

Big River

The Big River, like its sister tributary of the Meramec, the Bourbeuse, is slow. It differs mainly in that it flows through a more heavily populated area, yet there are many pleasant places along it. Sections both above and below Washington State Park (DNR) are more attractive, and the park makes an excellent base of operations for base camped floats. Old mills and mill sites add interest. The area is so close to St. Louis that it can be reached in little more than an hour's driving from that city.

The Big River featured here flows through two U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund National Priority List lead sites. The lead contamination in the Big River is within the sediments (sand/gravel bars and riverbed), and in the soils near the river. The primary health risk of lead involves inhalation of lead dust or ingestion of lead or lead-contaminated soils, therefore, there is minimal risk involved in canoeing this stretch of river. For more information on lead contamination along the river, visit the EPA website at epa.gov and search for "Big River Clean-up and Restoration." Additional information from the Missouri Department of Public Health concerning fish advisories for Missouri waterways, including the Big River, is available online at health.mo.gov/living/environment/fishadvisory/.

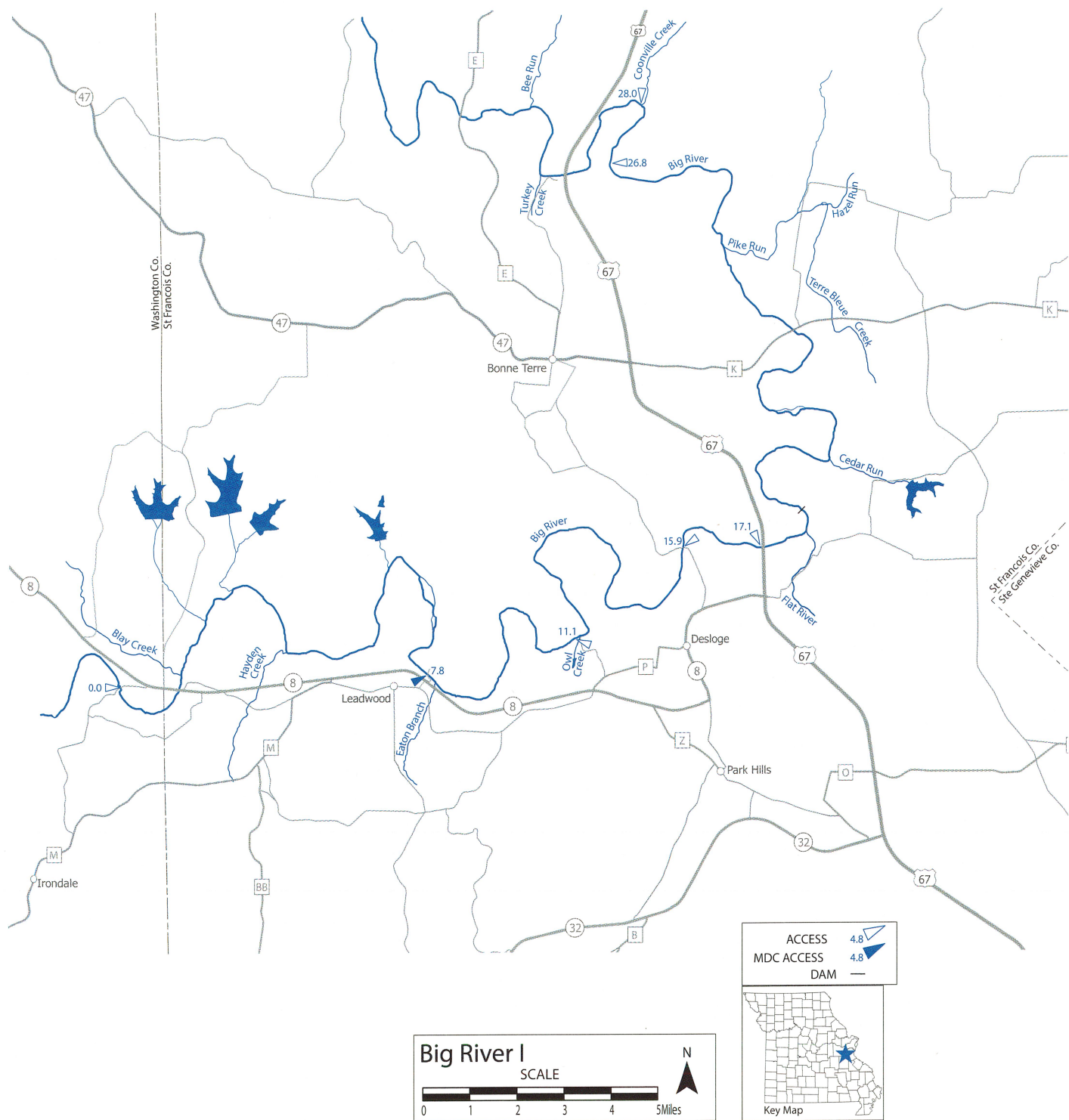
Difficulty: I.

Gradients: general — 2.4; Mounts to Cherokee Landing — 3.7; Route E to Hwy. 21 — 3.6; To Pine Ford Bridge — 2.2; to Byrnesville — 1.9; to Meramec River — 1.5.

Counties: St. Francois, Washington, Jefferson.

Big River I

- 0.0 Mounts/Benny Meyer Road Bridge. Private campground with fee parking
- 1.0 Hwy. 8 bridge. No access.
- 5.3 Terre du Lac lake development picnic ground. Private access.
- 7.8 [Leadwood Access](#) at the old Hunt's Ford low water bridge. Parking.
- 11.1 Owl Creek Park (formerly Bone Hole) on right. Parking.
- 15.5 Railroad bridge.
- 15.9 Old Bonne Terre Road/Hawthorne Street Bridge. Moderate access, limited parking on north side of the bridge.
- 17.1 Vo-tech Road and U.S. Hwy. 67 bridges. Poor access.
- 17.7 Flat River Creek enters on right.
- 18.0 Newberry Riffle lead remediation structure. Requires portaging.
- 19.9 Cedar Falls Creek enters on right, across from a private picnic area.
- 23.0 Route K Bridge. No access.
- 24.5 Terre Bleue Creek enters on right.
- 26.8 St. Francois State Park (DNR) picnic grounds and swimming beach on right. Access and parking.
- 28.0 Coonville Creek enters on right, at the state park's lower picnic ground. Like the upper river accesses in the park, this one requires a long walk to the water.
- 29.6 U.S. Hwy. 67 bridges. Private outfitter with access and camping on left.



Big River II

- 29.6 U.S. Hwy. 67 bridges. Private outfitter with access and camping on left.
- 29.9 Turkey Creek enters on left.
- 31.9 Route E bridge. No access.
- 37.1 "Rocky Riffle," a long riffle flowing over solid bedrock. Forms some sporty waves at higher water levels and requires walking a canoe down it on very slick rock at low levels.
- 37.0 Three Hill Creek on left.
- 39.8 Cole's Landing. Low water bridge. No access.
- 41.2 Blue Spring on right, about 20 feet from river and 2 feet above river level.
- 41.5 River splits at an island, and the right channel runs through a disintegrating concrete low water bridge. The left channel is open by drops over a very steep, narrow riffle.
- 42.8 Mill Creek on left.
- 43.4 Blackwell Bridge/Hwy CC. No public access.
- 46.3 Missouri Pacific Railroad bridge.
- 48.6 Hwy. 21 bridge. Just downstream is the upper Washington State Park. Public access. Parking. Outfitter. Ramp.
- 52.0 Washington State Park picnic grounds on left. Access.
- 52.6 Big River Heights Road Bridge (closed) No access.
- 53.7 Mineral Fork on left.
- 55.3 [Mammoth Access](#) on left, just above Mammoth Bridge on Mammoth Road. ➡
- 60.9 Route H Bridge. No access.
- 61.2 [Merrill Horse Access](#) on left. Parking. ➡
- 63.2 Calico Creek on left.
- 66.4 Brown's Ford Bridge. [Brown's Ford Access](#) on left just downstream from bridge. Parking. Privy. ➡
- 70.6 Ditch Creek on left. Engleford Road on right. No public access.
- 77.8 Pine Ford/Route Y Bridge. No access.
- 83.5 Dry Creek on right.
- 85.4 Morse Mill Park (Jefferson County Parks and Recreation). Remains of Morse Mill Dam just downstream now form a rocky rapid, and part of the foundation of the mill building is visible on left. Access.

- 85.8 Route B/Hillsboro Road Bridge. No access.
- 88.1 Klondike Road Bridge. No access.
- 88.8 Jones Creek on left.
- 96.5 Cedar Hill Road Bridge/Cedar Hill Park (Jefferson County Parks and Recreation). Parking. Access.
- 96.9 Hwy. 30 bridges. No access.
- 101.9 Byrnesville Mill Dam. Private dam with a chute constructed in it to allow easier portaging of canoes and kayaks to the right at lower water levels. Old Byrnesville Road and South Byrnesville Road bridges are just downstream, and there is no public access in this area.
- 106.0 Route W Bridge/Rockford Beach Park (Jefferson County Parks and Recreation) on left. Access. Parking.
- 108.0 Byrnes Mill City Park and dam. Portage right. Access. Parking.
- 116.1 Twin River Road Bridge. No access.
- 116.5 Meramec River.

Mineral Fork

This tributary of the Big River is often floatable.

