

Trout Fishing in Missouri



A guide for the
angler, with general
information, maps
and regulations



Trout Fishing in Missouri? You Better Believe It!

Missouri provides great opportunities for the trout angler.

- ▶ Four heavily stocked trout parks are located at large springs with hatchery or rearing facilities.
- ▶ Approximately 120 miles of spring-fed, cold-water trout streams are managed by the Conservation Department and offer stocked and/or wild trout.
- ▶ Lake Taneycomo, near Branson, offers year-round trout fishing.
- ▶ Over 40 designated Winter Trout Areas.
- ▶ Nearly 2 million trout, produced at Conservation Department hatcheries, are stocked each year in Missouri.



Table of Contents

General Information

Missouri Trout Habitat.....	2
Protecting Missouri’s Trout Fisheries	2
Invasives: Didymo and Zebra Mussels	3
Missouri’s Trout.....	4
Missouri Trout Area Types	5
Trout Fishing Information	8
Trout Fishing Regulations	12
Catch on to Catch-and-Release Fishing	18

Missouri Trout Area Maps

Missouri Trout Area Legend	19
Missouri Trout Areas	21
Bennett Spring Trout Park and the Niangua River	22
Barren Fork Creek	24
Blue Springs Creek.....	24
Capps Creek	25
Crane Creek.....	25
Eleven Point River	26
Hickory Creek	27
Lake Taneycomo.....	28
Maramec Spring Park and the Meramec River.....	30
Montauk Trout Park and the Current River.....	32
Little Piney Creek, Mill Creek, Spring Creek, and Stone Mill Spring Branch.....	34
North Fork of the White River	35
Roaring River Trout Park and Roaring River.....	36
Roubidoux Creek.....	37

Missouri Trout Habitat

Trout live in cold, fast-moving streams. Water is able to hold higher amounts of oxygen at colder temperatures, and trout need this oxygen to survive. Generally, trout do best in waters that remain below 70 degrees.

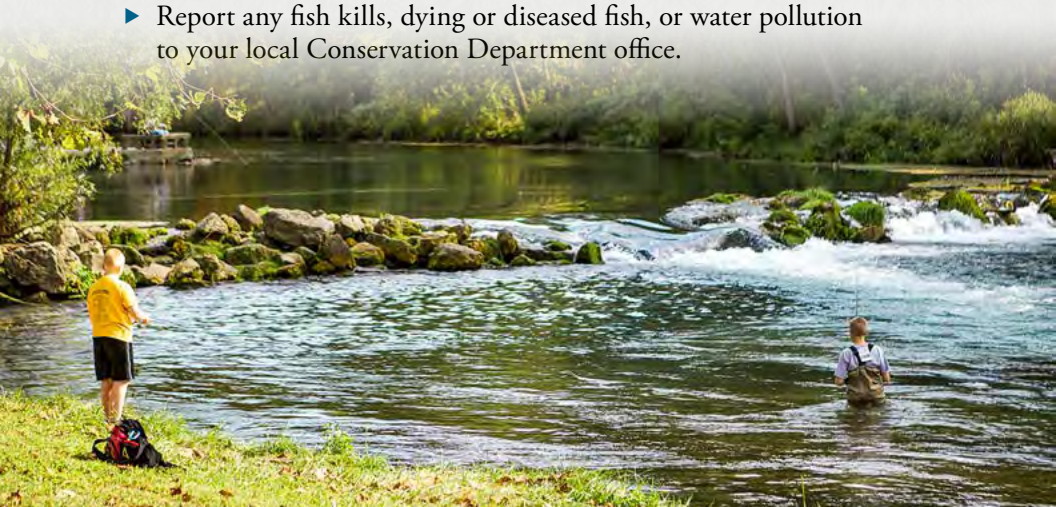
All of Missouri's trout areas have a cold-water source:

- ▶ Trout streams are fed by numerous springs.
- ▶ Trout parks are built around very large springs.
- ▶ Lake Taneycomo receives the outlet of cold water from Table Rock Lake.
- ▶ The winter trout areas depend on winter temperatures for stocked trout to survive in ponds.

Protecting Missouri's Trout Fisheries

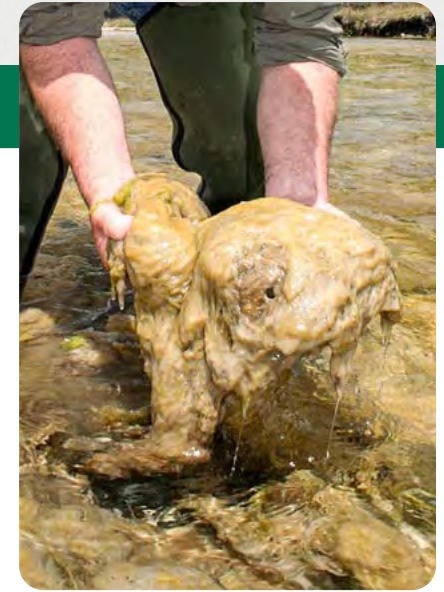
Missouri's trout are healthy and free of most diseases. To ensure that they remain that way and to keep our streams free of aquatic nuisance species, please follow these guidelines:

- ▶ Do not release live or dead trout obtained from outside the state into Missouri waters. Consult a Conservation Department fisheries biologist before stocking trout from any source, and be aware that importation of trout into Missouri is strictly regulated.
- ▶ Thoroughly clean boots, waders, boats, trailers, and fishing tackle between uses. Do not transfer mud, aquatic plants, water, or fish parts from one body of water to another.
- ▶ Report any fish kills, dying or diseased fish, or water pollution to your local Conservation Department office.



What is Didymo?

Didymo (rock snot) is an invasive microscopic alga that forms thick mats that have negative impacts on streams and can make fishing impossible. Didymo has been found in many states and occurs as close as northern Arkansas. Anglers can unknowingly spread this microscopic alga on fishing gear and waders, especially those with porous materials on their soles. Missouri has banned the use of porous soled shoes, boots, and waders in the trout parks and in specified trout streams. Please remember to check and clean or dry your fishing gear and waders when moving between waters.



FISH AND GAME NEW ZEALAND

Zebra Mussel Alert!

These exotic mussels threaten Missouri waters. To keep these 2-inch-long mussels from spreading further, follow the steps below.

INSPECT your boat for mussels after each use. Remove and place mussels and aquatic weeds in trash before leaving any body of water.

DUMP leftover bait on land away from water.

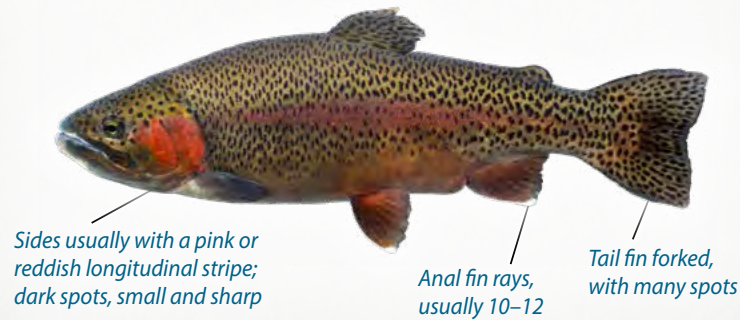
RINSE in hot water your boat's hull, drive unit, livewell and pump, bilge, trailer, bait bucket, engine cooling system, and all other parts and accessories that get wet.

