

Caney Creek (0502B) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use-attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Caney Creek (0502B) in the summers of 2010 and 2011 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Caney Creek is an unclassified perennial water body within Newton County, approximately 25 miles in length. 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 2006.

The RUAA identified that the presumed use of primary contact recreation (PCR) for Caney Creek is appropriate. PCR 1 is defined in §307.3 (a) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards as activities that are presumed to involve a significant risk of ingestion of water (e.g. wading by children, swimming, water skiing, diving, tubing, surfing, and the following whitewater activities: kayaking, canoeing, and rafting).

Field staff observations and interviews indicate that PCR is occurring on Caney Creek. At one site there were several children using a rope swing at a swimming hole. Interviews indicate several instances of wading by children. Secondary contact recreation was common along Caney Creek and was reported in interviews and observed by field staff. Public access was available at eight of fifteen survey sites. Despite difficult access from some sites and a public park that prohibits fishing and swimming, Caney Creek is used for primary contact recreation. The average thalweg depth of Caney Creek was 0.53 m (20.8 in) and during the June surveys 80% of sites had pools deeper than one meter.

Based on evidence collected during the RUAA study, the TCEQ recommends that Caney Creek retain its primary contact recreation use and corresponding *E. coli* geometric mean criteria of 126 colonies/100mL for the entire segment, the 25 mile stretch of Caney Creek from the Davison St crossing in Newton to the confluence with Martin Branch, in accordance with §307.4 (j) (1) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards.