

### 1.10.5 Menard Creek

Menard Creek begins east of Livingston in central Polk County and flows southeasterly to the county line where it turns westward through Hardin County and then northwesterly through Liberty County. The Menard Creek Corridor Unit of the Big Thicket National Preserve is a slender strip of land along Menard Creek between the Big Sandy Creek Unit and the Trinity River. The creek empties into the Trinity River near the Polk/Liberty County line. Dense overhanging vegetation shades the surface of the creek and provides abundant woody debris for instream cover. Dominant riparian vegetation observed included sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), river birch (*Betula nigra*), water oak (*Quercus nigra*) and bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). Moring (2003) collected 16 species of fish from two sampling sites on Menard Creek (Appendix C), including two species intolerant of degradation. Of the six stream Corridor Units sampled by Moring (2003), Menard Creek yielded the fewest total number of fish species and intolerant species, suggesting habitat quality is low as compared to the other creeks in the Big Thicket Corridor Units. Although aquatic insect collections from Menard Creek yielded a moderately high species richness, the Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera, Trichoptera (EPT) index was low, which also indicates habitat quality is low as compared to the other creeks in the Big Thicket Corridor Units. The ecologically significant stream segment is from the confluence with the Trinity River near the Polk/Liberty County line upstream to its headwaters east of Livingston in Polk County.

- **Riparian conservation area-** fringed by the 14,346-acre Big Sandy Creek Unit and the 3,805-acre Menard Creek Corridor Unit of the Big Thicket National Preserve.

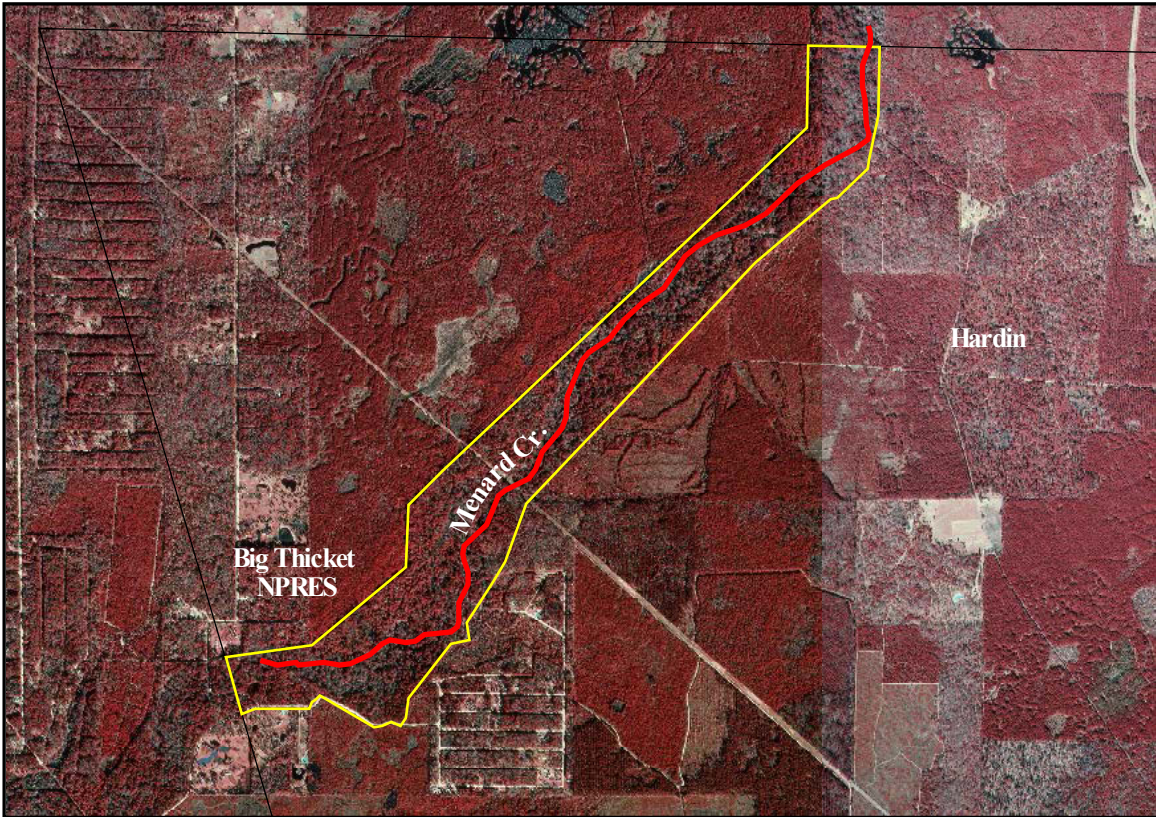


Figure 25. Menard Creek in Big Thicket National Preserve, Hardin County. Source: Votaw DOQ, 1995.



Figure 26. Menard Creek Corridor, Big Thicket National Preserve (8/15/01).