



Figure 6. Location of the ecologically significant Nueces River Segment (TNRCC segment 2102) between Calallan Dam and Wesley Seale Dam (Scale 0.26" : 1 mile; Base map source: TxDOT county files).

Nueces River (downstream of Lake Corpus Christi)

This segment of the Nueces River (TNRCC stream segment 2102) runs from below Wesley E. Seale Dam at Lake Corpus Christi downstream about 35 miles to the Calallan saltwater barrier (Fig. 6). The ecological significance of this segment is based upon the following criteria:

1. Biological function - Riparian forested habitat occurs along most of the length of this segment (Figs. 7, 8, 12, & 13). The lower portion of the segment (Fig. 9) also has freshwater marsh on the floodplain (Fig. 10)¹². These habitats support a wide variety of fish and wildlife, and contribute nutrients to the Nueces and Corpus Christi Bay estuarine ecosystem.
2. Hydrologic function - The riparian forest on the floodplain performs a host of important hydrologic functions such as: downstream flood control and mitigation of storm damage; regulation of baseflows and protection of fisheries habitat; protection of public and private water supplies through pollution filtration; and regulation and protection of groundwater and baseflows in the river.
3. Riparian conservation areas - At the upstream end of the segment is the 258-acre City of Corpus Christi Wildlife Sanctuary (Fig. 11). The sanctuary is also site CTC 079 on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail. At the downstream end of the segment is Hazel Bazemore County Park (site CTC 078 on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail) (Fig. 14)¹⁰.

4. High water quality/exceptional aquatic life/high aesthetic value - The segment has high aesthetic and economic value for outdoor recreation, especially birdwatching. Hazel Bazemore Park is a world-class hawk migration site. Birders come to the area from around the world to observe the fall hawk migration moving down the Nueces River¹⁰.
5. Threatened (T) or endangered (E) species/unique communities - The following rare species associated with aquatic or riparian habitats occur in or along this segment: the black spotted newt (St. T) and the South Texas siren (St. T) (large form); white-faced ibis (St. T) and wood stork (St. T); and the indigo snake (St. T) ⁹. The riparian forests are important foraging and roosting habitat for neotropical migratory songbirds. The City of Corpus Christi Wildlife Sanctuary supports some tropical birds such as the green jay¹⁰.

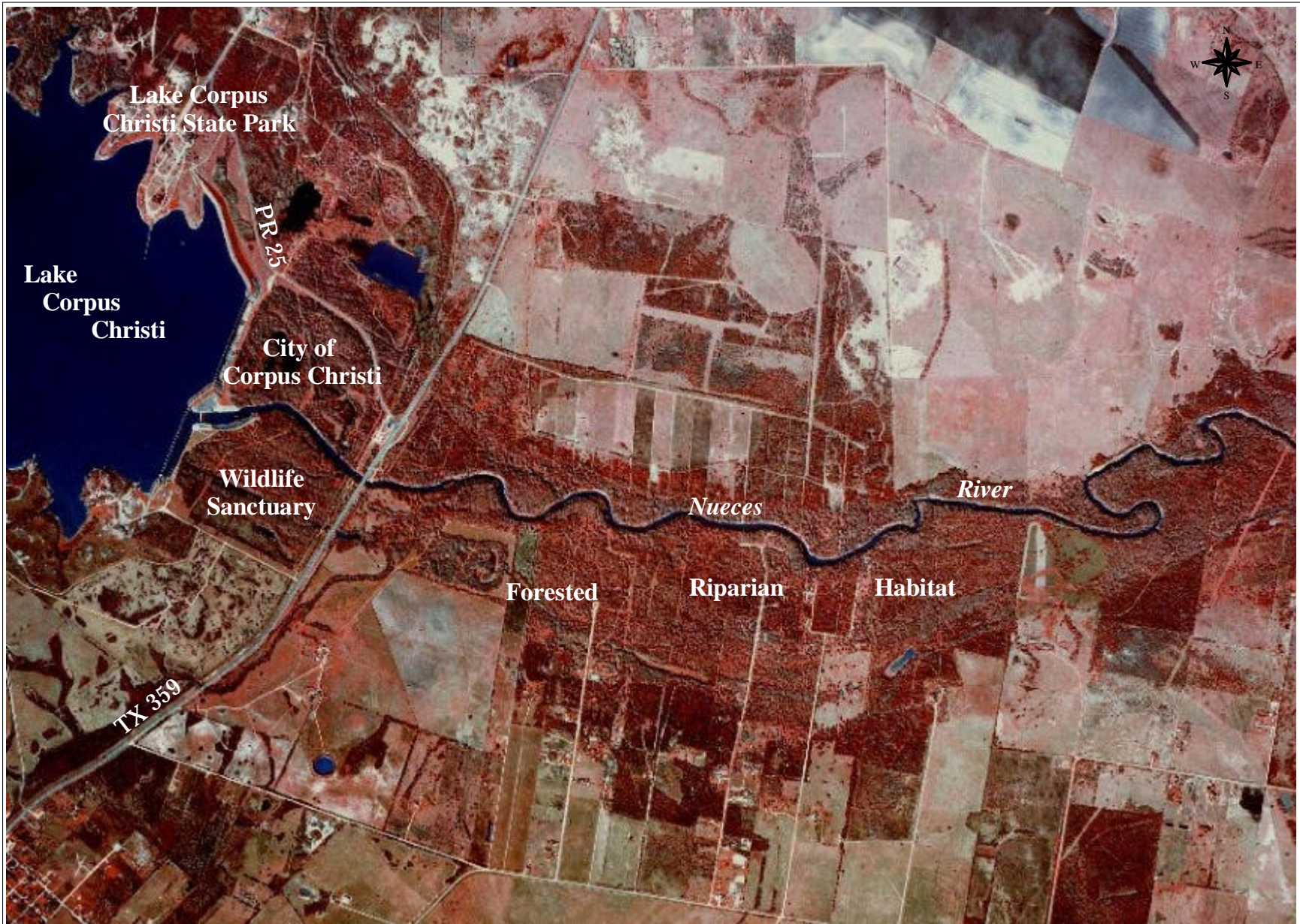


Figure 7. Extensive forested riparian habitat along the Nueces River downstream of Lake Corpus Christi (within TNRCC segment 2102).

