

### 1.11.2 Austin Branch

Austin Branch is a third-order stream that begins about nine miles northeast of Crockett in Houston County and flows north/northwest into San Pedro Creek on the northern edge of the Davy Crockett National Forest. The slow-moving waterbody has a substrate composed primarily of deep-shifting sand (Feaster 1998) and is covered by a dense canopy of vegetation. Dominant vegetation observed at the FM 1365 crossing included box elder (*Acer negundo*), sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), pecan (*Carya illinoensis*), and sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*). Kelly (1995) reported collecting 30 fish species from Austin Branch (Appendix C), including several species intolerant of degradation. Of the ten streams sampled in the Davy Crockett National Forest by Kelly (1999), the southern brook lamprey (*Ichthyomyzon gagei*) was only collected from Austin Branch, where it was found in great abundance. Biodiversity indices calculated by Kelly (1995) and the relatively high number of intolerant species present indicate Austin Branch is relatively unimpacted. The ecologically significant stream segment is from the confluence with San Pedro Creek upstream to the headwaters.

- **Riparian conservation area-** fringed by the 162,012-acre Davy Crockett National Forest.



Figure 36. Austin Branch east of CR 1560 in Houston County (08/14/01).



Figure 37. Austin Branch west of CR 1560 in Houston County (08/14/01).