DRY your boat, motor, and trailer thoroughly for 5 days before boating again.

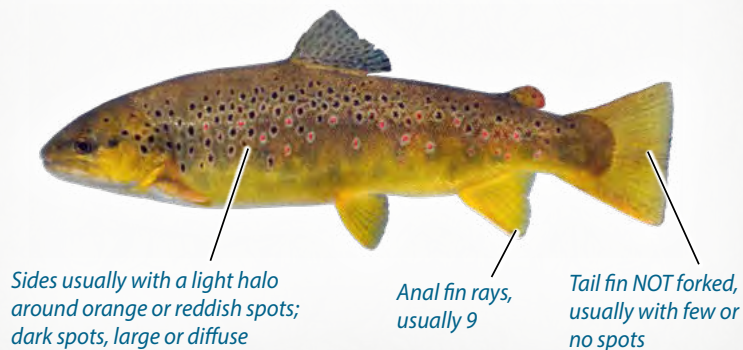


Missouri's Trout

Rainbow trout are found in all trout-fishing waters managed by the Conservation Department. They are stocked in trout parks, trout management areas, and winter trout areas. Rainbow trout naturally reproduce in the Blue Ribbon Trout Areas.



Brown trout are the main species stocked in red ribbon trout areas, and they are occasionally stocked in other trout areas depending on availability from hatcheries. Although natural reproduction of brown trout is rare in Missouri, stocked fish survive and grow to large sizes in the wild.



LANCIE MERRY PHOTOS

Missouri Trout Area Types



Lake Taneycomo

- ▶ Open year-round
- ▶ Disabled-accessible fishing docks are available on Lake Taneycomo above Powersite Dam and at Cooper Creek accesses.
- ▶ Only flies and artificial lures may be used, and soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are prohibited when fishing for any species above the mouth of Fall Creek.
- ▶ A Missouri fishing permit is required. A trout permit also is required:
 - » If harvesting trout below the U.S. Highway 65 bridge
 - » For any fishing above the U.S. Highway 65 bridge

Trout Parks

- ▶ Three trout parks are located at state parks owned and operated by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The James Foundation owns and operates Maramec Spring Park.
- ▶ All four parks are heavily stocked and heavily fished.
- ▶ Located at hatcheries, they are stocked daily with rainbow trout from March 1 through Oct. 31. Most rainbows stocked are 10 to 12 inches.
- ▶ Regulations vary in the four parks. Certain areas may be designated for fly fishing, natural baits, artificial lures, or catch-and-release fishing. For information on trout park regulations consult the annual *A Summary of Missouri Fishing Regulations*, contact the Conservation Department, or ask when buying your daily trout tag at the park.
- ▶ A Missouri fishing permit and daily trout tag are required. A trout permit is required for winter fishing.
- ▶ Disabled accessible fishing sites are available at the four trout parks.

Trout Park Information

Bennett Spring	417-532-4418
Maramec Spring	573-265-7808
Montauk	573-548-2585
Roaring River	417-847-2430

Winter Trout Areas

- ▶ Over 40 locations stocked by early November each year.
- ▶ Some locations allow harvest immediately after being stocked, while others are catch-and-release until February 1.
- ▶ The lakes with the Nov. 1–Jan. 31 catch-and-release season are stocked only once, while other areas are stocked throughout the winter season.
- ▶ The daily limit is four trout with no length limit. However, some lakes are restricted to catch-and-release with artificial flies and lures only for much of the season.
- ▶ A Missouri fishing permit is required, and a trout permit also is required if trout are harvested.

For a list of current locations and regulations contact your local Conservation Department office or go to short.mdc.mo.gov/ZF3.



Capps Creek



White Ribbon Trout Areas



- ▶ Support trout populations year-round.
- ▶ Receive periodic stockings of rainbow trout, and some also receive brown trout.
- ▶ Provide great opportunities for catching and harvesting trout and the occasional chance to harvest a large trout.

Red Ribbon Trout Areas



- ▶ Stocked primarily with brown trout.
- ▶ Rainbow trout are either stocked, escape from other areas, or reproduce naturally.
- ▶ Provide a chance to harvest quality-size trout.

Blue Ribbon Trout Areas



- ▶ Include parts of large, cold rivers with excellent trout habitat and smaller streams that support naturally reproducing rainbow trout.
- ▶ Harvest is limited to maintain the maximum density of adult trout, create excellent catch-and-release fishing, and provide the occasional chance to harvest a trophy.
- ▶ These areas on the Current River and North Fork of the White River are stocked with brown trout, and the Eleven Point River is stocked with rainbows.

Trout Fishing Information As of March 1, 2025

General Information for Trout Fishing

Missouri has several types of trout fishing areas, each with its own special rules. More information on trout areas and rules is available online at short.mdc.mo.gov/ZtL.

The season is open all year.

Permit & Tag Information

- ▶ All trout fishing areas require a fishing permit or exemption.
- ▶ A trout permit is also needed to possess trout on all waters outside the trout parks and to fish in Lake Taneycomo upstream from U.S. Highway 65.
- ▶ A daily trout tag is needed to fish in the trout parks except during the catch-and-release season between Nov. 1 and March 1.
- ▶ For information on permit and daily tag prices consult the annual *"A Summary of Missouri Fishing Regulations,"* check online at short.mdc.mo.gov/ZtL, or contact the Conservation Department.

Trespass Laws

Paddlers and anglers often ask whether they have a legal right to use Missouri's streams. The answer is yes ... in some places and in some ways. Missouri's rivers and streams can be classified as:

- ▶ **Public, navigable** — Large rivers on which commercial boats such as barges can navigate.
- ▶ **Public, non-navigable** — Middle-sized streams that are capable of floating smaller boats such as canoes.
- ▶ **Private, non-navigable** — Small streams that are not capable of floating even small boats such as canoes.

On private, non-navigable streams, adjacent landowners' property extends to the center of the stream. Consequently, anglers and floaters have no right to use these streams. Fishing, wading, and boating are illegal unless you have the landowner's permission.

On public, non-navigable streams, property lines are the same as they are on private, non-navigable streams. The difference is that although you are on private property, you have a right to use public, non-navigable streams for fishing, wading, or boating as long as you stay within the stream bed. The stream bed includes gravel bars that are submerged during part of the year.

The stream bed begins at the high-water mark. In practical terms, this is the point where trees and other permanent vegetation grow. Floaters and anglers need landowner permission to go beyond this point.

On public, navigable streams, property lines end at the high-water mark. The area inside the high-water marks is public property.

