

Unnamed Tributary of Scarborough Creek (1255F) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use-attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on the Unnamed Tributary of Scarborough Creek (1255F) in the summer of 2009 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Unnamed Tributary of Scarborough Creek is an unclassified intermittent water body in north central Texas, approximately 3 miles in length. It is currently listed on the 2014 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 Unnamed Tributary of Scarborough 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 did not observe any type of recreation occurring on the stream nor did they find any evidence of recreation. A landowner interviewed stated the stream only flowed after heavy rains. When it did flow, adults and children waded and fished. Another interviewee did not know of any recreation occurring on the stream and described it as a dry gully most of the time. All others interviewed did not know of any PCR occurring on the stream. The stream was completely dry at the time of the study and a biologist familiar with the water body stated the flow rate is usually less than 0.1 cubic feet per second. Public access is very limited. There is one bridge crossing and the stream flows predominately through private lands.

Naturally low water levels and limited accessibility decrease the likelihood of PCR use. The Unnamed Tributary to Scarborough Creek has few public road crossings, 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 SCR 1 with the corresponding geometric mean of 630 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for all of Unnamed Tributary of Scarborough Creek, from its confluence with Scarborough Creek in Erath County to its headwaters, 0.2 miles southeast of the intersection of FM 8 and Farm Road 1219. This reclassification is appropriate due to “natural, ephemeral, intermittent low flow conditions or water levels” in accordance with reasons specified in 40 CFR §131.10(g)(2).

Prior to changing the currently assigned recreational use of Unnamed Tributary of Scarborough 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.