Source: Mathis DOQ; Jan 5, 1995; 1m CIR.⁸

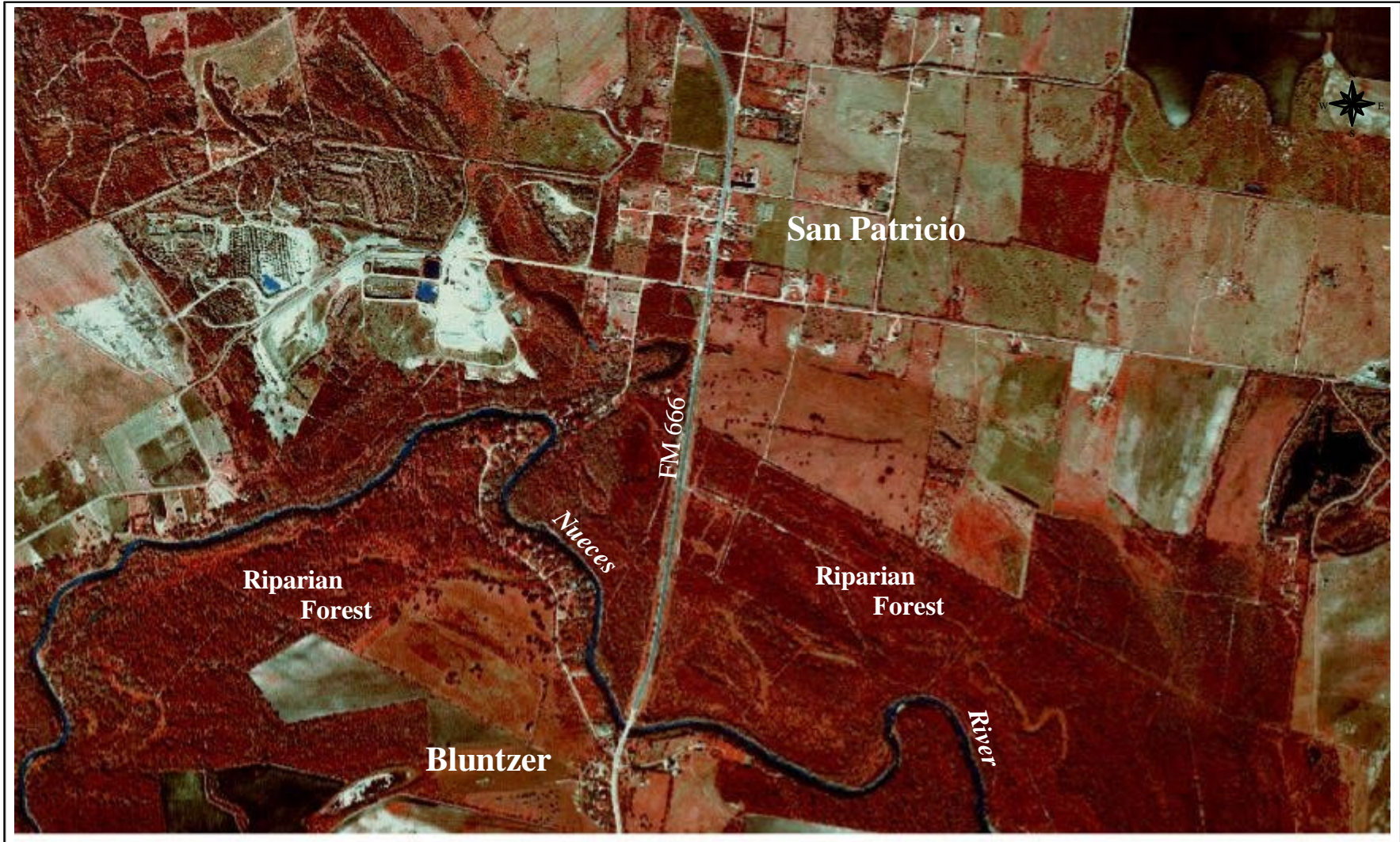


Figure 8. Extensive forested riparian habitat along the Nueces River near Bluntzer, Texas (within TNRCC segment 2102). Source: San Patricio DOQ; Jan 15, 1995; 1 m CIR.⁸

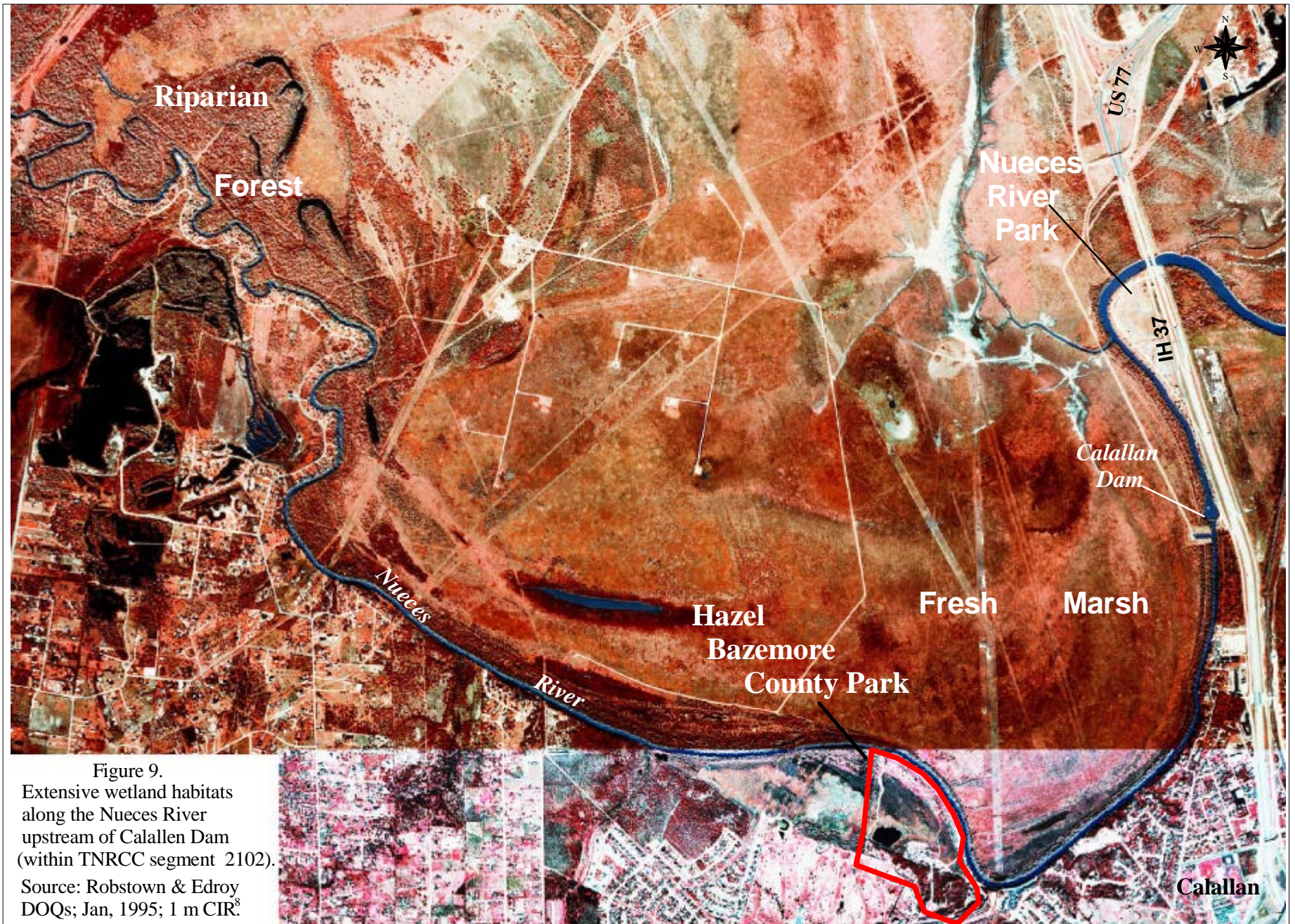


Figure 9.
 Extensive wetland habitats
 along the Nueces River
 upstream of Calallen Dam
 (within TNRCC segment 2102).
 Source: Robstown & Edroy
 DOQs; Jan, 1995; 1 m CIR.⁸