Although all of this may seem clear-cut, opinions can vary dramatically about how to classify a particular stretch of stream and where the highwater marks lie. Furthermore, permanent islands in public, navigable and public, non-navigable streams often are private property. **The local prosecuting attorney is your best reference to determine how a particular stretch of a stream is classified and where to find nearby public accesses. The county assessor's office can tell you where the property lines are. When in doubt, always ask for permission from the landowner.**

Trout Lure Definitions

Fly — An artificial lure constructed on a single point hook, using any material except soft plastic bait and natural and scented baits as defined below, that is tied, glued, or otherwise permanently attached. Flies may be fished with or without spinner attached.

Artificial Lure — A lure constructed of any material excluding soft plastic bait and natural and scented bait as defined below.

Soft Plastic Bait — Synthetic eggs, synthetic worms, synthetic grubs, and soft plastic lures.

Natural and Scented Baits — A natural fish food such as bait fish, crayfish, frogs permitted as bait, grubs, insects, larvae, worms, salmon eggs, cheese, corn, and other food substances not containing any ingredient to stupefy, injure, or kill fish. This does not include flies or artificial lures. It does include dough bait, putty, or paste-type bait, any substance designed to attract fish by taste or smell and any fly, lure, or bait containing or used with such substances.

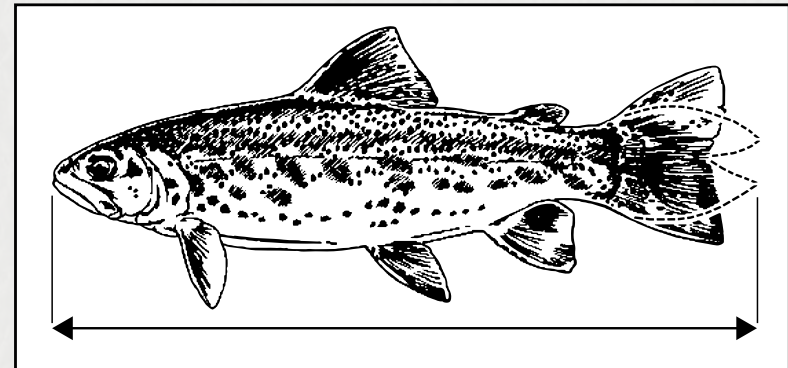


How to Measure Your Catch

Learn to measure and identify the fish you catch so that you can abide by Missouri's fishing seasons, daily limits, length limits, and other regulations. When in doubt about a fish's legal length, play it safe, and immediately return the fish to the water unharmed.

To Measure a Fish:

1. Place the fish on a ruler. Make sure the fish is laid flat on its side.
2. Close the fish's jaws.
3. Squeeze the lobes of the fish's tail fin together.
4. Measure a straight line from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail lobes.



Minimum Length Limit

Any fish below the listed minimum length must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught.

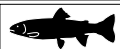
Trout Fishing Regulations As of March 1, 2025

Lake Taneycomo						
	Miles	County	Area	Length Limit	Daily Limit	Authorized Lures, Bait
Lake Taneycomo	3.0 miles	Taney	From the closed zone 760 feet below Table Rock Dam to the mouth of Fall Creek	<i>Rainbows:</i> less than 12" or greater than 20" <i>Browns:</i> at least 20"	4, except only 1 may be a brown trout	Artificial lures and flies only
Lake Taneycomo	19.7 miles	Taney	Mouth of Fall Creek to Powersite Dam, and all tributaries to Lake Taneycomo	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 20"	4, except only 1 may be a brown trout	All

Trout Parks							
			March 1–October 31			Catch & Release Only: 2nd Friday in Nov.–2nd Monday in Feb.	
Name	Miles	County	Length Limit	Daily Limit	Authorized Lures, Bait	Days Open	Authorized Lures, Bait
Bennett Spring State Park	1.5 miles or as posted	Dallas, Laclede	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	As posted	Friday–Monday	Flies only
Maramec Spring Park ¹	0.7 miles or as posted	Phelps	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	As posted	Daily	Flies only
Montauk State Park	3 miles or as posted	Dent	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	As posted	Friday–Monday	Flies only
Roaring River State Park	3 miles or as posted	Barry	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	As posted	Friday–Monday	Flies only

¹ Maramec Spring Park is a private park owned by the James Foundation. It is open to the public for trout fishing and other recreational activities. Park hours vary by season. There is a parking fee, payable at the gate. Permits and tags are available at the park store. Contact the park store at (573) 265-7387 for fishing hours and camping information. During the winter catch-and-release season the park is open seven days a week.

Trout Water	Miles	County	Area	Length Limit	Daily Limit	Authorized Lures and Bait
-------------	-------	--------	------	--------------	-------------	---------------------------



White Ribbon Trout Areas


Capps Creek	2.0 miles	Newton	Approximately 2 miles upstream from its junction with Shoal Creek	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	All
Current River	7.7 miles	Dent, Shannon	Downstream from Cedargrove Bridge	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	All
Eleven Point River	14.2 miles	Oregon	Downstream from Turner Mill Access	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	All
Hickory Creek	2.7 miles	Newton	From Highway 86 bridge to Shoal Creek	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4 from March 1–Oct. 31, catch and release from Nov. 1–last day in Feb.	All from March 1–Oct. 31, artificial lures and flies from Nov. 1–last day in Feb.
Little Piney Creek	3.7 miles	Phelps	Milldam Hollow Access downstream to Phelps County Road 7360	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	All
Niangua River	11.5 miles	Dallas, Laclede	All of the Niangua River and its tributaries	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	All
Roaring River	4.0 miles	Barry	From the lower boundary of Roaring River State Park to Table Rock Lake	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	All
Roubidoux Creek	3.1 miles	Pulaski	Downstream from Roubidoux Spring	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4	All
Stone Mill Spring ²	0.3 miles	Pulaski	The entire spring branch, from the spring to the Big Piney River	<i>Rainbows:</i> none <i>Browns:</i> at least 15"	4 from March 1–Oct. 31, catch and release from Nov. 1–last day in Feb.	All from March 1–Oct. 31, artificial lures and flies from Nov. 1–last day in Feb.



Red Ribbon Trout Areas

Meramec River	8.2 miles	Phelps, Crawford	From Highway 8 bridge to Scotts Ford, and on Dry Fork Creek from the elevated cable crossing to the Meramec River	At least 15"	2	Artificial lures and flies only
North Fork of the White River	7.0 miles	Ozark	The unimpounded portion of the river and its tributaries from Patrick Bridge to Norfolk Lake	At least 15"	2	All

² Roads to Stone Mill Spring Branch on the Mark Twain National Forest pass through Fort Leonard Wood. Access to the Spring Branch through the fort occasionally may be denied by the U.S. Army for security reasons. Contact the fort's Sportsmen's Center at (573) 596-4223 for information.

