

North Fork of the White River

The North Fork of the White combines a relatively constant flow of clearwater from large springs with some of the best whitewater in the Missouri Ozarks. Since its upper reaches are in Mark Twain National Forest, it retains some wilderness character and has good watershed protection. The section from Hwy. 14 to Route H is near-wilderness and includes some fine stands of short-leaf pine as well as several large springs. Old mills and a number of National Forest recreation areas enhance the attractiveness of the area for vacationers. Indeed, this river has high-quality recreation value equal to any in the Ozarks.

The river is almost always floatable from Dora down to Norfork Reservoir. Although the gradient of the lower sections is not spectacular, the volume is good and this produces some fairly sporty rifts.

The Little North Fork, in western Ozark County, was a fair float before Bull Shoals Reservoir destroyed its lower reaches. There is now little of it left that could be floated, but it is still suited to wading and fishing in the Hammond area.

Difficulty: I and II. A few places might rate a low III in high water.

Gradients: general — 7.5; Route HH to Round Valley Ford — 10.4; to Twin Bridges — 8; Hammond Camp — 6.7; to Route H — 6.4; to Tecumseh take-out — 5.6.

Counties: Douglas, Ozark, Howell useful for road connections.

- 0.0 Hwy. 76 Bridge. Access.
- 0.5 Low-water bridge on connecting road between Hwys. 76 and E. Access.
- 6.6 Low-water bridge and spring at Topaz. An old mill remains standing. Access.
- 11.1 Slab ford. Access.
- 11.4 Indian Creek enters on left.
- 12.2 Osborn Ford low-water bridge in Round Valley, on County Road AH-260 off Route AH and County Road 284 off Hwy. 181.
- 14.8 Hale Ford Bridge access on County Road 278 off Hwy. 181 and County Road W-278 off Hwy. W.
- 16.1 Fiddle Springs Hollow on left.
- 18.7 Bridge on connecting road between Hwys. AA and 14. [Hebron Access](#) on left, on County Road 279 off Hwy. 14. Gravel ramp. If used during summer months or low flows, expect to walk boat over several shallow spots downriver. ▲
- 24.1 Hwy. 14 Bridge at Twin Bridges. Other bridge is over Spring Creek. Access and camping. Roadside park on left bank just above Hwy. 14 Bridge is a popular access and campground. Store between bridges.
- 25.9 Spring Creek enters on left. The lower 8 miles of the creek have a gradient of 12.5 but it is more a

wading/fishing stream than a floating stream and tends to be blocked by logs and other obstacles. Big Spring, 2.5 miles upstream, is only a third magnitude spring.

- 26.0 Hicks Spring on right just below the mouth of Spring Creek.
- 28.2 Mary's Hollow and creek on right. Spring up hillside on opposite side of river.
- 29.2 Hammond Camp Access just off Route CC. Forest Service North Fork Recreation Area and campground on left.
- 29.9 Blue Spring on left, at river level. The flow is seldom less than 7 million gallons per day.
- 33.3 North Fork spring issues from rock ledge on left.
- 33.5 Upper branch of Rainbow (Double) Spring on right. Lower branch enters river 1500 feet downstream from source. No admittance. Private use only. This is rated as the fifth largest spring in the state with mid-summer flows of up to 137 million gallons per day. There is a rocky riffle on the bend just below the mouth of the lower spring.
- 35.0 McKee Bridge. Private use only. The privately owned McKee Bridge sometimes creates an obstacle to floaters when the river is high. Floaters should stay to the right of the main current to avoid being pushed into the bridge structure. Conditions may increase chances of capsizing, injury, or damage to boats. Floaters may need to portage their watercraft around the structure along the right bank. However, this may be difficult due to large rocks. Consider risks before floating.
- 36.0 The Falls is merely a rock ledge about 2-3 feet high. Chute is best handled from the left and go toward the right, but check first.
- 39.2 Blair Bridge on extension of Route KK to Route H. Access.
- 39.4 [Blair Bridge Access](#) on left, on County Road H-354 off Route KK. ➡
- 39.9 Private campground on right.
- 40.9 Spring Creek on left, is fed by numerous springs, none of them large. It has a gradient of 14 on the 6 miles above its mouth but access to it is poor except at the Duncan Ford 2.3 miles upstream. It has often been floated from this point in springtime and provides a good ride, but a float from Cureall (12 miles) could entail much walking.
- 42.1 Route H low-water bridge. [Patrick Bridge Access](#) at northeast side of bridge. ▲ ➡ Althea Spring, rated as Missouri's 23rd largest, is just downstream on the left.
- 42.3 Althea Spring Branch enters the river at a fast riffle.
- 43.6 Private campground on right.
- 45.3 Route PP Bridge.
- 47.1 Dawt Bridge. Going under this bridge in high

water is dangerous. Approach with caution and make sure there is clearance! The Dawt Mill is one of the most picturesque of those still operating in the area. The run from here to Tecumseh access has a number of riffles depending on lake level.

- 48.8 Repeating Riffle. This is the last drop when the lake is high. A ledge produces good standing waves

49.1

49.5

which whitewater enthusiasts rerun by using a strong upstream eddy on the right to carry them to the ledge again with little paddling effort.

Junction with Bryant Creek.

Tecumseh Access (USACE) and campground on right.

