

# MISSOURI

If Taneycomo water is high then there is Crane Creek.... small and difficult but loaded with wild rainbows.

## Crane Creek

185 miles, about 3 hours

Acclaimed as one of America's 100 Best Trout Streams, Crane Creek offers a truly unique trout fishing opportunity just forty-five minutes southwest of Springfield, MO. Crane Creek is one of the few streams in the region with self-sustaining populations of wild trout. These local trout are the descendants of California McCloud River rainbows stocked in the stream in the late 1800s. Opinions vary but there are those that say Crane Creek Rainbows are the only pure-strain McCloud Rainbow trout left in the world!

Crane Creek Rainbows are often a revelation to anglers who are accustomed to fishing for stocked trout: they are quick and skittish and may be the ultimate trout fishing challenge Missouri has to offer. Catch any trout in Crane Creek and you've accomplished something...land a big trout in Crane Creek and you can consider yourself to have a Ph. D. in trout fishing!

The creek runs right through the historic town of Crane, MO. It's often said of Crane that "the fishing reels them in, the charm brings them back" Find out for yourself by fishing the challenging waters of Crane Creek and sampling the historic delights of the City of Crane!

## Public Access Areas

<http://cranecreektrout.com/maps.htm>

There are over four stream miles of public access to Crane Creek. They can be divided into three sections:

1 Upper Wire Road Conservation Area parking lot (not good for fly fishing).

36.93542 -93.60063

2 Little Crane Creek & Crane Creek confluence parking lot (not good for fly fishing).

36.92482 -93.58814

3 Public access for about 1.3 miles farther south (rough fishing).

36.90787 -93.57762

Crane City Property Areas

4 **Crane City Park** includes about .3 miles of good bank access.

**36.90316 -93.57400**

5 **Crane Ball Fields** includes tree lined bank access.

**36.90154 -93.57142**

Privately owned to Grahams Ford Rd from here

36.895900, -93.561797

Lower Wire Road Conservation Area

6 Grahams Ford Rd Parking Lot to conservation area for ½ mile east, access is rough.

36.88893 -93.54878

Confluence of Crane Creek into James River

36.84606 -93.44836

All of these areas hold good numbers of trout, ranging in size from fingerlings to whoppers. Parts of the Upper Wire Road area go dry at certain times of year, but the City Park and Lower Wire Road sections run year-round and there are big trout lurking in the deep pools.

Because Crane Creek is a small stream, one of the biggest challenges for the angler, especially those using a fly rod, is outside the creek itself: vegetation. This is one reason many anglers concentrate their time on Crane Creek in the fall and early spring. Many anglers avoid the stream during the height of summer because it is overgrown and because there are reputed to be some angry cottonmouths in the area. But those willing to brave the brush can be rewarded with excellent fishing in the summer months. Anglers are also encouraged to stay out of the stream during December, January and February as this is when the fish typically are spawning.

### **Strategy**

The best way to catch fish on Crane Creek comes down to one word: stealth. For those of us accustomed to standing on the shore and sight casting to trout in state or private trout parks this can be quite an adjustment. Show a Crane Creek trout your shadow and they're gone!

You need to approach pools from behind brush or cover, stooping, kneeling or even crawling! A cast that hits the water hard may spook the fish. Might as well go have lunch!

This is the unique challenge of Crane Creek trout that you will find very few other places in the region. There are plenty of trout here, there are big trout here, but if you're going to catch one you're going to have to learn some new tricks, chief among them patience!

### **Tackle**

Because the creek corridor can be brushy, shorter rods work better. The ideal rod for Crane Creek might be a 3 or 4 weight rod of about six and a half or seven feet.

### **Flies**

Crane Creek trout are skittish but will often rise to the types of flies found in most fly boxes: various attractors, caddis patterns, may-fly patterns and traditional nymph patterns.

### **Regulations and Ethical Behavior**

The Missouri Department of Conservation has recognized the section of Crane Creek around the City of Crane as Blue Ribbon Trout water, its most prestigious designation. With this designation come special state regulations meant to preserve the resource for all anglers. Among the highlights of these are:

The daily limit is one trout.

All trout less than 18 inches total length must be released unharmed immediately after capture.

Only flies and artificial lures may be used. Soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits are out,

Fish may not be taken with gig, crossbow or longbow.

In addition anglers on Crane Creek are encouraged to follow current accepted best practices:

Use barbless hooks only.

Wear only rubber-soled waders.

Return all trout to the stream regardless of size.

Stay out of the stream during spawning season (Dec., Jan., Feb.)

Leave the stream better than you found it.

### **Local Services**

One of the best things you can do for Crane Creek is spending money in the town of Crane. When folks know that the creek is bringing money to their community they're more likely to participate in creek clean ups and other community events that preserve and protect the creek. "Keep it in Crane" we like to say.

### **Guide Service**

The fishing is still challenging but a guide can help you find the good spots, the right flies and, at the same time, help you improve your fly-fishing skills. Keith Oxbry, 417-527-6337 has fished all over the world but makes the Ozarks his home. Keith was the head instructor at the Orvis Fly-Fishing School at Dogwood

Canyon in Lampe, MO. He's a great fisherman, a lovely guy, and an excellent teacher. Keith is also able to offer access to some private water on Crane Creek.

### **Restaurants**

Three Sisters Café, Hwy 413 and Hemphill, 417-723-1170. Breakfast Lunch and Dinner, opens 7:00AM.

Crane Café, 206 Main St, 417-723-5313

Danny's Pizza (carry out) 103 South St, 417-723-0422

Subway, Creekside Shopping Center

Chinese Restaurant, Creekside Shopping Center

### **Lodging**

Pop's Cabins (Galena, Mo) 417-527-0913. Bit of a drive. Overlook the James, sleep up to 4 adults.

### **Groceries**

Porter's Supermarket, Creekside Shopping Center, 417-723-5700

### **Specialty Stores**

The Doll Lady 222 Main Street, 417-723-8852

Main Street has antique stores. Store on the NW corner of Main/Meadow sells home-made pie!

### **Other Businesses**

Dentist - Terry Burpo DDS, 204 N. Commerce, 417-723-1723

Drug Store & Soda Fountain - Lakeland Pharmacy, Creekside Shopping Center, 417-723-5227.

Hardware - V-MAR Feed and Hardware, 103 Main Street, 417-723-5254

Medical Clinic - Crane Medical Care, Creekside Shopping Center, 417-269-2264

### **Churches**

Crane Presbyterian 417-723-5596

Crane Fundamental Methodist 417-723-5821

First Baptist Church 417-723-5273