Trout Water	Miles	County	Area	Length Limit	Daily Limit	Authorized Lures and Bait
 Blue Ribbon Trout Areas						
Barren Fork Creek	3.2 miles	Shannon	County Road AD to its junction with Sinking Creek	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
Blue Springs Creek	4.0 miles	Crawford	Blue Springs to its junction with the Meramec River	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
Crane Creek	8.0 miles	Stone, Lawrence	Upstream from Quail Spur Road crossing on Stone County Road 13-195	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
Current River	9.0 miles	Dent, Shannon	From the lower boundary at Montauk State Park to Cedargrove Bridge	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
Eleven Point River	5.5 miles	Oregon	Greer Spring Branch junction to Turner Mill Access	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
Little Piney Creek	9.9 miles	Phelps	Phelps/Dent county line downstream to Milldam Hollow Access	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
Mill Creek	7.7 miles	Phelps	Yelton Springs to the Little Piney River, including Wilkins Spring and its spring branch	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
North Fork of the White River	8.6 miles	Ozark	Upper outlet of Rainbow Springs to Patrick Bridge	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only
Spring Creek	6.2 miles	Phelps	Relfe Spring to the Big Piney River	At least 18"	1	Artificial lures and flies only

Catch on to Catch-and-Release Fishing

Fishing is often done for pleasure rather than for food. Catch-and-release, or releasing fish immediately after they are caught, is a conservation measure that helps maintain a fishery for the future. Follow these guidelines to increase the chances of a fish's survival:













- ▶ Minimize the amount of time that you play a fish.
- ▶ Use the heaviest tackle appropriate for the prevailing conditions.
- ▶ Whenever possible, do not take the fish out of the water.
- ▶ Filing the barbs off of hooks makes removing them easier.
- ▶ Never pull a hook from a fish's throat or stomach; it is better to cut the line. Many hooks will rust away or be expelled by the fish.
- ▶ Avoid excessive handling of fish. Wet your hands before touching a fish.
- ▶ If handling is necessary, make certain not to squeeze or drop the fish.
- ▶ Never put your fingers in the fish's gills or eye sockets.
- ▶ If the fish appears exhausted, hold it gently in the water facing upstream until it swims out of your hand.



Missouri Trout Area Maps

Legend







Land Ownership and Water Types

-  Missouri Department of Conservation Area
-  Missouri Department of Conservation Natural Area
-  Missouri Department of Natural Resources, State Parks
-  National Parks Service Management Area
-  Mark Twain National Forest
-  U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Management Area
-  Other Ownership
-  City
-  Private Ownership
-  Lakes
-  Rivers and Creeks
-  Springs

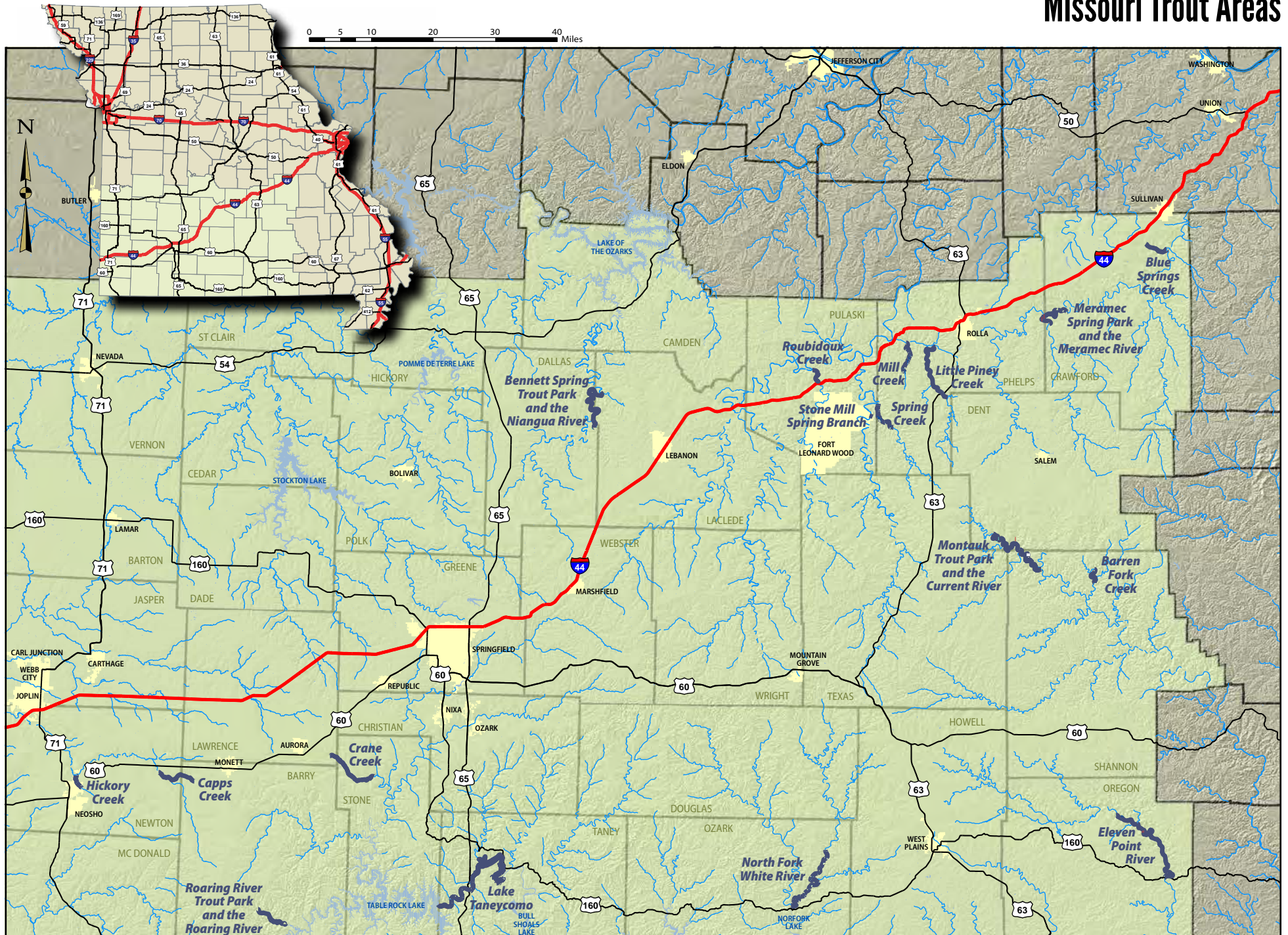
Trout Area Types

-  Blue Ribbon Trout Area
-  Red Ribbon Trout Area
-  White Ribbon Trout Area
-  Trout Park
-  Lake Taneycomo
-  Winter Trout Areas

