learn more about water quality standards and monitoring by reading *Preserving and Improving Water Quality*, available on the TMDL Program’s Web pages at <www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/tmdl>.

Lower Leon Creek Watershed

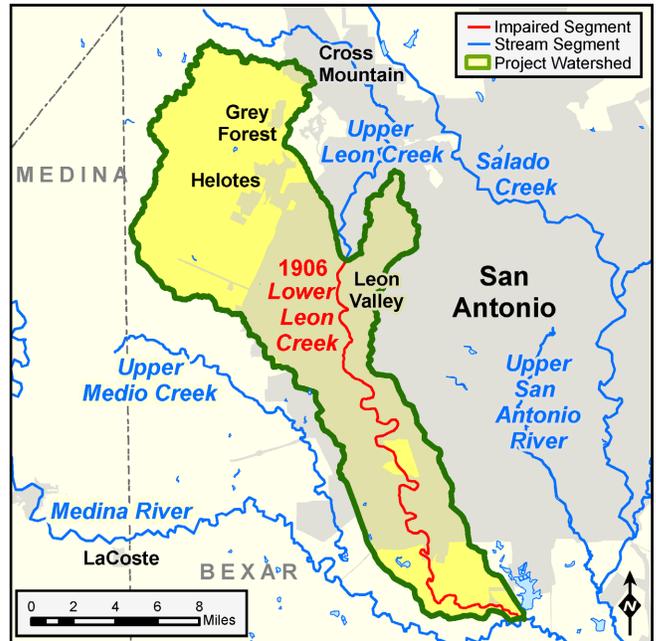
Lower Leon Creek, Segment 1906, drains an area of 228 square miles and has a total continuous length of 57 miles. It originates as a spring-fed stream in the Edwards Plateau region of south central Texas. The creek runs from its headwaters in northern Bexar County to its confluence with the Medina River. The creek generally flows south and enters the main portion of the Kelly Air Force Base (AFB) from the northwest, near the intersection of Billy Mitchell Road and Westover Road.

Leon Creek drains a highly urbanized residential area and the Kelly and Lackland AFBs. Water quality in the creek is affected by industrial and municipal wastewater discharges and storm water. The project watershed includes the municipalities of San Antonio, Cross Mountain, Helotes, and Leon Valley.

Project Development

The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) collected data to support the assessment and coordinated public involvement in the Lower Leon Creek Watershed. Data collection began in 2008, and included bacteria sampling and storm event sampling. The sampling and analysis were completed in the summer of 2010.

Bacteria sampling associated with the project showed that the contact recreation use was being met. The bacteria impairment was subsequently removed from the Texas 303(d) list of impaired waters.



Public Participation

In all its projects, the TMDL Program gathers opinion and information from a variety of people with interest in the watershed. The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) coordinated local involvement for this project with the help of the Bexar Regional Watershed Management (BRWM) Water Quality Focus Group, a public participation forum <www.bexarwatershed.org>.

For More Information

Contact one of the people listed, or visit the project page at:

<www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/84-lowerleonbactdo.html>

TCEQ Project Manager

Jason Leifester
TMDL Program
(512) 239-6457
Jason.Leifester@tceq.texas.gov

San Antonio River Authority

Michael Gonzales
Environmental Services Department
(210) 227-1373
mgonzales@sara-tx.org

TMDL Status

Start Date: September 2008

End Date: August 2010

This project did not result in development of TMDLs.

Assessment: Percent Complete

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Data Collection										
Data Analysis										

Project Highlights

- A two-year intensive effort to collect additional data about indicator bacteria was completed in 2010.
- Review and analysis of the new data showed the creek is supporting its contact recreation use.
- The TCEQ and the San Antonio River Authority will continue to monitor Leon Creek under the TCEQ's Surface Water Quality Monitoring and Clean Rivers programs.

Visit our website at: <www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/tmdl/>