

Recreational Use Attainability Analysis for Choctaw Creek

Website: <http://tiaer.tarleton.edu/ruaa>

Choctaw Creek

Choctaw Creek is a tributary of the Red River, and flows 44 miles from east of Sherman in Grayson County to the confluence with the Red River at the Grayson/Fannin County line. The watershed includes approximately 138,000 acres that encompass portions of the cities of Sherman, Tom Bean, Southmayd, Bells, and Howe. Choctaw Creek is one of many waterbodies listed on the *Texas 303(d) List* due to elevated levels of *E. coli*, the indicator bacteria found in warm-blooded animals. These indicator bacteria are used to assess the possible presence of pathogens that would limit the contact recreation use of a waterbody. Portions of Choctaw Creek have also been noted for concerns due to elevated total phosphorus, orthophosphorus, and nitrate.

The Choctaw Creek watershed is both urban and rural. Land-use consists of urban/developed, crop, and pastureland. The City of Sherman is the largest city within the watershed, and has an estimated population of 39,122. The populations of the remaining towns and communities are much smaller: Howe (3,279), Bells (1,392), Tom Bean (1,045), and Southmayd (992). Choctaw Creek was first listed as having a bacteria impairment for contact recreation on the *2010 Texas 303 (d) List*, and remains on the *2012 Texas 303 (d) List*.

Funding

Funding for this project is provided through a State Nonpoint Source Grant from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board. The Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research at Tarleton State University is the managing entity for this recreational use attainability analysis. The

project period extends from November 1, 2013 through October 31, 2015.

Public Participation

Local landowner cooperation and input from the public is crucial to identify and provide access to sampling locations and areas most likely used for contact recreation and providing historical information. Local city/county officials, landowners, as well as the general public will be consulted on their knowledge of how the stream is being used. Public meetings will be held during the project to allow stakeholders to provide input and acquire information as the study moves forward.

Project Objectives

- Conduct a Recreational Use Attainability Analysis to document factors that support or hinder recreational use and the actual level, if any, and types of recreational use occurring
- Facilitate public participation and involvement throughout project activities so that stakeholders make informed decisions about the future of their watershed



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