

# Big Sugar Creek and Elk River

The clear running, rock and gravel-bottomed Elk River is a popular float in the western part of the state. In the Pineville and Noel areas, summer cottages are numerous, but the Elk below Noel has a more isolated feel.

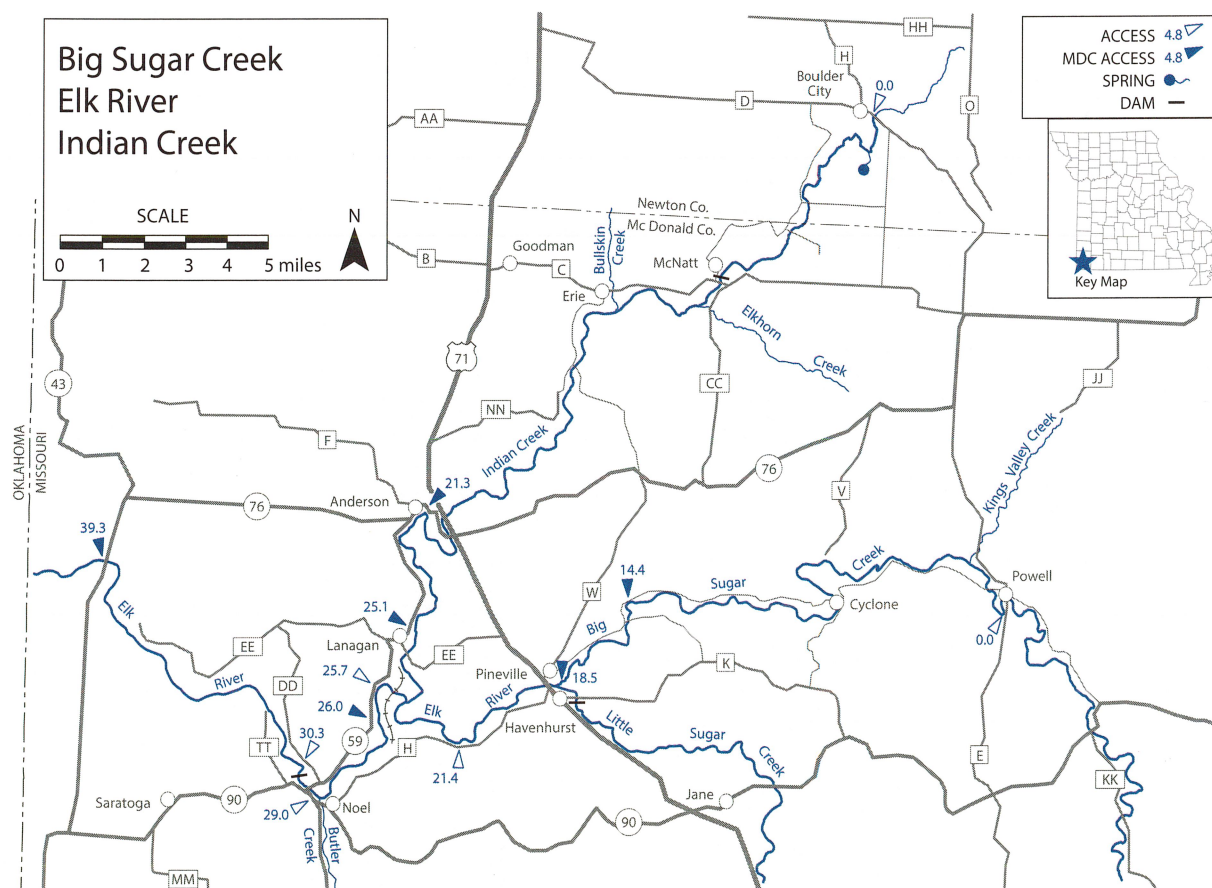
**Difficulty:** mostly II, seldom over.

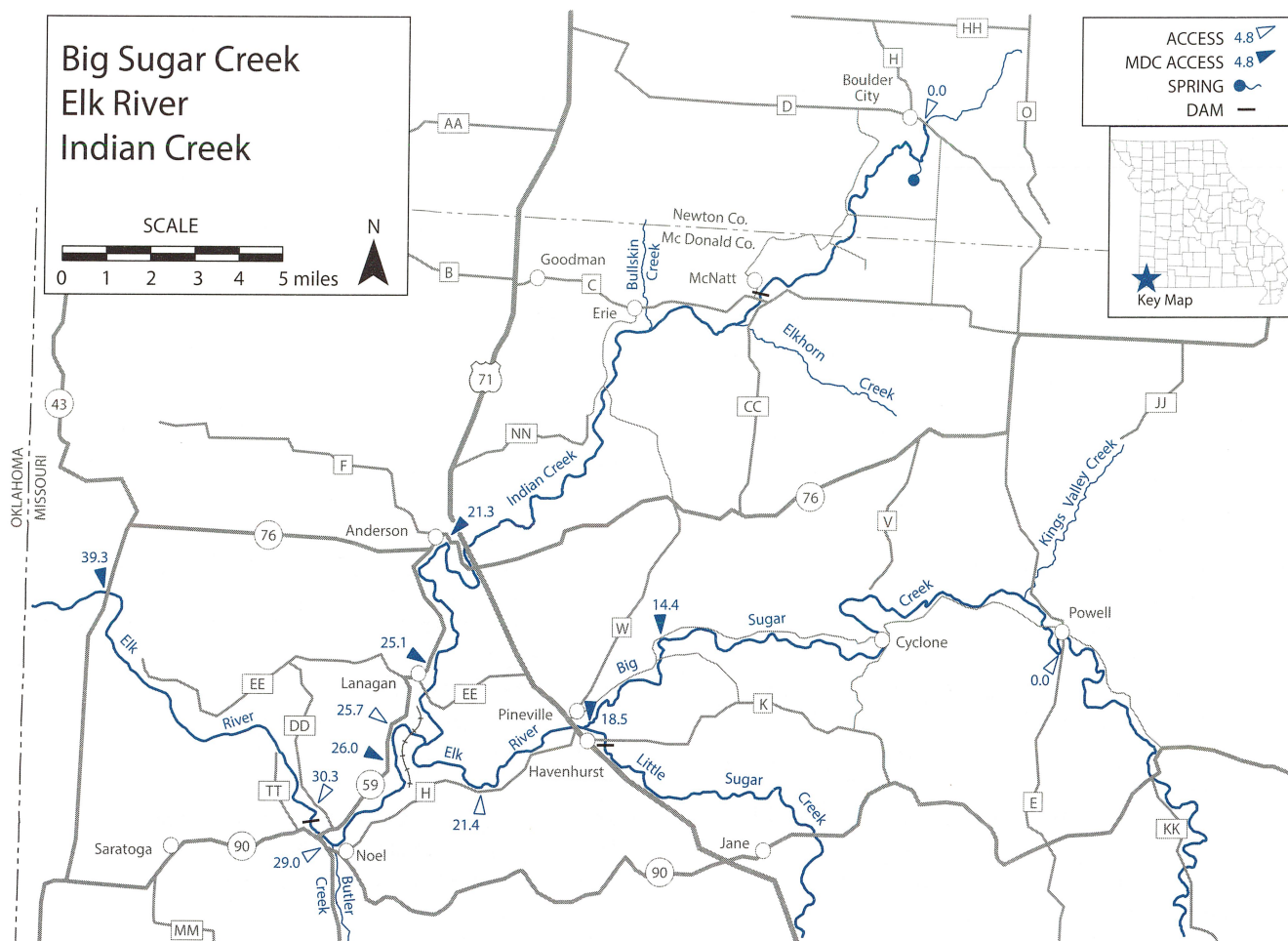
**Gradients:** general — 6.5; Big Sugar from Hwy. 90 to Powell — 8.9; to Cyclone — 6.5; to Pineville — 7.2; (Elk River) to Shadow Lake — 4.

**County:** McDonald.

- 0.0 Bentonville Hollow Creek and Route E Bridge.
- 0.8 Low-water bridge on creek road. Mikes Creek on right.
- 1.8 Kings Valley Creek on right.
- 6.3 End of Route V at Little Cedar Hollow on right.
- 8.6 Cyclone low-water bridge. Private campground. No public access.
- 11.4 Meadors Ford and Mac's Big Rock campground 0.3 mile south of creek road.
- 14.4 [Deep Ford Access](#) on right. From Pineville, take Big Sugar Creek Road east. Gravel ramp. May need to carry canoes to water during dry periods.
- 14.9 Crag O Lea. No public access.
- 16.4 Sugar Island campground and cottages.
- 18.3 Little Sugar Creek joins to form Elk River.
- 18.4 Campgrounds.

- 18.5 Elk River Access (Pineville). Old Hwy. 71 Bridge.
- 19.0 Campground south side of river.
- 19.9 Route H close on left.
- 21.4 Route H on left bank at Riverside Inn. Fair put-in.
- 24.3 Indian Creek, on right, nearly doubles volume of river. Indian Creek is a good float stream and is described separately. Water fast and heavy just below here at high water. Use caution at bridge.
- 24.7 Kansas City Southern Railroad Bridge. Campgrounds on right and left.
- 25.2 Site of old Ginger Blue Resort on right.
- 25.7 Campground and access on right.
- 26.0 [Mount Shira Access](#) on right. Gravel ramp.
- 27.5 Sycamore Landing campground.
- 29.0 Mouth of Butler Creek, at Noel, is adjacent to Hwys. 59 and 90. Take out up Butler Creek at city park on left at end of town or continue down Shadow Lake.
- 29.4 Hwy. 59 Bridge over Shadow Lake.
- 29.6 Campgrounds on both sides of river.
- 29.8 Dam. Portage.
- 30.3 Road closed on right. Fair put-in.
- 39.2 Campground east of Hwy. 43 bridge.
- 39.3 Hwy. 43 Bridge. [Cowskin Access](#) on right.
- 41.3 Oklahoma state line. Elk River becomes Lake of the Cherokees in Oklahoma.





## Indian Creek

This creek is suitable mainly for spring floats but has one of the best general gradients available in the Ozarks. However, the gradient is steady and there are no really unusual features in terms of falls or spectacular runs. It is just a good, steady, fast run through relatively undisturbed countryside, in spite of its closeness to civilization.

**Difficulty:** II and III, due to brush, logs and fast turns.  
**Gradients:** general — 8.7; Boulder City to Elkhorn Creek — 9.4; to Hwy. 76 — 8.7; to Elk River — 7.8.  
**Counties:** Newton, McDonald.

- 0.0 Route D Bridge access in spring or high water only.
- 0.5 Spring branch on left.
- 3.5 Wolfenbrager Bridge on Spruce Drive off Raccoon Road.
- 7.4 Mill dam at McNatt. Stream backed up for about half mile above this. Portage over dam. Rift below dam is hard on canoes except in high water.
- 8.4 Elkhorn Creek on left.
- 10.1 Old bridge 3.5 miles east of Goodman just off Route C. Private.

- 11.1 Bullskin Creek on right.
- 13.1 Mayfield Bridge.
- 18.3 Hwy. 71 Bridge. No public access.
- 18.8 Seller's Ford low-water bridge. Hwy. 71 and Anderson are 0.5 mile west.
- 19.3 Indian Creek Campground at Old Hwy. 71 Bridge.
- 19.8 Hwy. 76 Bridge.
- 21.3 [Dabbs Greer Town Hole Park and Access](#) (Anderson) on right, next to Post Office in Anderson. Must carry canoes/kayaks to river. Fair access.
- 21.6 Iron Canning Factory Bridge on county road south of Anderson.
- 24.5 Concrete slab at Bosky Dell Ford, not shown on maps. If there is water over the slab, approach with caution! It is slippery, and there is 4-foot rocky drop below it. Except in high water, portage right.
- 25.1 [Lanagan Access](#) (Lanagan) on right.
- 25.5 Route EE Bridge.
- 27.0 Elk River. Next access at low-water bridge 0.4 mile downstream or at [Mt. Shira Access](#) 1.3 miles beyond that, on right with gravel ramp.