

Upper Oyster Creek (1245) Recreational Use Attainability Analysis Summary and Recommendation

A recreational use-attainability analysis (RUAA) was conducted on Upper Oyster Creek (Segment 1245) in the summer of 2009 to determine the appropriate recreational use and numeric criteria. Upper Oyster Creek is a classified perennial water body in Fort Bend County Texas, approximately 54 miles in length. It was identified in the 2012 Texas Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies as not supporting its recreation use due to elevated bacteria levels. It was initially identified as impaired in 1996.

The RUAA identified evidence indicating the designated use of primary contact recreation (PCR) for Upper Oyster 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).

During the field surveys, interviews of residents in the watershed identified 4 personal instances of people engaging in PCR activities, with wading by children and swimming being the most abundant. In addition, interviewed individuals had personally witnessed 4 instances of PCR activities in the stream, and had heard about 5 instances of PCR activities. Upper Oyster Creek is used very frequently by the Greater Houston Rowing Club. The Club teaches approximately 100 students a year with tipping and total immersion occurring frequently by students, due to feet being “tied in at the shoe” on rowing shells. The average thalweg of the stream was 1.09 meters (42.91 in). General public access is moderate. Upper Oyster Creek flows through four parks (although swimming is prohibited in City of Sugar Land Parks) in the cities of Sugar Land and Missouri City, and provides river front property of numerous houses with piers.

Due to evidence collected during the RUAA determining that PCR is an existing use, the TCEQ recommends Upper Oyster Creek retain its PCR use and corresponding geometric mean criteria of 126 colonies *E. coli*/100mL for the entire segment, from the Steep Bank Creek/Brazos River confluence in Fort Bend County to pumping station on Jones Creek confluence at Brazos River in Fort Bend County (includes portions of Steep Bank Creek, Flat Bank Creek, and Jones Creek). This recommendation is in accordance with §307.4 (j)(1) of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards.