

Niangua River

One of the best fishing streams in the state, the Niangua also has the advantage of being closely associated with Bennett Spring State Park (DNR) and MDC's Bennett Spring Fish Hatchery. Those who prefer floating to trout fishing in the park often make the park their headquarters while floating the upper sections of the river or the section immediately below the park. However, the river itself provides many fine campsites for put-in-and-go type floats. In high water, a float could be made from as high as Route M, but the river above Hwy. 32 is seldom floatable. This river is usually crowded on hot summer weekends.

Difficulty: I and II.

Gradients: general — 4.6; Route M to Hwy. 32 — 6; to Route K-P Bridge — 4.2; to Bennett Spring State Park — 4.1; to Prosperine (Mountain Creek) Access — 3.5; to Mill Creek — 5.2; below Tunnel Dam — about 3.

Counties: Dallas, Laclede, Camden.

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| 0.0 | State Hwy. 32 Bridge. | 37.5 | Prater Spring Branch on left. Spring 0.4 mile up branch. |
| 1.3 | Big John Access . Span bridge. Good canoe/kayak gravel bar launch. Hwy. 32, north on Engle Road, then east to Steelman Road. | 38.0 | Low Gap. Fast rocky riffle area. |
| 3.4 | Greasy Creek on left. Lower few miles sometimes floatable. | 38.2 | Private access and campground. |
| 3.9 | River divides. Left channel shorter, but inspect. | 38.3 | Old bridge piers. |
| 8.4 | Durington Creek on left. | 40.0 | Gilbertson Ford. No access. |
| 12.2 | Low-water crossing on Benton Branch Road west of Williams Ford Access. Good canoe/kayak access. | 40.8 | Mountain Creek on right. Prosperine Access , at mouth of creek on Kinfolk Road. No ramp. Gravel bar. Private campground next to access. Good swimming hole just upstream from mouth of creek. Rocky riffle below mouth of creek. |
| 13.9 | Indian Creek on left. | 42.0 | Indian Grave Point on right. |
| 16.2 | Alfred Newton Gossett Conservation Area . Gravel bar access. Fourmile Creek on right. | 44.0 | Guthrie Bluff on right. |
| 20.1 | Cave Creek on right. | 44.9 | Oldhams private access. |
| 22.3 | Moon Valley Access is 1.5 miles south of Bennett Spring State Park on Route OO, then west 1.5 miles on Moon Valley Road just across a low-water bridge. ➡ | 47.4 | Smith Ford. No access. |
| 23.8 | Private access and campground on the left. | 48.0 | Blue Spring (also called Big Blue Spring) on right. |
| 26.5 | Cat Hollow on left. | 50.7 | Mint Spring branch on left. |
| 29.0 | Spring branch on left. | 53.7 | Leadmine Conservation Area Access , on left. ➡ |
| 29.5 | Bennett Spring State Park offers camping and outfitters. Bennett Spring Branch on right. The spring, 1.5 miles up the branch, is sixth largest in the state. A large trout hatchery provides fishing for rainbows. Daily trout tag required. | 53.9 | Jakes Creek on left. |
| 29.8 | Hwy. 64 Bridge. Spring branch on left. No access. | 54.3 | Gravel bar within Lead Mine Conservation Area provides good canoe/kayak access. |
| 30.2 | Bennett Spring Access on left off Hwy. 64. Canoe/kayak launch area and boat ramp. ➡ | 57.1 | Berry Bluff, on right, particularly beautiful in fall colors. |
| 30.5 | Danceyard Creek on right. | 59.1 | AB Creek on left. |
| 35.0 | For next two miles there are several private accesses and campgrounds. | 61.1 | Chapel Bluff, on left, is mostly unwooded. |
| 36.2 | Spring branch on right. River turns abruptly left along bluff. | 61.9 | Lake Niangua backs water to this point. |
| 36.5 | Barclay Conservation Area and access, on left, is | 63.3 | Woolsey (Wilsey) Creek on right. Private access road at creek mouth. |
| | | 63.8 | Private access on left. |
| | | 65.3 | Private cabins on east side of lake. |
| | | 66.0 | Tunnel Dam. Public access and boat ramp on west side (above the dam). Below the dam, public access on gravel bar (no boat ramp). At the dam it is only 0.2 mile across the ridge to next put-in, but it is an extremely difficult, steep (some would say impossible) portage. |
| | | 68.0 | Bridge. South of Edith off Route U. Private access. |
| | | 72.2 | Power house on right. Powerline. Area dangerous when water is coming through turbines. Use caution. |
| | | 73.5 | Power line crossing. |
| | | 74.7 | Rodger Ford may be reached from both north and south sides. No crossing here. |
| | | 77.0 | Lake of the Ozarks may back water to this point. |
| | | 79.5 | Access approximately 0.7 mile above the mouth of Bank Branch Creek, reached by paddling along right shore of lake. Kayaks and canoes can also be launched from a gravel bar above the second bridge. This site is part of Ha Ha Tonka State Park (DNR). |
| | | 80.0 | Ha Ha Tonka Cove (Ha Ha Tonka State Park). Good access from dock and ample parking. A good access to use if the previous access (79.5) is inaccessible during lake drawdown. |

