

Tankersley Creek (0404B) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Tankersley Creek (0404B) in the summer of 2010 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria.

Tankersley Creek is an unclassified perennial water body running through Titus County. The creek is approximately nine 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 2000.

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 surveys, field staff did not observe any primary or secondary contact recreation occurring on the stream. Interviews indicated that no PCR occurs on the creek. Field staff reported fishing tackle from one site on Tankersley Creek and interviewees had witnessed or heard of fishing and/or hunting. There were no parks, playgrounds, or boat ramps at any of the sites. At public meetings and in interviews stakeholders stated that they prefer nearby lakes for fishing rather than Tankersley Creek. Public access to Tankersley Creek is limited because much of the creek is on private property that generally has barbed wire fences along the property line. Entering the creek was moderately difficult due to steep slopes, thick vegetation, and deep mud. Tankersley Creek had an average thalweg depth of 0.8 m (31.5 in) and 80% of sites had pools deeper than one meter.

Limited public access and difficulty entering the stream decrease the likelihood of PCR use. 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 Tankersley Creek, from Tankersley Lake to its confluence with Big Cypress Creek. This reclassification is appropriate due to “physical conditions related to the natural features of the water body” in accordance with reasons specified in 40 CFR §131.10(g)(5).

Prior to changing the currently assigned recreational use of Tankersley 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.