



## Improving Water Quality in the Lower Leon Creek Assessing the Contact Recreation Use

In 2006, TCEQ assessment indicated that in Lower Leon Creek, concentrations of bacteria were regularly at levels that might pose a health risk for swimmers. High concentrations of bacteria, which are commonly found in the intestines of warm-blooded animals, may indicate an increased health risk to people who swim or wade in the creek—activities called “contact recreation” in the state’s standards for water quality.

In 2008, TCEQ’s TMDL Program initiated an assessment project to determine the extent and severity of water quality impairment in Lower Leon Creek.

Learn more about water quality standards and monitoring by reading [Preserving and Improving Water Quality](#)<sup>1</sup>, available on our website or in print.

### Lower Leon Creek Watershed

Lower Leon Creek, Segment 1906, drains an area of 228 square miles and has a total length of 57 miles. It originates as a spring-fed stream in the Edwards Plateau region of south central Texas. The creek runs from its headwaters in northern Bexar County to its confluence with the Medina River. The creek generally flows south and enters Kelly Air Force Base (AFB) from the northwest, near the intersection of Billy Mitchell Road and Westover Road.

Leon Creek drains a highly urbanized residential area and the Kelly and Lackland AFBs. Water quality in the creek is affected by industrial and municipal wastewater discharges and stormwater. The project watershed includes the municipalities of San Antonio, Cross Mountain, Helotes, and Leon Valley.

### Project Development

The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) collected data to support the assessment and coordinated public involvement in the Lower Leon Creek watershed. Data collection began in 2008 and included bacteria sampling and storm-event sampling. The sampling and analysis were completed in the summer of 2010.

Bacteria sampling associated with the project showed that the contact recreation use was being met. The bacteria impairment was subsequently removed from TCEQ’s list of impaired waters.



### Public Participation

In all its projects, the TMDL Program gathers opinion and information from a variety of people with interest in the watershed. SARA coordinated local involvement for this project with the help of the Bexar Regional Watershed Management Water Quality Focus Group, an established public participation forum.

### For More Information

Visit the project page at:

[www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/84-lower-leonbactdo.html](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/tmdl/84-lower-leonbactdo.html)

E-mail us at [tmdl@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:tmdl@tceq.texas.gov) or call 512-239-6682.

### Project Dates

**Start Date:** September 2008

**End Date:** August 2010

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/publications/gi/gi-351>