

Smith River

The Smith River from Philpott Dam downstream to Martinsville provides some of the best trout fishing in Virginia. Cold water releases from Philpott Dam create about 20 miles of trout stream. This river is stocked with catchable sized rainbow trout from October-May, and also supports a wild population of brown trout.

Between Philpott Dam and Town Creek, the river is managed as a stocked and wild trout stream. Rainbow and brown trout are plentiful, and access is relatively easy. Standard state trout regulations (6 fish/day, 7-inch minimum size) are in effect in this area. Wade fishing is probably the most effective technique here.

From Town Creek downstream to Bassett, the river is managed as a trophy brown trout stream. Brown trout are very abundant in this section, although fish larger than 14 inches are somewhat rare. Only single hook artificial lures are permitted, and fish must be 16 inches long to be kept. A daily limit of 2 fish/day is also in place in this section. Wade fishing is the most effective technique. Access in this section is pretty much limited to the upper and lower boundaries of this river segment. If you fish here, plan on a little walking/wading to get to the best spots.

From the Town of Bassett downstream to Martinsville, the river is again managed as a stocked and wild trout fishery. Rainbow trout are very plentiful in this area. Brown trout are not as numerous as the areas closer to Philpott Dam, but they tend to be a little larger. The biggest fish seem to come from this area, although you may have to fish a while to catch one. Access is plentiful, and wade and bank fishing are both effective.

Overall, this river provides excellent fishing for stocked rainbow trout and wild brown trout. The rainbows are generally about 10 inches long, while the browns range in size from 8-12 inches. Some larger fish of each species are present, although they are uncommon. Before you go, you should call the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at 276-629-2432 (a recording) to get the Philpott power generation schedule for that week. It is impossible to wade the river during power generation.

Safety tips to follow while fishing:

Sunscreen

Sunscreens are rated by Sun Protection Factor (SPF). The SPF rating tells you how long the product is expected to protect your skin from burning. For example, an SPF 15 sunscreen should protect your skin from developing redness fifteen times longer than no sunscreen at all. In any case, consult your doctor for the best SPF sunscreen for you.

Sunglasses

Imagine boating or fishing without any vision. This can be a reality if you do not wear eye protection while on the water. Eye fatigue and eye damage can result if you do not wear sunglasses.

Polarized is a key word to look for when selecting eye-wear. Polarized sunglasses will reduce or eliminate glare. They will also help protect you from harmful rays that could cause permanent eye damage.

Carry the right equipment

Be sure to always include a first aid kit and wire-cutting pliers with your fishing tackle. We also would recommend that you carry a pair of needle nose pliers or forceps.

Be aware of rapidly rising water

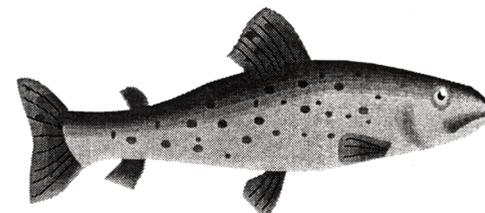
The water in the Smith River may rise suddenly due to power generation at the Philpott Powerhouse. The generation schedule may be obtained 24 hours a day/7 days a week by calling (276) 629-2432.

Know the weather and temperature

Loss of body heat to water is a major cause of death in water related accidents. Victims get hypothermia when they lose heat to the colder water. Hypothermia is a life-threatening condition. Be aware, you are more likely to rapidly lose body heat when your clothes are wet.

It should also be noted that alcohol lowers the body temperature around two to three degrees by dilating the blood vessels. Do not drink alcohol around water.

Smith River Fishing



Philpott Project



Contact Us!

*Philpott Lake
Visitor Assistance Center*

1058 Philpott Dam Road
Bassett, VA 24055
(276) 629-2703

philpott@usace.army.mil
www.saw.usace.army.mil/philpott/index.htm

Smith River Map

DO NOT WADE HIGH WATER

When Generating, high water reaches these areas as follows:

Generation Schedule: (276) 629-2432

- Town Creek 1 hour
- North Bassett 2 hours
- South Bassett 3 hours
- Courtaulds Film 4 hours
- Koehler Area 5 hours

Trout Stocking Schedules:

www.dgif.state.va.us

434-525-3474

