

Indian Creek (1221D) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use-attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on the Indian Creek (1221D) in the summer of 2009 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Indian Creek is an unclassified perennial water body in central Texas, approximately 30 miles in length. It is currently listed on the 2010 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 Indian Creek should be revised to secondary contact recreation 2 (SCR 2). 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 2 applies to water bodies where water recreation activities do not involve a significant risk of ingestion and where activities occur less frequently than for secondary contact recreation 1 due to physical characteristics of the water body or limited public access.

Individuals familiar with the stream did not use the stream for PCR, nor had they seen or heard of PCR on the water body. Others interviewed had no knowledge of PCR on the stream and cited lack of water and limited public access as the reason. Occasional fishing was the only recreation reported on the stream and non-contact recreation was observed. Physical characteristics of the stream include an average thalweg of 0.30 meters (11.81 in) and no pools greater than one meter deep. Public access is moderate. The stream flows through a park and the City of Comanche, and there are eight bridge crossings.

Naturally low water levels decrease the likelihood of PCR use. Indian Creek has an extremely shallow average depth and no pools greater than one meter deep, supporting reclassification to SCR 2. In accordance with §307.4 (j) (3)(C) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, the TCEQ recommends a reclassification from PCR to SCR 2 with the corresponding geometric mean of 1030 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for all of Indian Creek, from its confluence with an unnamed second order tributary (approximately 0.7 km downstream of Live Oak Street crossing) upstream to its confluence with Bachelor Prong Creek. 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 Indian 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.