

Caney Creek Above Tidal (1305) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use-attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Caney Creek Above Tidal (1305) in the summer of 2010 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Caney Creek Above Tidal is a classified perennial water body within Wharton and Matagorda counties, approximately 98 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 2002.

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).

Primary contact recreation was observed during the field surveys and reported in the interviews (e.g., wading by children, swimming, water skiing). Interview forms identified 22 instances of PCR as personal use and 15 instances of witnessed PCR. Additionally, there were 6 instances of heard of PCR occurring on the creek. Evidence of primary contact recreation consisted of a tire swing on the bank and children's toys. Secondary contact recreation was also observed in the field and recorded in surveys (e.g. fishing, canoeing, boating). There are not any publically accessible parks directly adjacent to the creek and most of the creek is on private property. Public access to Caney Creek Above Tidal is limited to bridge crossings. Physical characteristics of the creek include an average thalweg depth of 0.6 m (23.62 in), pools greater than one meter deep and an average stream flow of 59.7 cubic feet per second.

Based on evidence collected during the RUAA study, the TCEQ recommends that Caney Creek Above Tidal retain its primary contact recreation use and corresponding *E. coli* geometric mean criteria of 126 colonies/100mL for the entire segment, the 98 mile stretch of Caney Creek Above Tidal from 1.9 km upstream of the confluence of Linnville Bayou to the confluence with Water Hole Creek, in accordance with §307.4 (j) (1) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards.