

Recreational Use Attainability Analysis for South Lilly Creek

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

South Lilly Creek

South Lilly Creek is a small tributary of Lilly Creek. Only 15 river miles long, South Lilly Creek begins at the confluence of Lilly Creek in Camp County, flows approximately 13 miles through Upshur County then into Wood County where it ends approximately 2 miles west of FM 1647 in Wood County. The small watershed includes approximately 14,495 acres that runs through a rural area that is predominantly hay and pasture and deciduous forest. There are no cities within the watershed boundaries.

What is a Recreational Use Attainability Analysis (RUAA)?

A RUAA is a specific type of Use Attainability Analysis that is conducted to evaluate and determine the correct category of recreational use appropriate for a particular water body. RUAs are typically site specific studies that assess reasonably attainable recreational uses that can occur based on the physical and flow characteristics of a stream, examples include water depth and persistence of flow. In order to assess historical and existing patterns of recreational use, individuals and organizations within the watershed are asked to complete a survey sharing their knowledge of the water body.

How did we get here?

All creeks, rivers, streams and lakes in Texas have a recreational use category designated to them by the Texas Commission Environmental Quality (TCEQ). South Lilly Creek's current recreational use category is Primary Contact. Each designation has a corresponding bacteria limit which is monitored by a state or county entity for the TCEQ. South Lilly Creek is one of many rural waterbodies listed on the 2014 Texas 303(d) List. This list is part of the Texas Integrated Report which describes the status of Texas' natural waters based on historical data. It is required by law to be revised and released every two years. South Lilly Creek is listed as impaired due to elevated levels of *E. coli*, the indicator bacteria, used to assess the possible presence of pathogens that may increase the risk of illness when ingested while participating in contact recreation in the waterbody.

Why this approach?

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) has taken the initiative to re-evaluate the more rural streams that TCEQ has listed as impaired under the "Primary Contact" recreational use standard. To do this, TCEQ and TSSWCB, use the RUAA process which documents information that will either confirm or deny whether primary contact recreation is taking place.

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 (TIAER) at Tarleton State University is the managing entity for this RUAA. The project period extends from November 1, 2015 through November 30, 2017.

Public Participation

Local landowner cooperation and input from the public is crucial to identify survey sites along the creek and access survey sites on private property. 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 throughout the project to allow stakeholders to provide input and remain informed 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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