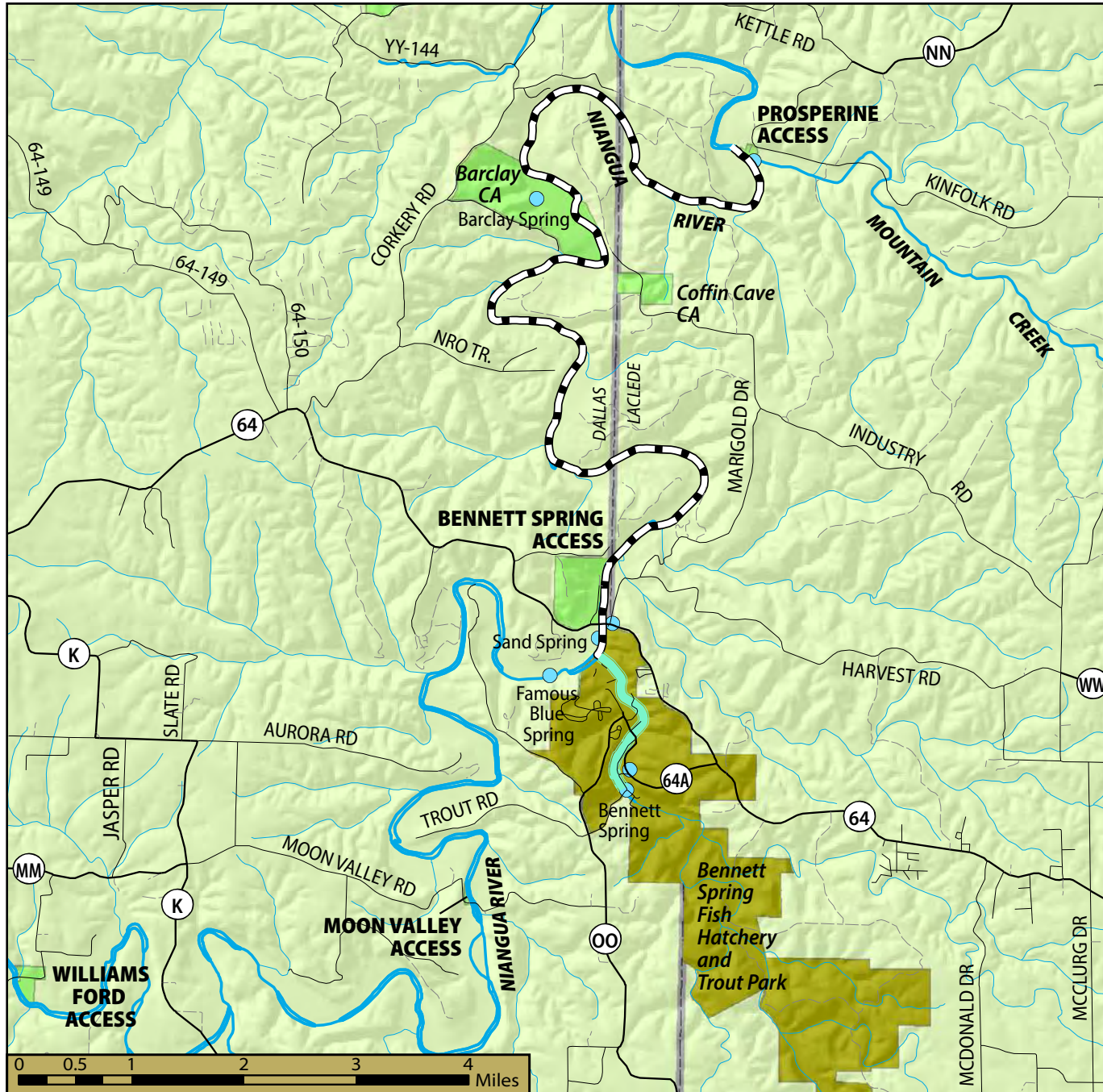
Highways & Roads

-  Interstate
-  U.S. Highways
-  Missouri Highways
-  Lettered Routes
-  County Roads
-  Private

Missouri Trout Areas



Bennett Spring Trout Park and the Niangua River





TEST YOUR SKILLS AND EARN

MISSOURI'S Blue Ribbon Trout Slam



Blue Ribbon Trout Slam

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

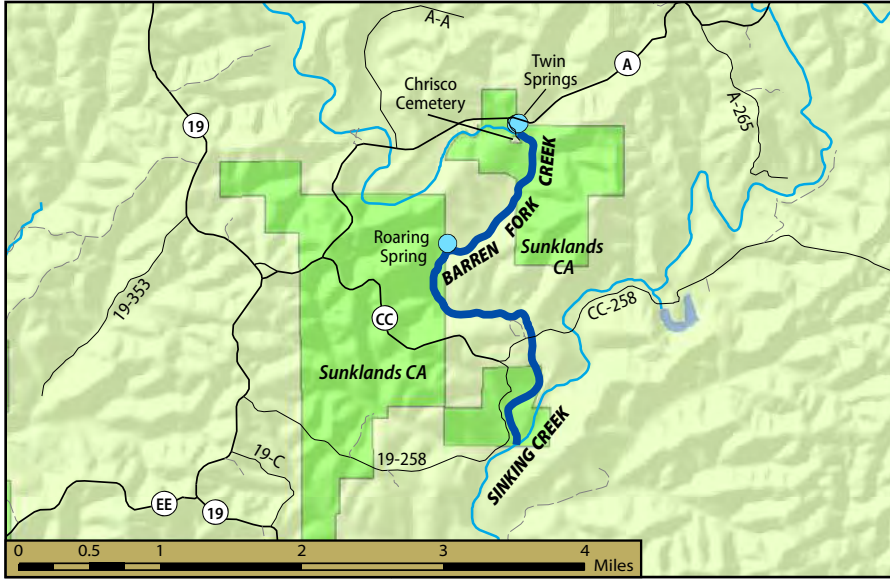
MDC and Trout Unlimited invite you to go out and test your skills against these trout in the riffles and pools of Missouri's nine Blue Ribbon trout streams.

The Missouri Blue Ribbon Trout Slam honors anglers who can catch a trout in at least 5 of these 9 streams. Catch a trout in more than 5 Blue Ribbon streams and your level of achievement goes up. Participants who choose to can have their successes listed on the MDC website.

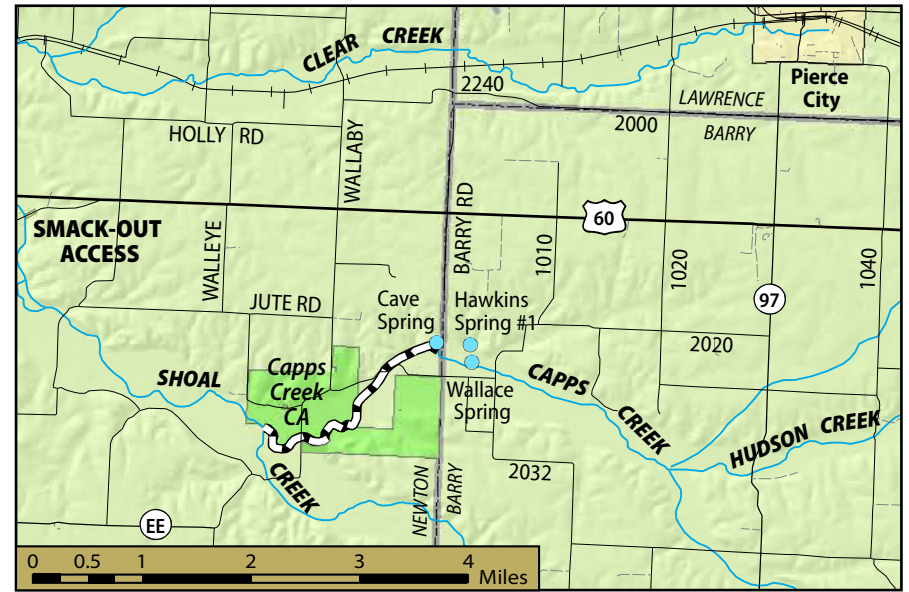
To learn more visit:
mdc.mo.gov/troutslam



