

CEDAR CREEK WATERSHED



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CEDAR CREEK WATERSHED OVERVIEW

Cedar Creek is the easternmost reservoir in the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) water supply system, located primarily in Kaufman, Henderson, and Van Zandt counties. This is one of four TRWD reservoirs that supply municipal water to over two million people and businesses in North Texas. Cedar Creek Lake and its tributary creeks also provide recreational amenities and wildlife habitat.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WATERSHED

The quality of a water body is controlled largely by what happens in its watershed, or drainage area. Even activities that happen far upstream can affect the amount and quality of water in a creek or lake, as well as the plants, animals, and people who depend on it. Maintaining high quality creeks, rivers, and lakes means maintaining clean and healthy watersheds.

The 1,007 square-mile Cedar Creek watershed is primarily rural and agricultural. Water quality issues such as sedimentation and nutrient loading can result from both current and past agricultural practices. Excessive sediment is indicative of poor upland ground cover and

malfunctioning streambanks. Over time, the buildup of sediment reduces the storage capacity of the reservoir, meaning it can serve fewer people. Nutrients that are either bound up in the soil or are currently being applied to agricultural fields and lawns can lead to algal blooms, which have cascading effects on wildlife, recreation, and drinking water quality.

This watershed is experiencing urban/suburban growth in the upper reaches and along the Interstate 20 corridor. As these urban areas expand, they may bring new water quality challenges.

WATERSHED PROTECTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has identified water quality issues within the Cedar Creek reservoir and some of its tributary creeks. These issues include high pH, elevated levels of bacteria, and minor dissolved oxygen issues. While the TCEQ doesn't identify specific causes, scientific models, local knowledge, and cooperative partnerships can help fill that gap.

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WATERSHED PLANNING STEPS

1 PLANNING

- Build partnerships
- Characterize watershed
- Set goals and identify solutions

2 DOING

- Design implementation plan
- Implement plan

3 IMPROVING

- Measure progress and make adjustments
- Improve plan
- Revisit goals and refine solutions

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TRWD and numerous partners led an effort to identify causes and possible solutions in 2002. Now, TRWD is embarking on the process of re-engaging stakeholders, updating models, and converting existing documentation into a Watershed Protection Plan that can be approved by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Watershed protection planning is a voluntary process that aims to restore and protect water resources by identifying

and mitigating controllable sources of pollutants and stresses in the watershed. During this process, a diverse set of stakeholders, landowners, residents, elected officials, and agency representatives will work together to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce pollutants in water bodies within the Cedar Creek watershed. Participation in the process and resulting watershed plan are strictly voluntary.

Public participation and stakeholder involvement are carried out through a series of public meetings. Input from stakeholders is critical to the development of a sustainable plan, as well as for continued implementation and re-evaluation in future years.



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CEDAR CREEK WATERSHED

TCEQ Water Quality Status

Streams

- Fully Supporting
- Concern
- Impaired

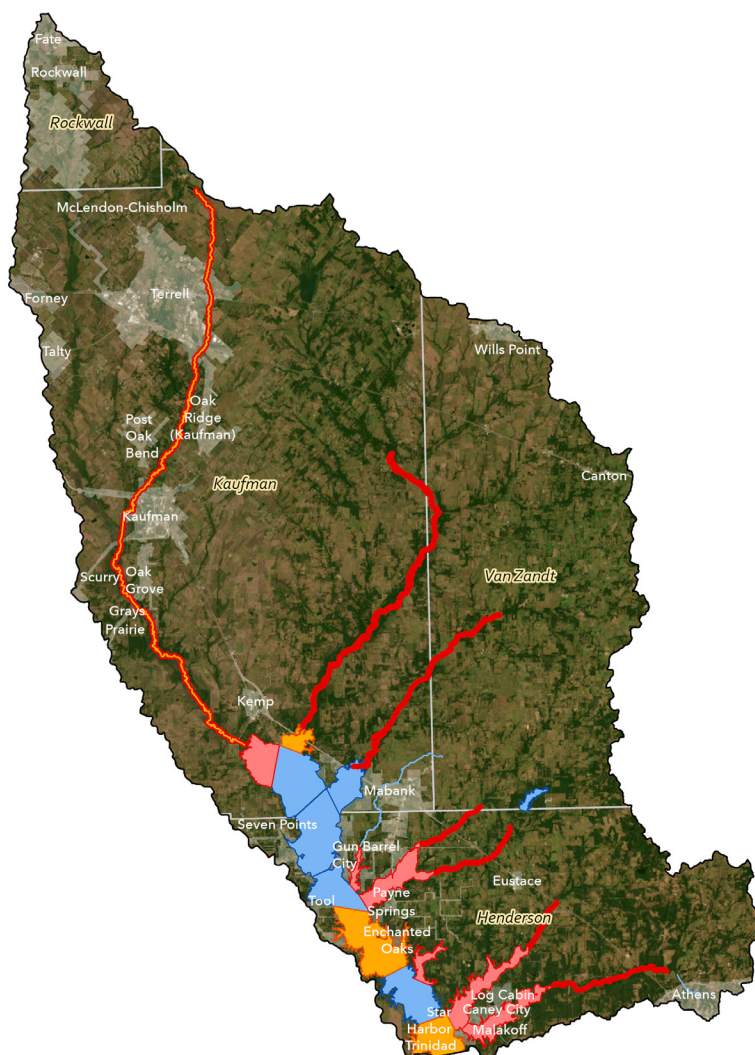
Reservoirs

- Fully Supporting
- Concern
- Impaired



Learn more about the EPA's technical guidance for the establishment of pollutant thresholds.

Source: TCEQ 2026 Integrated Report



0 5 10 Miles