TREASURED TANGIPAHOA

The Tangipahoa River begins as an upland stream in Mississippi and flows southeastward from the Mississippi-Louisiana state line through Tangipahoa Parish into Lake Pontchartrain. As it makes its way southward, it flows through rolling hills where it has a sand and gravel substrate. South of Highway 190, the characteristics of the river change to those of a lowland stream where flat land levels off and the water becomes sluggish, curvy, and often muddy. The Tangipahoa is listed in Louisiana as a Wild and Scenic Stream. It was used for boating, tubing and swimming, as well as fishing. Since 1987, it has been closed to primary contact recreation (tubing and swimming) due to high bacteria levels.

The Tangipahoa River and the lands which surround it were heavily impacted by land use changes such as timber harvesting or clearing for pasture, subdivisions and roads. This land use change contributed to erosion and increased sedimentation in the drainage basin of the Tangipahoa River.

The Tangipahoa River channel:
- Is straight in the upland stream area as it flows south to Highway 190, with a sand and gravel substrate;
- Becomes a lowland stream with a muddy substrate south of Highway 190.

The stream bank:
- Has bluffs in the upland areas where the land lies far above the high water of the river;
- Has sandy beaches or gravel areas in streamside deposits;
- Has cypress swamps near the point at which the stream enters Lake Pontchartrain;
- Has lush vegetation, either forest or swampy wetland, lining other areas of the stream bank.

The floodplain:
- Is composed of pine forest and pasture lands in the upland area;
- Consists of cypress and tupelo swamp in the lowland area where the stream widens.