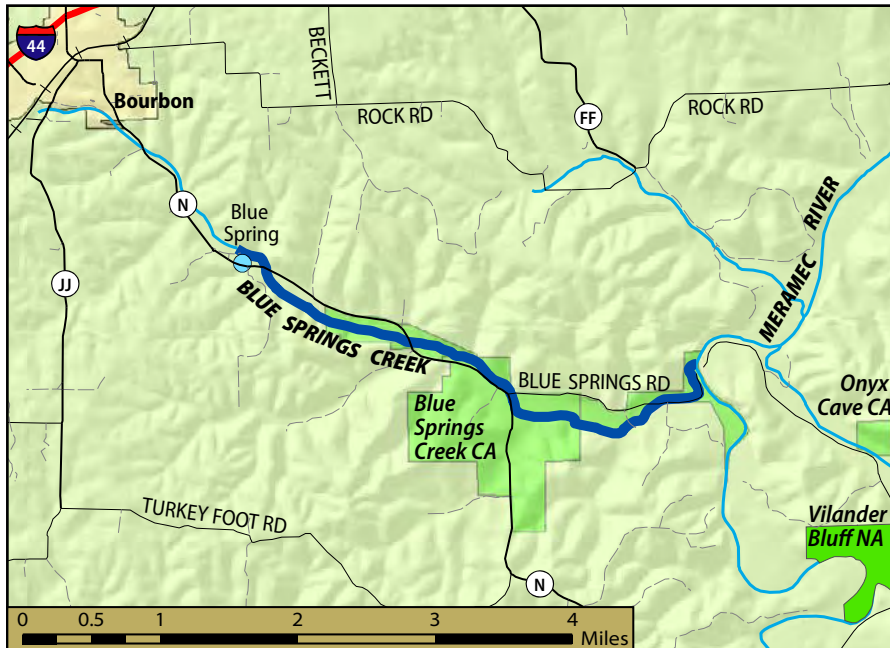

Barren Fork Creek



Capps Creek



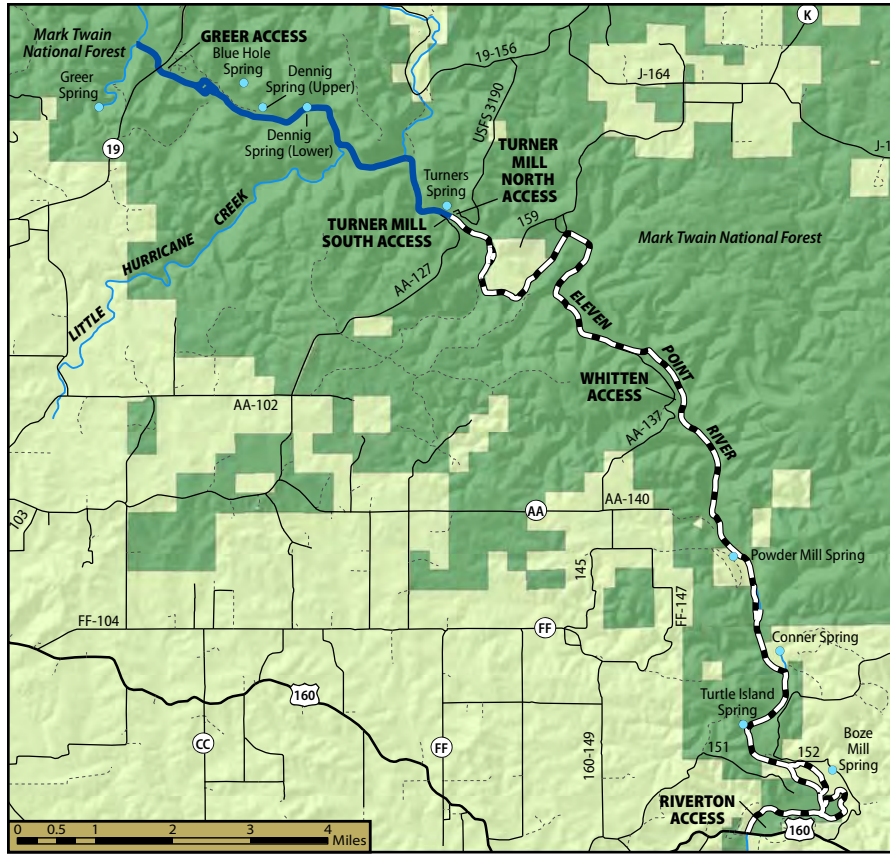
Blue Springs Creek



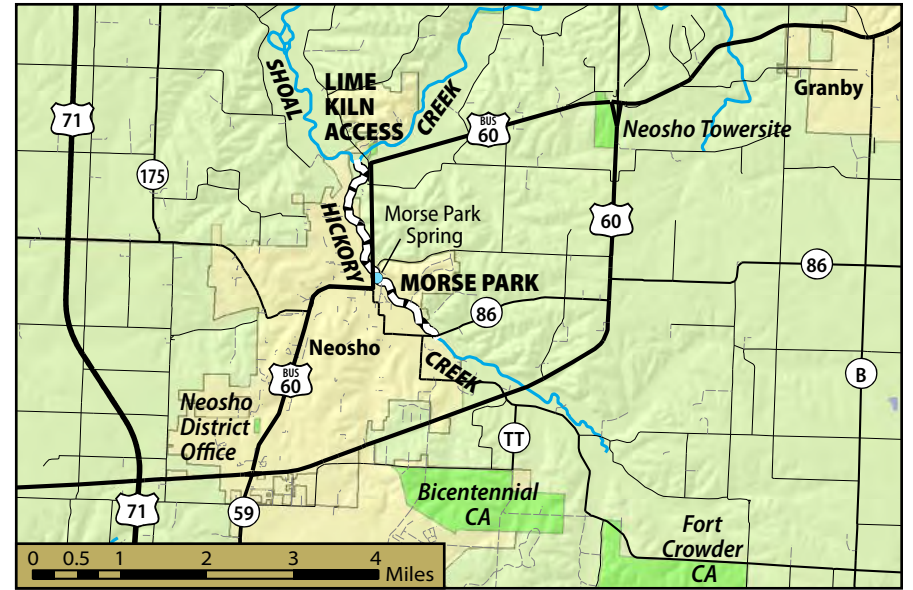
Crane Creek