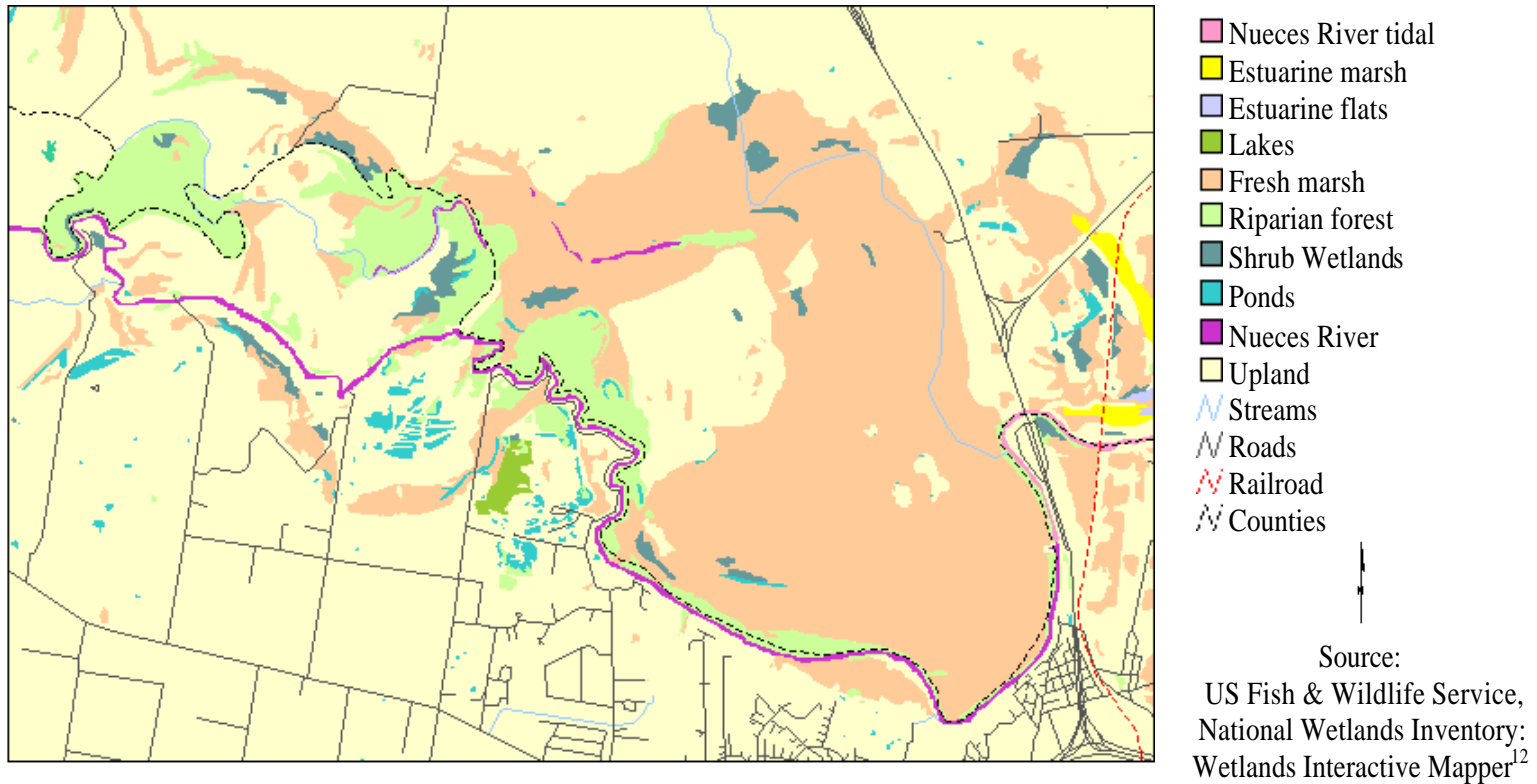


Figure 10. Mapped wetland habitat associated with a segment of the Nueces River upstream of Calallan Dam (See Fig. 9).



Figure 11. Nueces River within the City of Corpus Christi Wildlife Sanctuary downstream of Lake Corpus Christi.



Figure 12. Nueces River at TX 359 bridge, downstream of Lake Corpus Christi.



Figure 13. Nueces River at FM 666 bridge near Bluntzer, Texas.



Figure 14. Nueces River at Hazel Bazemore County Park near Calallan, Texas.