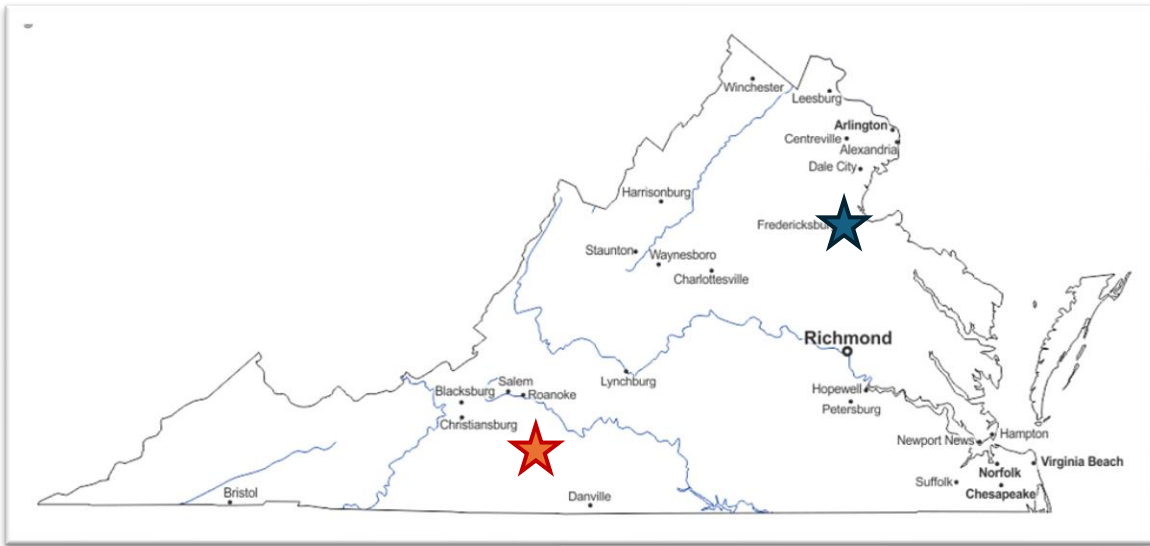


A blue inflatable raft is positioned in the middle of a river. The raft is equipped with two seats, a steering wheel, and various gear. The water is calm and reflects the surrounding greenery. The background shows a rocky bank with dense trees and a stone wall. The foreground shows a rocky shoreline with many small stones.

TRIP REPORT

SMITH RIVER

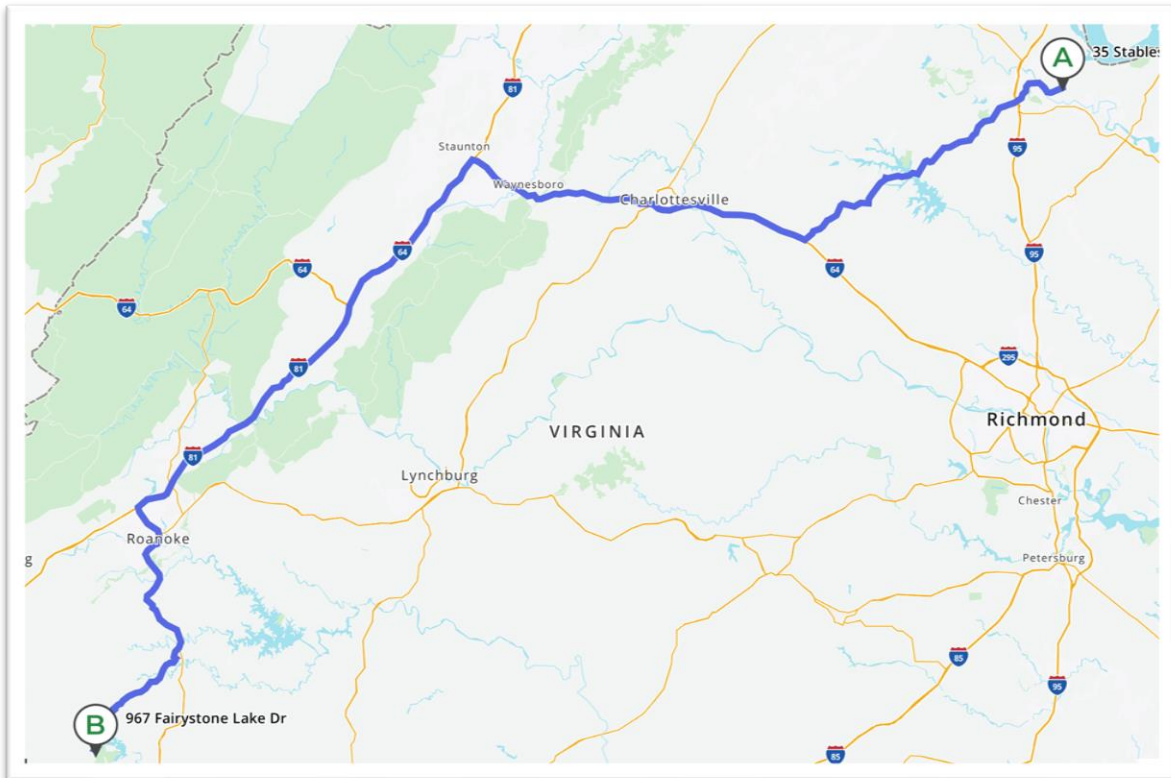
BASSETT, VIRGINIA
30 April – 2 May, 2026



SMITH RIVER TRIP

Bassett / Fairy Stone State Park

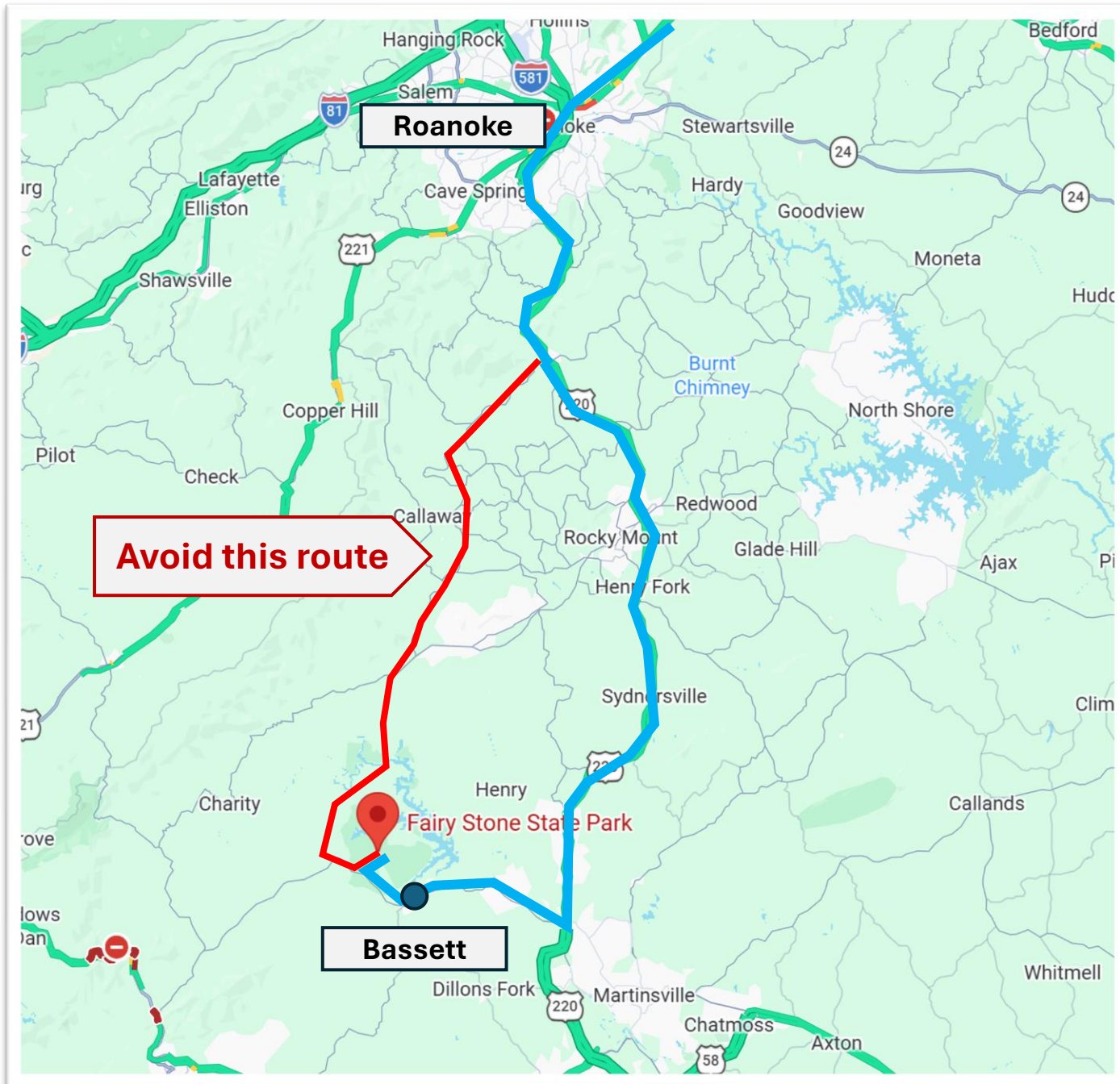
- 4.5 Hour + Drive
- 5.5 Hour + w/ camper



10 people & 2 dogs

- 8 on the float (4 boats)

**Lodging: Fairy Stone State Park
& Local Hotels**



The Drive There

GPS / Google Maps route

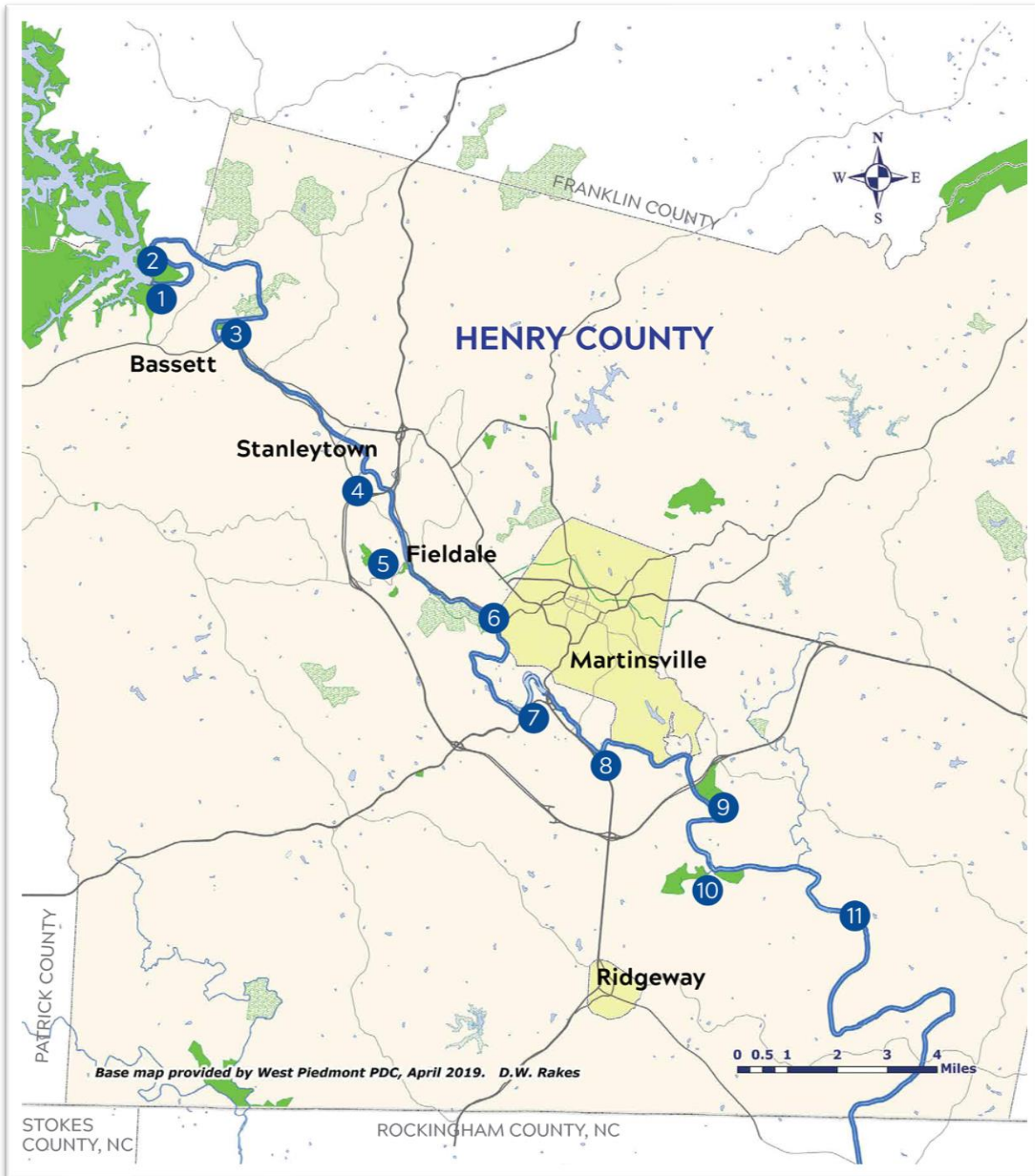
- North & west of Philpot Reservoir
- 12 miles / 18 minutes shorter
- **Avoid like the plague**
 - - Narrow, winding road
 - - Based on 55 mph speed limit

Come in from East Side

- Roanoke Rte 220 to Rte 57

SMITH RIVER

- ~ 45 miles long (39 miles in VA)
- From Philpot Dam to Dan River (N.C.)
- Consistent cold water from dam
- Wadable sections near Bassett



SMITH RIVER FISH



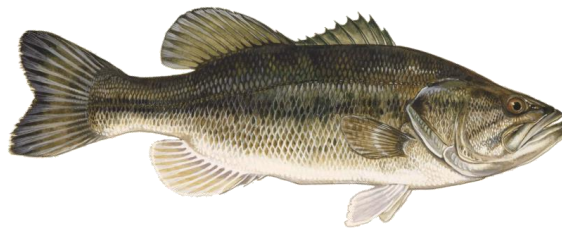
Wild Brown Trout



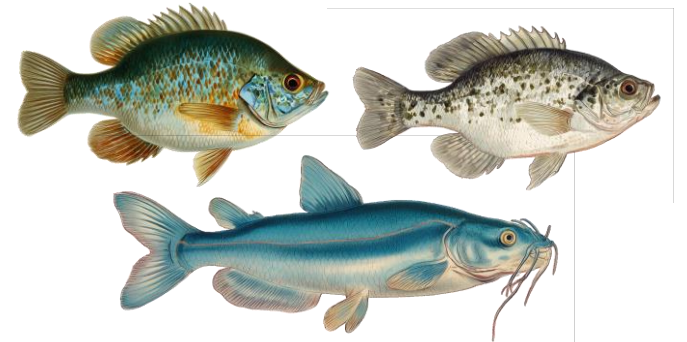
Stocked Rainbows



Smallmouth



Largemouth



**Warm-water
River fish**

** Some sites state brook & tiger trout as well*

SMITH RIVER

Near Bassett



SMITH RIVER

Near Bassett



SMITH RIVER NEAR BASSETT

- Public access points for bank & wade fishing
- Maps available on line & from outfitters

Fishing Access Philpott Bridge to Bassett

Cement steps

Riverbrook rd

Bassett Mirror Factory- Grassy lot parking for old special regs section access

Lemmons Hole

Ricks Place

The Grassy Area

Philpott road bridge

Fish camp rapids

Lauren Mountain Preserve Wells Hollow rd

Rosemont Road Bassett River Access

The "Loop"

Bassett Historic Center

Smith River Outfitters

The River can be accessed anywhere you can find a pull off to park along Riverbrook Road. Start at the Grassy area, inside the USACE gate. Walk up or downstream here. Popular area for bait and bank fishermen. At Ricks Place walk downstream of rapids, its too deep upstream. At the cement steps you can go upstream or down. The mirror factory is the old "special Regulations Section". Park off Philpott road in the grassy field. Walk behind fence, then behind building, through parking lot and field to river. Fish downstream of Towne creek mouth all the way to Fish camp rapids if you have all day. Lauren Mountain Preserve Wells Hollow Road. Trail along west side of river. Rosemont road. go almost to end of Rosemont, turn left on small dirt drive- park in small cleared area at railroad tracks. Walk across tracks to access river, walk upstream or down. Upstream has more riffles and it very pretty while downstream is deep and slower water The "Loop" Start at Bassett Access, fish downstream around loop. Bassett Historic Center. Park at Blue Ridge Regional library. Walk across road to river SRO - park behind shop. Access river just downstream of bridge via SRO river access.

Philpott Dam Franklin County: 36.78075, -80.02631
Philpott Dam Henry County: 36.78114, -80.02592
Ricks Place: 36.785854, -80.014447
Lemmon's Hole: 36.791201, -80.027671
Bassett Mirror Factory: 36.790170, -80.003672
Lauren Mountain Preserve: 36.770598, -80.005165
Bassett River Access: 36.76992, -80.00147
Rosemont Road parking: 36.770185, -79.993404
Bassett Historic Center: 36.763461, -79.995341

***Do NOT walk down RR tracks. It is ok to go straight across to access river, just don't walk along the tracks**

RED BY weebly

Shoreline Fishing Access Philpott Bridge to Bassett

Cement steps

Riverbrook rd

Lemmons Hole

The Grassy Area

Philpott road bridge

Lauren Mountain Preserve Wells Hollow rd

Bassett River Access

Bassett Historic Center

Smith River Outfitters

The River can be accessed anywhere you can find a pull off to park along Riverbrook Road. Below the dam on the Franklin county side you can fish from the shore, right at the base of the dam. A little further downstream is the "Grassy Area" is an open area, easy to access the river. Lauren Mountain Preserve - Wells Hollow Road. Trail along west side of river. The "Loop" Start at Bassett Access, fish downstream around loop. SRO - park behind shop. Access river just downstream of bridge via SRO river access.

Fishing from Shore

Stanleytown

The Great Road Access
36.727214, -79.948166

Philpott Dam Franklin County: 36.78075, -80.02631
Philpott Dam Henry County: 36.78114, -80.02592
Ricks Place: 36.785854, -80.014447
Lemmon's Hole: 36.791201, -80.027671
Bassett Mirror Factory: 36.790170, -80.003672
Lauren Mountain Preserve: 36.770598, -80.005165
Bassett River Access: 36.76992, -80.00147
Rosemont Road parking: 36.770185, -79.993404
Bassett Historic Center: 36.763461, -79.995341

RED BY weebly

FLOATING THE SMITH RIVER



- **Smith River Outfitters (SRO)**
 - EJ Stern
 - 3425 Fairystone Park Hwy, Bassett
- **Same as Raleigh Flyfishing**
- **Can provide up to 5 boats (rafts)**
- **Standard guide services**
 - Lunch, rods, terminal tackle, flies
- **\$550 (& possible processing fees)**



FLOATING THE SMITH RIVER

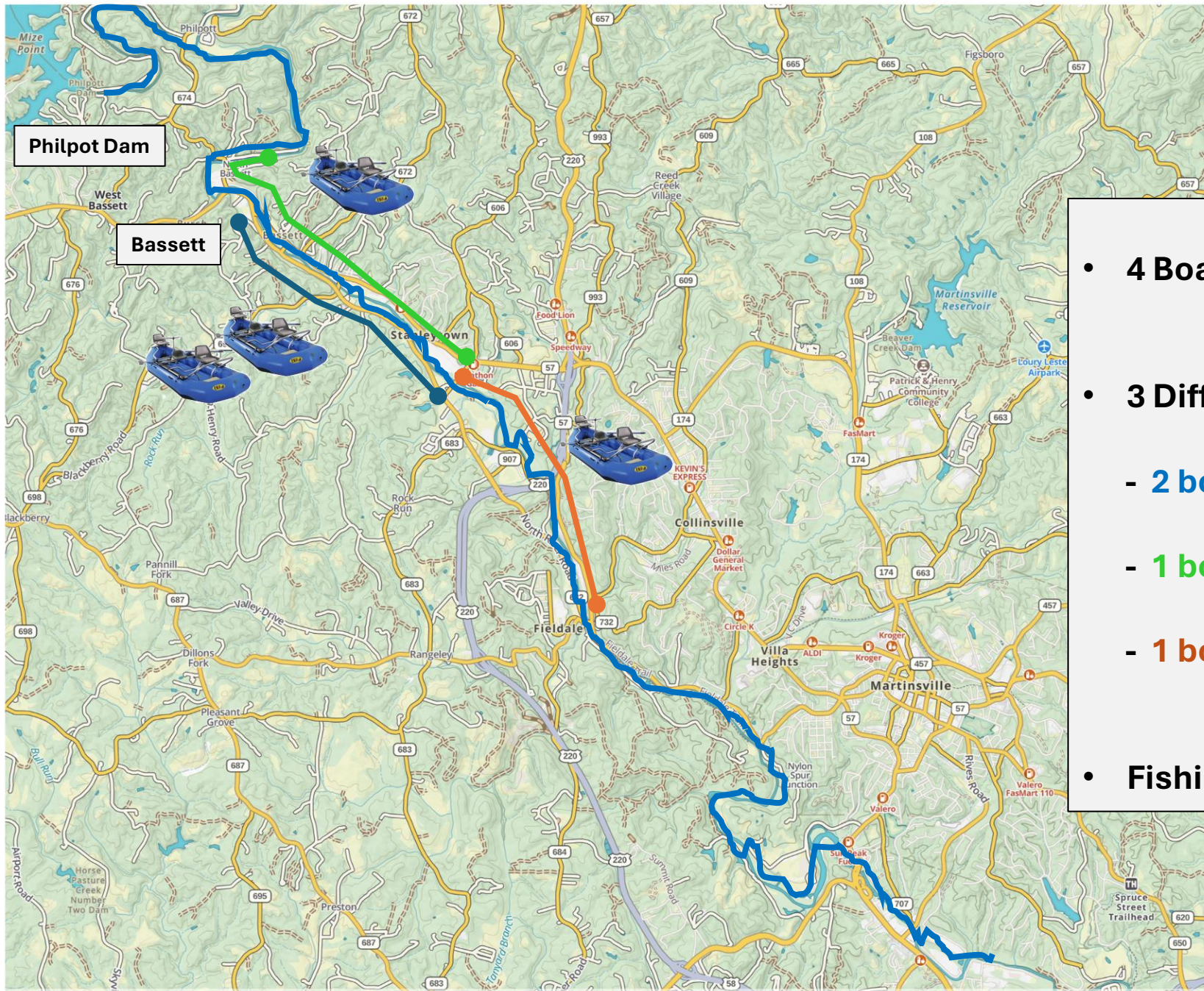
Other Outfitters / Options – *Lucky Strips Fly Company*



- Small, independent operation
- One boat (possibly a second)
- Standard guide services
- Less expensive (\$475)

Matt Tuggle via website email: luckystripesflyco@gmail.com Phone: 276-732-0517

FLOATING THE SMITH RIVER



- **4 Boats**
- **3 Different Stretches**
 - **2 boats in Bassett area (leap-frogging)**
 - **1 boat further up stream**
 - **1 boat further down stream**
- **Fishing varied by boat / stretch**

FLOATING THE SMITH RIVER – OVERVIEW & COMMENTS

- **Fishing predominantly from anchored position**
- **Guide provided 3 wt and 4 wt 10' Orvis Helios rods**
- **Nymphing: Dry – Dropper and indicator**
 - **Chubby Chernobyl w/ zebra midge underneath**

FLOATING THE SMITH RIVER – OVERVIEW & COMMENTS

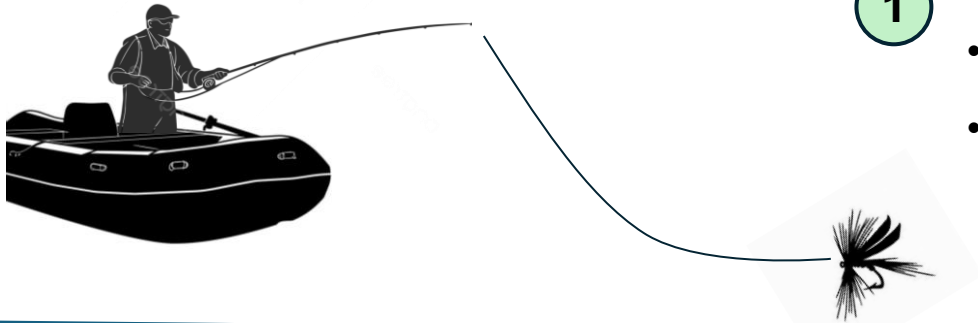
- **Long drifts to reach cautious fish using ‘Stack’ mending**
 - **Explain and demonstrate**

- **Takes so subtle as to be imperceptible**
 - **Guide: “Did you see that?” Angler: “I did not.”**

STACK MENDING

(Line Feed Method)

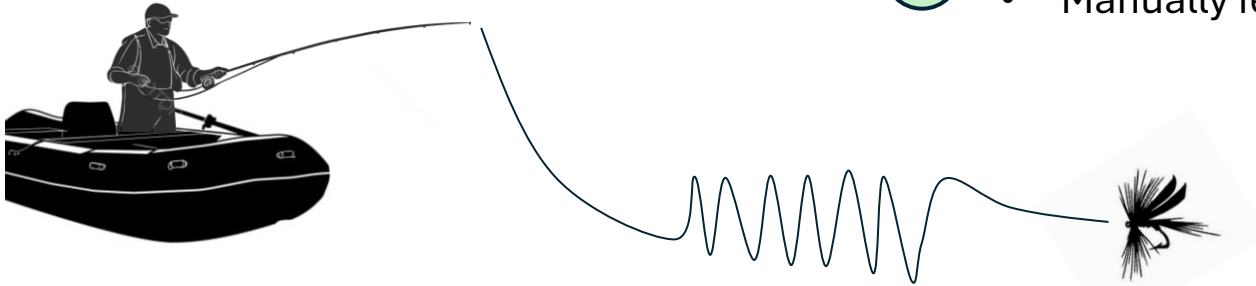
1



- ID target area 30-40' from boat
- Short cast into drift line



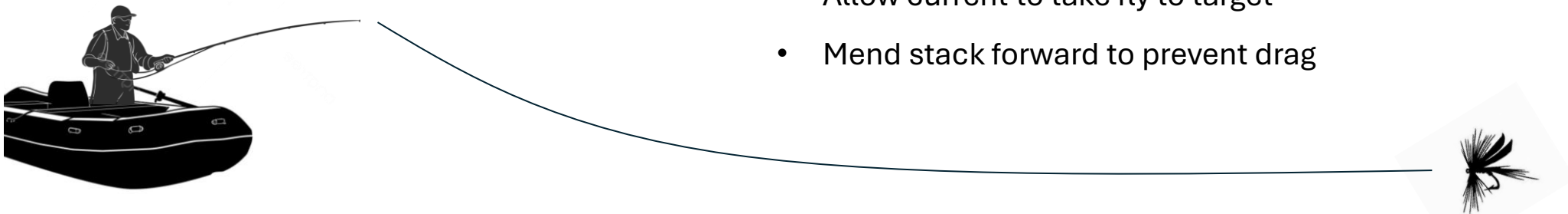
2



- Manually feed line to water (stack)



3



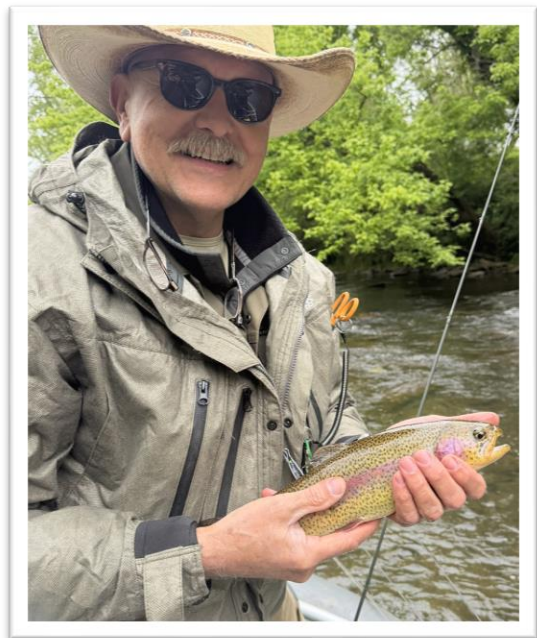
- Allow current to take fly to target
- Mend stack forward to prevent drag





SMITH RIVER FLOAT

- **Predominantly Rainbows**
- **10-14 inches**
- **Boat numbers varied**



FLOATING THE SMITH RIVER



Some Rainbow Doubles




Browns – Few & Tiny


SMITH RIVER FLOAT – ANGLER COMMENTS

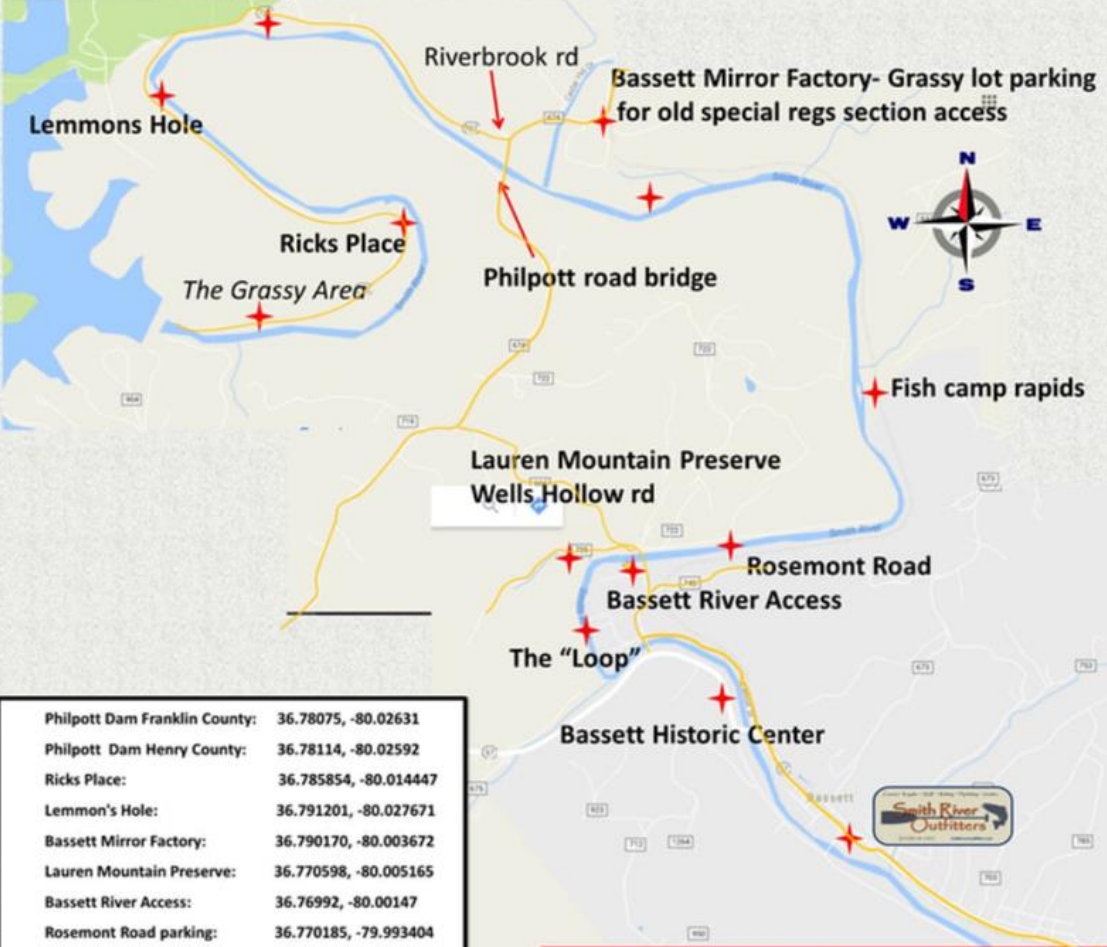
- **Beautiful Water – but very low & clear during our float**
- **Guides very good (would recommend if wanting to float)**
- **Good Rafts . . . but rafts (seats, braces, lack of rod tubes)**

DIY WADES AROUND BASSETT



Fishing Access Philpott Bridge to Bassett





The River can be accessed anywhere you can find a pull off to park along Riverbrook Road. Start at at the Grassy area, inside the USACE gate. Walk up or downstream here. Popular area for bait and bank fishermen.

At Ricks Place walk downstream of rapids, its too deep upstream.

At the cement steps you can go upstream or down.

The mirror factory is the old "special Regulations Section". Park off Philpott road in the grassy field. Walk behind fence, then behind building, through parking lot and field to river.

Fish downstream of Towne creek mouth all the way to Fish camp rapids if you have all day.

Lauren Mountain Preserve Wells Hollow Road. Trail along west side of river.

Rosemont road. go almost to end of Rosemont, turn left on small dirt drive- park in small cleared area at railroad tracks. Walk across tracks to access river, walk upstream or down. Upstream has more riffles and it very pretty while downstream is deep and slower water

The "Loop" Start at Bassett Access, fish downstream around loop.

Bassett Historic Center. Park at Blue Ridge Regional library. Walk across road to river SRO - park behind shop. Access river just downstream of bridge via SRO river access.

Philpott Dam Franklin County:	36.78075, -80.02631
Philpott Dam Henry County:	36.78114, -80.02592
Ricks Place:	36.785854, -80.014447
Lemmon's Hole:	36.791201, -80.027671
Bassett Mirror Factory:	36.790170, -80.003672
Lauren Mountain Preserve:	36.770598, -80.005165
Bassett River Access:	36.76992, -80.00147
Rosemont Road parking:	36.770185, -79.993404
Bassett Historic Center:	36.763461, -79.995341

*Do NOT walk down RR tracks. It is ok to go straight across to access river, just don't walk along the tracks

Easy, road side access

Finding locations occasionally challenging

GPS addresses & road names

DIY WADES AROUND BASSETT



- **~80% of water easily wadable (3' or less), but flow deceptively strong**
- **Be cautious / aware of holes and large rocks**

DIY WADES AROUND BASSETT



- **Three hours near Fireman's Museum / Dinosaur Zoo**
- **One anglers experience**
 - **More fish in 30 minutes than entire previous day**
 - **All browns (10-14")**
 - **All on top – Super Hatch (caddis, sulphurs, BWOs, others)**
 - **Constant rises and recurring breaches**

FISHING FAIRY STONE STATE PARK



Large Lake

Very limited shore casting areas
Non-motorized boats allowed
Good warm-water fishing



Some small creeks

“Nothing you’d want to catch”
Brookies in distant areas (?)

SMITH RIVER TRIP – FSSP LODGING



Green Sites = RV Only



Red Sites = RV + Tent Pad

Every site has electric & water hook ups

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

