

ARKANSAS

Big Piney Creek

Info at southwestpaddler.com

Extended forecast at accuweather.com for Treat, AR

Water flow & levels at waterdata.usgs.gov/ar/nwis/uv/?site_no=07257006&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060

Once at the waterdata website, enter 365 days to get a history of the river levels & character of the river.

Water level with explanations at mooreoutdoors.com/water-level.html

Water level history at americanwhitewater.org/content/Gauge2/detail/id/3414/

Best fishing gauge height is < 1.9.

Winter fishing info arkansasonline.com/news/2011/feb/20/outdoors-arkansas-great-winter-smallmouth-fishing/

When **Gauge Height** is below 1.9 feet expect dragging and slower current. Optimum flow is 2.0 to 4.0. Over 4.0 require open canoes to have flotation and/or spray covers to prevent swamping in standing waves. Best time to float is in the 3.0-5.0 range (recording at 501-324-5150 has daily report). At 5.0 the stream is dangerous.

Big Piney runs southeast to the Arkansas River. It forms east of Limestone in the Ozark National Forest in Newton County, then flows 67 miles through Pope & Johnson Counties to **Lake Dardanelle** on the **Arkansas River** east of Piney. Its headwaters communities are Fallsville, Limestone, and Deer. A different Big Piney River actually starts just south of Cabool, MO & runs north to the Casconade. (wildernessridgeresort.com)

Fishing the Big Piney is a twelve month pastime, but most recommend the **late spring/early summer** period. The creek has smallmouth, largemouth, spotted and rock bass, longear and green sunfish. The largest bass are often taken in the **late fall/ winter months**. It flows best in **late-winter/ mid-spring**. The prime season for canoes is **late fall/mid spring** in November thru late-May or early-June. **Summer/early fall** usually have low water. In the hotter months, some luck is in the creek's deep pools, but getting there may be rough.

Smallmouth bass fishing can be excellent due to great habitat. Fishing near rootwads & boulders associated with current will produce more Smallmouth bass than other habitats. Fish the pools in the spring time with traditional largemouth lures. Focus on the right habitats. Goggle-eye fishing can also be excellent in the spring time. Goggle-eye can be caught in the pools around structure & on the channel edge of weed beds. Crayfish imitations are always the best for goggle-eye. Also, goggle-eye can be caught on crankbaits in the rocky sections of the creek. Largemouth Bass can generally be found in backwater areas & are more readily caught in winter & early spring when these habitats are clear of vegetation. The Big Piney River is a clear stream, especially when low, & is best fished slow with a canoe or small river jon boat. If you are not catching fish from a boat, get out & wade fish the swifter habitats. Supplies in Dover or Russellville. Motels in Russellville. Stay in Russelville or Conway, AR if going to TN.

**Motel 6 or Expedia or Priceline or Trivago or Tripadvisor, then call hotel
Russellville**

<http://www.discoverrussellville.org/economy-inn.html>

Motel 6, sr \$41.03, 215 W Birch Str 479 968-3666 **35.30772 -93.14080**

Budget Inn, 1206 East Main Str 479 968-4959 **35.27789 -93.11888**

Economy Inn, 2200 N AR Ave 479 968-4400 **35.30160 -93.13689**

Conway

Motel 6 \$40, 1105 Skyline Dr, Exit #125, 501 327-6623 **35.11044 -92.43911**

Americas Best Value Inn \$42, 815 East Oak Str 501 329-8392 **35.09028 -92.41940**

Access Points (north northwest to south southeast)

Carry some bug repellent with DEET.

Fishing towards the lower end of the floatable reach of river as opposed to the upper stretch can produce more fish.

Access points 1 thru 4 are in the Ozark National Forest & require 4WD for the bad roads.

BigP1 Rt 29 Bridge at .0 miles, below bridge. Just below Limestone.
35.78110 -93.28997

BigP2 Rt 1002 also provides access few miles south of Rt 1004 crossing.
35.73308 -93.27282

BigP3 Rt 123 at 10.0 miles, just off Rt 123 below bridge. This section to Treat (Rt 1805) covers about 8 miles. The water upstream is fast & sometimes difficult to navigate. On this stretch, the valley is not so tight, the stream's pace slackens to allow casual fishing.

BigP4 Rt 1802 at 18.6 miles, where Rt 1802 ends at river. River ford @ Philips Ford near Rt 107/112, east of Helton's. Bad road.
35.62281 -93.21732

Helton's Farm at 35.60916 -93.17954 at 20.6 miles. At Treat (Rt 1805), put-in \$3 person.

Access points 5 & 6 are best approached from the south, I-40.

BigP5 Long Pool Camp & Rec Area at 29.0 miles. Good fishing on the five-mile stretch from **35.54948 -93.16191** Long Pool to Rt 164, just above Lake Dardanelle. 10 miles downstream with restrooms, changing rooms, loading/unloading areas, and a parking lot. (fee area except for winter season.)

Roadside parking place, walk down to the River.
35.53656 -93.15208

BigP6 Twin Bridges Rt 164 at 33.4 miles. Campground on each side of bridge.
35.50593 -93.18158

Public Walk-In Access.

35.50445 -93.18377

BigP7 Rushing Bridge Rt 27 at 36.8 miles below Limestone. (No access)
35.46262 -93.19703

A couple of places to fish between #6 & Russellville

Illinois Bayou Just north of Dover on Rt 7.
35.41061 -93.13333

Pleasant View Park Fishery. A Russellville fishing place!
35.32285 -93.13937

Lake Dardanelle below the dam on the Arkansas River. Paddle past Rushing Bridge to Lake Dardanelle State Park at Russellville. Rt 164 to Lake Dardanelle (or points in between). In these last few miles, the Piney slowly meanders toward Piney Bay at 35.39927 - 93.31605, an arm of Lake Dardanelle.

Campgrounds

Haw Creek Falls Recreation Area (USFS) off Rt 123 near Fort Douglas.

Long Pool Campground (USFS) at the end of Rt 15 at the Creek. campsites, flush toilets, hot/cold showers, potable water, RV hookups and other amenities.

Lake Dardanelle State Park on the Arkansas River near Russellville.

Rotary Ann Campground, on Rt 7 south of Rt 123 in Pope County.

Ozone Campground on Rt 21 south of Rt 123 in Johnson County.