Eleven Point River



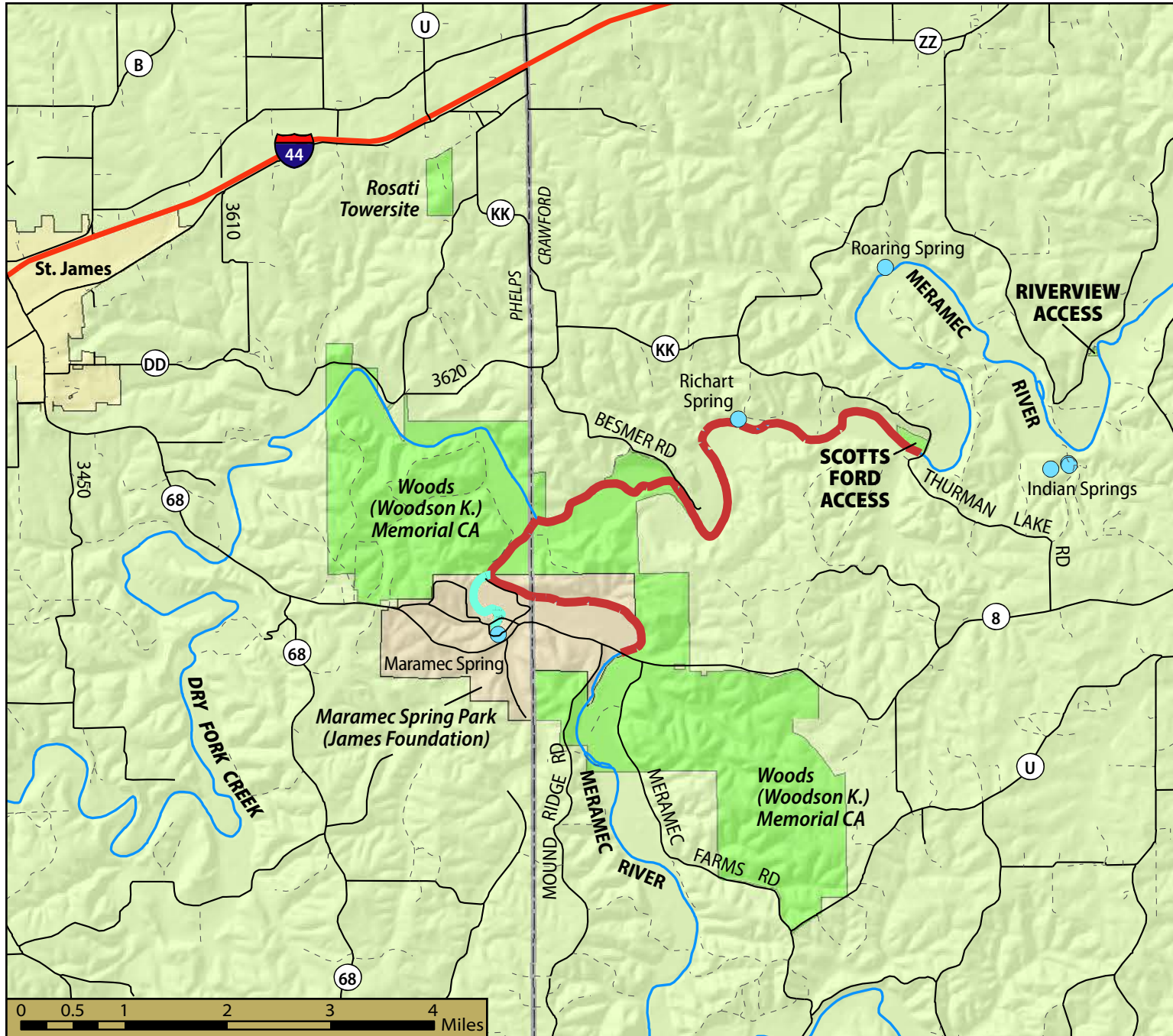
Hickory Creek



Lake Taneycomo



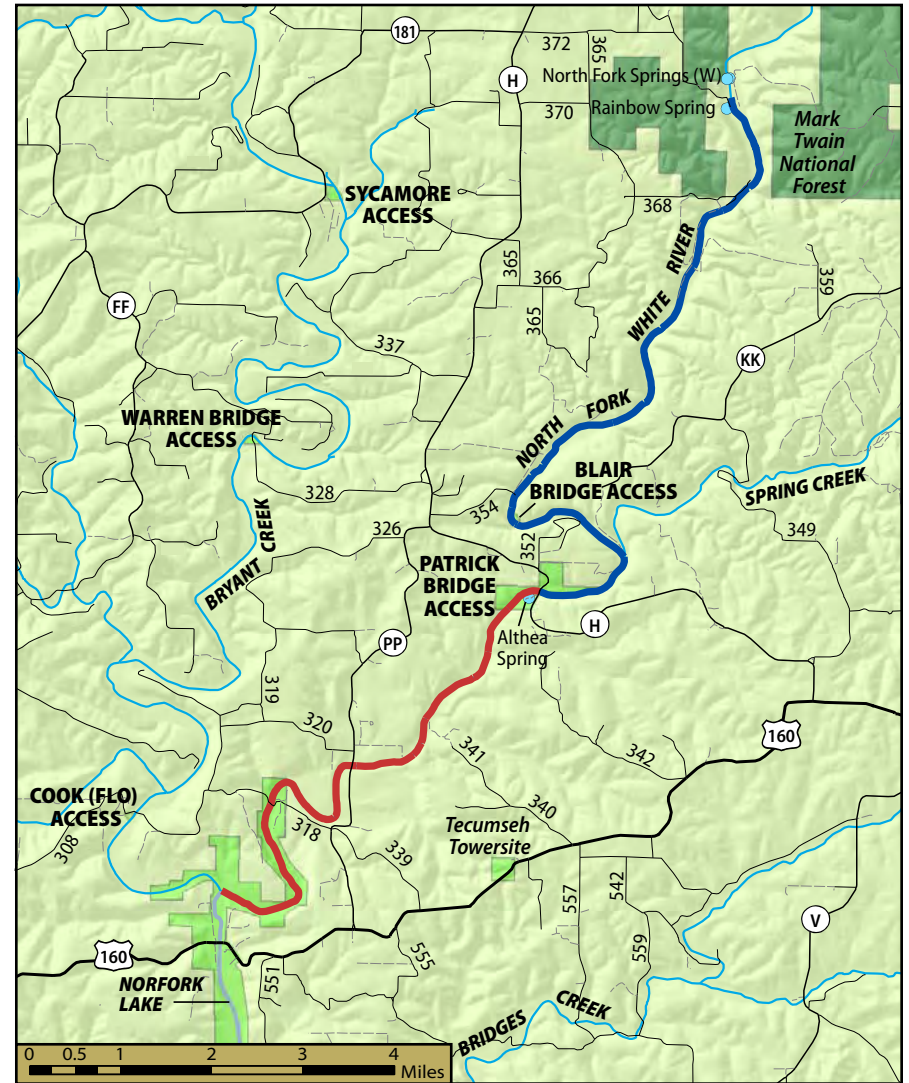
Maramec Spring Park and the Meramec River



