

## Dixon Creek (0101A) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use-attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Dixon Creek (0101A) in the summer of 2013 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Dixon Creek is an unclassified water body that is approximately 20 miles in length. The creek is located in Hutchinson and Carson counties. It was identified in the 2014 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 that the presumed use of primary contact recreation (PCR) for Dixon 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 form of recreation occurring on the stream. Interviews with stakeholders and landowners indicated that most people have never personally used or witnessed PCR on the stream. Fishing was documented from interviews as observed use and heard of use. Dixon Creek had an average thalweg of 0.07 meters (2.75 inches) and lacked pools deeper than 1 meter. Stream flow was low during both surveys. The stream was experiencing extreme to moderate drought conditions during the time of the surveys. Public access is available at 1 of 8 survey sites. There are no public parks on the creek. Access into the stream is overall moderately easy due to low banks and pasture like conditions; however, access to most of the creek can only be gained through private property.

Naturally low water levels decrease the likelihood of PCR use. Dixon Creek has a shallow average depth and no accounts of PCR, 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 SCR1 with the corresponding geometric mean of 630 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for all of Dixon Creek, from the confluence of the Canadian River upstream to the confluence of the East, Middle, and West Forks of Dixon 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 Dixon 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.