



# TRIP REPORT

# COOL WATER RANCH

**CEDAR CREEK, WINCHESTER, VA**

**22 March, 2024**

# COOL WATER RANCH

- **New daily rod fee / private water SW of Winchester**
- **Owned / operated by Tim Freeman**
  - **Cool Water Outfitters (west of Harrisonburg)**
  - **Known for Beaver Creek & Horseback trips in WV**
  - **40 years as guide and outfitter**

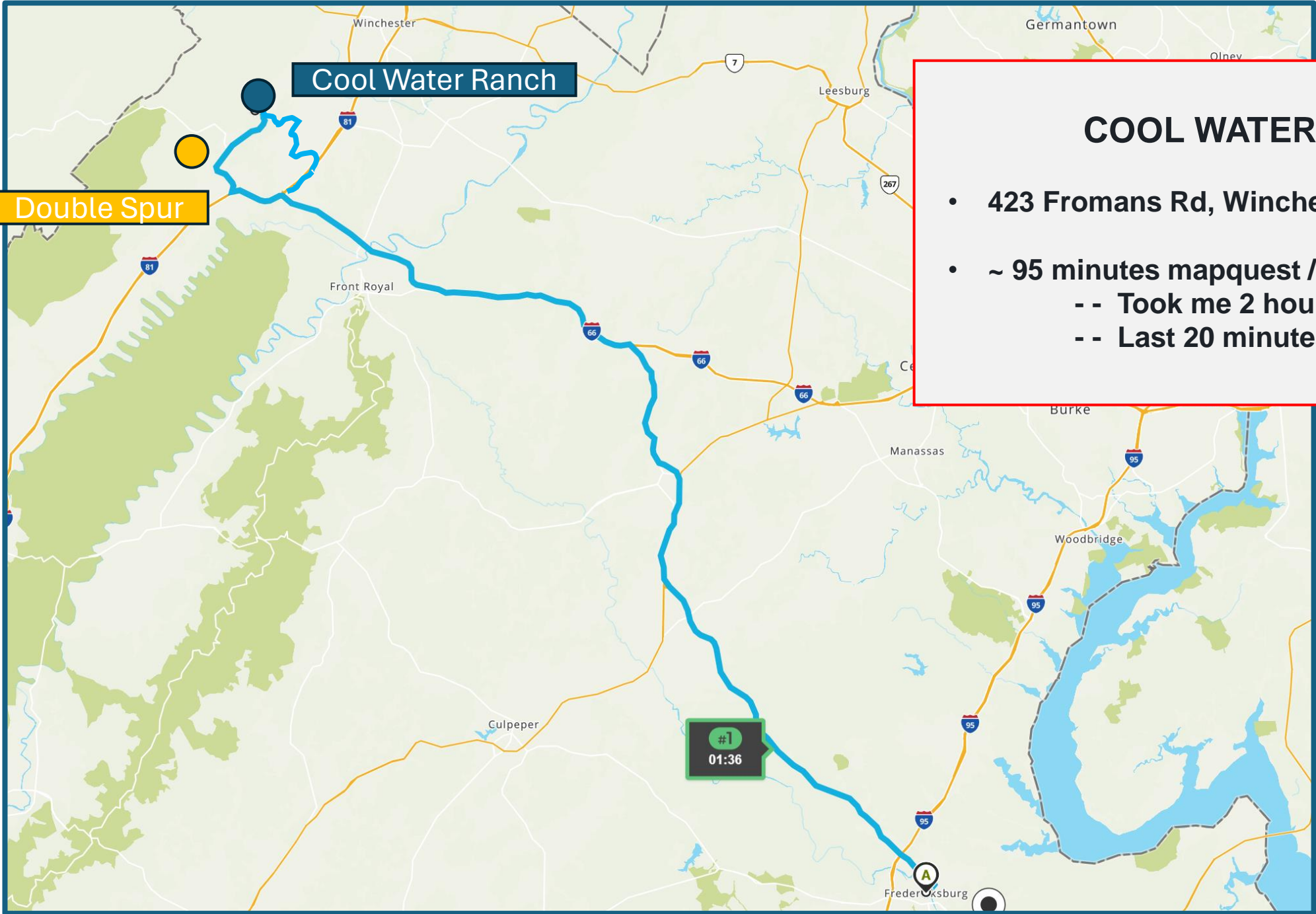
Cool Water Ranch

Double Spur

## COOL WATER RANCH

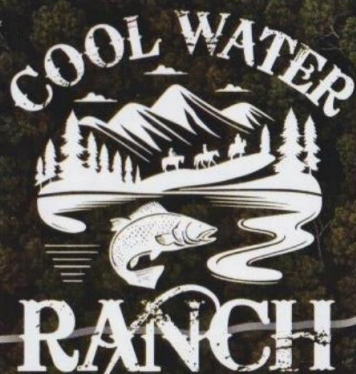
- 423 Fromans Rd, Winchester, VA 22602
- ~ 95 minutes mapquest / garmin from FXBG
  - - Took me 2 hours and change
  - - Last 20 minutes on country roads

#1  
01:36



# COOL WATER RANCH

- **Tim's farm property + leased farm property**
- **2 miles + of Cedar Creek (90% fishable)**
- **\$100 daily rod fee**
- **Limit 5 anglers per day**

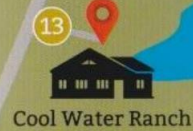


- Lower Section (owned)
- Good trail along stream

- Upper Section (leased)
- Stream or Bank walking

Livestock  
Fences

Livestock  
Fences



Cool Water Ranch

- 32 'named' fishing points
- 28 Rod Fee points
- 7 Guided Area points
- Nice graphic map, but no signs / markers

LOWER SECTION

1. Grace's Hole
2. Lower Cellar Rock Hole
3. Upper Cellar Rock Hole
4. Junk Hole
5. Cliff Hole
6. Lower Alley
7. Upper Alley
8. Lower Meadow
9. Upper Meadow
10. Race Way
11. Butterfly Rock Hole
12. End Lower Section
13. Parking Lower Section

UPPER SECTION

14. Parking Upper Section
15. Windy Rock Hole
16. New Dam Hole
17. Skip's Hole
18. Jack Riffle
19. Upper Meadow
20. Slide Hole
21. Fox Rock
22. Picture Rock
23. Swimming Hole
24. Gnegy Flat
25. Breakneck Hollow
26. Mowery Riffle
27. Tire Hole
28. Island Hole  
(Guiding Waters Above)
29. C Hole
30. Log Jam
31. Freezer Hole
32. Mom's Flat
33. Lick Run
34. The Nursery
35. The Aquarium



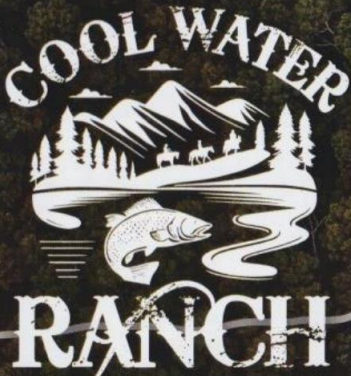
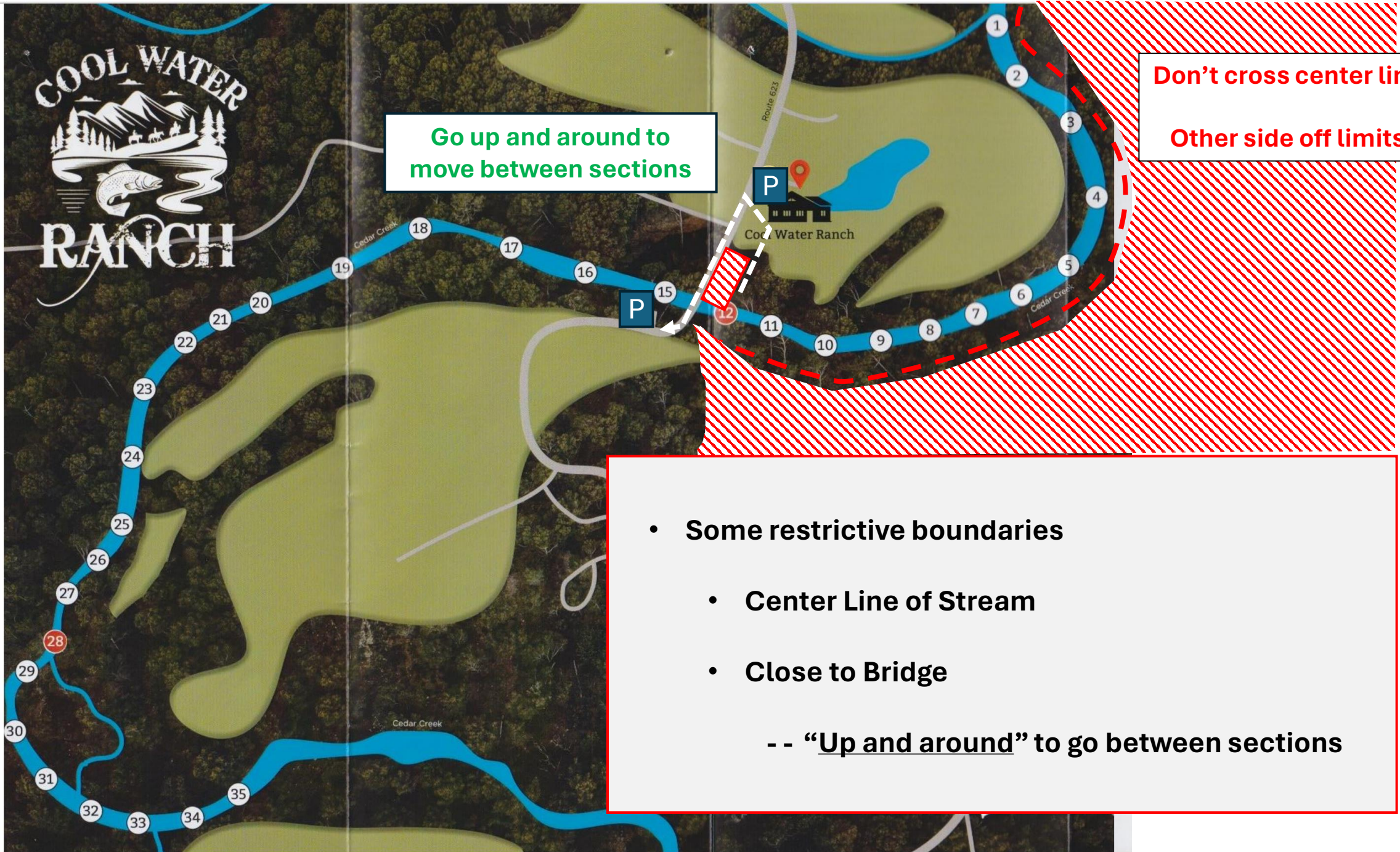
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- 35. The Aquarium

- **2 Parking Areas**
- **One by house, one off road**
- **Separated by ~ 150 yards**
- **Go to House lot at 9:00 show time**  
- - **Map & Safety / Rules Briefing**



Go up and around to move between sections

Don't cross center line  
Other side off limits

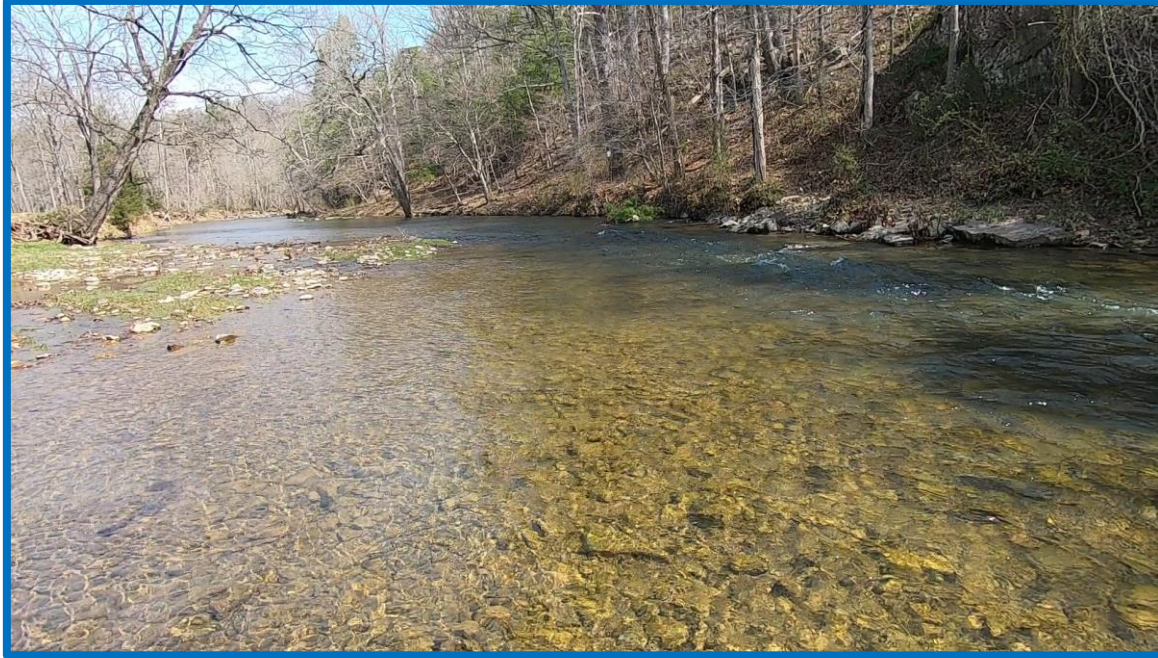
- **Some restrictive boundaries**
    - **Center Line of Stream**
    - **Close to Bridge**
- **“Up and around” to go between sections**

# COOL WATER RANCH – OTHER RULES

- **Fly fishing only**
- **Catch and Release**
- **Barbless Hooks (crimped barbs)**
- **Fish near bank (don't foul water courtesy)**



# COOL WATER RANCH – THE STREAM



**Rocky shallows – deep trough**



**Silty shallows – deep holes**

**About as diverse as you can get . . .**

# COOL WATER RANCH – THE STREAM



**Rocks & Silt – deep pool**

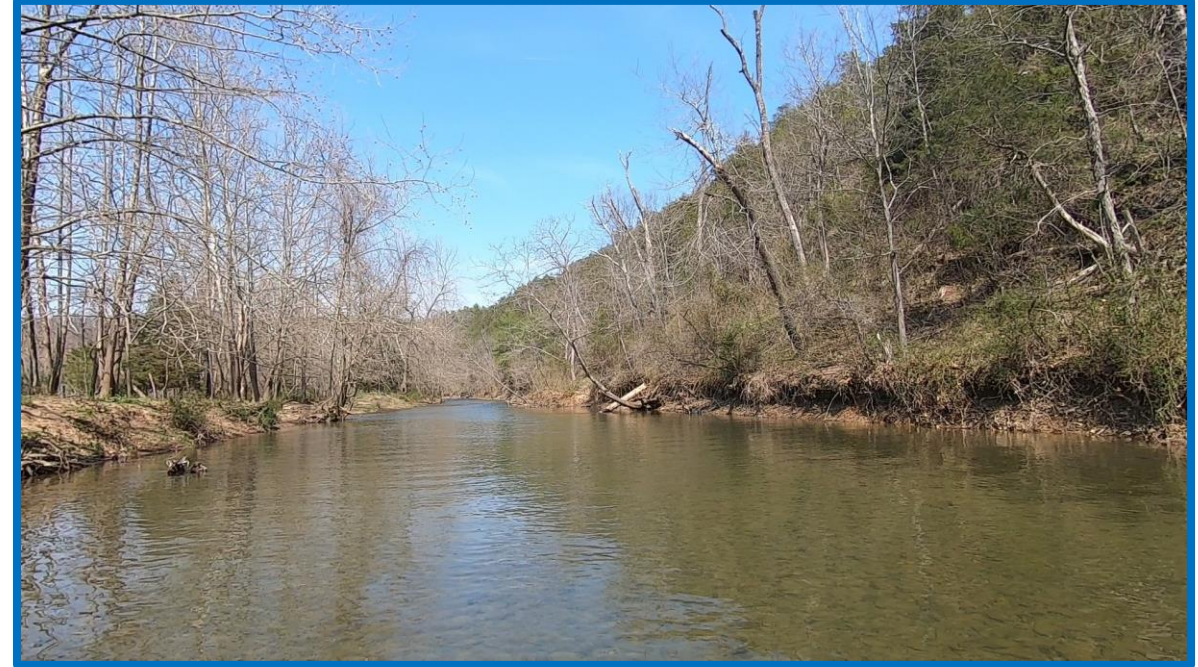
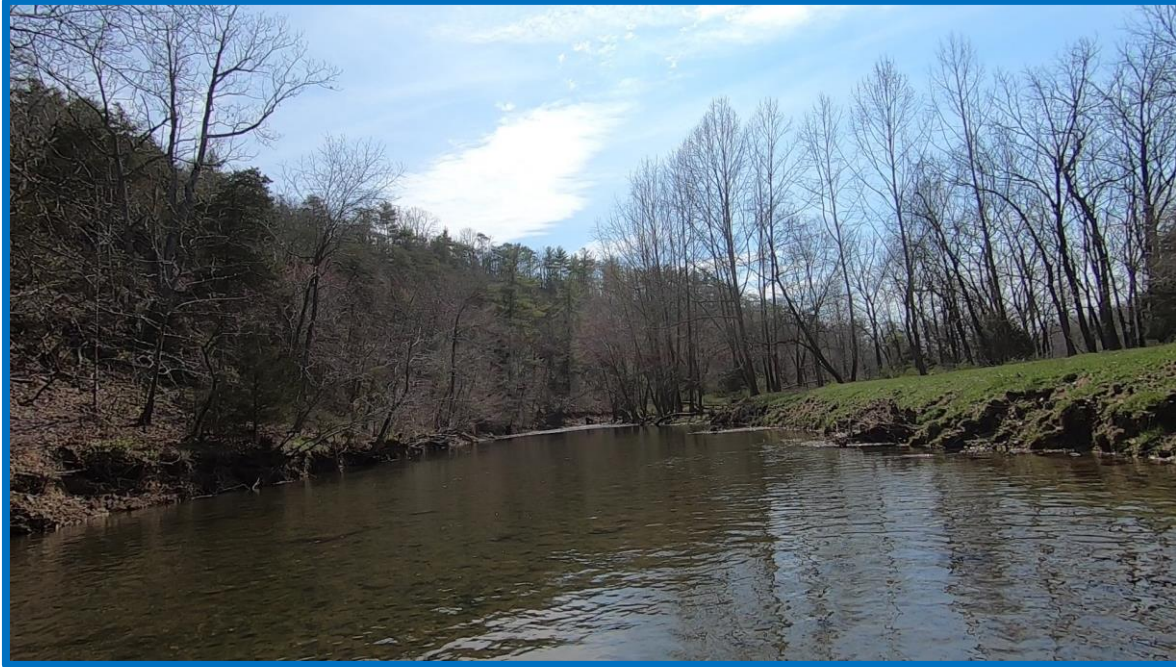
**Streamside Trail  
(lower Section)**



**Access Trail  
(lower Section)**

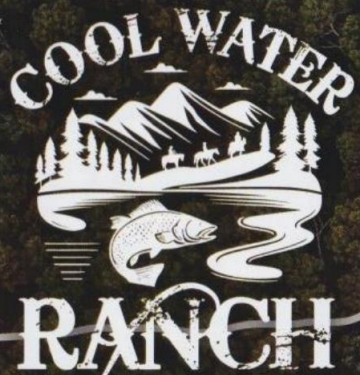


# COOL WATER RANCH – THE STREAM



**Long, Shallow Runs (upper section)**

**Also fast, turbulent riffle sections (euro-nymphing / tight-lining)**



Rocky / sandy bottoms  
Long runs & fast riffles

Shallow near side  
Holes & Troughs far side  
Deep silt w/ Hidden Drops

Rocky / sandy bottoms  
Extremely long runs

Rocky / sandy bottom  
Reasonably shallow  
Riffles, runs, holes

Varied stream bottom  
Small riffles – Pools (runs)



# **UPSTREAM – DECEPTIVELY SHALLOW (NOT)**

- **Clear water and clean, rocky bottom**
- **Limited or no structure other than freestone bottom**
- **What looks like 6” from the bank is 2-3’ deep**
- **The (big) fish are there, just well camouflaged**
  - - **Small surface riffles, false shadows, coloration**

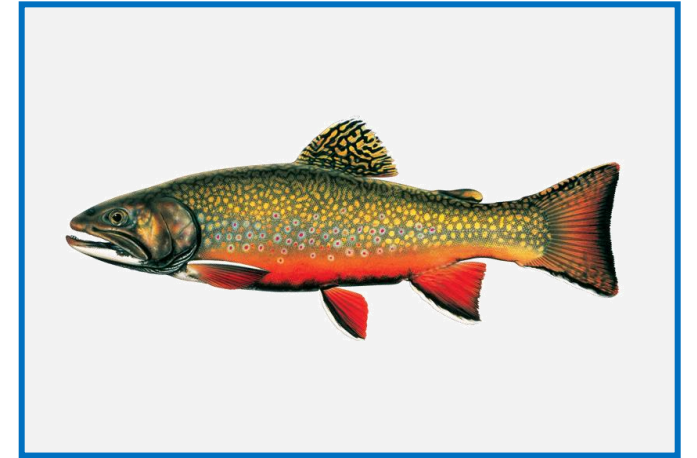
# COOL WATER RANCH – THE FISH



**Rainbows**



**Browns**



**Brooks**

**All 5 anglers caught rainbows / 4 of 5 anglers caught browns / Nobody caught brooks**

# THE FISH – ANGLER COMMENTS

- **Thin / skinny . . . Until they weren't**
- **Light, nearly imperceptible nymph takes**
- **Repeated charges at streamers even when refusing**
- **Frenzied, acrobatic fights (multiple jumps)**

# THE FISH



**Avg 14-15"**

## Chasing Rainbows



**A couple 18-19"**



**Biggest 22"**



# COOL WATER RANCH – FLIES

- **Guide Recommendations**

- - **Small Nymphs: 18-20 Zebra Midges**

- - **Zirdle Bugs**



**A Girdle Bug / Pat's Rubber Legs  
with flash and zonker strip**

# COOL WATER RANCH – FLIES

- **Angler Experience**



**#16 BNFB PTN**

**#18 Zebra Midge**

**Morning +  
Some action (~ 10 hook ups)  
100% on the PTN**



**#10 Peach Krystal (Golden Retriever)**

**2.5 Hours in Afternoon  
~ 20 Hook Ups  
Bigger Fish**

# ANGLER OBSERVATIONS / COMMENTS

- **Good Water - - - lots of space, very diverse**
- **Good fish, well dispersed**
  - - **Presence of Browns & Brooks a nice addition**
- **Infrastructure . . . Under development**
  - - **On-ground signs would be helpful**
  - - **Trail construction well on the way**
  - - **Pavilion, sitting area, other amenities planned**

# ANGLER OBSERVATIONS / COMMENTS

- **Relative comparison**
  - **Cost same as RRF, more than DSO**
  - **Longer drive for us than either RRF or DSO**
  - **Later show time: 9:00 a.m. vs 8:00 at RRF, sunrise at DSO**
  - **Stream / Water**
    - **Different stream type than RRF (natural vs enhanced)**
    - **Longer, generally wider, and more diverse than DSO**

# ANGLER OBSERVATIONS / COMMENTS

- **Recommend for serious, experienced fly anglers**
  - - **New anglers / spouses / kids okay in upper section**
    - - - **Cautious wading on lower, bank walking on upper.**
- **Go as a group. Plenty of space, but ...**
- **Good now . . . Will be better once infrastructure in place**

A large brown trout is shown swimming underwater. The fish is positioned diagonally from the top right towards the bottom left. It has a brown and white mottled pattern on its back and sides, with a prominent pinkish-red patch on its head. The water is clear, and the rocky riverbed is visible at the bottom. The text "QUESTIONS / COMMENTS" is overlaid in the center of the image in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

**QUESTIONS / COMMENTS**