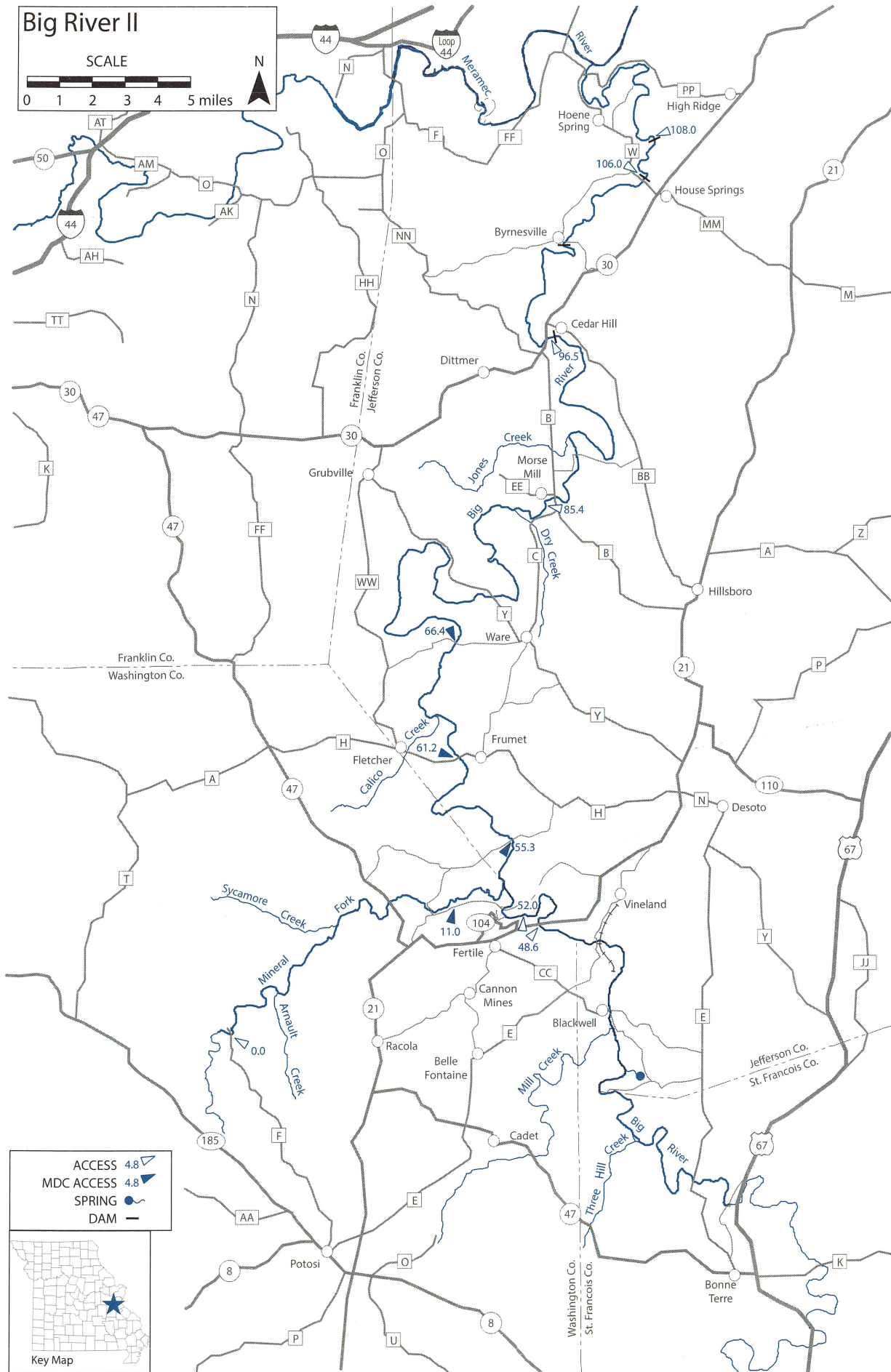
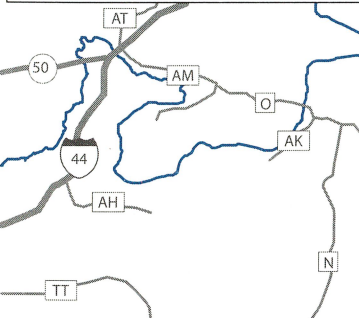
Difficulty: I.

Gradients: general — 9.

County: Washington.

- 0.0 Route F Bridge. Private land. Parking difficult.
- 3.0 Arnault Creek on right.
- 6.2 Sycamore Creek on left.
- 8.7 Hwy. 47 Bridge.
- 10.2 Private slab bridge across creek.
- 11.0 [Kingston Access](#) on right. No ramp. Must carry boats down trail to gravel bar.
- 13.8 Big River. Next access at [Mammoth Access](#) on left. ➡

Big River II



- ACCESS 4.8
- MDC ACCESS 4.8
- SPRING
- DAM

