



Improving Water Quality in the Sandy and Wolf Creeks Watersheds

A Project to Protect Contact Recreation Uses

In two stream segments in the Sandy and Wolf creeks watersheds, bacteria concentrations are sometimes higher than the criteria set to protect the safety of recreation. High concentrations of bacteria, which are found in both human and animal waste, may indicate a health risk to people who swim or wade in the water body—activities called “contact recreation” in the state’s standards for water quality.

To address these concerns, people who have a stake in the watershed are working with the TCEQ to develop a total maximum daily load (TMDL) and a plan to implement it (I-Plan). A TMDL is like a budget—it determines the amount (or load) of bacteria that the bayou can receive and still support recreational safety. The allowable load is then allocated among categories of sources within the watershed. The I-Plan outlines the measures that will be used to reduce pollution.

Learn more about water quality standards, monitoring, and TMDLs by reading *Preserving and Improving Water Quality*, available on our website at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/tmdl/.

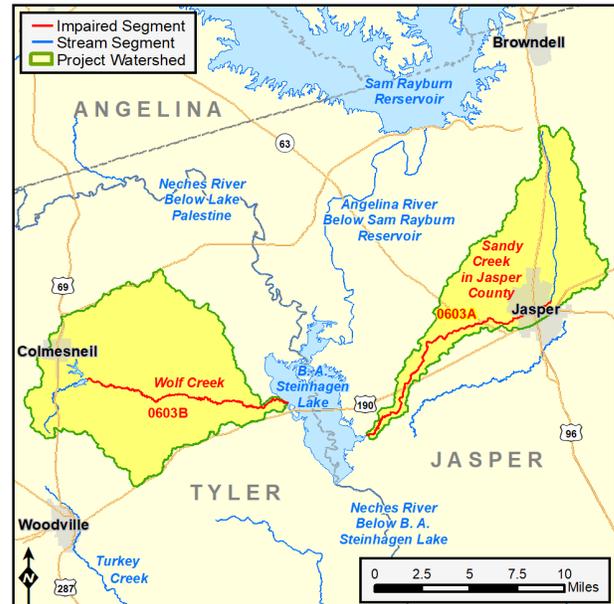
The Sandy and Wolf Creeks Watersheds

The watersheds lie in east Texas about sixty miles north of Beaumont. Sandy and Wolf creeks are tributaries to B.A. Steinhagen Lake. The watersheds include the cities of Colmesneil in Tyler County and Jasper in Jasper County. Wolf Creek flows east before emptying into B.A. Steinhagen Lake. Sandy Creek flows southwest through Jasper before emptying into the lake.

The project includes two stream segments:

- **Sandy Creek in Jasper County**
(Segment 0603A)
From the confluence of B.A. Steinhagen Lake southwest of City of Jasper in Jasper County to the confluence of Big and Little Sandy Creeks in City of Jasper in Jasper County.
- **Wolf Creek**
(Segment 0603B)
From the confluence of B. A. Steinhagen Lake southeast of Colmesneil in Tyler County to the upstream perennial portion of the stream south of Colmesneil in Tyler County.

The Sandy Creek watershed is about 57 square miles. The dominant land cover areas include forest (45%), shrub/scrub (13%) and developed (15%). Jasper is the



largest city in the watershed, with a population of 7,584 in 2018.

The Wolf Creek watershed is about 83 square miles. The dominant land cover areas include forest (50%) and grassland/herbaceous (14%). Colmesneil is the only municipality in the watershed, with a population of 590 in 2018.

Project Development

The TCEQ began this project in 2018. The Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) is providing support for the technical work as well as stakeholder engagement.

The technical tasks of TWRI personnel include compiling and analyzing all available bacteria data and considering sources of the bacteria and their relative contributions.

In addition to the TMDL and I-Plan, stakeholders will consider developing a Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) to address other issues in the watershed.

Public Participation

In all its projects, the TCEQ seeks to gather opinion and information from people who represent government, permitted facilities, agriculture, business, environmental, and community and private interests in the watershed. The TCEQ solicits advice from the public at

meetings and through print and electronic media notices.

TWRI is coordinating stakeholder participation. Stakeholders will guide development of the project.

For More Information

Contact the project manager listed below, or visit the project website at:

www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/nav/118-sandy-wolf-creeks-bacteria

TCEQ Project Manager

Tim Cawthon, TMDL Program

512-239-5451

Tim.Cawthon@tceq.texas.gov

TWRI Project Manager

Michael Schramm, Research Associate

979-458-9191

Michael.Schramm@ag.tamu.edu

TMDL Development Status

Start Date: 2018

TCEQ Adoption:

EPA Region 6 Approval:

I-Plan Development Status

Start Date: 2020

TCEQ Approval:

Project Highlights

- A Watershed Stewards Workshop was held in May 2019 in Jasper.
- A public meeting to discuss water quality in Wolf Creek was held on November 21, 2019, at the Tyler County Extension Office located at 201 Veterans Way in Woodville.
- A public meeting to discuss water quality in Sandy Creek was held on November 21, 2019, at the Jasper County Tax Assessor Office.
- Public meetings scheduled for April 13, 2020, in Woodville and Jasper were postponed in response to COVID-19.
- TCEQ and TWRI held an online meeting with stakeholders on September 1, 2020 to present a summary of the TMDL Technical Support Document developed by TWRI and to begin forming a Coordination Committee for development of the I-Plan.

Visit our website at: www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/tmdl/