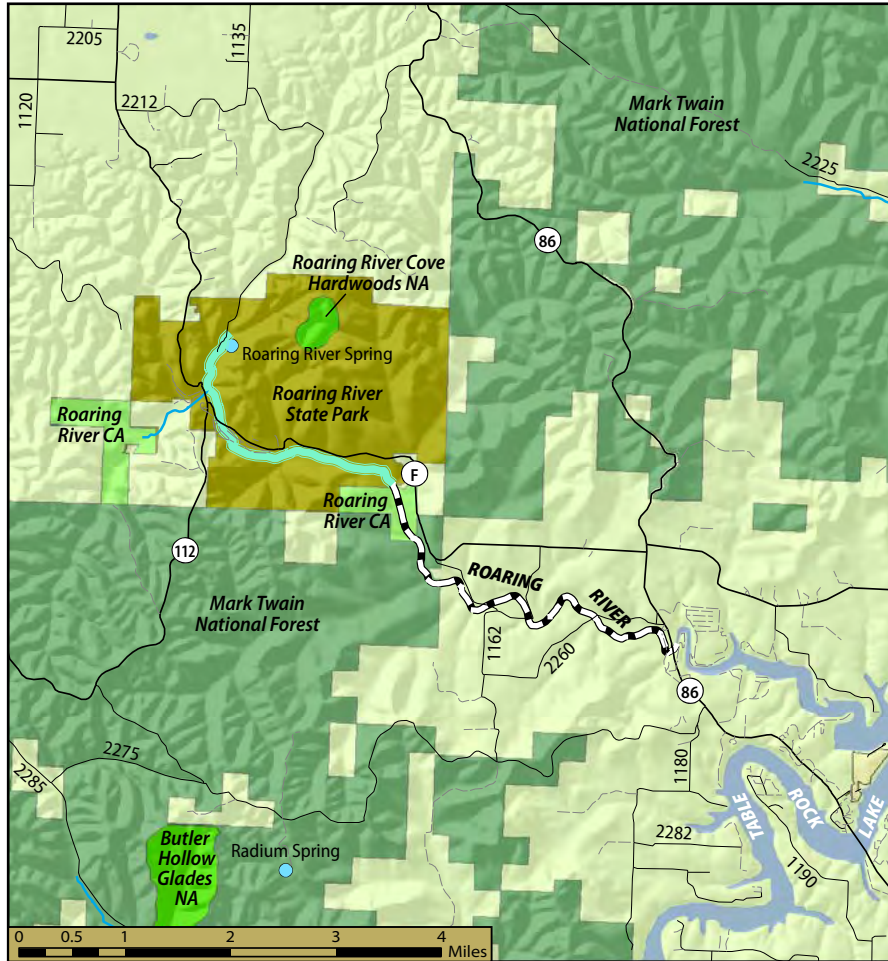
Little Piney Creek, Mill Creek, Spring Creek, and Stone Mill Spring Branch



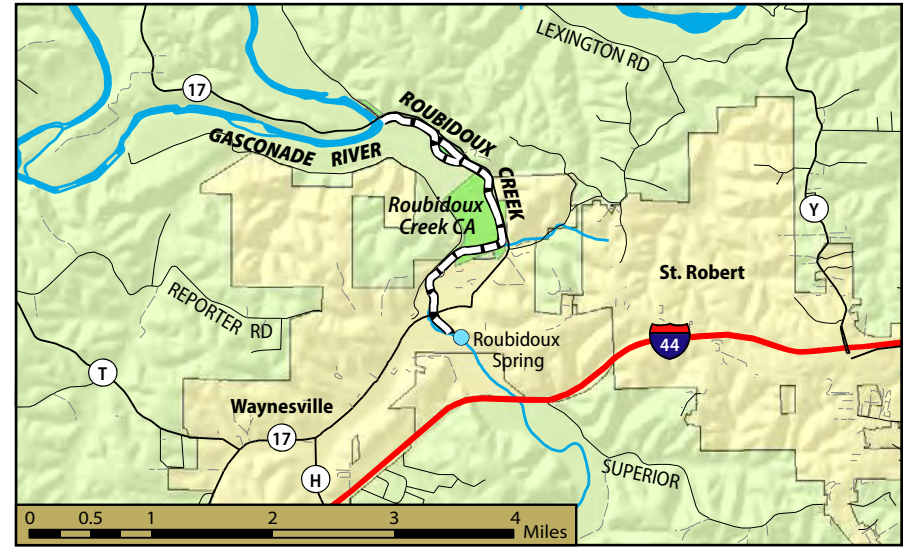
North Fork of the White River



Roaring River Trout Park and Roaring River



Roubidoux Creek





Missouri's Sport Fish Restoration and You

Anglers make it possible for the Missouri Department of Conservation to better manage the state's fish populations. Through the federally funded Sport Fish Restoration Program, you help make Missouri's fishing even better each time you purchase a new lure, replace a reel, or gas up your boat.

When you purchase sporting goods, you pay a special federal tax that is collected by suppliers and manufacturers. Each year, Missouri receives about \$8 million from that tax. This money pays 75 percent of many fish restoration projects designed to improve your fishing.

In Missouri, the Sport Fish Restoration Program helps fund:

- ▶ Research to increase fish populations and improve fishing
- ▶ Fisheries management and research to improve fish habitats and fishing and management advice to pond owners
- ▶ Public access to lakes, rivers and streams, and new public lakes
- ▶ Hatcheries, which produce the fish used to stock lakes and rivers
- ▶ Educational programs about Missouri's diverse aquatic environment
- ▶ Special projects to teach angling skills and provide fishing opportunities for kids, urbanites, the disabled, and the elderly



Enjoy “MO Fishing” With Free Mobile App



Conservation makes Missouri a great place to fish, and the Conservation Department’s free MO Fishing app can help anglers find a place to wet a line. The app allows you to:

- ▶ Purchase permits and carry valid, electronic permits afield.
- ▶ Find nearby lakes, rivers, and streams.
- ▶ Easily see whether a body of water has boat ramps, parking lots, and restrooms.
- ▶ See where fish attractors, such as sunken brush piles, are located on various bodies of water. With the app’s geolocation feature, you can guide your boat right up to your favorite fish attractor and start fishing.
- ▶ Review statewide fishing seasons and regulations.
- ▶ Identify your catch using a searchable electronic field guide.

MO Fishing is available in the Google Play and iTunes stores. You can also get MO Fishing and learn more about the app at short.mdc.mo.gov/Zoh. Try it now and get hooked on fishing in Missouri.

Contact your local MDC office to find out more information on any of the areas listed in this publication.

mdc.mo.gov



Copyright © 2025 by the Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri

*Published by the Missouri Department of Conservation
PO Box 180, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0180*

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, 573-751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to Chief, Public Civil Rights, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.



Current River



Serving nature and you[®]

FIS210 8/2025