

Little Green Creek (1226M) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Little Green Creek (1226M) in the summer of 2012 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Little Green Creek is an unclassified intermittent with perennial pools water body in Erath County, TX, approximately 6 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 2010.

The RUAA identified evidence indicating the designated use of primary contact recreation (PCR) 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 recreational activities. One interview was conducted and the family stated that they do not use Little Green Creek for recreation due to low water or lack of water. The interviewee had not witnessed or heard of recreational activities occurring in Little Green Creek. Field staff did not report any evidence indicating human use. Physical characteristics of the stream include an average thalweg of 0.52 meters (20.47 in), low flow, and two substantial pools. At the time of the surveys, Little Green Creek had a mid-range Palmer drought index. Public access to Little Green Creek is estimated to be moderate and there are no public recreation areas on the creek. Access to the creek is affected by private property, fences, and steep slopes.

Limited public access and shallow average depths decrease the likelihood of PCR use in the stream. 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 Little Green Creek, from its confluence with Green Creek, upstream to its confluence with the North and South Forks of Little Green Creek, 2.4 miles south of SH 6 in Erath County. 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 Little Green 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.